

*The Rise of China and the
Changing Trends of Middle
Power's China Policy*

Co-organized by
Institute of International Affairs, Graduate School of International Studies, SNU
Institute of East Asian Studies, Keio University

With the Participation of
ANU-MacArthur Asia Security Initiative Partnership, the Australian National University

Sponsored by Institute of International Affairs

Program Schedule

March 15
18:00 ~ Dinner

Day 1: March 16

09:00~09:20 **Introduction and Overview of the Project**
Speakers: Yoshihide Soeya and Geun Lee

Session 1 Domestic Politics (Public Diplomacy) Sphere
Moderator: Geun Lee

09:20~09:35 Cheol-Hee Park,
09:35~09:50 Yoshihide Soeya
09:50~10:00 David Envall
10:00~10:30 General Discussion (open to all participants)

10:30~10:40 Break

Session 2 Socio-Cultural (Soft Power) Sphere
Moderator: Geun Lee

10:40~10:55 Jong-Ho Jeong
10:55~11:10 Masahuki Tadokoro
11:10~11:20 Rikki Kersten
11:20~11:50 General Discussion (open to all participants)

11:50~12:50 Lunch

Session 3 Economics and Regionalism Sphere
Moderator: Yoshihide Soeya

12:50~13:05 Geun Lee
13:05~13:20 Takashi Terada
13:20~13:30 Brendan Taylor
13:30~14:00 General Discussion (open to all participants)

Session 4 Security Sphere
Moderator: Yoshihide Soeya

14:00~14:15 Seong-Ho Sheen
14:15~14:30 Tomohiko Satake
14:30~14:40 Amy Catalinac and Andrew O`Neli
14:40~15:10 General Discussion (open to all participants)

15:10~15:30 Break

Live Telecast ANU Panel Session

15:45~16:30 **Session 1: Middle Powers and “The China Factor”**
Moderator: William Tow
Brenden Taylor
Yoshihide Soeya
Geun Lee

16:30~17:15 **Session 2: Stability on the Korean Peninsula and Alliance Strategies**
Moderator: William Tow
Andrew O`Neli
Tomohiko Satake
Seong-Ho Sheen

Closing Comments and Closing Discussion

17:00~17:15 Geun Lee
17:15~17:30 Yoshihide Soeya
17:30~17:45 William Tow

18:30~ Dinner

Day 2: March 17

10:00-12:00 Planning for the Next Conference

12:00~ Farewell Luncheon

Summary and Policy Recommendations

The Rise of China and the Changing Trends of Middle Power's China Policy

Introduction

This workshop is a continuation of the discussions which had started at the first Japan-Korea-Australia workshop at Keio University last year. This second workshop on the rise of China and changing trends of middle power's China policy will particularly hone on South Korea's soul-searching in security affairs in the changing era of regional power transformation. The workshop aims to produce policy-relevant analyses of how the three regional middle power partners, South Korea, Japan, and Australia, can facilitate deeper level of cooperation in the midst of rising regional rivalries between traditional superpowers - the United States, China, and Russia.

Session 1: Domestic Politics (Public Diplomacy) Sphere

“The Rise of China and Cooperation among the Like-minded”

Cheol Hee Park (Seoul National University)

The rise of China has domestic implications in South Korea, as more Koreans have started to gradually recognize China's military and economic presence in close proximity. China maintains a “smiley face” toward the United States and toward international community, but it has become more assertive and less accommodating in its regional interactions toward its close neighbours when it comes to its “core interests.”

In the past, during the Kim Yong-sam administration, for example, South Korea did not regard “China issue” as serious in South Korea's foreign policy priority. Although the following administrations changed this trend somewhat, there is still a lack of focus on China in the South Korean government and the bureaucracy. In the future, however, heated domestic debate on how to deal with China is likely to occur, as a number of “hot spots” in South Korea-China bilateral relations have emerged recently. These questions are: whether the China issue can be handled independently by South Korea; whether China will help resolve conflict in the Korean Peninsula; and whether China will cooperate with other middle powers for regional order building.

