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**NAVAL
POSTGRADUATE
SCHOOL**

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

JAPAN AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN SECURITY

by

Stephany M. Breau

June 2019

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JAPAN AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN SECURITY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
(FAR EAST, SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC)**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses why Japan has increased its security cooperation with Southeast Asian institutions and states. It also explores how Japan has increased cooperation in the region. In this analysis, the author uses data from port visits, exercises, joint statements and security cooperation trends from the 1990s through 2018. This thesis concludes that Japan is increasing its cooperation with ASEAN, the Philippines, and Vietnam because it is trying to protect its sea lines of communication, to garner support to condemn North Korean actions, and to gain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADMM	ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting
ADMM+	ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Conference
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
AMM SOF	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting Senior Official Meeting
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN-PMC	ASEAN Prime Ministers Conference
CBM	Confidence Building Measure
CUES	Code of Unplanned Encounter at Sea
COC	Code of Conduct
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty
DOC	Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea
DPRK	Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EWG	Expert Working Group
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
IMT	International Monitoring Team
ISC	Information Sharing Center
ISM on NPD	Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament
HA/DR	Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief
JASDF	Japanese Air Self Defense Forces
JBIRD	Japan-Bangsamoro Initiative for Reconstruction and Development
JCG	Japanese Coast Guard
JGSDF	Japanese Ground Self Defense Forces
JMSDF	Japanese Maritime Self Defense Forces
JSDF	Japanese Self Defense Forces
LEO	Law Enforcement Organization
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MRMs	Mutual Reassurance Measures
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PCG	Philippine Coast Guard
PECC	Pacific Economic Cooperation Council
PKO	Peace Keeping Operations
PRC	People's Republic of China
PM/MM	Politico-Military and Military-Military
ReCAAP	Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia
RIMPAC	Rim of the Pacific Exercise
SAR	Search and Rescue
SLOC	Sea Line of Communication
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
WWII	World War Two

I. INTRODUCTION: JAPANESE SECURITY COOPERATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Beginning in the 1990s, Japan changed its focus in Southeast Asia from primarily economic considerations and increasingly engaged in security cooperation in the region. This increase in security cooperation has been most apparent in the 2010s, as the Japanese Self Defense Forces (JSDF) have participated in a growing number of military exercises and deployments to Southeast Asia. The Japanese government also lifted its ban on arms exports, allowing Southeast Asian countries to purchase defense equipment.¹

Following the end of the Cold War, Japan began to increase cooperation with Southeast Asian states and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its related forums and dialogues. In the 1990s, Japanese cooperation focused on anti-piracy initiatives. Later, Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR) operations and cooperation on non-traditional security threats became accepted areas of collaboration.² There were no exchanges or donations of hardware, and many drills were focused on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs).³ However, recent history indicates a break from former security practices. In 2014, Japan agreed to donate maritime patrol craft to the Philippines and Vietnam, providing greater maritime capacity for both these states. Japan also leased TC-90 training aircraft to the Philippines and provided training to Filipino pilots.⁴ Japan also deployed ships to the region to improve cooperation with countries there

¹“Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed May 20, 2019, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000034953.pdf>.

² Paul Midford, “Japan’s Security Cooperation with East Asia,” in *Japan’s New Security Partnerships: Beyond the Security Alliance*, edited by Wilhelm Vosse and Paul Midford (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 104-105.

³ Takeshi Yuzawa, *Japan’s Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 56. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203964972>.

⁴ Renato Cruz De Castro, “The Philippine Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” in *Japan’s New Security Partnerships: Beyond the Security Alliance*, ed. Wilhelm Vosse and Paul Midford (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 139,141; Swee Lean Collin Koh, “The Vietnamese Perspective on the Security partnership with Japan,” in *Japan’s New Security Partnerships: Beyond the Security Alliance*, ed. Wilhelm Vosse and Paul Midford (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 162-163.

through a ship-riding program.⁵ During the summer of 2017, the helicopter destroyer JS *Izumo* deployed and worked with the U.S. and Australian Navies in the South China Sea. In August of 2018, Japan deployed another helicopter destroyer, the JS *Kaga* and two escorting destroyers, the JS *Inazuma* and the JS *Suzutsuki* for a two-month exercise. This trip included port calls to the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and India and was intended to promote interoperability between these countries and Japan.⁶

In addition to military-to-military exercises, in 2014, Japan lifted a self-imposed ban on selling weapons, and began to allow for arms transfers with other countries.⁷ In 2018, Japan signed an arms transfer agreement with Malaysia, though as of this writing, no defense contracts were complete.⁸ Japanese defense contractors also brought in representatives from several Southeast Asian countries including Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines to an arms show outside of Tokyo. The intent was to prove that Japan willing to establish defense contracts with states in the region.⁹

This thesis will establish that there is a clear trend that Japan is increasing its security cooperation in Southeast Asia. Other authors have acknowledged that Japan is increasing its cooperation in the region but have not documented the ways in which this has occurred. By consolidating data on exercises, port visits, and joint statements, trends can be established. This thesis will explain why this trend has emerged during the past five years. Further questions that will be considered are: how is Japan engaging Southeast Asia

⁵“Press Releases: Japan-ASEAN Ship Rider Cooperation Program–A Vientiane Vision Initiative,” Ministry of Defense, June 19, 2017, <https://www.mod.go.jp/e/press/release/2017/06/19b.html>.

⁶ Steven Stashwick, “Japan Deploys Flotilla to South China Sea,” *The Diplomat*, last modified August 30, 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/japan-deploys-flotilla-to-south-china-sea/>.

⁷“Japan’s Policies on the Control of Arms Exports,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed May 20, 2019, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/policy/index.html>.

⁸“Agreement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of Malaysia Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed May 20, 2019, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000360291.pdf>.

⁹ Tim Kelly and Nobuhiro Kubo, “Arms show offers Japan venue to build military ties in Southeast Asia,” *Reuters*, last modified June 11, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-asean-defense/arms-show-offers-japan-venue-to-build-military-ties-in-southeast-asia-idUSKBN19208R>.

in security cooperation and which institutions and countries in Southeast Asia is Japan most engaged with?

A. SIGNIFICANCE

Following WWII, Japan did not engage in security cooperation in the region, and instead focused on ODA and economic development. This was driven by the 1977 Fukuda Doctrine which stated that Japan rejected a military role in Southeast Asia and instead wanted equal partnerships with states in the region. The Fukuda Doctrine allowed Japan to participate in greater economic cooperation in the region and to establish a mediator role between ASEAN and Indochina.¹⁰ This provided Southeast Asian states the reassurance they needed to engage with Japan economically, but security cooperation would not be a consideration until the early 1990s.

Following the end of the Cold War, Japan began to pursue increased security cooperation in Southeast Asia. Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa promoted the development of a regional multilateral dialogue focused on security in 1992, and in 1994, the ASEAN-led ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was created.¹¹ The development of the ARF allowed Southeast Asian states, Japan, and other partner countries to speak directly about shared security concerns. This cooperation was focused on non-traditional security threats and dialogue than large-scale military-to-military joint exercises. Dialogue and cooperation on non-traditional security threats began to make way for more substantial forms of partnership through the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+). This forum enabled Defense ministers from ASEAN members and partner states to discuss shared regional concerns in a defense-minded setting.

¹⁰ Bhubhinder Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," *Asian Survey*, 42, no. 2 (March/April 2002): 284. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2002.42.2.276>.

¹¹ Midford, "Japan's Security Cooperation with East Asia," 94; Japanese names will be presented in the Western style with given names first and family names second.

Japan has also engaged in bilateral security cooperation in the region. Japan has participated in bilateral and trilateral exercises and donated patrol aircraft and ships.¹² Considering the recipients of these aircraft and ships are coastal countries with territorial disputes with China, it appears that Japan wanted to strengthen their maritime security forces. Japan also sent its two helicopter destroyers ships into the South China Sea to conduct patrols in 2017 and 2018 to conduct drills with the United States and to participate in port visits with several Southeast Asian countries.¹³ The presence of these large vessels in a highly contested region shows that Japan is willing to actively participate in the region in ways that it was not in the 1990s.

Japanese leaders must also consider the regional implications of their decision to increase security cooperation in Southeast Asia. Japan has sought increased strategic partnerships with Southeast Asian states like the Philippines and Vietnam, and these states have territorial disputes in the South China Sea. By expanding its security interests into Southeast Asia and the South China Sea Japan is increasing tensions with China. This is most evident when Japan has shown support for maintaining the status quo in the region, and through drills with claimant states.¹⁴

Japan's decision to increase cooperation as China expands its reach indicates that Japanese leaders want to be viewed as a viable partner on security issues. Japanese support for partners in joint statements and through capacity building is significant as Japan continues to engage the region. It is also important to compile and analyze current trends in Japan-Southeast Asian security cooperation. This thesis will attempt to clarify and expound upon these new developments.

¹² De Castro, "The Philippine perspective on the security partnership with Japan," 141-142; Koh, "The Vietnamese perspective on the security partnership with Japan," 162.

¹³ Helicopter destroyers will be referred to as DDH; Nobuhiro Kubo, "Exclusive: Japanese helicopter carrier to tour South China Sea, Indian Ocean for two months," Reuters, last modified, July 3, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-defence-southchinasea-exclusive/exclusive-japanese-helicopter-carrier-to-tour-south-china-sea-indian-ocean-for-two-months-idUSKBN1JU0CJ>.

¹⁴ Mark Lanteigne, *Chinese Foreign Policy: An Introduction*, 3rd ed (New York: Routledge, 2016), 172.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Much of the literature on Japanese security in Southeast Asia focuses on the roles of China, Japan's interactions with ASEAN, the Philippines and Vietnam. This section will examine Japan's security cooperation in order to identify the main trends and explanations for those trends. The section is separated into three parts. The first focuses on China as much of the literature positions China as a central reason for why Japan has recently engaged more in security cooperation with Southeast Asian states and institutions. The next two sections examine which institutions and states Japan has developed the most security cooperation with.

1. China

One hypothesis on why Japan is increasing its security presence in Southeast Asia is because of aggressive Chinese expansion in the South China Sea and its increasing presence in the East China Sea around the Senkaku Islands. This theory is supported by much of the existing literature on Japanese security and has become an important consideration when examining increases in Japanese cooperation with other countries.¹⁵

One of the ways in which Japan has expanded cooperation with Southeast Asian states to counter China in the South China Sea is through strategic partnerships. Japan's focus on the South China Sea is a result of fear that further escalation of tensions in the region will limit access to this vital SLOC.¹⁶ Koga writes that increasing the number and elevating the type of strategic partnerships in Southeast Asia is one way in which Japan is countering Chinese expansion in the region. Japan began to sign strategic partnerships in 2006 with Indonesia, before China began to assert its claims in the South China Sea. However, it began to sign more strategic partnerships after 2009 with Vietnam, the

¹⁵ Kei Koga, "Japan's 'Strategic Coordination' in 2015 ASEAN, Southeast Asia, and Abe's Diplomatic Agenda," *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2016): 68. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/627451>; Andrew L. Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance: New Policies and Politics for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 13; Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 68-69.

¹⁶ Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance*, 92.

Philippines, and Thailand when Chinese aggressively expanded in the region. In 2013, Cambodia and Malaysia signed strategic partnerships, and Laos concluded a strategic partnership in 2015.¹⁷ These statements often focus on developmental and economic cooperation and assistance, but Japanese leaders have focused on these factors as ways to increase regional stability. In the case of the strategic statements with the Philippines and Vietnam, these partnerships have also increasingly included language on the South China Sea and the importance of freedom of navigation and maintaining the status quo. This will be addressed below.

It must be understood that China is not the only maritime country that claims territory in the South China Sea. Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Brunei also have competing claims in the region, and most have developed features to varying degrees.¹⁸ China has been aggressive in establishing and maintaining its control over islands and features through island reclamation and militarization of these features, but while it has the largest islands, it does not have the most.¹⁹ By working with institutions like ASEAN and promoting international law to counter revisionist Chinese claims in Southeast Asia, Japan is promoting itself as a viable security partner that respects the status quo. Japan needs to promote international law with these institutions because of Chinese incursions in and around the Senkaku Islands.

Japan is intent on securing its own sea lines of communication (SLOC) and sees China's actions in the South China Sea as a threat to its own security. China's occupation

¹⁷ Koga, "Japan's 'Strategic Coordination' in 2015: ASEAN, Southeast Asia and Abe's Diplomatic Agenda," 69-70.

¹⁸ Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, "Island Tracker," CSIS, last accessed May 21, 2019, <https://amti.csis.org/island-tracker/>; Brunei, while a claimant state, does not have any established outposts in the South China Sea; Michael Green, Kathleen Hicks, Zack Cooper, John Schaus, and Jake Douglas, "Chapter 3: Case Studies of Maritime Coercion," in *Countering Coercion in Maritime Asia: The Theory and Practice of Gray Zone Deterrence*, (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, May 2017): 170. https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/170505_GreenM_CounteringCoercionAsia_Web.pdf?OnoJXfWb4A5gw_n6G.8azgEd8zRIM4wq

¹⁹ Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, "China Island Tracker," CSIS, last accessed May 21, 2019. <https://amti.csis.org/island-tracker/china/>; Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, "Vietnam Island Tracker," CSIS, last accessed May 21, 2019, <https://amti.csis.org/island-tracker/vietnam/>.

of features in the Spratly Islands and its efforts to enforce its claims throughout the SCS have the potential to limit freedom of navigation in the region.²⁰ While Japanese law permits the JMSDF to protect Japanese SLOCs out to 1000 nautical miles from Tokyo, the South China Sea is beyond this area of protection. Grønning writes that 93% of crude oil imports to Japan arrive through marine traffic, and De Castro notes that 70% of Japan's energy needs travel through the South China Sea.²¹ Should this SLOC become unavailable as a result of conflict or through actions that limited freedom of navigation, Japan would be adversely impacted. In this context, it is clear Japanese economic interests are threatened by China's assertive behavior in the South China Sea, and by reaching out to countries in the area, it can better protect these SLOCs.²² The Japanese initiative to protect its SLOCs perhaps best understood through the Abe administration's "Proactive Contribution to Peace." Abe stated that Japan would take a more active approach regarding its own security and towards cooperation with Southeast Asian states. This has placed it in contention with Chinese leaders who do not want Japan to become involved in South China Sea affairs.

However, this policy has also worried states that Japan desires closer ties with. Koga notes that Abe has had to reassure ASEAN members that the "Proactive Contribution to Peace" policy followed the guidelines established by the Fukuda Doctrine: that Japan would not become a military power in the region, Japan would continue to forge and maintain ties with ASEAN members, and that Japan would continue to cooperate with ASEAN states as equals.²³ This insistence that Japan would participate more in security operations but that it valued the relationships it established in the region shows that Japanese leaders saw the value of maintaining the principles of the Fukuda Doctrine. As

²⁰ Bjørn Elias Mikalsen Grønning, "Japan's Security Cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam," *The Pacific Review* 31, no. 4 (2018): 541. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2017.1397730>.

²¹ Grønning, 541; Renato Cruz De Castro, "China and Japan in maritime Southeast Asia: Extending Their Geo-Strategic Rivalry by Competing for Friends," *Philippine Political Science Journal*, 34, no. 2, (November 2013): 159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01154451.2013.851491>.

²² De Castro, "China and Japan in maritime Southeast Asia: extending their geo-strategic rivalry by competing for friends," 159.

²³ Koga, "Japan's 'Strategic Coordination' in 2015 ASEAN, Southeast Asia, and Abe's Diplomatic Agenda," 67-68.

the following section shows, Japan's partnership with ASEAN and ASEAN members is critical as it increases its security presence in Southeast Asia.

2. ASEAN

Japan has worked with ASEAN and ASEAN led forums for over four decades. In the post-war period, the Japan-ASEAN relationship focused on economic and development assistance from Japan to ASEAN states, due in part to fears that Japan would remilitarize. The Fukuda doctrine helped to assuage these concerns, and enabled Japan to take on a mediator role for ASEAN and Indochina prior to the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.²⁴ It was during the early part of Japan and ASEAN's relationship that Japanese leaders realized that the institution of ASEAN encouraged regional stability in Southeast Asia.²⁵

Following the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, Japan began to signal to ASEAN members that it desired a multilateral forum to discuss regional security concerns. ASEAN states also saw the value in an ASEAN led security forum and formed the ARF in 1994.²⁶ Japan utilized the ARF to address regional cooperation on non-proliferation and to highlight North Korea's nuclear and missile testing.²⁷

Japan also engaged ASEAN in the late 1990s during a spike in piracy and at sea robbery. Piracy affected ASEAN states more than Japan, but due to the rise of these types of crimes along Japan's SLOCs and several high-profile events, Japanese officials realized that they needed to work with ASEAN members to combat the problem. This led to the development of Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).²⁸

²⁴ Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 284, 296.

²⁵ Singh, 283-284.

²⁶ Singh, 290.

²⁷ Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 59.

²⁸ Ian Storey, "Japan's Maritime Security Interests in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea Dispute," *Political Science*, 65, no. 2 (2013):135-156. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032318713508482>; John F. Bradford, "Japanese Anti-Piracy Initiatives in Southeast Asia: Policy Formulations and the Coastal State Responses," *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, 26, no. 3 (December 2004): 480-505. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/387942/summary>.

There are two arguments as to why Japan began to focus on ASEAN and Southeast Asia for security cooperation in the 1990s. One is that due to a perceived decline in American power as a result of withdrawing from the Asia-Pacific, and the rise of China, Japan needed to take on a more independent and active role in both its regional and security affairs.²⁹ This was against the wishes of the United States, which did not want a regional security forum in the Asia Pacific, even when such initiatives were supported by other allies like South Korea, Canada and Australia.³⁰

The other is that Japan began to interact with Southeast Asian states and institutions as a way to keep the United States engaged in the region.³¹ Midford argues that Japan's independent policy actions in the 1990s and promotion of multilateral security forums were not at odds with the United States, and were often coordinated. He states that a major goal of Japanese officials was to keep the United States deployed in the region, and to continue to engage in the Asia-Pacific. By participating a multilateral security organization with states that were relatively friendly towards the United States, Japanese leaders hoped to continue to keep the United States militarily engaged in the region.³² Both of these factors partially explain why Japan chose to support and participate in the ARF, but ultimately, as Sudo notes, Japan was acting in response to changes in the regional security environment. Japanese leaders saw ASEAN institutions like the ARF and later the ADMM+ as a way to

²⁹ Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 287-288; Suedo Sudo, *Japan's ASEAN Policy: In Search of Proactive Multilateralism* (Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2014), 21. <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/39805>; Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 5; Yuzawa argues that the fear of American withdrawal from the region is a greater factor for why ASEAN formed the ARF than why Japan began to encourage the development of multilateral security forums in Southeast Asia. Yuzawa, *Japan's security policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 34.

