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Vietnam-Japan Partnership in the Era of Uncertainty The BRI, FOIP and a Changing Regional Order in Asia

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Today's theme

- How are the regional order changing in East Asia?
- What are the the strategic and political importance and risks and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)
- How is Japan trying to cope with such a changing situation in East Asia by promoting multilayered regional approach, including a Free and Open Indo-Paciic (FOIP)?
- How to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of the FOIP?
- How to see the prospect of the regional order?
- How should Vietnam and Japan enhance the cooperation to deal with the changing regional order?

How is the regional order changing?

- The rise of China and changing power balance between the United States and China
- China's proactive foreign policies toward neighbor countries
 - Its assertive stance over territorial issues in East China Sea and South China Sea
 - The proposal of a China-led regional vision
 - Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)
 - One Belt One Road → Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)
 - Asian security concept
- The Sino-U.S. economic “war”
 - Trump's administration's protectionism
 - The struggle over the hegemony in the high-technology field

The overview of the BRI (1): Action Plan (Mar. 2015)

- “The Belt and Road Initiative is a way for win-win cooperation that promotes common development and prosperity and a road toward peace and friendship by enhancing mutual understanding and trust, and strengthening all-around exchanges.”
- “The Belt and Road run through the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa, connecting the vibrant East Asia economic circle at one end and developed European economic circle at the other, and encompassing countries with huge potential for economic development. “
- “Cooperation priorities: policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds²

(Resource: http://english.gov.cn/archive/publications/2015/03/30/content_281475080249035.htm)

The overview of the BRI (2): the recent picture



The strategic “risk” of the BRI

- Is the BRI the “grand strategy” by Beijing?
 - Various actors involved in the BRI
- What will the BRI lead to the strategic outcome?
 - The problems of transparency, environment and human rights
 - The erosion of sovereignty of recipient countries
 - “Sri Lanka’s lesson”
- Will the BRI lead to the construction of China-led regional order instead of US-led liberal international order??

International liberal order

- The origin was the U.S.-led order in the Western Camp in the Cold War Era
- It has become the “international” order after the end of the Cold War.
- The ingredients of the international liberal order
 - The economic liberal order
 - “Universal” norms: democracy, human rights, rule of law, good governance and market economy
 - Liberalism in the world politics
 - respect international cooperation, collaboration, and multilateral institutions
 - The respect of “peaceful settlement of peace” and “no use of force”

How has Japan dealt with the changing regional order? (1)

Multi-layered regional approach

- Cooperation with the ASEAN/ASEAN countries
 - Assistance to enhance ASEAN integration and capability
 - The ARF, ASEAN+3, EAS, ADMM+
 - Bilateral ties with ASEAN countries including Vietnam
- The TPP 11 (CPTPP)
 - The sign of Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (March 2018)
 - Rule-making framework for economy in the region
 - The “vanguard” of “Asia Pacific” regional integration
 - The expectation for US return to the TPP

How has Japan dealt with the changing regional order? (2)

Multi-layered regional approach

- The RCEP
 - To aim at realizing the “extended East Asian” economic integration
 - To enhance ASEAN-centered regional architecture
 - Joint Leaders’ Statement on the Negotiations for the RCEP : RCEP: A vehicle for Economic Integration and Inclusive Development (Nov. 2017)
- The Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy
 - In order to counter the BRI?

Why is “Indo-Pacific” emerging as a regional concept ?

- Indo-Pacific: a huge geographical sphere
- The backgrounds of emerging “Indo-Pacific” concept
 - The aim at deterrence of the rise of China by Japan and the United States
 - The rising expectation for the role of India as a partner by Japan and the United States
 - The growing sense of crisis toward China by India
 - The shift of the center of developments from Asia Pacific to Indo-Pacific (?)
 - The rise of India
 - The economic development of Africa

Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (Japan's version)

- “Improve “connectivity” between Asia and Africa through free and open Indo-Pacific, and promote stability and prosperity of the region as a whole”
- “Develop free and open maritime order in the Indo-Pacific region as “international public goods”, bringing stability and prosperity for every country as well as securing peace and prosperity in the region as a whole. Japan will cooperate with any country that supports this idea.”
- three pillars:
 - 1.promotion and establishment of rule of law, freedom of navigation and free trade, etc.
 - 2 Pursuit of economic prosperity (improving connectivity, etc.)
 - 3 Commitment for peace and stability (capacity building on maritime

Free and Open Indo Pacific in 2017



✂ To make the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy” into shape, Japan will strengthen strategic collaboration with India, which has a historical relationship with East Africa, as well as the US and Australia.