As a middle power, South Korea's dealing with China, like Japan and Australia, is different from that of hegemonic powers or of small powers. The middle powers are “hedging” in the presence of rising China, as they prefer to benefit from China's economy and not make China feel isolated. However, at the same time, the loose network of middle powers must collectively warn China for its intense nationalism. Likeminded middle powers must cooperate

to promote a defensive posture, while working closely with China on economic and social-cultural fields.

“DPJ’s China Policy: Lack of Public Diplomacy and Its Implications”

Yoshihide Soeya (Keio University)

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ)’s DPJ’s regional foreign policy, especially during the Hatoyama Cabinet, is characterized by amateurism. The DPJ has projected its assertive diplomacy externally for the sake of being assertive, and it has consequently raised significant misperception both within and without Japan that the country is turning into a “normal” state.

The root of the assertiveness originated in the 1990s, when the Japanese government tried to resolve chronic history issues with China and Korea. Rejection of Japanese efforts by Chinese and Koreans, then became a “trauma” in Japanese domestic context. Anxiety over Japan’s neighbours’ lack of appreciation of the Japanese effort turned into an acute frustration and fatigue. From this point on, Japanese approach toward its neighbours has become more “inward-looking,” and talking negative about China (and to a lesser extent, South Korea as well) became politically safer within Japan.

But if we look at the actual policies rather than domestic rhetoric, it becomes clear that the apparent assertiveness is not necessarily a sign of Japan’s grand strategy shift. Assertive discursive rhetoric and political promises that are popular domestically cannot be delivered to Japanese people unless there’s a fundamental shift in regional order. The DPJ’s policy toward China is no exception. Although there is a psychological element among many Japanese seeing their country to be too “soft” and thus demand concrete action against China, it is frustration than a symbol of a new fundamental policy shift, as misconceived in China. This mutual misperception and frustration could be ameliorated by focusing on public diplomacy, but it is not given sufficient attention at this point in the region.

“Domestic Politics and China Policy in Australia: From Chaos to Cutbacks?”

H.D.P. Envall (The Australian National University)

Australia, a middle power traditionally allied to the United States for its security, is currently facing a dilemma with the economic rise of China. In order to understand future prospect of Australian policies vis-à-vis China and the United States, it is crucial to understand that the direction Australia takes in security and economic strategies is heavily influenced by domestic politics.

Australian defence community perceives China as a major challenge (especially in its 2009 Defence White Paper) and proposes Australia’s self-reliance on security and strengthened maritime capability. However, the Labor Party under Julia Gillard is pressured to focus on

domestic economic management, and it entails securing national budget surplus. Budget surplus and economic management calls for a closer economic engagement with China. Thus, two ambitions of the two Australian government branches – the Cabinet vs. defense community – are likely to clash in the future. It has already resulted in a worsening relation between the military and the Labor Party, and the trend will continue unless they reach a difficult, but necessary, compromise.

Q&A Session:

Two main themes were discussed in the first Q&A session. The first was the role of China factor in South Korean policies toward North Korea, and in South Korean domestic politics. What is important in analyzing South Korea's foreign policy vis-à-vis both China and North Korea is not China's actual policy posture or military might itself, but how China's dealing with North Korea is interpreted in South Korean policy community. China's increasing "advocacy" of North Korea's position in recent years has caused the undercurrents of Sino-South Korean relations to be turbulent, and it will continue to promote debates about dealing with China within South Korean policy circles. The second theme for discussion was Professor Soeya's notion of Japan's public diplomacy. It is hard to exactly pinpoint "how" Japan can become an effective entrepreneur of public diplomacy. What is more important is that all related parties recognize and appreciate the nature of rhetorical issues damaging the relations between Japan, South Korea, and China, as a result of the misunderstanding that Japan is become an assertive hegemonic state. Having discussions and workshops at multiple levels is crucial for promoting middle power networking, which can then aid in the implementation of public diplomacy within the region.

Session 2: Socio-cultural (Soft Power) Sphere

"Korea's Response to the Rise of China: A Socio-cultural Perspective"

Jong Ho Jeong (Seoul National University)

The rising interaction between South Korea and China from the 1990s at socio-cultural level can be analyzed in three "scapes": ethnoscapes; mediascapes; and ideoscapes. These three scapes provide us with the framework for understanding both positive interaction and conflicts that have made bilateral social interactions more complex in recent years.