³⁰ Midford, "Japan's Security Cooperation with East Asia," 91.

³¹ Wilhelm Vosse and Paul Midford, "Introduction," in *Japan's New Security Partnerships: Beyond the Security Alliance* ed. Wilhelm Vosse and Paul Midford. (Manchester: Manchester United Press, 2018), 11; Yuzawa also notes this argument but says that a Japanese initiative to develop multilateral security forums was not developed with the intent of keeping the United States involved in the region. Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 33.

³² Midford, "Japan's Security Cooperation with East Asia," 92, 105.

address regional stability and to promote cooperation.³³ This thesis will not explore these hypotheses but must acknowledge that they are present in the literature.

As mentioned in the previous section on China, its rise has encouraged Japan to increase its cooperation with ASEAN states and support ASEAN led initiatives intended on ensuring freedom of navigation in the South China Sea.³⁴ However, due to ASEAN's need for consensus from all members, even censure for Chinese island reclamation and militarization of the features it occupies in the South China Sea is not guaranteed. The fact that ASEAN members are not united in how to present the South China Sea in joint declarations has limited Japan in how much it can promote a laws-based approach to the region.³⁵

Japan has also sought support from ASEAN in other ways. Singh notes that in the 1980 as Japan and ASEAN became more cohesive. Japan provided aid and other incentives to ASEAN members, and in return sought support for international issues and policies. Japan's ultimate purpose was gaining ASEAN's support for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.³⁶ While ASEAN provides Japan several unified forums to discuss security concerns and engage in cooperation with Southeast Asian states, Japan has also engaged in bilateral security cooperation. This is best shown in Japan's interactions with the Philippines and Vietnam.

3. The Philippines and Vietnam

There is a growing literature that focuses on Japan's growing cooperation with two Southeast Asian states: the Philippines and Vietnam. This section will focus on why Japan is engaging in increased security cooperation with these two states. The Philippines and Vietnam have both been forced to react to Chinese expansion in the South China Sea and

³³ Sudo, *Japan's ASEAN Policy*, 26.

³⁴ Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 291.

³⁵ Koga, "Japan's 'Strategic Coordination' in 2015 ASEAN, Southeast Asia, and Abe's Diplomatic Agenda," 68-69; Nagy, "East Asia perspective on the security partnership with Japan," 118.

³⁶ Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 284.

are both members of ASEAN. Japan has also developed its strategic partnerships with these two states to a considerable extent.

Stephen R. Nagy's writes from the perspective of why Southeast Asian states view Japanese security cooperation in a favorable way, but this view helps in understanding the Japanese side as well. He notes that both the Philippines and Vietnam have a similar threat perception towards China and have been in direct conflict over territory in the South China Sea. In addition, both states "have actively courted Japanese aid and expressed a desire to have more security dialogue."³⁷ Oros also notes this increasing relationship and states that Japan is developing these partnerships as a way to "push back against Chinese claims."³⁸ The theory that Japan is engaging the Philippines and Vietnam due to Chinese actions in the South China Sea is repeated by others studying the region, and themes of hedging and balancing are consistent in the literature.³⁹ This aggression in the South China Sea has echoes in the East China Sea and the Japanese Senkaku Islands and the threat this poses to Japanese SLOCs is not lost on officials. De Castro notes Japan has sought to increase its relationship with countries with coastal territories that are critical to Japanese SLOCs.⁴⁰ Vietnam and the Philippines both fall into this category.

Primary documents in the form of strategic partnership joint statements provide further explanation for why Japan is increasing cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam. These statements focus on Official Development Assistance (ODA) and economic cooperation, but security concerns are also addressed. The instability created by North Korean missile and nuclear tests and abductions of Japanese citizens is noted in strategic partnerships with the Philippines and Vietnam, indicating that this was a shared concern for all parties. These joint statements also address Japan's desire for a permanent

³⁷ Nagy, "East Asia perspective on the security partnership with Japan," 122.

³⁸ Oros, *Japan's Security Renaissance*, 92.

³⁹ Grønning, "Japan's security cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam," 534; Trinidad, "Domestic Factors and Strategic Partnership: Redefining Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century," 618-624; De Castro, "The Philippine Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan," 130; Nagy, "East Asia Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan," 121-122.

⁴⁰ De Castro, "The Philippine perspective on the security partnership with Japan," 137.

seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). By including it on joint statements that are supported by these two states, Japan is showing it has international support for this concern.⁴¹

C. POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS

These hypotheses are listed in order as to which is the most likely reason Japan is engaging in increased security cooperation with Southeast Asian organizations and countries.

Hypothesis One: Japan is increasing its security cooperation with ASEAN and ASEAN members in order to protect shared SLOCs against changes to the status quo and ensure freedom of navigation. This hypothesis is supported by the literature on Chinese expansion into the South China Sea and the threat it presents to shared SLOCs. Primary documents also note the importance of a peaceful and stable South China Sea for the region.

Hypothesis Two: Japan is increasing its security cooperation with ASEAN and ASEAN members in order to gain support against North Korean missile and nuclear tests, and to place pressure on the DPRK for information on abducted Japanese citizens. This issue is supported in the literature about Japan and ASEAN. It is also supported by primary source documents with ASEAN, ASEAN forums, the Philippines, and Vietnam, which list North Korean missile and nuclear activity as a source of regional instability.

Hypothesis Three: Japan is increasing its security cooperation with ASEAN and ASEAN members because it desires a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. Through cooperation with regional institutions and bilateral cooperation, Japan is gathering the necessary international support it needs for its bid. This is supported through

⁴¹“Japan-Philippine Joint Statement ‘Partnership between Close Neighbors for Comprehensive Cooperation’,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 9, 2006. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/philippine/joint0612.html>; “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement ‘Fostering a Strategic Partnership for the Future between Close Neighbors’,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, June 18, 2009. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/philippine/joint0906.html>.

“Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement Towards a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 19, 2006, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/vietnam/joint0610.html>; “Japan–Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 18, 2014. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000031617.pdf>.

primary documents such as joint statements issued by Japan and ASEAN, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

D. PLAN OF THE THESIS

This thesis will focus on three case studies: ASEAN, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Chapter II will consider security cooperation between Japan and ASEAN. ASEAN will be considered since it is the primary regional institution for Southeast Asia and the host of several large security forums: the ARF and the ADMM+. The chapter examines how Japan is engaging ASEAN and ASEAN led forums. It argues that Japan increased cooperation with ASEAN and the development of a regional multilateral security forum as a way to ensure support for nuclear non-proliferation and to pressure North Korea. In addition, it says that Japan is utilizing ASEAN and ASEAN security forums to promote the rule of law in the South China Sea in order to protect its SLOCs. ASEAN support for a Japanese UNSC seat will also be considered.

Chapter III focuses on the Philippines and Japan and how security cooperation has evolved from the 1990s to 2018. It considers the development of their strategic partnership, how Japan as supported the Philippine government in Mindanao, and changes to the types of donations and security exercises both states are participating in. It argues that Japan and the Philippines are working together in order to secure their shared SLOCs and because each state has security concerns that the other state is willing to assist with, such as North Korea and a UNSC seat.

In Chapter IV, Japan's security cooperation with Vietnam will be considered. Like with Chapter III, security cooperation between the 1990s and 2018 will be examined in order to identify and explain recent trends. The joint statements establishing and expanding the Japanese-Vietnamese strategic partnership will be investigated to understand if there have been changes to the type and scale of security cooperation mentioned within these documents. In addition, Vietnam's own security concerns in the South China Sea will be considered, and how Japan has assisted Vietnam in building its maritime capacity. It argues that Japan is engaging Vietnam for similar reasons to the Philippines. Japan is looking for states to assist in protecting SLOCs in the South China Sea, it is looking for partners in

condemning North Korean actions, and it is looking for additional support as Japan makes a bid for a permanent UNSC seat.

E. RESEARCH DESIGN

The Philippines and Vietnam were chosen, as there is more data on how Japan is assisting these states. These countries appear receptive to Japanese security assistance, and both have developed strategic partnerships with Japan. The Philippines has a Strengthened Strategic Partnership and Vietnam as a Deepened Extensive Strategic Partnership with Japan. Understanding why Vietnam and the Philippines appear more willing to work with Japan is worth studying, as it may provide information on why certain states in Southeast Asia may engage in security cooperation with states from outside of the region.

The flaw in examining two states are open to assistance is that the Philippines and Vietnam may be outliers in the SEA region. Focusing on these two countries does not fundamentally challenge this thesis. While other Southeast Asian states may not be engaging in security cooperation with Japan bilaterally, many still work with Japan through ASEAN. It is worth the time to consider where Japan is investing the most in security, what actions Japan is taking, and why Japan is cooperating with these states.

Primary source documents translated into English will be utilized where available. These are useful in understanding each country's security concerns. The problem with using translated documents is that the original meaning may be lost due to a mistranslation. Official translations from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ASEAN are used in order to reduce the chances of mistranslations into English. Another risk in utilizing joint statements provided by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs is that they may provide a biased view towards the Japanese perspective. Since this thesis is focused on reasons for why Japan is increasing its security cooperation with Southeast Asian countries and ASEAN-institutions, using the Japanese perspective is important in order to understand their publicized reasons for engaging in cooperation.

II. JAPAN AND ASEAN SECURITY COOPERATION

A. INTRODUCTION

Japan and ASEAN have had diplomatic ties for over 40 years. From the establishment of this relationship through the 1990s, ASEAN members were not particularly trusting of Japan, and Singh notes that ASEAN states took two attitudes on how to approach Japan. The first was how to regard Japan on economics, and the second was and politics and security.⁴² History was a significant factor for why ASEAN states did not trust Japan before the 1990s. However, even as ASEAN states began to view Japan as a viable partner on economic matters, most did not trust Tokyo politically, or with security matters in Southeast Asia because of Japanese actions during WWII.⁴³

Japanese leaders understood that ASEAN states provided resources but were also key sources of economic stability and could be significant partners in balancing against communist countries.⁴⁴ Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda laid the foundation for better relations when he attended the 1977 ASEAN-Summit in Kuala Lumpur. He insisted that Japan rejected a military role in Southeast Asia and instead desired equal partnerships with states in the region with a focus on economic development. His initiative became known as the Fukuda Doctrine and played a vital role in how Tokyo interacted with Southeast Asian countries and ASEAN for decades to come.

Not all ASEAN members saw Japan as a benevolent economic giant. Despite working with Japan in order to learn from its successful business practices, many leaders still considered Tokyo to be arrogant and supportive of regionalism simply because it expected to dominate that space. Several members expressed concern over Japan taking a leading role in mediating the Cambodia conflict.⁴⁵

⁴² Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 276-277.

⁴³ Singh, 277.

⁴⁴ Singh, 284.

⁴⁵ Singh, 287; Singh does not list which ASEAN members were against Japan taking a lead role.

In the forty-two years since the implementation of the Fukuda Doctrine, Japan and ASEAN states have expanded how they work together on regional security concerns. Japan has participated in ASEAN-led forums and has shown itself to be a strong supporter of ASEAN Centrality and the ASEAN Way of consensus. This chapter will consider Japan's relationship with the ASEAN community from the 1990s to 2018 and how leaders have worked within the framework established by the Association to promote regional peace. In addition to this, this chapter will attempt to understand why Japan continues to engage in ASEAN-led forums, and the benefits these parties gain from cooperation.

This chapter finds that Japan has utilized ASEAN to promote international law for freedom of navigation, especially as it relates to the South China Sea. This is an important SLOC for Japan and several ASEAN members, and by encouraging language that calls for peace and stability in the region, and preserving the status quo, Japan is assisting its partners with disputes. This chapter also finds that Japan has garnered support from ASEAN led security forums to condemn North Korean missile and nuclear testing. Finally, the chapter finds that Japan has utilized ASEAN in the past for support to gain a permanent seat on the UNSC.

B. JAPAN AND ASEAN IN THE 1990s

Japan was more integrated into ASEAN processes by the 1990s than it had been in the 1970s and the 1980s. This was largely due to the economic connections Japan had established with Southeast Asia. Japan was the largest economy in Asia and the world's second-largest economy behind the United States. ASEAN states' fears that Japan would remilitarize started to diminish as Japan continued to work with Southeast Asian countries economically without increasing its military presence in the region.⁴⁶

Singh notes that another reassurance for ASEAN members was that even as Japan grew to become the largest economy in East Asia, the total Japanese economy was not as massive as it had been during WWII. The Japanese economy did not completely dominate

⁴⁶ Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 277.

these states in the same way that the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere had during the war.⁴⁷ Another way in which Japan worked with ASEAN members during this time was through gaining ASEAN support on international concerns and policy that affected Japan. One of the primary issues that Japan sought support from ASEAN on during this time was gaining a permanent seat on the UNSC.⁴⁸ Economic cooperation slowly began to pave the way for security cooperation as the Cold War came to an end, but regional leadership did not establish a forum to discuss security concerns until the mid-1990s.

That is not to say that there was no discussion on establishing a security-minded institution or multilateral dialogue in the Asia-Pacific. Leaders understood that any regional security institution needed to consider economic development over a reduction of military tensions. Another consideration was that in the early 1990s, bipolar security structures were not the driving source of tension in the Asia-Pacific. Rather, territorial disputes among states generated the most disagreement in the region.⁴⁹ The Japanese Foreign Minister, Satō, believed that it was important to utilize existing frameworks for security cooperation like ASEAN, ASEAN Prime Ministers Conference (ASEAN-PMC), the Asia-Pacific Economic Conference (APEC), and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) instead of developing brand new institutions, and he was keen on using ASEAN-PMC as the primary forum for multilateral security dialogue. This helped assuage ASEAN countries' fears that a regional security forum would weaken the ASEAN identity and members' autonomy in addressing security concerns.⁵⁰ ASEAN countries were reluctant to accept any proposal from Japan, though some ASEAN states like Singapore were looking to push an ASEAN-led multilateral security dialogue. Other states, like Indonesia, worried that the ASEAN-PMC would become a security forum instead of a political-economic forum.⁵¹ This uncertainty meant that countries in the region needed to

⁴⁷ Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 278.

⁴⁸ Singh, 284.

⁴⁹ Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 22.

⁵⁰ Yuzawa, 26.

⁵¹ Yuzawa, 27.

develop mutual reassurance. For Japan, this mutual reassurance began with the Fukuda Doctrine and ODA and expanded into mediating and peacekeeping roles as the decade progressed.⁵²

Japan played mediating roles in Southeast Asia on several occasions during the 1990s. When China seized Mischief Reef in 1994, Japan offered to mediate between the Philippines and China, but talks resulted in little headway.⁵³ After Vietnam departed from Cambodia in the early 1990s, Japan participated in Peace-Keeping Operations (PKO) in Cambodia. A decade later, Japan was actively involved with PKO in Timor-Leste following the island's separation from Indonesia.⁵⁴ The initial uncertainty over developing a regional security forum at the start of the 1990s eased as the decade continued, and ASEAN members decided to establish a forum focused on security.

The first meeting of the ARF convened in Bangkok in July 1994.⁵⁵ The first assembly did not have a clear agenda, but a key issue that the forum needed to address was if the participating countries could develop a common view on appropriate measures and security cooperation. Participating states had differing views on what the ARF was supposed to be and how it was supposed to function, and consensus was necessary for the forum to have any lasting impact.⁵⁶ Senior officials from eighteen countries were present for the first meeting. During discussions, ASEAN states and China wanted to limit the ARF to security dialogues for the first few years of its existence. Yuzawa notes that this was in line with ASEAN's commitment to consensus-building and informal meetings instead of concrete policy and exercises.⁵⁷ Japanese officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) understood ASEAN's approach to security cooperation.

⁵² Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 23

⁵³ This topic is discussed more in-depth in Chapter III.

⁵⁴ Sudo, *Japan's ASEAN Policy*, 160.

⁵⁵ Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 42.

⁵⁶ Yuzawa, 57.

⁵⁷ Yuzawa, 57.

Japanese leaders envisioned the ARF as a way to address security concerns with China and North Korea. North Korea started testing long range rockets in the early 1990s, landing them in and around the Japanese EEZ. At the time, these missiles were incapable of carrying nuclear warheads, but there were indications that North Korea was attempting to make a nuclear weapon, which concerned many regional leaders. By participating in a forum devoted to security topics, Japan was able to bring its own security concerns to other like-minded partners in the region and gain support in the international community.⁵⁸

In addition to using the forum to discuss country actions, Japan presented a paper on CBMs, later re-labeled as Mutual Reassurance Measures (MRMs), that consisted of three areas: information sharing to enhance each state's defense policies, personnel exchanges, and cooperation towards promoting global activities. Japanese officials saw regional cooperation and non-proliferation as necessary for regional security, which North Korea's nuclear tests threatened, and ASEAN and the ARF were critical components in ensuring stability.⁵⁹ Japan also used its position in the forum to cooperate with the United States and push for greater transparency from China regarding disputes in the South China Sea.⁶⁰

Chinese officials were less inclined to agree to further transparency regarding their presence in the South China Sea. Instead, in 1998, Beijing expanded the structures it had constructed on Mischief Reef and augmented the number of Chinese flagged vessels entering the area around the feature. In response to Chinese fishing vessels operating near the disputed shoal, in July 1999, the Philippine Navy sank two Chinese fishing boats in the area, further escalating tensions between the two states. Malaysia also built two structures on shoals in the Spratly Islands, amplifying territorial disputes in the sea even more. At the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting Senior Official Meeting (AMM SOF) just before the ARF Ministerial Meeting in 1998, the Philippines presented a draft for a regional Code of

⁵⁸ Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 49.

⁵⁹ Yuzawa, 59.

⁶⁰ Midford, "Japan's Security Cooperation with East Asia," 97.