Free and Open Indo-Pacific 2018



Improve “connectivity” between Asia and Africa through free and open Indo-Pacific, and, with ASEAN as the hinge of two oceans, promote stability and prosperity of the region as a whole

How to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of the FOIP?

- Is the Quadrilateral strategic linkage (Japan-the United States-India-Australia) the core of the FOIP?
 - If so, the ASEAN countries can't easily support the FOIP.
- Do Japan and the U.S. really agree on the direction of the FOIP?
 - As for the geographical scope and the tone of anti-China
- Do India and Australia support the deterring-China favour's FOIP?
 - “inclusive” Indo-Pacific?
- How Japan promote the FOIP with improving the relationship with China and facing Sino-U.S. confrontation?
 - Sino-Japan cooperation on infrastructure construction?
 - Cooperation on the high-speed railway project in Thailand (Sep.2018)

Indo-Pacific from the U.S. perspective



<http://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/USPACOM-Area-of-Responsibility/>

ASEAN's reaction to the FOIP

- The concern about the decline of “ASEAN centrality”
- The anxiety about the anti-China tone
 - Ex. Singapore's Foreign Minister's lecture in International Institute of Strategic Studies
- The proposal of ASEAN-favoured Indo-Pacific
 - “inclusiveness, openness, and ASEAN centrality and unity ... lie at the heart of the new Indo-Pacific”
- The interest from the viewpoint of balancing China's (economic) leverage
 - Ex. Tokyo Strategy 2018 at the 8th Mekong-Japan(2018.9)
 - “Leaders of the Mekong countries welcomed Japan's policy to realize a FOIP”
 - “!Leaders expressed their determination to steadily implement the Mekong-Japan Cooperation projects which contribute to and complement the promotion of a FOIP”

Japan's efforts in the context of the FOIP

- The agreement on cooperation on infrastructure development in Indo-Pacific by the U.S, Japan and Australia (Jul.2018)
- The expansion of defense cooperation/assistance toward some of ASEAN countries
 - The agreement concerning the transfer of defence equipment and technology (with the Philippines in Feb. 2016, Malaysia in Apr. 2018, on negotiation with Indonesia, on examine with Vietnam The provision of training aircrafts TC90 of the JSDF to the Philippines (Mar.2017)
 - Japan-Singapore Defence Ministers' meeting (May 2018)
 - The enhancement of Vietnam-Japan defense cooperation, Vietnam-Japan Joint Vision (2018.4)
 - Japan and Malaysia agreed on the enhancement of defence cooperation (Sep/2018)
 - Japan sent helicopter destroyers Kaga, Inazuma, and Suzutsuki to some of South and Southeast Asian countries (India, Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Philippines (Sep-Oct. 2018)
- PM Abe's statement on FOIP and "high-quality infrastructure" in the ASEM Summit (Oct.2018)

The decline of the liberal international order

- Can we maintain the international liberal Order in East Asia?
 - Challenges against international liberal order
 - Changing the status quo by force: South China Sea, East China Sea, by China
 - The impact of the BRI, and spread of the “China model for economic development”
 - The backlash of democracy and protection of human rights in some Asian countries (China and some of SEA)
 - Are the FOIP, as well as the TPP and RCEP effective to keep the international liberal order?

Conclusion: the future of

- How should Vietnam and Japan cooperate for constructing a comfortable and stable regional order?
 - To keep the liberal economic order
 - The CPTPP, the expansion of the CPTPP
 - The RCEP
 - Vietnam-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement
 - To keep the liberal internationalism
 - The enhancement of defence cooperation between two countries
 - More open and inclusive FOIP

Thank you so much!