

**Talking Points at Session II: Cooperative Security Principles in Challenging Time
Conference on "Challenges to Regional and Global Peace in the 21st Century**

3-28-2017

Masakatsu Ota

Kyodo News

1. US consideration of NFU(No-First Use) Policy and Japan

○Main Reasons of GOJ(Government of Japan)'s opposition

① Expanding North Korean NW and Missile Programs

"Kim Jong Un is an irrational actor." (a senior official of Japanese MOFA=Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

② Chinese Military Rising

"We can't survive without the US nuclear weapons." (a well-placed official of GOJ and aide to PM Shinzo Abe)

③ No Rationale for Changing US Nuclear Declaratory Policy since 2010

"There has been no improvement or progress of the security environment surrounding Japan since 2010 when Obama administration postponed a decision to adopt "Sole Purpose" policy." (the same senior official of MOFA)

▽Please refer to this site;

<http://english.kyodonews.jp/news/2016/10/439558.html>

○Basic policy attitude of GOJ is to oppose any move or policy-change which could lead to potentially weakening "Nuclear Umbrella."

○In this sense, GOJ is very happy to see President Trump to reassure US commitment of nuclear deterrence.

"The unshakable U.S.-Japan Alliance is the cornerstone of peace, prosperity, and freedom in the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S. commitment to defend Japan through the full range of U.S. military capabilities, both nuclear and conventional, is unwavering." (Joint Statement issued by President Trump and PM Abe on Feb. 10, 2017)

2. NW Ban Treaty and Japan

○**GOJ's Indecisive Approach on Treaty Negotiation until Real Final Moment WHY?**

① **GOJ's Strong Opposition to Ban Treaty itself= The treaty would undermine entire security conditions and landscapes Japan has been relying on for more than half a century.**

"There is no any meaning on this treaty because no NWS (Nuclear Weapons State) participate in it. It would deepen division between NWS and NNWS " (a well-placed official of Japanese NSC)

"Mr. Abe does not want to hurt solid relationship with Mr. Trump by this issue." (a well-placed official of MOFA)

② **Consistent and Strong Anti-Nuclear Sentiment among Japanese Public**

"As a personal opinion, I want Japan to participate in the negotiation (even though Japan voted against L41=UNGA Resolution 71/258)." (FM Fumio Kishida)

③ **Tense and Complicated Conflict of Interest between GOJ and General Public**

"Please write a story and tell them we are in a real predicament." (another well-placed official of MOFA)

○**Japan finally made announcement not to participate in the negotiation at the High-Level Segment at the beginning of the negotiation on March 27,2017.**

3. Plutonium and Japan

○**Currently, Japan Possesses totally 48 metric ton of Separated Plutonium**

Abe administration has consistently and persistently insisted that "Japan will never have any plutonium which has no purpose."

But, Japan has only one MOX nuclear reactor running at this moment. Also, Monju (FBR) Project was canceled last year without any practical and reasonable alternative measure to consume plutonium in a steady manner.

○ **"2018 Problem" and More Plutonium?**

Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant is to start operation as early as spring 2018.

US-Japan 123 agreement will face the end of 30-year duration in July, 2018.

○ **More Plutonium in East Asia?**

ROK's new nuclear fuel cycle project based on "Pyro-Processing"

Possible Chinese commercial contract with Areva for reprocessing SF

4. What would be Nuclear Challenges for Japan and this Region?

① Strategic Implications of "More Nuclear-Reliant Security Posture" in the Region, not only DPRK, but also Japan, ROK and China

→ Too much emphasis on Nuclear factor worsen serious and negative nature of NW, such as "Contagious" effect=DPRK will intensify its own efforts to stick to NW as the last safeguard, strengthening inflexible "worship" in NW.

② Potential Plutonium Avalanche in the Region

→ Accelerating regional competing pursuant of Indigenous Nuclear Fuel Cycle

→ Increasing nuclear risk including nuclear smuggling and terrorism