Conduct in the South China Sea in order to give the dispute needed attention in a multilateral forum, and as a way to protect the interest of states bordering the sea.⁶¹

China's rise in Southeast Asia and its seizure of features claimed by other states did not go unnoticed by Japan, despite leaders' reluctance to take a firm response against Chinese actions in the South China Sea. Yuzawa notes that by 1992, Japanese officials were beginning to worry about China's growing military capabilities. China ordered its first aircraft carrier from Ukraine in 1992 and purchased MIG fighters from the former Soviet Union at the same time. In addition to these military procurements, the PRC proclaimed the Law on Territorial Waters in February 1992, declaring that China owned the South China Sea and the Senkaku Islands, and that China had the right to use force to defend its claims.⁶² For Japan, this proclamation brought with it two main worries. The first concern focused on the South China Sea as the region is Japan's primary SLOC for energy transportation. Japan is not a claimant in the South China Sea, but any attempt to close off access through the region would have a disproportionate effect on Japan as approximately 96% of its energy trade passes through the sea.⁶³ The second was sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands. Prior to 1992, Japan's ownership of the islands had been mostly unchallenged, and China's assertion that the islands were Chinese territory forced Japanese leaders to worry about Beijing's ambitions both in the East China Sea and the South China Sea.⁶⁴

These cumulated issues resulted in Japanese leaders reaching out to ASEAN members. Prime Minister Hashimoto proposed the establishment of a high-level forum between Japan and ASEAN states in 1997. He believed that ASEAN and Japan needed to reform the relationship they had for a new era in what became known as the Hashimoto Doctrine.⁶⁵ The intent of the new doctrine was to promote regionalism over traditional

⁶¹ Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 115.

⁶² Yuzawa, 46.

⁶³ Trinidad, "Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century," 622.

⁶⁴ Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 46.

⁶⁵ Sudo, *Japan's ASEAN Policy*, 150.

bilateralism with the ultimate goal of creating an East Asian forum that did not include the United States.⁶⁶ By pursuing independent policy with Southeast Asian states, Tokyo was attempting to develop its own regional multilateral security forums.⁶⁷ An independent security policy from the United States would still provide security partnerships in the region, albeit much less capable ones, but greatly reduced the chance that Japan would be drawn into an overseas conflict. While meeting with ASEAN, Hashimoto proposed discussing broad Asia-Pacific security concerns with ASEAN states on a biannual basis, though he did not specifically call for increased discussion on Japan-ASEAN security talks.⁶⁸ Japan's MOFA later elaborated on Hashimoto's comments and said that there was a desire for Japan-ASEAN talks on regional security. MOFA also wanted to use a Japan-ASEAN Summit to respond to the Asian Financial Crisis.⁶⁹

The Hashimoto Doctrine was established at the same time that Southeast Asian states hoped Japan would support ASEAN-focused security priorities. Japan and ASEAN members agreed to cooperate on combating transnational crime, such as piracy, which affected certain ASEAN states more than others and threatened Japan's SLOCs.⁷⁰ ASEAN members welcomed an offer from Japan to host a conference for coast guard authorities exploring possible cooperation on transnational crime and piracy. Midford writes that Japan proposed joint "anti-piracy" patrols as early as 1999. Midford writes that while conferences and dialogue were acceptable, ASEAN disagreed with the proposal for joint patrols and instead recommended developing a multilateral scheme for coordinating patrols and sharing data.⁷¹

Ultimately, Japan took a passive stance towards the South China Sea dispute in the late 1990s, despite the economic importance of the region for Japan and its previous

⁶⁶ Midford, "Japan's security cooperation with East Asia," 97

⁶⁷ Midford, 96-97.

⁶⁸ Midford, 97.

⁶⁹ Midford, 98.

⁷⁰ Sudo, *Japan's ASEAN Policy*, 155.

⁷¹ Midford, "Japan's Security Cooperation with East Asia," 104

mediation between the Philippines and China. In a statement issued about China's island reclamation and construction, Japan only expressed its concern for the situation, but little else was done against China diplomatically. The foreign minister at the time, Kōmura, said that Japan supported a Code of Conduct if it was based on international and maritime law and facilitated peaceful resolutions to the disputes. Tokyo's main focus was on forming collective criticism towards North Korea, which presented a more immediate threat to Japanese national security.⁷²

C. JAPAN AND ASEAN 2000–2010

Following his appointment, Junichiro Koizumi visited five ASEAN countries in 2002. He proposed new initiatives for ASEAN-Japan and declared that 2003 would be the “Year of ASEAN-Japan Exchange.”⁷³ One of the primary concentrations for this initiative was solidifying security relations between Japan and ASEAN countries. The intent was to create regional prosperity through reforms, solidifying cooperation into the future.⁷⁴

Koizumi proposed developing an information-sharing center to coordinate anti-piracy patrols and to share data among states in East and Southeast Asia in November of 2001. This was in response to several high-profile events involving Japanese flagships, leading many in Tokyo to feel that Japan was bearing the brunt of the costs associated with sea robbery and piracy. Storey explains that the data do not corroborate this idea, but it did result in the Japanese government to call for a pan-Asian response to maritime crime.⁷⁵ After two years of discussion, in 2003, Japan held a two-day conference of Asian Coast Guard Heads in Tokyo. Sixteen Asian states participated in negotiating the agreement, which became the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).⁷⁶

⁷² Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 116.

⁷³ Sudo, *Japan's ASEAN Policy*, 153.

⁷⁴ Sudo, 153-154.

⁷⁵ Ian Storey, “Japan's Maritime Security Interests in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea Dispute,” *Political Science*, 65, no. 2: 140-141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032318713508482>.

⁷⁶ Midford, “Japan's Security Cooperation with East Asia,” 104-105.

The agreement reached fruition in September 2006, and in November of the same year, the Information Sharing Center (ISC) was established for ReCAAP in Singapore.⁷⁷ All ASEAN countries agreed to adopt Koizumi's 2001 proposal targeting maritime crime, though Indonesia and Malaysia refused to ratify ReCAAP in 2004, citing concerns for their sovereignty.⁷⁸ However, by the time of ReCAAP's establishment, incidents of high seas robbery and piracy had already started to decrease. ReCAAP still allowed states to consolidate data on reports of sea robbery and piracy in Southeast Asia and prove that these types of crimes were becoming less common. The highest reported number of incidents was 271 in 2000, and in 2009, there only 67 reports were filed for at sea robbery in Southeast Asia. The primary reason for the decrease in this type of maritime crime was due to increased political and social stability in Indonesia. Multilateral efforts by Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia on conducting patrols in the Strait of Malacca also assisted in reducing maritime crime.⁷⁹

ReCAAP allowed Japan to support regional security efforts through multilateral approaches instead of relying on the JMSDF or the JCG to provide maritime security. ReCAAP and the ISC enabled Japan to engage in regional capacity building with ASEAN states without taking on an unilateral security role and allowed the JCG to conduct counter-piracy operations with its Southeast Asian counterparts.⁸⁰ Japan continues to maintain a leading role with ReCAAP, and during its first decade of operation, all heads of the ISC were Japanese. The second largest contributor to the ISC has been Japan, behind Singapore.⁸¹

It was in 2004 that another major security cooperation initiative between Tokyo and ASEAN states reached fruition. Japan and ASEAN members signed the "ASEAN-Japan Joint Declaration for Cooperation on the Fight against International Terrorism."⁸²

⁷⁷ Midford, 105.

⁷⁸ Storey, "Japan's Maritime Security Interests in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea Dispute," 141.

⁷⁹ Storey, 141.

⁸⁰ Storey, 141.

⁸¹ Storey, 141.

⁸² Sudo, *Japan's ASEAN Policy*, 158.

In 2001, ASEAN released the Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism which was intended to strengthen regional, international, and bilateral cooperation on combating terrorism, but this was an ASEAN-specific document. The 2004 ASEAN-Japan Joint Declaration for Cooperation expanded on the 2001 Declaration by including Japan in ASEAN efforts to combat international terrorism, and had two main objectives: develop a framework that would enable ASEAN to “prevent, disrupt and combat international terrorism through information exchange, intelligence sharing, and capacity-building” and “to enhance the efficacy of those efforts to combat terrorism.”⁸³ This document signified that ASEAN members were willing to work with Japan to counter terrorism through information sharing, law enforcement, maritime, and aviation cooperation.

Koizumi suggested an ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership at the 9th ASEAN-Japan summit meeting in December 2005, his last act as Japan’s Prime Minister. The joint statement issued following the summit, titled “Deepening and Broadening of ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership” and focused on ten points. The fourth point was to combat transitional crime and terrorism, and the tenth was to foster cooperation when responding to international issues.⁸⁴ Sudo notes that the decision to add “strategic” components to Japan’s ASEAN policy was in response to worsening Sino-Japanese foreign relations and to China’s increased presence in Southeast Asia.⁸⁵

The mid-2000s brought with it the perception that Tokyo had gained strength and confidence, which made Japanese security cooperation more attractive to partners like ASEAN-states. Historical grievances with Japan had also continued to wane following decades of economic cooperation and adherence to the Fukuda Doctrine. The Director General of the Japan Defense Agency from 2002–2004, Shigeru Ishiba, began to discuss the concept of collective self-defense in the region, and he believed that it would enable

⁸³“ASEAN-Japan Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism,” ASEAN, November 13, 2004. https://asean.org/?static_post=asean-japan-joint-declaration-for-cooperation-to-combat-international-terrorism-2.

⁸⁴ Sudo, *Japan’s ASEAN Policy*, 158.

⁸⁵ Sudo, 158.

Japan to assist ASEAN states if they were threatened by China.⁸⁶ There had been a de-escalation of tension over the South China Sea as China agreed to sign the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DoC) in 2002. The DoC was a “non-binding conflict management mechanism” but it, along with a 2005 decision that allowed state-owned energy enterprises in Vietnam, the Philippines, and China to work together to conduct seismic exploration in the disputed regions, helped ease concerns over territory and resources in the South China Sea.⁸⁷

D. THE ARF AND THE ASEAN DEFENSE MINISTER MEETING PLUS

The following section covers the same years as the previous section, but the ARF and the ADMM+ need to be considered on their own. Japan has worked extensively with ASEAN members through both forums in order to address shared security concerns, as these security forums allow for multilateral dialogue among high-level officials.

Yuzawa argues that the ARF in the 2000s was unable to reduce competition between the great powers in the region, and China, while cooperating with the forum, also used it for its own means as it modernized the People’s Liberation Army.⁸⁸ The ARF began to shift away from issues like piracy that it had focused on in the late 1990s and early 2000s to security threats like maritime security, anti-terrorism, and migration issues. A major exception to this shift was how the forum discussed North Korea, which was still perceived as a threat to regional stability.⁸⁹ This change in focus was brought about by the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. The attack helped to reinvigorate the common interest ASEAN countries and partners had in promoting regional security cooperation, and the ARF was the only security forum in the Asia-Pacific at the time.⁹⁰

Even with renewed interest in security cooperation in Southeast Asia due to the September 11th attacks, multilateral exercises focused on military cooperation lagged.

⁸⁶Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 204.

⁸⁷ Storey, “Japan’s Maritime Security Interests in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea Dispute,” 143.

⁸⁸ Yuzawa, *Japan’s Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 152-153.

⁸⁹ Midford, “Japan’s Security Cooperation with East Asia,” 104.

⁹⁰ Yuzawa, *Japan’s Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 123.

Instead, military-to-military cooperation for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR) operations became a major new focus for ARF. The ARF agreed to sponsor small-scale multilateral exercises that highlighted each member state's HA/DR capabilities and allowed them to engage in cooperation on disaster relief operations. Midford draws on an interview with a Singaporean-based analyst to conclude that HA/DR exercises allowed members to expand beyond CBMs and engage in genuine military cooperation.⁹¹ Non-traditional security cooperation also encouraged Japanese participation. HA/DR was an area that the JSDF could assist with that was not focused on offensive or defensive tactics, but still allowed JSDF forces to engage with the region's militaries.⁹²

North Korea was invited to join the ARF in 2000, and the DPRK's admission was laid out by Thailand, the chair of the Seventh ARF meeting.⁹³ Japanese leaders and some ARF countries worried that North Korea did not recognize the ARF's objectives and principles. Despite tensions between North Korea and Japan due to missile launches in and around Japanese territorial waters and abductions of Japanese citizens, Tokyo urged North Korea to join the ARF in the years following the forum's creation. Ultimately, Japanese leaders wanted the DPRK to join the ARF as they believed that in the long term, this was better for Japan's national security, as it would encourage the reclusive state to work within a multilateral framework.⁹⁴ ASEAN members believed that by encouraging North Korea to join the ARF, it would restore ASEAN credibility following the Asian Financial Crisis, and it would also enhance the quality of the ARF's regional security discussions.⁹⁵

North Korea's integration with the ARF did allow for new bilateral and multilateral discussions with North Korea. It also allowed other states like Japan and the United States to reach out to the DPRK outside of previously utilized Six Party Talks. However, ASEAN's norms on consensus and non-interference meant that the joint statement issued

⁹¹ Midford, "Japan's Security Cooperation with East Asia," 104.

⁹² Midford, 104.

⁹³ Yuzawa, *Japan's Security Policy and the ASEAN Regional Forum*, 118.

⁹⁴ Yuzawa, 118.

⁹⁵ Yuzawa, 118.

in 2000 did not touch North Korea's missile program as ASEAN members did not want to provoke Pyongyang or impede on its sovereignty. This meant that the DPRK gained legitimacy and the benefits of participating in the ARF but did not have to concede any ground on its nuclear or missile programs.⁹⁶ For Japan, the decision to allow North Korea to participate meant that leaders had another avenue to discuss security concerns with the isolated country. The insistence on the ASEAN Way prohibited not only Japan but other countries as well, from forcing North Korea to acknowledge that its nuclear and weapons programs had a destabilizing effect on the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific.

Despite increases in cooperation and the expansion in membership, it became apparent to ASEAN members and to partner states like Japan that the ARF was too limited a forum to discuss all security concerns. The ARF was composed of senior foreign ministers from ASEAN countries and partner states, and as a result, regional security issues were discussed through this lens. In 2002, Japanese Defense Minister Gen Nakatani proposed an Asia-Pacific defense ministers forum that would meet on an annual basis and at the intergovernmental level. He thought that defense officials' participation in the ARF was too limited as the ARF was designed for foreign ministers. He made this proposal at the Shangri-La Dialogue, an unofficial forum for defense ministers.⁹⁷

ASEAN did not establish a forum for defense ministers until 2006. When it did, the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) did not include countries from outside ASEAN. In 2010 ASEAN chose to expand the ADMM framework to create the ADMM Plus (ADMM+), which included the ten ASEAN member states and as well as the eight partner states that were part of the East Asia Summit. The first ADMM+ meeting was held in Vietnam in October 2010, and while it still retained its ASEAN focus and ASEAN centrality, the decision to create a security forum centered on defense ministers allowed key figures in the region to engage in security dialogue in an official setting.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Yuzawa, 119.

⁹⁷ Midford, "Japan's Security Cooperation with East Asia," 103.

⁹⁸ Midford, 104.

E. JAPAN AND ASEAN 2010–2018

Andrew Oros claims that from 2006–2012, Japan’s security cooperation with ASEAN countries and other regional partners reached unprecedented levels. Oros believes that Japan would have embarked on this path even if Prime Minister Abe had not returned to power in 2012 following his decision to step down in 2007. During this period there were four other prime ministers, including two from the Democratic Party, but security cooperation continued to increase with ASEAN states despite the change in government.⁹⁹ Oros notes that Japan implemented a new National Defense Program Guidelines during this period that reoriented the JSDF’s focus toward China and the south. The new guidelines allowed for greater Japanese participation in counterpiracy operations at the global level, and also led to increased tension with China over the Senkaku Islands.¹⁰⁰ Two of the largest changes implemented following Abe’s return to power in 2012 were the decision to allow ODA to be used for military-related purposes, and to relax restrictions on arms exports.¹⁰¹

Japanese leaders also understood the value of enhancing bilateral relations with individual ASEAN states as well with as the Association, and 2010–2015 saw Japan establish or deepen several strategic partnership agreements. Japanese officials signed the ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership in 2011, and prior to Abe’s return to power, previous administrations negotiated strategic partnerships with Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam. In 2013, Japan signed a strategic partnership with Cambodia and expanded its strategic partnership Vietnam in 2014.¹⁰²

At the start of his second term as prime minister, Abe visited all ten ASEAN states, and he developed the “Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation:

⁹⁹ Oros, *Japan’s Security Renaissance*, 97.

¹⁰⁰ Oros, 97.

¹⁰¹ Oros, 100.

¹⁰² Kei Koga, “Japan’s ‘Strategic Coordination’ in 2015 ASEAN, Southeast Asia, and Abe’s Diplomatic Agenda,” 69; Japan’s strategic partnerships with the Philippines and Vietnam will be considered more in-depth in Chapters III and IV, respectively.

Shared Vision, Shared Identity, Shared Future,” which established four pillars of cooperation: economic, sociocultural ties, security, and people-to-people interaction.¹⁰³ ASEAN and Japan also issued a joint statement titled, “Hand in Hand, Facing Regional and Global Challenges.”¹⁰⁴ The primary goal of 2014 was to implement the four main pillars of the 2013 Vision Statement.¹⁰⁵ In addition to the “ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation” and “Hand and Hand” statements, Tokyo continued to focus on security cooperation against terrorism through the “ASEAN-Japan Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transitional Crime.”¹⁰⁶

Despite the sustained attention on non-traditional security threats, Abe had to reassure ASEAN states about changes to Japan security policies implemented in 2013 through 2014. In 2014, the Abe administration implemented the “Proactive Contribution to Peace” policy, which indicated that Japan would contribute more to regional security. In order to alleviate worries that Japan would not involve itself militarily in disputes in Southeast Asia, Abe insisted that the “Proactive Contribution to Peace” was in line with the 1977 Fukuda Doctrine, and maintained the three principles of the doctrine: cooperation with ASEAN members as equal partners, develop ties with ASEAN on “heart to heart” understanding, and never become a military power.¹⁰⁷

In addition to Japan’s Proactive Contribution to Peace policy, Abe emphasized the three principles of the rule of law in order to, as Koga explains, “mitigate Chinese assertiveness in the East and South China Seas.”¹⁰⁸ The three principles are thus: “states shall make their claims based on international law,” “states shall not use force or coercion in trying to drive their claims,” and “states shall seek to settle disputes by peaceful

¹⁰³ Koga, 67.

¹⁰⁴ Koga, 67.

¹⁰⁵ Koga, 67.

¹⁰⁶ Koga, 67-68.

¹⁰⁷ Koga, 67-68.