From the ethnoscapes perspective, there has been a significant increase in the population exchange, resulting in Chinese residences in a number of parts in Korea as Chinese workers have provided South Korea with cheap but skilled labour. Concerning the mediascapes, the most prominent feature is the Korean Wave in China. But there has also been a growing Korean

interest in the Chinese language, and the number of Korean students studying in China has consequently increased. On ideological scape, both states have engaged in discursive exchanges about political democratization, economic development strategy, and Asian values.

The interactions at the three scape-level, however, have also produced sources of conflicts. It is essential that Korea incrementally remove regulations limiting the legal flow of Chinese into Korea, and eliminate discriminatory aspects of the domestic market for transnational migrants. Concerning the media, Korea must use the Korean wave as a medium – public goods - for a common Asian culture. Finally, on ideoscape, Korea must pursue “Seoul Consensus” and “Asian Consensus” as a middle power, as an alternative model to both the US-led Western neoliberal economic development (“Washington Consensus”) or the developmental state model (“Beijing Consensus”). To achieve this goal, academic/civil society exchange of opinion leaders is crucial.

“Talking Points on Japan-Korea Socio-cultural Influences over China”

Masayuki Tadokoro (Keio University)

Chinese society is becoming more resonant to liberal values, as its economic growth inevitably changes value system. However, the influence of liberal values in China’s socio-cultural sector cannot be a substitute for careful management of traditional interstate relationship based upon national interests.

Moreover, even if the “soft power” of liberalism introduced by Japanese and South Korean societies is certainly not a “coercive power”, China will also be suspicious of transformative transnational influences from outside.

Therefore, Japanese and South Korean socio-economic influences over China must be geared more toward showing alternative attractive models setting examples for China’s social developments. During this process, it is essential that outsiders do not alienate or antagonize those Chinese who are potentially sympathetic to liberal principles, since we may be able to establish durable cooperative relationship with them.

“Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Assistance: Soft Power in the Asian Century”

Rikki Kersten (The Australian National University)

The Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11 has demonstrated the effect of a particular dimension of a state’s “soft power,” and it is Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). HADR can be understood as a bridge between military power and civil society, and thus hard capability is utilized in HADR as a social good.

HADR can be a “mutually reinforcing mechanism” for both middle and super powers, as it is an area where hard military capability is connected to soft power and state credibility. It

promotes confident building measures (CBM) and scrutinizes hard power capabilities of great powers for their actual capability to promote regional cooperation and welfare on equal footing with middle powers, by their particular use of military power.

As the Asia Pacific is a region with not only traditional security competition but also rising non-traditional transnational security concerns, regional cooperation in HADR promotes healthy competition for soft power, demonstrate competence, and provide normative significance for winning hearts and minds of regional states and citizens, as we have witness in the examples of the Operation Tomodachi (US-Japan), Operation Pacific Assist (AU-Japan), and Exercise Cooperation Spirit (AU-China).

Q&A Session

The first theme of the Q&A session dealt with whether China would consider Japan-South Korea model as a viable alternative for its social and economic development. Since China prefers economic development without the introduction of Western-style liberal democracy, it is still an open ended question. In fact, to some countries that longs for development without political liberalization, Chinese - not Japanese or South Korean - model of development would be even more attractive, since China's strategy is fundamentally different. China is aware of this fact and thus it is promoting its own values through institutions such as the Confucius Institute.

The second major theme was the nature of how "soft power" is understood and implemented in the region. In Japan, soft power is mainly discussed in terms of what is happening within Japan and not about projection of this potential outward. South Korea seems to be doing this better. Concerning the implementation of soft power, it must be noted that we already has regional structures for projecting soft powers of concerned states with better control on specific issue areas, so that they can draw back from long-term engagement when the need arises. Such institutional structure is also a testing ground for China to engage itself in a "soft power competition" with other middle powers in the region, since we equate this type of power with zealous and timely state response on particular issue areas.