¹⁰⁸ Koga, 68

means.”¹⁰⁹ The intent of these three principles was to gain political support for the rule of law and to increase international pressure on China in the hope that Beijing would reduce its military presence.¹¹⁰ Japanese leaders understood that ASEAN member states were unlikely to take a unified position on maritime issues in the South China Sea due to pressure from China, and instead, Tokyo “focused on facilitating ASEAN centrality and unity by respecting consultation practices and the Associations’ consensus making process.”¹¹¹ Even as Japan promoted Abe’s Three Principles, Tokyo remained cautious of how it much it stressed the rule of law in the South China Sea in its interactions with ASEAN. China has taken a different approach to how it handles maritime disputes in the South China Sea. Beijing prefers to deal with other South China Sea claimants on a bilateral basis so that it has greater leveraging power.¹¹²

Promoting international law has not been the only way in which Japan has maintained its presence in Southeast Asia. Oros notes that under Japan’s new ODA charter, finalized in 2015, economic development and social stability were linked even more closely with regional stability than in previous decades.¹¹³ By continuing to link economic development with both regional and social stability and increasing the importance of these items, Japan assists states in the regions through ways in which leaders in these countries have long been familiar with.

F. JAPAN AND ASEAN FORUMS

Japan increased its bilateral cooperation with ASEAN states by 2015, but even support for ASEAN centrality during this time did not mean that ASEAN members agreed on regional concerns. Following the 2015 ADMM+ meeting, there was no Joint Declaration issued, as there was a disagreement over the statement on the South China Sea.

¹⁰⁹ Koga, 68. From the “Keynote Address: Shinzo Abe,” IISS Shangri-La Dialogue 2014, May 30, 2014.

¹¹⁰ Koga, 68.

¹¹¹ Koga, 68.

¹¹² Koga, 68.

¹¹³ Oros, *Japan’s Security Renaissance*, 178.

Unlike other ASEAN forums, the ADMM+ did not have a history of issuing a joint declaration after every meeting. Koga notes this should be seen as ASEAN members agreeing to disagree and not as a sign of greater fissures between them.¹¹⁴

There was no meeting of the ADMM+ in 2016, and Japanese leaders took this period to announce that they were developing the “Vientiane Vision.”¹¹⁵ The Vientiane Vision is a Japanese initiative enacted by then Defense Minister Inada with the intent of acting as a “guiding principle for Japan’s defense cooperation with ASEAN.”¹¹⁶ Japanese leaders also announced that Japan would invite all ASEAN members to participate in the first Japan-ASEAN Ship Rider Cooperation Program onboard the JMSDF ship JS *Izumo*. Both announcements were made during the November 2016 ASEAN-Japan Defense Ministers’ Informal Meeting.¹¹⁷ The ship rider program ran from 19–23 June 2017 and included seminars on HA/DR, International Maritime Law, and the opportunity to witness different training activities by the JMSDF. The training activities included observing and participating in search-and-rescue (SAR) operations, conducting a communication exercising utilizing Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES), observing a replenishment at sea, and ship handling on board the JS *Izumo*.¹¹⁸ These activities amounted to CBMs, but by specifically making the program open to all ASEAN members and announcing it at the Informal Defense Ministers meeting, Japan was taking a stance that it was open to working closer on defense issues with ASEAN members together, not just bilaterally.

¹¹⁴Koga, “Japan’s ‘Strategic Coordination’ in 2015 ASEAN, Southeast Asia, and Abe’s Diplomatic Agenda,” 69.

¹¹⁵The ADMM+ was not yet an annual ASEAN and partner country meeting in 2016.; “Vientiane Vision: Japan’s Defense Cooperation with ASEAN,” Ministry of Defense, accessed April 23, 2019, https://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/exc/vientianevision/.

¹¹⁶“Vientiane Vision: Japan’s Defense Cooperation with ASEAN,” Ministry of Defense, accessed April 23, 2019. https://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/exc/vientianevision/.

¹¹⁷“Press Releases: Japan-ASEAN Ship Rider Cooperation Program—A Vientiane Vision Initiative,” Ministry of Defense, June 19, 2017. <https://www.mod.go.jp/e/press/release/2017/06/19b.html>.

¹¹⁸“Japan-ASEAN Ship-Rider Cooperation Program,” Ministry of Defense, video, 2:11, June 28, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Opd2kEPR10>.

When the ADMM+ met again in 2017, the ministers issued a statement, summarizing the key points of interest that members discussed. The ADMM+ is first and foremost a forum for defense ministers to confer with like-minded partners in regional security issues that affect all members. As a result, few country specific security concerns were discussed, and instead, broader topics like violent extremist organizations, HA/DR, cybersecurity, and cooperation on military exercises were the main topics of conversation. The ministers' statement includes the South China Sea and the importance of maintaining stability, peace, and security in the region and members welcomed the development of the framework for the Code of Conduct (COC) as it was an indication that all parties involved were closer to reaching a conclusion.¹¹⁹ As is often seen in ASEAN statements, the primary concerns considered are transnational crime, which affects all members, or HA/DR since all countries in the region are likely to experience natural disasters and can agree to cooperate on measures to alleviate human suffering.

The ADMM+ meeting in 2017 still did not establish any large-scale exercises between ASEAN states and their eight partner countries, but the ship ride onboard the JS *Izumo* was successful enough for Japan to announce another initiative. In October of 2018 during a meeting with ASEAN defense ministers, Japanese Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya invited commissioned air force officers from all ASEAN member states to observe training by the JASDF.¹²⁰ ASEAN defense ministers supported Japanese proposals that would continue to enhance defense cooperation between ASEAN members and Japan and increase collective capacity against regional security concerns.¹²¹ Like the 2017 JS *Izumo* ship ride, the training that ASEAN states observed was unlikely to go further than CBMs, but it did provide an opportunity for the visiting officers to see what equipment and the capabilities the JASDF has available.

¹¹⁹“Chairmen’s Statement on the Fourth ASEAN Defence (sic) Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (4th ADMM-Plus),” ASEAN, October 24, 2017. <https://asean.org/storage/2017/10/Chairmans-Statement-on-the-4th-ADMM-Plus.pdf>.

¹²⁰Kyodo, “Japan will invite ASEAN air force personnel to observe training: Iwaya,” *The Japan Times*, October 20, 2018. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/10/20/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-will-invite-asean-air-force-personnel-observe-asdf-training-iwaya/#.XJ05IZhKjD4>.

¹²¹Kyodo, “Japan will Invite ASEAN Air Force Personnel to Observe Training: Iwaya.”

Japan has also been an active participant in ADMM+ sponsored exercises and ARF meetings. The ADMM+ sponsored an EWG on Peacekeeping Operations of which Japan is a member, and Japanese forces participated in the first ADMM+ Humanitarian Mine Action and PKO Exercise which was conducted in Pune, India in March 2018. Japan is also a co-chair for the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD) for the 2018–2020 cycle along with Indonesia and the Republic of Korea.¹²² By participating in these exercises and discussions on non-proliferation, Japan is continuing to show its support for ASEAN led events and those security concerns that ASEAN members are comfortable cooperating on.

Japan has shown its physical presence in the region as well, in ways that it did not in the 1990s and 2000s. In 2017 and in 2018, Japan sent one of its helicopter carriers through the South China Sea to participate in joint exercises with the United States and to visit states in the region.¹²³ In 2017, the JS *Izumo* traveled through the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean, and the JS *Kaga* traveled a similar path in the summer of 2018. Japan still had not participated in freedom of navigation operations by the end of 2018 due to concerns that doing so would provoke a Chinese response in and around the Senkaku Islands.¹²⁴ The decision to send the JS *Izumo* and JS *Kaga* to the South China Sea two years in a row signals that Japan is willing to take a more forward approach to its physical presence in the region. This is in line with 2013’s “Proactive Contribution to Peace” and the decision to take an active stance in promoting stability and peace in the Asia-Pacific.

Japan and ASEAN released a joint statement for the 21st ASEAN-Japan Summit that also commemorated the 45th Anniversary of the ASEAN-Japan relationship in

¹²²“Overview of ASEAN-Japan Dialogue Relations,” ASEAN, August 16, 2018, <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Overview-ASEAN-Japan-Relations-As-of-16-August-2018-rev.pdf>.

¹²³ In December 2018, Japan announced that it would convert its two DDHs to accommodate F-35B aircraft. Previously, DDHs only carried rotary aircraft, fitting with their stated missions as anti-submarine vessels. The conversion means that for the first time since the end of WWII, Japan will have aircraft carriers; Kosuke Takahashi, “Japan to spend more than USD240 billion on defense over next five years,” *Jane’s Defense Weekly*, last modified December 18, 2018. <https://www.janes.com/article/85299/japan-to-spend-more-than-usd240-billion-on-defence-over-next-five-years>.

¹²⁴ Kubo, “Exclusive: Japanese Helicopter Carrier to Tour South China Sea, Indian Ocean for Two Months.”

November of 2018. The statement reaffirmed the mutual respect Japan has for the ASEAN Way, and both parties acknowledged the need to deepen and strengthen dialogue between ASEAN and Japan. They also affirmed the beneficial relationship the Association has with Japan, and the shared commitment both have for maintaining stability, peace, and security in the region through recognition and universal principles like international law and peaceful resolution to disputes.¹²⁵ This is similar to previous joint statements made following ASEAN-Japan Summits, and also notes Japan's policy of Proactive Contribution to Peace. One of the focuses of the joint statement is on ASEAN centrality, the vital role the Association plays in maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region, and Japan's contributions to maintaining this stability. This joint statement, considering the 2017 and 2018 patrols by the JS *Izumo* and JS *Kaga*, indicates that ASEAN members appear to support the increased physical presence of Japanese Self Defense Forces. While the JMSDF has not conducted Freedom of Navigation patrols in the South China Sea, Tokyo continues to discuss the possibility of these patrols, and by conducting what are effectively deployments to the region, Southeast Asian states are becoming more comfortable with the idea of the JSDF remaining in the area to push back against Chinese maritime claims.

G. CONCLUSION

Japan and ASEAN have had a long history of working with one another, but security has only become a more pronounced focus for both in the past thirty years. More concrete examples of security cooperation have only truly developed within the last ten years. The Fukuda Doctrine and its insistence that Japan had no intention of remilitarizing enabled Southeast Asian states to trust Japanese intent in the region. Long term Japanese engagement with ASEAN led forums also assisted in establishing the necessary foundations for security cooperation.

Japan continues to support the ASEAN Way and has increased its security cooperation with ASEAN member states while respecting ASEAN centrality. By signing

¹²⁵“Joint Statement of the 21st ASEAN-Japan Summit to Commemorate the 45th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation,” ASEAN, November 13, 2018. <https://asean.org/storage/2018/11/ASEAN-Japan-Joint-Statement.pdf>.

strategic partnership agreements with Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Laos, Japan is indicating that there is a willingness to increase bilateral cooperation with these states in addition to working through ASEAN forums. Cooperation through forums like the ARF and ADMM+ has allowed ASEAN members and Japan to discuss regional security concerns and to encourage unity and support for the rule of law, in particular for disputes in the South China Sea.

Japan has also utilized ASEAN to gain support for concerns like piracy along SLOCs and North Korea. The impacts of at sea robbery and piracy were felt more acutely by Southeast Asian states, but due to several prominent events involving Japanese ships, Tokyo gathered the necessary support to develop ReCAAP and the ISC.¹²⁶ These institutions, along with increased stability in Indonesia and multilateral support from ASEAN members, reduced acts of piracy and at sea robbery from several hundred in 2000 to less than one hundred in only a few years, helping to secure SLOCs in the region. In the case of North Korea, Japanese officials have been able to maintain international support in condemning the DPRK's missile and nuclear tests. While the importance of criticizing North Korean actions is not always a top concern, Japan's national security does benefit from the support it receives from the ASEAN community.¹²⁷

Japan has also emphasized the importance of the rule of law, and this is expressed in statements on maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea. This is a major SLOC for Japan and many ASEAN members. Maintaining the status quo in the region ensures that all will have unrestricted access to it into the future. Recently Japan has not actively pursued ASEAN support for a permanent seat on the UNSC, through joint statements, but during the 1980s, this was a way in which ASEAN and Japan cooperated with each other.

¹²⁶ Storey, "Japan's Maritime Security Interests in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea Dispute," 140.

¹²⁷The 20th ASEAN-Japan Summit Joint Statement does condemn DPRK nuclear and missile testing, but the 21st ASEAN-Japan Summit Joint Statement does not mention the Korean peninsula. This is likely due to the lack of testing in 2018 as North Korean Chairmen Kim Jong Un met with U.S. President Donald Trump.

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III. JAPAN AND THE PHILIPPINES SECURITY COOPERATION

A. INTRODUCTION

Japan and the Philippines have maintained a unique relationship with one another as a result of their defense treaties with the United States. Japan and the Philippines established diplomatic relations with one another in 1956. As with many of Japan's relationships following WWII, the Philippines was reluctant to allow Japan to maintain a Self Defense Force due to fears that Japan would remilitarize.¹²⁸ This early relationship was focused on economic development and investment from Japan to the Philippines, both countries maintained some security ties, and the JMSDF has visited the Philippines continuously since 1966.¹²⁹ In the 1990s, the security aspect of Japanese-Philippine cooperation received more attention due to China's seizure of Mischief Reef in the Spratly Islands.

This chapter will explore the Japanese-Philippine security relationship from the 1990s until 2018. It will consider the early stages of the partnership in the 1990s through the mid-2000s, how it has expanded, and the reasons for this expansion. The different strategic partnership agreements between the two states will be examined to understand how both countries regard security, economic, and regional cooperation, and what they consider important to present to an international audience. In addition to the strategic partnerships, the number of port visits and security drills will be analyzed to see if these events have increased in number, remained steady, or have decreased over time, and what accounts for these changes.

¹²⁸Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 276-277.

¹²⁹"The Japanese Training Squadron Set to Make a Goodwill Visit to the Philippines," Embassy of Japan in the Philippines, March 31, 2014. <https://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/pressandspeech/press/pressreleases/2014/39.html>.

B. JAPAN AND THE PHILIPPINES EARLY RELATIONSHIP 1990–2005

Security cooperation between the Philippines and Japan developed within the last three decades as attitudes regarding Japan's security role in Southeast Asia began to change. From the end of WWII until the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, their relationship was marred by distrust over Japanese actions during WWII.¹³⁰ Japan provided economic aid to the Philippines and the greater Southeast Asian region throughout the Cold War which eased some tensions and allowed Japan to contribute to the region without inciting fears that it would pursue remilitarization. Calls from the United States in the late 1980s for Japan to assume responsibility for its SLOCs out to 1000 nautical miles resulted in Philippine President Marcos' saying that he was wary of an increased Japanese military role in the region. The SLOCs came within 200 nautical miles of the northern boundary of the Philippines, and given the economic influence Japan had in Southeast Asia, many states in the region feared possible Japanese militarization if Tokyo reassumed control over their own SLOCs.¹³¹ In general, Philippine presidents were content to stay within the hub-and-spokes protection system developed and advocated by the United States and did not seek additional security partnerships from other extra-regional powers like Japan.¹³² Receiving FDI and ODA from Japan was considered acceptable, but interactions between each state's defense organizations were not viewed favorably.

By the start of the 1990s and the fall of the Soviet Union, most concerns over Japanese remilitarization had subsided, and Japanese leaders were viewed as facilitators of peaceful dialogue in Southeast Asia after their success in Cambodian peacekeeping operations. This view persisted as Japan offered to mediate the territorial dispute between China and the Philippines in the South China Sea, after China seized Mischief Reef from the Philippines in 1994. Singh notes that Tokyo urged Beijing to settle the dispute

¹³⁰Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 282.

¹³¹Singh, 287; Singh calls these SLOCs "sea lanes" but for clarification, the term SLOC has been used.

¹³²Dennis D. Trinidad, "Domestic Factors and Strategic Partnership: Redefining Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century." *Asian Politics Policy* 9, no. 4 (2017): 618.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12352>.

peacefully after meeting with both sides in 1995, but the disagreement was left unresolved.¹³³ The majority of cooperation between Tokyo and Manila continued to be based on economic investment from Japan to the Philippines and not on substantial security cooperation.¹³⁴

In the late 1990s and into the early 2000s, as a result of increased piracy in Southeast Asian waters, Japan sent out a fact-finding mission to the Philippines to better understand the extent of the problem in the region. Kidnapping was common among pirates from the Philippines, and the problem spread throughout the region.¹³⁵ Since these acts of piracy were along vital Japanese SLOCs, the Japanese government understood the need to support those states most affected by the increase in piracy.¹³⁶ Tokyo worked with Southeast Asian countries to establish regional organizations to report cases of piracy, and the Japanese Coast Guard (JCG) conducted anti-piracy training with the Philippines in 2001 and in 2003. Since these events were conducted through the JCG, emphasis was placed on the fact that these were for law enforcement training and were not military exercises.¹³⁷ These exercises helped establish a base for future security cooperation between Japan and the Philippines as both states sought to increase stability along their mutual SLOCs.

While these exercises were limited in scope and often multilateral with other Southeast Asian states, they provided a foundation for the Philippines and Japan to further increase their security cooperation. The fact that the JCG and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) could work together to train for non-traditional security threats indicated that they had the capability to work together on other issues.

¹³³Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," 290.

¹³⁴Trinidad, "Domestic Factors and Strategic Partnership: Redefining Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century," 619.

¹³⁵John F. Bradford, "Shifting the Tides Against Piracy in Southeast Asian Waters," *Asian Survey* 48, no 3. (May/June 2008): 477. <https://doi.org/AS.2008.48.3.473>.

¹³⁶Sam Bateman, "Solving the 'Wicked Problems' of Maritime Security: Are Regional Forums up to the Task?" *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 33 no. 1 (2011): 3. <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs33-1>.

¹³⁷Bradford, "Japanese Anti-Piracy Initiatives in Southeast Asia," 492.

These exercises were supplemented through Japanese funded ODA, which was used to increase the capacity of the PCG during the early 2000s. Japan provided the PCG with three small patrol craft, and assisted in developing Philippine capability through tabletop exercises, a 609 million yen aid grant, and training and education for Coast Guard officials.¹³⁸ While relatively small, this program strengthened early Philippine-Japanese security cooperation prior to the signing of an official strategic partnership.

C. JAPANESE AND PHILIPPINE JOINT STATEMENTS ON THEIR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The dialogue to establish a strategic partnership between Japan and the Philippines began with the “Japan-Philippine Joint Statement ‘Partnership between Close Neighbors for Comprehensive Cooperation.’”¹³⁹ It was signed in 2006 by Prime Minister Abe and Philippine President Arroyo, and marked 50 years of normalized diplomatic relations between Japan and the Philippines. The statement indicated that Tokyo and Manila would promote cooperation in eight different fields including policy dialogues in security, ocean and consular affairs, and maritime issues. Other areas of cooperation mentioned were economic cooperation, disaster management, peace in Mindanao, and collaboration on regional and global issues. An additional regional concern listed was North Korea’s missile launches and nuclear testing. Leaders from Japan and the Philippines urged the DPRK to resume Six-Party Talks, and to address alleged abductions against Japanese citizens.¹⁴⁰ The last point considered on the 2006 Joint Statement is the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). President Arroyo reaffirmed that the Philippines would “strongly support” Japan’s bid to become a permanent member of the UNSC.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ Grønning, “Japan’s security cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam,” 538.

¹³⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs “Japan-Philippine Joint Statement ‘Partnership between Close Neighbors for Comprehensive Cooperation’.”

¹⁴⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs “Japan-Philippine Joint Statement ‘Partnership between Close Neighbors for Comprehensive Cooperation’.”

¹⁴¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs “Japan-Philippine Joint Statement ‘Partnership between Close Neighbors for Comprehensive Cooperation’.”

Three years later, in 2009, both countries signed the “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement ‘Fostering a Strategic Partnership for the Future between Close Neighbors’.”¹⁴² This joint statement further enhanced bilateral relations with the intention of establishing a strategic partnership in the future. The statement was written following the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, and the introduction reflects this, saying that Prime Minister Aso and President Arroyo agreed both governments needed to “overcome the current global economic crisis” and continue to increase economic cooperation.¹⁴³ The statement discusses specific areas of cooperation for the strategic partnership including additional Politico-Military and Military-Military (PM/MM) discussions, the Mindanao peace process and global piracy. The statement also briefly discusses North Korea and both leaders supported a UNSC Resolution condemning a nuclear test conducted in May 2009. It stated that President Arroyo offered her full support for Japan as they worked to diplomatically resolve long-standing issues with North Korea, like continued missile and nuclear testing, and abduction cases. Like the 2006 Joint Statement, the 2009 statement also affirmed that the Philippines strongly supported Japan in its bid for a permanent seat on the UNSC.¹⁴⁴

Japan and the Philippines signed the “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement on the Comprehensive Promotion of the ‘Strategic Partnership’ between Neighboring Countries Connected by Special Bonds of Friendship” in September 2011.¹⁴⁵ Unlike the 2009 Joint Statement, the 2011 Comprehensive Promotion statement formally established a strategic partnership. It confirmed that both Japan and the Philippines valued freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. In addition to these fundamental democratic principles,

¹⁴²Japan-Philippines Joint Statement ‘Fostering a Strategic Partnership for the Future between Close Neighbors’,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, June 18, 2009. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/philippine/joint0906.html>.

¹⁴³Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement ‘Fostering a Strategic Partnership for the Future between Close Neighbors’.”

¹⁴⁴Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement ‘Fostering a Strategic Partnership for the Future between Close Neighbors’.”

¹⁴⁵“Japan-Philippines Joint Statement on the Comprehensive Promotion of the ‘Strategic Partnership’ between Neighboring Countries Connected by Special Bonds of Friendship,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 27, 2011. https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/pm/noda/joint_statement110927.html.

both countries reaffirmed that they shared common strategic interests such as ensuring that their shared SLOCs remained safe. The 2011 statement does consider security cooperation between both states as well. It notes that Prime Minister Noda and President Aquino III chose to continue the high-level dialogues that both attended through regional and multilateral events like PM/MM forums. In addition, cooperation on maritime concerns was addressed, and the statement mentions Japan and the Philippines' shared view on piracy and the role ReCAAP has played in combating armed robbery in Asia.¹⁴⁶

Like the previous joint statements, the 2011 Comprehensive Promotion of the “Strategic Partnership” mentions peace in Mindanao, the continued concerns over nuclear and missile development on the Korean Peninsula, and Philippine support for Japan’s bid for a permanent UNSC seat. However, for the first time in a joint statement there is a direct mention of the South China Sea. Previously, leaders of both states expressed their desire for freedom of navigation and overflight of SLOCs, but this illustrates that Tokyo and Manila began to view the South China Sea not only as a vital region that connects the greater world and the Asia-Pacific, but also as an area where peace and stability is in the common international interest. President Aquino affirmed that the Philippines was committed to the DOC and to the early conclusion of the COC consistent with International Law.¹⁴⁷

As the decade continued, both Japan and the Philippines took measures to enhance their strategic partnership. In 2015, Japan and the Philippines signed the “Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration: A Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing the Shared Principles and Goals of Peace Security, and Growth in the Region and Beyond.”¹⁴⁸ The document is separated into six sections, but specific language on bilateral security

¹⁴⁶Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement on the Comprehensive Promotion of the ‘Strategic Partnership’ between Neighboring Countries Connected by Special Bonds of Friendship.”

¹⁴⁷Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement on the Comprehensive Promotion of the ‘Strategic Partnership’ between Neighboring Countries Connected by Special Bonds of Friendship.”

¹⁴⁸“Japan-Philippines Relations—Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration A Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing the Shared Principles and Goals of Peace, Security, and Growth in the Region and Beyond,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, June 4th, 2015. https://www.mofa.go.jp/s_sa/sea2/ph/page4e_000280.html.

cooperation is limited. One of the notes on bilateral security states that both countries agree that as “maritime nations” it is critical to maintain open and stabilized seas in order to ensure stability in the region.¹⁴⁹ To achieve this, Japan and the Philippines state that it is necessary to increase the capacity of the PCG. The document states that this will be accomplished through the Philippines’ acquisition of additional patrol craft, which Japan will provide through a contract with the Japan Marine United Corporation.¹⁵⁰ As in previous strategic partnership joint statements, the United Nations Security Council is mentioned; and, as before, the Philippines notes that it will continue to support Japan as it tries to gain a permanent seat on the security council.¹⁵¹

The annex of the 2015 joint declaration titled “Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership,” details specific areas of security between Japan and the Philippines and discusses these ventures more than in the primary 2015 joint statement.¹⁵² It notes that both governments will build on cooperation in seven areas including “information exchanges and policy coordination on respective security policies,” indicating that during the Aquino administration, Tokyo and Manila were willing to coordinate with one another on relevant security policy.¹⁵³ Other areas of security cooperation that the Action Plan mentions are defense equipment, technology cooperation, and capacity building. Japan and the Philippines has greatly expanded cooperation in these areas, and the Annex specifically notes that the Japanese government will continue to assist in building the capacity of the

¹⁴⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Relations—Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration A Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing the Shared Principles and Goals of Peace, Security, and Growth in the Region and Beyond.”

¹⁵⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Relations—Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration A Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing the Shared Principles and Goals of Peace, Security, and Growth in the Region and Beyond.”

¹⁵¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Relations—Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration A Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing the Shared Principles and Goals of Peace, Security, and Growth in the Region and Beyond.”

¹⁵² “Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership (Annex of the Joint Declaration),” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed May 20, 2019. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000083659.pdf>.

¹⁵³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership (Annex of the Joint Declaration).”

Philippines Coast Guard.¹⁵⁴ The Annex mentions other areas that the Philippines and Japan will cooperate on, including maritime safety, combating-piracy and armed robbery in the “ASEAN region,” and sharing information through ReCAAP.¹⁵⁵ While security cooperation does compose a large portion of the Annex, the Annex also covers cooperation on agriculture, climate change, disaster mitigation, and economics.

Japan and the Philippines continued to develop bilateral security cooperation, and the current strategic partnership between the two states remains at the Strengthened Strategic Partnership level. In a joint statement issued in 2016, both states indicated that they desired to continue to promote the existing strategic partnership and to strengthen it.¹⁵⁶ An agreement on bilateral cooperation over the next five years provides some context on how both states intend to proceed into 2022.

Japan and the Philippines issued the “Bilateral Cooperation for the Next Five Years” in October 2017.¹⁵⁷ The document is primarily focused on development but does have a short section on maritime safety and counterterrorism. The statement notes that the government of Japan will provide patrol vessels as well as “relevant equipment” to the Philippines.¹⁵⁸ In addition to providing physical assets, Japan states it will also assist the Philippine government in developing the capacity of its maritime safety agency, which would enable better coastal surveillance and vessel operation.¹⁵⁹ This indicates that both states are committed to capacity building and developing their relationship with one another.

¹⁵⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership (Annex of the Joint Declaration).”

¹⁵⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Action Plan for Strengthening of the Strategic Partnership (Annex of the Joint Declaration).”

¹⁵⁶ “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement,” Embassy of Japan in the Philippines, October 26, 2016. https://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/00_000168.html.

¹⁵⁷ “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement On Bilateral Cooperation for the Next Five Years,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 30, 2017. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/000303417.pdf>.

¹⁵⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement On Bilateral Cooperation for the Next Five Years.”

¹⁵⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement On Bilateral Cooperation for the Next Five Years.”

By examining these joint statements, it becomes apparent that security cooperation has developed into a prominent discussion point between Japan and the Philippines. In the early joint statements from 2006 and 2009, security is rarely written about in-depth, except in the context of the United Nations Security Council. In later statements, such as the 2011 and 2015 joint statements, there are sections devoted to security—to what both parties agree to and what future dialogues they intend on engaging in. This suggests that Japan and the Philippines were establishing the necessary groundwork to make security cooperation feasible, and that because of this, both states now feel more comfortable as relations have continued to develop.

The joint statements also provide a window into other issues that both states maintain they want to address. This is apparent in repeated mentions of Mindanao, the United Nations Security Council, North Korea, and more recently, the South China Sea. Mindanao is not a Japanese security concern, but it does affect Philippine domestic stability. It is likely that Mindanao has been a long-term fixture on the joint statements because it is a prominent issue for Manila. By including it on joint statements with Japan, it ensures that Tokyo continues to provide ODA and economic support for the autonomous state. In much the same way, Japan has long sought a permanent seat on the UNSC and needs international support in order to achieve this. By including this on joint statements, Japan is ensuring that it retains this support from the Philippines.¹⁶⁰ However, while Philippine backing for a permanent UNSC for Japan seat has been included on most statements, it has not appeared on all of them. Meanwhile, much as with Mindanao, the threat that North Korea presents is more a Japanese security concern. The Philippines has continued to show support for Japan and has condemned DPRK nuclear and missile testing. As with the UNSC seat, this concern has not been included on recent joint statements. The South China Sea has been featured as a shared concern for both states, but only on the 2011 joint statement. Maritime security and the protection of their shared SLOCs is one of the key features of Philippine and Japanese cooperation, and this has been listed on many of

¹⁶⁰In the 2015 joint statement, there is no mention of the UNSC as it pertains to Manila supporting Tokyo's bid. Its exclusion does not mean that this is no longer a priority for Japan, but that both states may not have been able to come to an agreement to include it for this statement and the annex.

the joint statements. It is unclear why recent statements have not made more specific mentions to the South China Sea.

D. COOPERATION FOR PEACE IN MINDANAO

One unique area of security cooperation between Japan and the Philippines is in Mindanao. Peace in Mindanao is mentioned in the 2006, 2009, and 2011 joint statements and in the Annex for the 2015 statement, reflecting the importance of this topic for both states. It is important to understand that Tokyo and Manila worked together on the Mindanao peace process years before these joint statements were written. In 2002, Japan developed the “Support Package for Peace and Stability in Mindanao.”¹⁶¹ The package included three core ideas: support policy that targeted the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), support improvements for basic human needs, and to provide support which contributed towards peace-building and fighting terrorism in Mindanao.¹⁶²

After a ceasefire was called in July 2003, the International Monitoring Team (IMT) asked Japan to send an expert to monitor socioeconomics in the region. For a period, stability and peace improved, and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) formally invited Japan to send its peacekeeping operations to the ARMM.¹⁶³ Japan did not send PKO forces to the region, but continued to show support for the region and the Philippine government by pledging to establish a socio-economic development plan for the Bangsamoro people and the transitional government.¹⁶⁴ The 2006 Joint Statement “Partnership between Close Neighbors for Comprehensive Cooperation” notes that Japan’s then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Aso intended on implementing ten projects for grant assistance, with an additional twelve projects to be implemented by 2007. In addition to

¹⁶¹Sudo, *Japan’s ASEAN Policy*, 164.

¹⁶²Sudo, 165.

¹⁶³Sudo, 165.

¹⁶⁴Kei Koga, “Toward Effective Institution-Building in Peacebuilding: Conceptual Development, Coordination Mechanism, and Partnership Building,” in *Peacebuilding and Japan: Views from the Next Generation* ed. Yuki Tatsumi and Pamela Kennedy. (Washington DC: Stimson, March 2017): 20. https://www.stimson.org/sites/default/files/file-attachments/PeacebuildingANDJapan_FINAL_WEB3.pdf.

these projects, the Japanese government pledged to cover education and infrastructure development in the region.¹⁶⁵ In August 2011, Japan facilitated a meeting between Philippine President Aquino III and the leadership of the MILF.¹⁶⁶ This meeting is mentioned in the 2011 joint statement, and President Aquino III thanked the Japanese government for enabling the meeting, saying that it helped to push the peace process forward.

Japan continued to provide ODA and other economic development assistance to the ARMM region, which Sudo writes is unusual, as this aid was provided before a peace agreement had been signed, a pattern that contrasts with that of other donors who wanted to use contributions as leverage against the MILF.¹⁶⁷ Japan established the Japan-Bangsamoro Initiative for Reconstruction and Development (JBIRD), which in 2015 entered a new phase and became known as the JBIRD2. This initiative has focused on developing and ensuring economic autonomy for the Bangsamoro area.¹⁶⁸

E. JAPANESE AND PHILIPPINE SECURITY COOPERATION 2010–2018

The last two sections have focused specifically on Japanese and Philippines strategic partnership joint statements and on the peace in Mindanao. While these topics do overlap with the selected years of this section, this section covers specific events and actions that have shown increased security cooperation, including defense transfers, port visits, and exercises between Japan and the Philippines. It also examines recent changes to the types of exercises Japan is participating in with the Philippines and the United States.

Early security cooperation through anti-piracy exercises and vessel donations helped establish a base for a security partnership between Japan and the Philippines.

¹⁶⁵Ministry of Foreign Affairs “Japan-Philippine Joint Statement ‘Partnership between Close Neighbors for Comprehensive Cooperation’.”

¹⁶⁶Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement on the Comprehensive Promotion of the ‘Strategic Partnership’ between Neighboring Countries Connected by Special Bonds of Friendship.”

¹⁶⁷Sudo, *Japan’s ASEAN Policy*, 165.

¹⁶⁸Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Philippines Relations—Japan-Philippines Joint Declaration A Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing the Shared Principles and Goals of Peace, Security, and Growth in the Region and Beyond.”

Economic cooperation remained a fundamental component of Japanese-Philippine relations, but as tensions over territorial claims in the South China Sea increased, security cooperation between the two countries began to take on a more pivotal role. As a result, both Japan and the Philippines began to seek stronger security ties to each other.

Japan and the Philippines chose to sign and declare a joint strategic partnership in 2011. This partnership included an agreement that both countries would promote exchanges and develop cooperation between each state's defense organizations. This cooperation included dialogues between high-level naval officers and port calls between the two countries. The emphasis for both Japan and the Philippines with the 2011 joint statement was on maritime cooperation, as both states are island countries that rely heavily on their SLOCs for trade and energy needs.¹⁶⁹

By July 2012, following the Scarborough Shoal incident between the Philippines and China, Japanese Defense Minister Satoshi Morimoto and the Philippine Defense Secretary Voltaire T. Gazmin signed a bilateral agreement on maritime security. Much like the 2011 agreement before it, the 2012 bilateral agreement focused on increased cooperation and dialogue between high-level officials within each country's respective defense agency. It also stated that there were to be reciprocal visits between the JMSDF chief-of-staff and the Philippine Navy flag commander.¹⁷⁰

For Japan and the Philippines, 2015 proved to be an important year to further establish their strategic partnership. Prime Minister Abe and President Aquino signed the "Philippines-Japan Joint Declaration," which affirmed that both countries desired continued stability and peace in the Asia-Pacific.¹⁷¹ Like other declarations and security partnerships Japan signed at the time, the joint declaration went beyond security concerns

¹⁶⁹ Grønning, "Japan's security cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam," 536.

¹⁷⁰ De Castro, "The Philippine perspective on the security partnership with Japan," 138.

¹⁷¹ Trinidad, "Domestic Factors and Strategic Partnership: Redefining Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century," 622.

and focused on economic cooperation and increased technology transfers as well.¹⁷² Both leaders also signed the “Strengthened Strategic Partnership for Advancing the Shared Principles and Partnership and Goals for Peace, Security and Growth in the Region and beyond” in 2015.¹⁷³ As De Castro notes, the strengthened partnership agreement enhanced the existing strategic partnership, but reaffirmed several key interests including a shared commitment to safety and security in the South China Sea, and opposition to unilateral attempts to alter the status quo in the region. Phrases in the document against deviations to the status quo or large-scale island reclamation were intended to refer to China, which was engaged in island building in the Spratly Islands.¹⁷⁴

Following the adoption of the Three Principles on the transfer of defense equipment in 2013, Japan agreed to provide the Philippines with ten patrol craft to assist in maritime security. The first of these craft was delivered in 2016, with the last two vessels commissioned by the Philippines in August 2018.¹⁷⁵ These initial patrol craft are relatively small, at 40 meters, but discussions in 2016 indicated that negotiations were underway for Japan to build two larger 100-meter ships.¹⁷⁶ These larger craft were designed to have thicker armor to protect the crew from shells, indicating that these craft were to be used as warships.¹⁷⁷ The Japanese also provided surveillance planes and training to the Philippines. Two second-hand aircraft were delivered in 2017 with the rest to be delivered throughout 2018.¹⁷⁸ In addition to the TC-90s, Japan agreed to include training for

¹⁷²Trinidad “Domestic Factors and Strategic Partnership: Redefining Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century,” 622.

¹⁷³De Castro, “The Philippines Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” 139.

¹⁷⁴ De Castro, 139.

¹⁷⁵ Prashanth Parameswaran, “Japan-Philippine Security Ties in Focus with Patrol Vessels,” *The Diplomat*, last modified August 28, 2018. <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/japan-philippines-security-ties-in-focus-with-patrol-vessels/>.

¹⁷⁶ Grønning, “Japan’s Security Cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam,” 538.

¹⁷⁷ De Castro, “The Philippines Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” 144.

¹⁷⁸ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Trade Register (Japan as supplier with the Philippines and Viet Nam as recipients; accessed November 29, 2018). http://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/page/trade_register.php.

Philippine Navy pilots for their new aircraft.¹⁷⁹ These aircraft provide the Philippines an additional means of surveying the South China Sea and those features the Philippines controls.

Japan made certain that donations were not the only way in which it assisted the Philippines. Following the devastating category five typhoon Haiyan in 2013, Japan participated in HA/DR operations in the country. Three destroyers with approximately 1,000 JGSDF personnel arrived and supplied emergency goods to Samar and Leyte. This operation proved that the Japanese were capable of rendering HA/DR relief to a strategic partner and led to further cooperation between the two countries.¹⁸⁰

One such event occurred in 2015, when Japanese Minister of Defense Gen Nakatani and Philippine Secretary of National Defense Gazmin signed the “Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges” which allowed for both countries to participate in joint naval exercises with each other.¹⁸¹ Unconnected to the 2015 Memorandum, in June of 2015, JSDF forces, along with Philippine military personnel, conducted a joint operation near Reed Bank. This area is thought to have large reserves of fossil fuels and is claimed by both Manila and Beijing. Chinese officials protested the joint operation and viewed the event as a way for Japan to become more involved in the South China Sea territorial disputes.¹⁸² The first of the joint exercises enabled by the 2015 Memorandum occurred on the day The Hague ruled in favor of the Philippines in 14 out of 15 of its proceedings against China in the Spratly Islands.¹⁸³

The most recent operation, the October 2018 Kamandag exercise with the United States and the Philippines, was the first time since WWII that Japanese armored vehicles

¹⁷⁹ Embassy of Japan in the Philippines, “Japan-Philippines Joint Statement.”

¹⁸⁰ De Castro, “The Philippines Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” 139.

¹⁸¹ Trinidad “Domestic Factors and Strategic Partnership: Redefining Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century,” 622.

¹⁸² Lanteigne, *Chinese Foreign Policy*, 172.

¹⁸³ Trinidad “Domestic Factors and Strategic Partnership: Redefining Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century,” 628.

were used on foreign soil. The Japanese only played a humanitarian assistance role in the drill, but the experience allowed the newly formed Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade to work with Japan's traditional security ally and its strategic partner during an amphibious landing. The Japanese did not participate in the combat-related portions of the exercise, but the joint landing operations benefited the Japanese, the Philippine troops, and the American ships that were involved with the landings.¹⁸⁴

The JMSDF and the JCG frequently visit the Philippines on port visits and for exercises. The Embassy of Japan in the Philippines notes that the JSDF has been making port calls to the Philippines since the 1960s, though its information does not cover all port visits made and, only consists of press release information through 2010. When information is available on how many ships or aircraft visited the Philippines, it is not always clear which vessels stopped or where they made port. The information presented in Table 1 collects what information is available on JSDF visits or exercises that include landing on the Philippines, how many vessels arrived, their names, and the location of the visit.

¹⁸⁴ "Japan Military Joins Historic Philippine War Games," *The Straits Times*, October 06, 2018. <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/japan-military-joins-historic-philippine-war-games>.

Table 1. Visits by the JSDF to the Philippines¹⁸⁵

Date of Visit	Organization	Vessel if known	Port if known
2012	JMSDF	JS <i>Kashima</i> ; JS <i>Shimayuki</i> ; JS <i>Matsuyuki</i>	Manila
2 April 2014	JMSDF	JS <i>Shirane</i> ; JS <i>Asayuki</i>	Manila
21 June 2015	JMSDF	P3-C Orion	Unknown
03 April 2016	JMSDF	JS <i>Ariake</i> ; JS <i>Oyashio</i> ; JS <i>Setogiri</i>	Subic Bay
April 2016	JMSDF	JS <i>Ise</i>	Subic Bay
04 June 2017	JMSDF	JS <i>Izumo</i> ; JS <i>Sazanami</i>	Manila
February 2018	JMSDF	JS <i>Amagiri</i>	Manila
April 2018	JMSDF	JS <i>Aizuki</i>	Subic Bay
25 April 2018	JMSDF	JS <i>Osumi</i>	Manila
25 May 2018	JMSDF	JS <i>Setogiri</i>	Manila
1 September 2018	JMSDF	JS <i>Kaga</i> ; JS <i>Suzutsuki</i> ; JS <i>Inazuma</i>	Manila
October 15, 2018	JGSDf	Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade	Part of Exercise Kamandag

¹⁸⁵“The Japanese Training Squadron set to make Goodwill Visit to the Philippines,” Embassy of Japan in the Philippines, May 24, 2012. <https://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/pressandspeech/press/pressreleases/2012/47.html>; De Castro, “The Philippine Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” 141; “The Japanese Training Squadron Set to Make a Goodwill Visit to the Philippines,” Embassy of Japan in the Philippines, March 31, 2014. <https://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/pressandspeech/press/pressreleases/2014/39.html>; Raul Dancel, “Japanese Submarine, Warships Dock at Philippine Port Near Disputed South China Sea Waters,” *The Straits Times*, April 03, 2016. <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/japanese-warships-dock-at-philippine-port-near-disputed-south-china-sea-waters>; Franz-Stefan Gady, “Japan Sends Helicopter Destroyer to South China Sea,” *The Diplomat*, last modified April 12, 2016. <https://thediplomat.com/2016/04/japan-sends-helicopter-destroyer-to-south-china-sea/>; Franz-Stefan Gady, “Philippines’ Duterte First Head of State to Visit Japan’s Largest Warship,” *The Diplomat*, last modified June 05, 2017. <https://thediplomat.com/2017/06/philippines-duterte-first-head-of-state-to-visit-japans-largest-warship/>; Francis Wakefield, “Japanese Landing Ship in Manila for Port Visit,” *Manila Bulletin*, last modified April 26, 2018. <https://news.mb.com.ph/2018/04/26/japanese-landing-ship-in-manila-for-port-visit/>; “JMSDF JS Setogiri (DD-156) Manila Bay Port Call,” Embassy of Japan in the Philippines, June 04, 2018. https://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/00_000549.html; Carlo Lorenzo J. Datu, “Duterte Visits Japanese Helicopter Carrier,” Republic of the Philippines: Philippine Information Agency, last modified September 1, 2018. <https://pia.gov.ph/news/articles/1012184>; Gidget Fuentes, “Japanese Amphibious Soldiers Hit the Beach in the Philippines with U.S. Marines, 7th Fleet,” *USNI News*, last modified October 15, 2018. <https://news.usni.org/2018/10/15/japanese-amphibious-soldiers-hit-beach-philippines-u-s-marines-7th-fleet>.

What we can see from these visits is that they are consistent and are part of training exercises with the Philippines. The number increased from a combined total of three visits from five vessels in 2016 and 2017, to six visits from seven ships and the Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade in 2018. The inclusion of the newly formed Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade in the Kamandag exercises is also noteworthy because it does indicate a change in the types of exercises the US, the Philippines and Japan are conducting with each other. Japan is unlikely to alter its current form of participation, but even an increase in HA/DR, anti-piracy drills, and port visits enhances the JSDF's compatibility with the Philippines military and coast guard.

F. THE NATURE OF THE JAPANESE-PHILIPPINE SECURITY PARTNERSHIP

When Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte assumed office on June 30, 2016, the future of the US-Philippine alliance was called into question, which concerned the Abe administration. President Duterte sought to establish closer economic and diplomatic ties to China and move away from the alliance with the United States. Duterte implied in interviews from November 2018 that he believed that China would stay in the South China Sea, and that increased conflict between the United States and China in the region would have consequences for the Philippines. He directly pointed at U.S. operations in the South China Sea as heightening tensions.¹⁸⁶

This has placed Japan in a difficult position diplomatically. While the Philippines and Japan have a strategic partnership, both countries are allied to the United States, and this mutual connection built the foundation for their current security cooperation. Tokyo continues to work with Manila, and Japan remains a key provider of FDI and ODA to the Philippines and is one of the Philippines' largest trading partners. De Castro observes that

¹⁸⁶ Raul Dancel, "Duterte says China 'Already in Possession' of South China Sea, Tells US to End Military Drills," *The Straits Times*, November 15, 2018. <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/duterte-says-china-already-in-possession-of-south-china-sea-tells-us-to-end-military>.

Japan is viewed as the “only Western [sic] country to have a healthy and cordial relationship with the Philippines.”¹⁸⁷

In addition to distancing the Philippines from the United States, Duterte’s decision to work closer with China has complicated how the South China Sea is presented at ASEAN summits. Making certain that territorial disputes were mentioned in joint communiqués had been a priority for the Philippines prior to Duterte’s election, and one that both the United States and Japan encouraged in order to generate consensus among the ten ASEAN members. At the 2017 ASEAN Summit hosted in Manila, none of the ASEAN claimant states in the South China Sea insisted that the dispute be mentioned in the Chairman’s statement. The statement also failed to mention the 2016 tribunal ruling in Manila’s favor. Trinidad views the 2017 ASEAN Summit as a turning point for ASEAN members, and see the issued joint statement as a sign of the organization’s pivoting towards China.¹⁸⁸

Despite fears from Japanese leaders and statements from President Duterte that the Philippines was moving away from the United States, security cooperation between all three states remained strong through 2018. Bilateral and multilateral drills involving the United States, the Philippines, and Japan continued despite calls from President Duterte to halt joint US-Philippine exercises.¹⁸⁹ Japan increased its own participation in such events and has continued to provide ODA and FDI to the Philippines in support of economic development.¹⁹⁰ This support is seen as necessary in order to allow the Philippines to rebuild in Mindanao and increase economic productivity.

By continuing to support this strategic partner in domestic security-related matters like Mindanao and regarding regional concerns like the South China Sea, Japan and the

¹⁸⁷De Castro, “The Philippine Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” 144-145F.

¹⁸⁸Trinidad, “Domestic Factors and Strategic Partnership: Redefining Philippines-Japan Relations in the 21st Century,” 630.

¹⁸⁹Felipe Villamor, “Duterte, Philippine President, Raises Doubts About Military Alliance With U.S.,” *The New York Times*, September 29, 2016. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/30/world/asia/duterte-philippines-us.html>.

¹⁹⁰De Castro, “The Philippine Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” 144.

Philippines are developing a strong security base. As Japan increasingly participates in bilateral and multilateral exercises with the Philippines, both states continue to build trust and compatibility. However, it remains to be seen if any meaningful changes will occur to the type and complexity of exercises Japan conducts with the Philippines.

G. CONCLUSION

The Japanese-Philippine security relationship is more developed and has existed for longer than other security relationships in Southeast Asia. It has overcome post-WWII tensions and fears of Japanese remilitarization during the 1980s. Most cooperation prior to the 1990s was economic and centered on ODA, but Japan remained a constant supporter for the Philippines and the security aspect of their relationship began to expand. Tokyo offered to mediate disputes between the Philippines and China in the 1990s over Mischief Reef and continued to stand by Manila as Philippine leaders brought forward their claim in the South China Sea to the international courts.

In return for increased security cooperation, Japanese leaders seek assistance to protect free navigation of SLOCs in the South China Sea, support for Japanese maritime disputes with China, international support against North Korea, and assistance as Japan attempts to gain a permanent seat on the UNSC. The strategic partnership joint statement released in 2015 and the Annex that accompanied it does not mention Japan's desire to become a permanent UNSC member or the Philippines' support for such an endeavor, but this is a common theme within other strategic partnership statements between Japan and other Southeast Asian states and in early joint statements with the Philippines. The Philippines has supported Japan's bid in the past.

By reinforcing freedom of navigation in accordance with international law and by reinforcing these norms itself, Japan is proving itself a reliable partner for the Philippines at a time when new leadership has tested traditional security alliances and regional powers are testing the limits of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea.

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IV. JAPAN AND VIETNAM SECURITY COOPERATION

A. INTRODUCTION

Japanese and Vietnamese security cooperation is not as integrated as Japanese-Philippine security cooperation but has made considerable progress over the last 25 years. Japan and Vietnam established diplomatic relations beginning in 1973, but the two countries only restored economic relations in 1992 following Vietnam's peace agreement with Cambodia.¹⁹¹ Despite the relatively short time that Japan and Vietnam have had a formal strategic partnership in place, a strong security foundation has formed between the two states.

This chapter will focus on how the Japanese-Vietnamese security partnership has evolved, starting in the 1990s when the two nations reestablished economic relations, and continuing through 2018 and current security cooperation between the two countries. It will also examine four joint statements on strategic partnership between Japan and Vietnam and how the agreements have evolved from the 2006 "Toward a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" to the 2017 "Joint Statement on Deepening the Extensive Strategic Partnership." In addition, this chapter will examine the nature of Japan's security cooperation with Vietnam, why these countries have developed this security partnership, and what it could mean for the future.

B. JAPAN AND VIETNAM EARLY COOPERATION

Formal security cooperation between Vietnam and Japan did not begin until the late 1990s, and this was limited in scope. Koh writes that few studies have been conducted specifically on the Vietnamese-Japanese maritime security relationship because it has only recently seen significant cooperation.¹⁹² As with the Philippines, most Japanese interactions with Vietnam during the 1990s were devoted to economic development.

¹⁹¹"Working Toward the Development of the Mekong Region Viet Nam," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 2009. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/mekong/development/vietnam.html>.

¹⁹²Koh, "The Vietnamese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan," 150.

Despite having diplomatic relations since 1973, Japan ceased providing aid to Vietnam as a result of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, and did not resume economic cooperation until 1992, when Vietnam left Cambodia. By sending aid and developing economic ties to Vietnam, Japan was able to establish closer relations in the region.

Japan worked closely with ASEAN on several initiatives for the Mekong region with the intent to build capacity, develop infrastructure, and integrate into the more developed ASEAN economies.¹⁹³ Security cooperation was not a main priority for either Japan or Vietnam in the early 1990s as demonstrated by the limited interactions between both states' defense organizations and civilian law enforcement agencies until the end of the decade. Instead, by focusing on economics and ODA, Japan and Vietnam created trust, which later enabled both to pursue additional ties in other fields of cooperation.

Japan and Vietnam began to develop a maritime security partnership in 1997, when Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and Vietnamese Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet agreed to security dialogues. The same year, Vice Defense Minister Lieutenant-General Tran Hanh visited Tokyo and showed support for the Japanese security alliance with the United States, saying it contributed to regional security. The general also called for Vietnamese students to be accepted at the Japanese National Defense Academy, indicating a growing sense that the two countries were willing to discuss defense exchanges. Koh also notes that China's seizure of Mischief Reef in 1995 raised tensions in Southeast Asia, causing states like Vietnam to consider extra-regional security partnerships.¹⁹⁴

Despite these exchanges, it was not until 1999 that security discussions began to bear tangible results. In April 1999, Tokyo agreed to host three Vietnamese students at the National Defense Academy annually. Two Japanese MSDF ships, the JS *Kashima* and JS *Hamagiri* made a port call to Ho Chi Minh City on May 9, 1999, the first such visit by Japanese warships to Vietnam. In 2000, Vietnamese officials proposed joint SAR exercises in the South China Sea, and Japan suggested that both countries establish bilateral politico-

¹⁹³ Suelo Sudo "Japan's ASEAN Policy: Reactive or Proactive in the Face of a Rising China in East Asia?" *Asian Perspective* 33 no. 1 (2009): 142. <https://doi.org/10.1353/apr.2009.0028>.

¹⁹⁴ Koh, "The Vietnamese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan," 155.

military consultations.¹⁹⁵ Hanoi proposed the joint exercises as Japanese vessels traversed the South China Sea regularly, and because Vietnamese maritime capabilities were limited. Despite Tokyo's agreeing to consider the proposal, no SAR operations occurred for the next seven years.¹⁹⁶

For the next three years, 2000 to 2003, the two countries conducted defense and security dialogue exchanges, but there was little interaction between the physical assets of either state's maritime law enforcement organizations or defense institutions. Vietnam and Japan held expert-level meetings discussing their views on defense and foreign affairs, and Hanoi continued to express interest in increasing security and defense cooperation. Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai again stated that increased cooperation between the two countries would act as a stabilizing force for Southeast Asia and would help in developing the region and the world.¹⁹⁷

Part of the reason for the relative lack of cooperation in the 1990s through the 2000s is that following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Vietnam's foreign policy called for them to keep from depending too much on any one extra-regional power for support. While this policy generally refers to resources and investment, it also applies to the depth of security partnerships Vietnam can pursue.¹⁹⁸ Japan too had restrictions over what arms it could and could not give Vietnam as the Japanese Diet in 1967 explicitly stated that arms exports would not be permitted to communist bloc countries.¹⁹⁹

Despite restrictions on both sides, Japan and Vietnam continued to develop relations throughout the 2000s. By 2004, both countries released a joint statement indicating their intentions to develop a partnership. In 2006, Japan and Vietnam issued a

¹⁹⁵ Bjørn Elias Mikalsen Grønning, "The Japanese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Vietnam," in *Japan's New Security Partnerships: Beyond the Security Alliance*, ed. Wilhelm Vosse and Paul Midford (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2018), 173.

¹⁹⁶ Koh, "The Vietnamese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan," 155, 159.

¹⁹⁷ Koh, 155.

¹⁹⁸ Koh, 154.

¹⁹⁹"Japan's Policies on the Control of Arms Exports," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, accessed May 20, 2019." <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/policy/index.html>.

joint statement called “Toward a Strategic Partnership for Peaceful Prosperity in Asia” which established that both states desired to strengthen their existing bilateral relations, specifically as “strategic partners for peace and prosperity in the Asian region.”²⁰⁰ Japan and Vietnam signed a joint statement a strategic partnership in 2009.²⁰¹ While security cooperation remained limited during this period, by establishing a strategic partnership, both countries signaled their willingness to develop stronger relations.

Following the establishment of the strategic partnership, Japan and Vietnam created a vice-ministerial defense and foreign affairs strategic partnership dialogue with the intent to discuss a variety of political and diplomatic topics including defense and security issues, in 2010. This became an annual event and in the following year, 2011, Japan and Vietnam agreed to create a Defense Policy Dialogue. Since 2013, the Defense Policy Dialogue has met annually at the vice-minister level.²⁰²

C. JAPANESE AND VIETNAMESE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Tokyo and Hanoi have signed four Joint Strategic Partnerships agreements, each either affirming that both countries desire a strategic partnership or expanding the status of the existing partnership. These joint statements show that both countries are committed to developing security ties in addition to enhancing their economic relationship. The statements will be examined below to determine how the Japanese-Vietnamese security partnership has grown and what this means for security cooperation between both states.

The first joint statement to be considered was not the first agreement Japan and Vietnam concluded that established a deeper relationship. On October 19, 2006, Japan and Vietnam signed the “Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement toward a Strategic Partnership for

²⁰⁰“Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement Toward a Strategic Partnership for Peace Prosperity in Asia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 19, 2006. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/vietnam/joint0610.html>.

²⁰¹“Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 20, 2009. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/vietnam/joint0904.html>.

²⁰²Grønning, “Japan’s Security Cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam,” 536.

Peace and Prosperity in Asia” which was an expansion on the 2004 “Japan-the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Foreign Ministers’ Joint Statement toward a Higher Sphere of Ensuring Partnership.”²⁰³ The 2006 Joint Statement focuses on six areas of increased dialogue and cooperation between the two states, including economic and development cooperation, technology transfers, and cultural exchanges. The statement acknowledges that Japan and Vietnam note that terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), human trafficking, and drugs are threats to stability and security, and that they agree to cooperate both bilaterally and multilaterally to address these and other challenges.²⁰⁴ It is clear from the language used that security cooperation was not the main priority of the 2006 agreement. Security is mentioned, but mostly in reference to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Instead, the joint statement’s primary concern is developing and increasing high-level dialogues between the two states and expanding economic cooperation and cultural exchanges.²⁰⁵

However, what the joint statement does show is that by 2006, both Vietnam and Japan were interested in greater cooperation, even though it took another three years before an official strategic partnership was announced. The decision to include Vietnam’s support for Japan as it sought to become a permanent member of the UNSC does indicate that this was considered important enough to Japan to include in the statement, likely as a way to prove Tokyo had international support for its bid. North Korea and its nuclear and missiles programs are not given attention in this document, and while non-proliferation is briefly mentioned, it is within a larger context of nuclear safety and nuclear energy.²⁰⁶

²⁰³“Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement Towards a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 19, 2006. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/vietnam/joint0610.html>.

²⁰⁴Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement Towards a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²⁰⁵Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement Towards a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²⁰⁶Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement Towards a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

Japan and Vietnam signed an official strategic partnership agreement in 2009 with the “Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”²⁰⁷ Much like the 2006 Joint Statement, the 2009 Strategic Partnership agreement is not primarily concerned with security related matters. Instead, economics and aid from Japan to Vietnam is the primary focus of the document.²⁰⁸ Security is briefly mentioned within the joint statement, and it notes that both Japan and Vietnam will hold high-level exchanges and deepen discussions at the Director-General level, and work together to promote human security.²⁰⁹

While still limited with respect to discussions on security cooperation, the 2009 Joint Statement did establish a Strategic Partnership between Vietnam and Japan. This demonstrates that both countries valued the cooperation that had been established through previous agreements and wanted to strengthen their partnership. Unlike the 2006 Joint Statement, Vietnamese support for a permanent UNSC seat for Japan is not included, though both states agreed to support and cooperate more closely with international and regional organizations. North Korea is not included as a shared concern, though both states agreed to promote cooperation on non-proliferation and disarmament through the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).²¹⁰

Five years later, in 2014, Vietnam and Japan chose to elevate the status of their Strategic Partnership through the “Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment

²⁰⁷“Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 20, 2009. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/vietnam/joint0904.html>.

²⁰⁸Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²⁰⁹Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²¹⁰Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”²¹¹ The new partnership was a commitment to increased political trust through increased bilateral cooperation, and unlike the 2006 and 2009 Joint Statements, the 2014 Extensive Strategic Partnership explores bilateral areas of defense and security cooperation as well as regional and global concerns.²¹²

The Extensive Strategic Partnership agreement places defense cooperation near the start of the document, indicating its heightened importance. It notes that Japan and Vietnam intend to work together to effectively implement a 2011 memorandum between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Ministry of Defense of Vietnam that promotes bilateral security and defense cooperation.²¹³ In addition, both states agree to continue talks at the vice-ministerial level. For the first time in the statements, both Japan and Vietnam agree to increase cooperation between the JSDF and the Vietnam’s People Army. The South China Sea is not mentioned as a primary concern for either state, despite events in previous years that heightened tension in Southeast Asia. Instead, strengthening Vietnam’s maritime law enforcement capabilities is given high importance.²¹⁴ The statement also acknowledges that Prime Minister Abe agreed to send a survey team to Vietnam to discuss the best way to support Vietnam’s development of maritime security capacity.²¹⁵

Previous statements did not directly acknowledge North Korea and its nuclear program, but the 2014 statement does. Under a section titled “Korean Peninsula,” Japan and Vietnam encourage the DPRK to comply with all applicable UNSC Resolutions. Both

²¹¹“Japan–Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 18, 2014. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000031617.pdf>.

²¹²Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan – Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²¹³The 2011 memorandum is considered more in-depth the following section.

²¹⁴Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan–Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²¹⁵Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan – Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

states agreed that they supported efforts for “complete and verifiable denuclearization in the Korean Peninsula” and for North Korea to comply with commitments made under the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks issued on September 19, 2005.²¹⁶ Vietnam also showed its support on the issue of North Korean abductions of Japanese citizens. The document notes that Japan and Vietnam intend to “strengthen efforts to resolve the issue of abductions” which they agree is an international humanitarian concern. Vietnamese leaders stated that they were willing to work with Japan to promote the issue of abductions within their available capacity.²¹⁷ As with the 2006 statement, Vietnam’s support for Japan’s goal of becoming a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council is included.

Like the 2006 and 2009 Joint Statements on strategic partnership, the 2014 Extensive Strategic Partnership considers economic cooperation between Vietnam and Japan. While the 2009 establishment did not establish areas of cooperation, the 2014 agreement covers a variety of topics, including energy cooperation, agriculture and fishing, and banking. Cultural and human exchanges are also included, as they were in previous agreements.²¹⁸

Three years later, in 2017, Japan and Vietnam took another step to affirm increased cooperation through the “Joint Statement on Deepening the Japan-Viet Nam Extensive Strategic Partnership.”²¹⁹ This statement, like the 2014 Extensive Strategic Partnership agreement, shows how security and defense cooperation remained an important point of interest for both parties and, again, these points are placed at the start of the document. The 2017 agreement notes that both states intend to increase the effectiveness of dialogue and

²¹⁶Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan–Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²¹⁷Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan–Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²¹⁸Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Japan–Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia.”

²¹⁹“Joint Statement on Deepening the Japan-Viet Nam Extensive Strategic Partnership,” Ministry of Foreign affairs, June 6, 2017. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000262573.pdf>

exchanges. It goes on to mention that Japan and Vietnam agree to enhance existing cooperation on HA/DR capacity, participation in United Nations Peacekeeping operations, and maritime security. The statement specifically mentions Prime Minister Abe's pledge to work with Vietnam in developing the latter's maritime law enforcement capabilities and promises to provide used and new patrol craft.²²⁰

The focus on regional maritime security is further expanded in the 2014 agreement. The 2017 Joint Statement, like the 2014 agreement, mentions the South China Sea but considers the region more in-depth. Tokyo and Hanoi agreed on the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea, noting the region to be critical to regional and global security. The 2017 statement does not mention specific countries but does urge other states involved in South China Sea disputes to "refrain from taking unilateral actions, including militarization that change [s] the status quo...in the South China Sea."²²¹ The specific mention of changing the status quo is likely in reference to China and its increasing military presence in the South China Sea.

In addition to acknowledging South China Sea disputes, the 2017 statement includes mentions of how Japan and Vietnam support a continuation of Six-Party Talks with North Korea and how Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc would continue to support Japan as it sought a permanent UN Security Council seat. These two points are important security issues for Japan, but not necessarily for Vietnam, though North Korea's missile tests in 2017 did raise concerns over regional stability. However, the inclusion of these topics in the 2017 Joint Statement suggests that Japan is using its Extensive Strategic Partnership with Vietnam to gain support for abductions allegedly conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and in its bid to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council.²²²

²²⁰Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Joint Statement on Deepening the Japan-Viet Nam Extensive Strategic Partnership."

²²¹Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Joint Statement On Deepening the Japan-Viet Nam Extensive Strategic Partnership."

²²²Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Joint Statement On Deepening the Japan-Viet Nam Extensive Strategic Partnership."

As with other strategic partnership statements made between Japan and Vietnam, the primary concern of the agreement is not security or defense. Rather, it considers cooperation on economics, science, and regional organizations like ASEAN, and how both states intend on deepening collaboration on existing programs. Making the document primarily about non-defense and security related topics suggests that both Japan and Vietnam are still focused on making economic and humanitarian issues their primary areas of cooperation.

The “Deepening of the Japan-Viet Nam Extensive Strategic Partnership” joint statement shows continuity and an expansion from previous joint statements on the strategic partnership. While the 2006 and 2009 statements were hesitant to mention disputed areas like the South China Sea and North Korea, the 2014 and 2017 joint statements not only mention these issues, but also note that Japanese and Vietnamese officials view these as locations that could have a destabilizing effect on the region. By working together to promote stability and peace and providing more concrete ways in which the two states can increase their future cooperation, Japan and Vietnam are showing that their strategic partnership is developing in meaningful ways. Their relationship is no longer focused only on economic aid and development. Instead, both states can present their shared concerns over changes in the status quo in the South China Sea and continued nuclear and missile tests on the Korean Peninsula.

The joint statements also show development on specific issues and concerns. While security is hardly mentioned in the 2006 and 2009 joint statements, the 2014 and the 2017 statements acknowledge that Japan is willing to assist Vietnam in building its maritime security capacity and increase the number of dialogues both states have between high-level defense officials. Specific mentions of bilateral exercises on HA/DR, anti-piracy operations, and SAR drills are not mentioned, but regionally sponsored activities on these topics are. This shows that both states are willing to discuss these topics and to reach an agreement on participation and cooperation on exercises needed to build regional stability and security.

D. JAPANESE AND VIETNAMESE SECURITY COOPERATION 2011–2018

Japan and Vietnam signed a strategic partnership agreement in 2009, but it was not until 2011 that Japanese and Vietnamese security cooperation began to take on a more substantial form. In October 2011, Japan and Vietnam signed the “Memorandum between the Ministry of Defense of Vietnam and the Ministry of Defense of Japan on Bilateral Defense Cooperation and Exchanges” which called on exchanges at the deputy defense minister level as well as cooperation for the defense industry and HA/DR.²²³ The first vice-ministerial meeting focused on Japan and Vietnam’s opinions on regional concerns, but indicated that there was interest in such meetings.²²⁴

With the release of the 2014 joint statement increasing the strategic partnership to an “Extensive Strategic Partnership,” both countries agreed to further their security relationship in ways that previously they had not.²²⁵ The Extensive Partnership extended beyond security cooperation and included promises to increase the number of high-level leader talks on bilateral trade and investment ties between the two countries, but the statement took on additional significance as two months after signing the joint statement, China sent an oil rig into disputed waters also claimed by Vietnam.²²⁶

The Chinese oil rig, HYSY 981, entered and remained in an oil drilling area claimed by Vietnam for two months. During that time, Hanoi maintained a continuous presence around the oil rig. Vietnamese maritime law enforcement ships were sent to disrupt operations, despite incidents of Chinese escorts ramming these vessels. HYSY 981 was intended to stay in the area through August of 2014, but left in July 2014, citing that the mission was completed. Observers of the incident believe that the oil rig departed earlier

²²³ Koh, “The Vietnamese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” 156.

²²⁴ Ministry of Defense, “Initiative of Defense of Japan,” Ministry of Defense Tokyo: Japan. 2014, 286. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2014/DOJ2014_3-3-2_web_1031.pdf.

²²⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “Joint Statement: On deepening the Japan-Viet Nam Extensive Strategic Partnership.”

²²⁶ “Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Establishment of the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 18, 2014. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000031617.pdf>.

than anticipated as a result of continued Vietnamese pressure, even with limitations on the capacity of their maritime LEOs.²²⁷

Following Japan's policy change regarding arms transfers to other countries, Tokyo agreed to provide six used patrol craft to Vietnam in 2014 and delivered the first vessel in August 2015. These small patrol craft displaced between 600 and 800 hundred tons and needed upgrades in order to be effective.²²⁸ The small size of the craft means that they are unable to remain at sea for long periods of time, but given the limits of Vietnamese maritime capacity, even these small craft increased Hanoi's law enforcement capabilities. Deliveries of used vessels continued through November 2015, and in January 2017, Prime Minister Abe agreed to provide six new vessels to the Vietnamese. No set time frame was established for the delivery of the new patrol craft, but Abe stated that Japan supported Vietnam's commitment to strength its maritime law enforcement capacity.²²⁹

The original ships that Japan supplied to Vietnam took longer than expected to be delivered due to the need to upgrade the craft. Additional pressures on the Japanese Coast Guard meant that the organization could not decommission ships at the original rate, reducing the number of vessels available to give to the Vietnamese. This was driven by an increase in the number of Chinese fishing ships and Chinese Coast Guard patrols near the Senkaku islands that demanded more attention from the Japanese Coast Guard.²³⁰

In addition to donations of new and used patrol craft, the Japanese and Vietnamese increased the number of exercises conducted between the two countries' Coast Guards. Recent decisions to allow for bilateral Coast Guard exercises show how the Japanese-Vietnamese partnership has evolved from the original dialogue of the late 1990s. In 2017, both countries participated in a bilateral Coast Guard exercise to counter illegal fishing in

²²⁷Green, Hicks, Cooper, Schaus, and Douglas, "Chapter 3: Case Studies of Maritime Coercion," 202.

²²⁸ Koh, "The Vietnamese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan," 162.

²²⁹ Mai Nguyen and My Pham, "Japan Pledges Boats to Vietnam as China Dispute Simmers," Reuters, last modified January 16, 2017. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-vietnam-japan/japan-pledges-boats-to-vietnam-as-china-dispute-simmers-idUSKBN150150>.

²³⁰ Koh, "The Vietnamese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan," 162.

the South China Sea. This was the first such exercise for both countries to counter illegal fishing, though both have conducted training on SAR operations.²³¹ Furthermore, Vietnam and Japan have worked together during the Pacific Partnership exercise, but because this is a multilateral training event focused on HA/DR, it limits the opportunities for these states to work together bilaterally. The Pacific Partnership does allow Vietnam to work with the JSDF, American military, and other states' armed forces in a variety of situations.²³²

Vietnam also participated in RIMPAC for the first time in 2018 after observing in 2012 and 2016. Vietnam provided eight ships for the month-long exercise, which included SAR operations, live fire events, and drills to train for anti-submarine events and anti-air.²³³ While also a multilateral event like the Pacific Partnership and not specifically focused on Japan-Vietnamese maritime relations, Vietnam's participation shows a willingness to work with new partners.²³⁴

Japan also increased the frequency of visits that JMSDF and JCG vessels make to Vietnam. The JMSDF's first visit to Ho Chi Minh City in 1999 remained the only visit until 2003. Both visits consisted of two JMSDF destroyers and did not appear connected to any drill or exercise in the area or between Tokyo and Hanoi. Another four years passed before a Japanese Coast Guard vessel visited Da Nang in 2007, further emphasizing the lack of integrated security cooperation between the two states during this time, despite both

²³¹ Ankit Panda, "Vietnam, Japan Coast Guards Hold First-Ever South China Sea Drill on Illegal Fishing," *The Diplomat*, last modified June 19, 2017. <https://thediplomat.com/2017/06/vietnam-japan-coast-guards-hold-first-ever-south-china-sea-drill-on-illegal-fishing/>.

²³² LTJG Emily Wilkin, "Pacific Partnership 2017 Visits Vietnam's Khanh Hoa Province," Department of Defense, last modified May 22, 2017. <https://dod.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1188932/pacific-partnership-2017-visits-vietnams-khanh-hoa-province/>.

²³³ VNA, "Vietnam to participate in US-hosted RIMPAC exercise for the first time," *VOV.VN*, last modified June 26, 2018. <https://english.vov.vn/politics/vietnam-to-participate-in-ushosted-rimpac-exercise-for-the-first-time-377805.vov>.

²³⁴ Multilateral events like the Pacific Partnership and RIMPAC are noted here and not in Chapter III because there are more bilateral and tri-lateral exercises between Japan and the Philippines. Due to the limited number of specific bilateral Japanese-Vietnamese exercises that focus on training other than SAR and illegal fishing, showing Vietnamese participation in large multilateral events is intended to prove that Vietnam is beginning to engage in more events.

signing on to the “Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement Toward a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia” in 2006.

Despite the relatively low frequency of visits prior to 2010, in 2012, Japan began to send both JMSDF and JCG vessels biannually to Vietnam. This shows that despite limited interactions between both countries’ maritime forces and LEOs before 2012, these interactions are now a key part of Japanese-Vietnamese security cooperation. From 1999 to 2010, there were only four visits by the JMSDF and the JCG. In contrast, from 2011 to 2018 there were nineteen visits by JMSDF and JCG vessels, including the first port visit to Vietnam by a Japanese submarine.²³⁵ The 2017 visit by the JS *Izumo* also signaled a change in security cooperation between both countries. While not an aircraft carrier, the JS *Izumo* carries rotary aircraft, and is one of Japan’s largest JMSDF ships and one of the largest vessels in East Asia.²³⁶ Though primarily used for anti-submarine operations, the JS *Izumo*’s port visit signaled Japan’s increasing role in the South China Sea and as a security partner to Vietnam.

The Vietnamese have reciprocated port visits to Japan as well. In September 2018, the same month as the JS *Kuroshio* docked in Cam Ranh Bay, the Vietnamese frigate *Tran Hung Dao* visited Yokosuka and Osaka in Japan. The Vietnamese ship’s primary duty was to patrol the South China Sea to promote peace. In Yokosuka, the Vietnamese sailors were expected to engage in games with the JMSDF forces, likely with the intent of strengthening relations between the two countries’ maritime forces.²³⁷

The South China Sea is a vital SLOC for Japan and Vietnam, but as considered above, it has not been a key point in the joint statements issued by the leadership of these states. When it was first considered, it was through the lens of the early completion of the COC. In the 2017 joint statement, both states agreed that they were concerned about

²³⁵See Table 3.1.

²³⁶At the end of 2018, Japanese leaders announced that both the JS *Izumo* and the JS *Kaga* would receive upgrade enabling them to carry F-35B fighters. See Chapter III footnotes for additional information.

²³⁷Anh Vu, “Vietnamese Frigate on Long Naval Journey Docks in Japan,” VN Express International, last modified September 28, 2018. <https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnamese-frigate-on-long-naval-journey-docks-in-japan-3815991.html>.

revisionist powers in the region and attempts to change the status quo. For Vietnam, support for the status quo is important, as Vietnam occupies 27 features in the Spratly Islands and, as of 2017, maintained approximately 49 outposts on features in the region, ranging from what are known as “pillboxes” to occupied islets and isolated platforms.²³⁸ Vietnam built some of its structures as a response to China’s occupation of reefs in the Spratly islands in the late 1980s and 1990s. More recently, Hanoi has dredged channels to some of its outposts to allow vessels with deeper drafts to approach while others have helicopter pads and lighthouses for navigation.²³⁹

Vietnam, with Japanese support, has taken an international laws-based approach to resolving the disputes in the South China Sea.²⁴⁰ Chinese maritime vessels have seized Vietnamese fishing vessels and crews in the disputed territory around the Chinese held Parcel Islands, which are also claimed by Vietnam. A Vietnamese seismic survey ship was reported to have had its towed cable severed by Chinese craft in an overlapping EEZ also in the Parcel region.²⁴¹ These instances, along with the oil rig incident in May 2014 highlight increased Sino-Vietnamese tensions in the South China Sea. They also help explain why Hanoi has increased security cooperation with Japan as Tokyo has not explicitly chosen sides in any South China Sea dispute, but rather supports claimants in finding laws-based solutions.

²³⁸ Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, “Vietnam Builds Up Its Remote Outposts,” CSIC, August 4, 2017. <https://amti.csis.org/vietnam-builds-remote-outposts/>.

²³⁹ Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, “Vietnam Builds Up Its Remote Outposts”

²⁴⁰ Grønning, “Japan’s Security Cooperation with the Philippines and Vietnam,” 537.

²⁴¹ Koh, “The Vietnamese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Japan,” 150.

Table 2. Visits by JMSDF and Japanese Coast Guard to Vietnam²⁴²

Date of Visit	Organization	Vessel Name if known	Port if Known
7 May 1999	JMSDF	<i>JS Kashima; JS Hamagiri</i>	Ho Chi Minh City
14 April 2003	JMSDF	<i>JS Asayuki; JS Shirayuki</i>	Ho Chi Minh City
January 2007	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Yashima</i>	Da Nang
March 2008	JMSDF	<i>JS Yamayuki; JS Matsuyuki</i>	Ho Chi Minh City
17 September 2011	JMSDF	<i>JS Uraga; JS Tsushima</i>	Danang
12 March 2012	JMSDF	<i>JS Hamagiri; JS Sawayuki; JS Asayuki</i>	Haiphong
7 September 2012	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Shikishima</i>	Haiphong
30 July 2013	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Kojima</i>	Da Nang
19 October 2013	JMSDF	<i>JS Kashima; JS Shirayuki; JS Isoyuki</i>	Da Nang
March 2014	Unknown	P-3C Orion	Ho Chi Minh City
7 June 2014	JMSDF	<i>JS Kunisaki</i>	Da Nang
15 April 2015	JMSDF	<i>JS Asayuki; JS Kirisame</i>	Da Nang
May 2015	Unknown	P-3C Orion	Da Nang
10 May 2015	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Yashima</i>	Da Nang
18 February 2016	Unknown	P-3C Orion	Da Nang
12 April 2016	JMSDF	<i>JS Ariake; JS Setogiri</i>	Cam Ranh Bay
29 May 2016	JMSDF	<i>JS Uraga; JS Takashima</i>	Cam Ranh Bay
15 July 2016	JMSDF	<i>JSDS Shimokita</i>	Da Nang
25 July 2016	Coast Guard	<i>JCGS Kojima</i>	Da Nang
13 April 2017	JMSDF	<i>JMSDF Fuyuzuki</i>	Cam Ranh Bay
20 May 2017	JMSDF	<i>JS Izumo; JS Sazanami</i>	Cam Ranh Bay
17 May 2018	JMSDF	<i>JS Osumi</i>	Khanh Hoa province
18 September 2018	JMSDF	<i>JS Kuroshio</i>	Cam Ranh Bay

²⁴² Adapted from Koh, “The Vietnamese perspective on the security partnership with Japan,” 159. Information taken from Table 8.1; additional data compiled by author using various sources. This Database includes as many found references to Japanese SDF and Japanese Coast Guard vessels as possible, but the author notes that the database may not be complete. Visits by P3-C Orion planes are likely from the JMSDF.; Sgt. Brittney Vella, “Pacific Partnership 2016 Arrives in Vietnam,” Navy.mil, last modified July 16, 2016. https://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=95721; “Two Foreign Naval Ships Visit Vietnam,” People’s Army Newspaper, trans. Mai Huong, April 13, 2017. <http://en.qdnd.vn/military/intl-relations-and-cooperation/two-foreign-naval-ships-visit-vietnam-479940>; Franz-Stefan Gady “Vietnam: Japan’s Largest Aircraft Carrier Participates in Major Naval Exercise,” The Diplomat, last modified May 24, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/05/vietnam-japans-largest-aircraft-carrier-participates-in-major-naval-exercise/>; “Pacific Partnership 2018 Kicks Off in Khanh Hoa Province, Vietnam,” U.S. Embassy Vietnam, May 19, 2018. <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1526357/pacific-partnership-2018-kicks-off-in-khanh-hoa-province-vietnam/>; Motoko Rich and Makiko Inoue, “With a Submarine, Japan Sends a Message in the South China Sea,” The New York Times, last modified September 18, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/18/world/asia/japan-submarine-south-china-sea.html>.

E. THE NATURE OF THE JAPANESE-VIETNAMESE SECURITY PARTNERSHIP

As Grønning notes, the focus on the security partnership between Japan and Vietnam has been primarily maritime in nature, and the nature of cooperation developed thus far “stands on the verge of military significance.”²⁴³ That does not mean that the current relationship lacks meaning. Militarily both countries have yet to embark on a cooperation platform that fully integrates joint exercises, but Vietnam and Japan have increased the scope of their security dialogues and SAR and HA/DR exercises. The number of port visits from Japanese Coast Guard vessels and JMSDF ships and aircraft has increased substantially since such visits began in 1999, further signaling that cooperation and CBMs are increasing in scope.

Japan and Vietnam’s strategic partnership has not yet developed into something substantial, but the cooperation the two countries engage in does matter. By providing both used and new patrol craft to Vietnam, Japan is assisting the Vietnamese in protecting their own maritime territory and allowing Hanoi to push back against extra-legal claims from other South China Sea claimants, namely China. Through their persistence in the 2014 oil rig incident, Hanoi proved that the Vietnamese could maintain a long-term presence at sea in order to facilitate the removal of the oil rig in disputed waters. New or newly upgraded craft allow the Vietnamese to continue to perform these actions for longer periods of time. This also reduces the burden on the Japanese Coast Guard and JMSDF ships in the South China Sea, allowing them to continue needed patrols in the area around the Senkaku Islands. In this way, shared SLOCs are protected by a variety of parties.

Japan has also benefitted internationally from its strategic partnership with Vietnam. Vietnam has shown support for Japanese security concerns, such as denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula and the return of abducted Japanese citizens. Vietnam has also pledged to stand by Japan as it attempts to gain a permanent seat on the UNSC. Without the established economic and recent security cooperation between Tokyo

²⁴³ Grønning, “The Japanese Perspective on the Security Partnership with Vietnam,” 173.

and Hanoi, it is unlikely that Vietnamese leaders would show the same support on these issues.

Vietnam's official stance on declining formal military alliances does limit the full extent of what a strategic partnership between Vietnam and Japan could achieve, but as Vietnam expands its own security cooperation, it has allowed for greater interaction with countries like Japan and the United States on issues like HA/DR. Vietnam's utilization of ASEAN to keep South China Sea territorial disputes a key talking point for not only for the organization but also for the international community is also important. This allows Vietnam and other claimants in the region a way to solve territorial disputes within the ASEAN framework.²⁴⁴ While this does not force China to concede its claims in the South China Sea, it does suggest that if China desires a beneficial outcome, it must work closely with ASEAN claimant states to gain any ground.²⁴⁵

F. CONCLUSION

Vietnamese and Japanese security partnership remains limited but has grown a considerable amount from initial interactions in the late 1990s. The 2006 "Japan-Vietnam Joint Statement toward a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" enabled both countries to make additional contributions towards a security partnership while still focusing primarily on economic cooperation and dialogue exchanges at higher levels. The 2009 "Japan-Viet Nam Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" solidified a strategic partnership between the two states. The decision to enhance the Strategic Partnership to an Extensive Strategic Partnership in 2014 proved that both states appeared to benefit from the establishment of the strategic partnership. Placing defense and security cooperation at the start of both the 2014 and 2017 agreements shows that during this time, these forms of cooperation were highly valued by both states, though economic and human-to-human interactions remain the primary focus of the

²⁴⁴ Koh, "The Vietnamese perspective on the security partnership with Japan," 157.

²⁴⁵ Shoji Tomotaka, "Vietnam, ASEAN, and the South China sea: Unity or Diverseness?" *NIDS Journal of Defense and Security* 13. (Dec 2012): 12.
http://www.nids.mod.go.jp/english/publication/kiyo/pdf/2012/bulletin_e2012_2.pdf.

strategic partnership. Vietnamese leaders appear to want Japan in Southeast Asia as an active participant and to see the role Japan plays in the region through aid and security cooperation as constructive.

Japan has also been a conservative security partner, preferring to provide economic aid and dialogue exchanges with Vietnam rather than directly interfere with Vietnam's territorial disputes with neighboring states. Japanese leaders like Prime Minister Abe have stood by Vietnam by calling for peaceful resolutions to disputes even as other countries, most notably China, have sought to challenge the status quo in and around the South China Sea. By not directly interfering but providing support on the international stage and at ASEAN meetings, Japan is proving to Vietnam that it values the Extensive Strategic Partnership and is willing to provide needed economic and security support.

Given the increase in port visits by JMSDF forces to Vietnam and the September and October 2018 visits to Yokosuka and Osaka by a Vietnamese frigate, one can expect security cooperation will continue to increase between both countries. Vietnam's participation in RIMPAC for the first time and continued participation in the Pacific Partnership exercises indicates that Vietnam is willing to embrace multilateral exercises. While there have been relatively few bilateral exercises between JSDF and Vietnamese forces, these multilateral events still provide both states an opportunity to work together on a variety of issues, such as HA/DR, drug and human trafficking, and piracy. This cooperation gives both Japan and Vietnam the experience needed to confront other state's vessels in disputed waters, and through donations of upgraded maritime patrol craft, allows Vietnamese law enforcement agencies to stay out at sea for longer periods of time.

The focus on more specific concerns has been another key point of development between Vietnam and Japan since 1997. This is perhaps best shown in the joint statements as both states focused more on economic and development issues, and the only point of interest was Vietnamese support for a permanent place on the UNSC for Japan in the 2006 statement. As noted previously, by 2014 and 2017, both states, perhaps as an indication that they had developed mutual trust, were willing to acknowledge destabilizing actions in North Korea, and later, in the South China Sea. By not only acknowledging these shared concerns but also agreeing to support each other to build capacity and provide regional

stability, Japan and Vietnam have shown themselves to have become important partners to each other.

V. CONCLUSION

The security relationship Japan has fostered with Southeast Asian states and institutions has grown and expanded from the 1990s. After WWII, many states were wary of an increased Japanese security presence in Southeast Asia due to historical memory of Japanese actions during the war and the scale of the Japanese economy in the 1970s and 1980s. Most cooperation during these decades was economic and through ODA.

The 1990s and the end of the Cold War signaled a slow shift in how ASEAN countries and Japan viewed security concerns and how they cooperated on shared regional problems. This was initially accomplished through the ARF and in 2010 expanded into the ADMM+. Japan participated in these meetings, initially as a supporter of ASEAN centrality and recently as an advocate for increased exercises with ASEAN members.

Japan has increased the physical presence of the Japanese Coast Guard and the JMSDF through anti-piracy drills and HA/DR exercises with several Southeast Asian states, most notably with the Philippines and Vietnam. These two states have been receptive to Japanese offers of increased security cooperation and have detailed strategic partnerships with Japan. They have also accepted offers of Japanese maritime patrol vessels, and aircraft.

This thesis has demonstrated not only that Japan is increasing its security presence and participation in Southeast Asia, but also that it is seeking partnerships in order to gain regional support for sources of concern for Japan. There are three sources of concern that repeatedly appear in strategic partnership agreements, joint statements, and actions and explain why Japan is turning to regional partners for security cooperation.

The first source of concern for Japan is continuous, free, and unimpeded access to its SLOCs in the South China Sea and East China Sea. At the start of the new millennium, this issue became more important due to piracy and terrorism. States in the region placed increased emphasis on HA/DR, SAR, anti-terrorism, and other non-traditional security threats, which allowed for greater interaction with Japan and the region as these issues threatened sea-routes. Large-scale defense-oriented exercises were outside the scope of

what states were willing to engage in. Instead, small HA/DR focused exercises, expert working groups, and high-level ministerial meetings remained the normal means of engagement. While Japan did sign several strategic partnership agreements during this time, these were focused mainly on economic development.

Training is not the only way in which Japan has increased its presence in the region in response to this threat. In 2017 and 2018, Japan sent a DDH on patrols through the South China Sea. In September of 2018, Japan also sent, and publicized, that a Japanese submarine traversed the South China Sea before making port in Vietnam. These instances, coupled with Japan's engagement in high-level dialogues with its partners and its consistent promotion and involvement with ASEAN forums and members, indicate that this trend is likely to continue.

Japan does not have territorial claims in the South China Sea, but China's presence in the region, increase in military craft in the South China Sea, and lack of transparency has led to concerns over how free and safe these sea routes are and has made it one of Japan's most important security concerns. As noted previously, if Japan could no longer freely utilize shipping routes in the South China Sea, it would lose access to the majority of its energy imports. As seen in joint statements with ASEAN, the Philippines, and Vietnam, this issue has gained salience over the last decade as affected parties have brought territorial concerns to the International Court of Arbitrations and called for adherence to UNCLOS and the completion of the COC.

It is important to understand that Japan is not attempting to use ASEAN, the Philippines, or Vietnam to militarily balance against China as China expands in the South China Sea to protect Japanese SLOCs. ASEAN as an organization cannot call on its members to balance against China to maintain freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. It is a consensus-based organization that values state sovereignty and, as a result, its members do not always agree on which issues need to be addressed in joint statements. While Japan has been able to address its "Proactive Contribution to Peace" policy and the South China Sea in its own joint statements with the Association, in larger forums like the ADMM+ and the ARF consensus is not guaranteed, and is often limited to calling for peaceful resolutions of disputes in the region.

In the case of the Philippines and Vietnam, neither of these states on its own, or even within a multilateral framework, is capable of balancing against China. However, by assisting these states in building their maritime capacity and working together to build capability, Japan is enabling the Philippines and Vietnam to better address Chinese actions within their EEZs and claimed territories in order to protect their SLOCs. Japan's insistence on promoting international law, maintaining the status quo, and not taking sides in South China Sea disputes also assists both the Philippines and Vietnam. Both have claims in the region, and while Vietnam holds the greatest number of features in the area, neither Vietnam nor the Philippines has attempted to militarize its claimed features in the same way that China has.

In Japan's most recent strategic partnership statements with the Philippines and Vietnam, the South China Sea was an important discussion point, and this is unlikely to change in the immediate future due to ongoing territorial disputes. By working with both states, Japan is ensuring that it will continue to have partners that assist in ensuring unimpeded access to SLOCs in the South China Sea. This issue appears to be the most prominent reason for why Japan has increased its security cooperation with Southeast Asian states.

The second concern that has caused Japan to cooperate with Southeast Asian countries is North Korea. Tokyo continues to call for an end to North Korean missile and nuclear testing. When the DPRK is mentioned in joint statements, is it often in the context of requesting that North Korea follow resolutions set forth by the UNSC and attempting to resolve the abduction issue with Japan. Both the Philippines and Vietnam have agreed to support Japan on this issue when North Korea is addressed in joint statements. Additionally, the DPRK presents a problem to the East-Asia Pacific as its weapons testing reduces peace and stability. Southeast Asian countries consistently uphold ideals and standards for non-proliferation and Southeast Asian institutions serve as important forums for Japan as it seeks partners to condemn these tests.

Japan has utilized ASEAN-led dialogues to condemn North Korean missile and nuclear tests since the formation of the ARF. By working with an international organization that places high importance on nuclear non-proliferation, Japan is bolstering its own

position against the DPRK. While the Korean peninsula has not always been mentioned in joint statements with ASEAN, the Philippines, and Vietnam, it has been a consistent security concern for Japan. In addition to missile and nuclear testing, Japan has sought support from the Philippines and Vietnam as it tries to gain information on alleged abductions of Japanese citizens by North Korea, though this issue has not been a part of joint statements with ASEAN. Unlike with the South China Sea, Japan does not appear to be engaged in increased physical security cooperation with Southeast Asian states as a counter to North Korea. Instead, Japanese leaders have placed a far greater emphasis on international institutions and bilateral joint statements with Southeast Asian countries to pressure the North Korean regime.

A final reason that Japan is increasing its security cooperation with Southeast Asian states is to gain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. While not a consistent issue in joint statements, it does appear in several strategic partnership agreements with Vietnam and the Philippines, proving that this is an important issue to Japan and that both states are willing to show support for Japan as it continues to try to gain a permanent seat. While in the 1980s Japan worked with ASEAN to gain support for a permanent seat, it has not been an issue listed on recent joint statements with ASEAN. This indicates that Japanese leaders may be using the UNSC seat as a bilateral talking point with Southeast Asian countries. Japan has already proven that it will stand by Southeast Asian states and assist in promoting issues that directly affect them. Gaining a seat would not only reflect Japan's status as the world's third-largest economy, but it would also indicate that Japan is increasingly a valid regional security partner and has support from other countries.

It is clear that Japan has gradually increased its security cooperation with Southeast Asian institutions and countries. Japan has long been an important economic partner for the region, but as it places more emphasis on security cooperation, some Southeast Asian countries have more interest in developing security ties to Japan. It is unlikely that Japan will become a major military power in the Asia-Pacific even as it expands the capability of the JSDF through new technology, but the strategic partnerships and security cooperation

Japan is developing in Southeast Asia may prove beneficial to maintaining peace and stability within the region.

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