Session 3: Economics and Regionalism Sphere

"Korea's Policy toward China and East Asian Regionalism"

Geun Lee (Seoul National University)

South Korea's current relations with China must be understood in the backdrop of the following three questions that the Korean policymakers are increasingly asking themselves: 1) Is China regional or global power?; 2) Does South Korea have regional and global policy toward China?; and 3) Can regional middle powers cooperate to effectively respond to China?

Needless to say, China's importance is rising in South Korea. However, there are both costs and benefits for Korea by the rise of China. Koreans must face security threat for China's proximity to the Korean Peninsula, China's likely influence in the case of contingencies in North Korea, and South Korea's economic overdependence on China (Cost). However, South Korea is also benefiting from trade with the largest market in the world, as well as from using Chinese influence to push North Korea for reform and the security stabilization of the peninsula.

South Korea's regional policy for engaging China is to bind China into Asia, by utilizing the ASEAN plus Three (APT) and promote the rise of Asia as a whole by riding on the rise of China. However, at the global level, checking and balancing of China on the basis of "universal values" is also considered crucial by South Korea, by using institutional frameworks such as the East Asia Summit (EAS) as its platform. In the end, South Korea must "ride the back of the tiger." Korea must engage China with APT regionally for its benefit, but also participate in APT and EAS for balancing and checking China with other middle powers at the global level.

"China-Japan Power Struggles for East Asian Financial Regionalism"

Takashi Terada (Doshisha University) – Paper presented on behalf of Professor Terada by Professor Yoshihide Soeya

Rising China's influence in both political and economic sphere on a global scale is backed by China's continuous high economic growth. The economic rise is mainly due to its huge trade surpluses to exports to the United States as well as Europe, as well as the world's largest foreign currency reserves China maintains. The recent global financial crisis, furthermore, highlighted mutual economic interdependence between China and the United States, proving to the world that the two superpowers are bound to govern the global financial politics bilaterally in the near future and bypass other major players, such as Japan.

The global financial crisis also highlighted the rise of China in terms of financial cooperation within East Asia, where Japan has been long considered the most significant player. Regional financial cooperation entails financial contributions, and there is currently a battle between China and Japan over "which country pays more" in order to reflect their power in East Asian politics. Not limited to contributions, the two states are also battling over the usage of their currencies in East Asia. 70 percent of regional trades are settled in US dollars, and it is the region's common interest to create a stable business environment by creating its own new currency mechanism led by either Yen or Renminbi.

However, despite Japan's concern over China's rise and its policies in relation to East Asian regionalism for maintaining its status, it can be still asserted that overall, Japan has not moved beyond its traditional status as a "reactive state."

"The Dog That Hasn't Barked: Asian Multilateralism and Australia's China Debate"

Brendan Taylor (The Australian National University)

Australia is currently in the midst of a debate over its China policy. What is interesting in the debate is that there is an absence of any reference to the role of regional multilateral processes in engaging China's rise. This lack of attention to regional multilateralism is particularly puzzling, since multilateralism is a "great equalizer" for small and middle powers - such as Australia - in dealing with rising hegemonic powers such as China.

The lack of interest on the part of the Australian academia and policymakers toward regional multilateralism suggests that Australia does not have much confidence in regional institutions in addressing pressing challenges. The distrust stems from Australian evaluations of the effectiveness of multilateral institutions in terms of their capacity to deliver outcomes, rather than as a process for building trust and confidence. Consequently, we can predict that Canberra will continue to rely on bilateral modes of cooperation in responding to China's rise, and only take part in already-existing multilateral frameworks as "institutional follower," limiting its commitment only to highly practical and relatively uncontroversial initiatives. However, irrespective of the China factor, Canberra is not likely to wholly abandon its engagement with Asian multilateralism, as it is driven by larger fears of possible regional marginalization.

Q&A Session:

The main topic for discussion during this session was alliance politics, particularly those between South Korea and the United States, and the potential of a strengthened South Korea-Japan security cooperation in the same context. Although the previous Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun administrations actively sought Korea's part in regional cooperation, the current administration has re-shifted its focus on the alliance with the United States, and therefore in terms of South Korea's priority, the bilateral alliance - and not regionalism - is central to South Korea's security calculations at present.

Concerning the possibility of a formal South Korea-Japan alliance, panelists agreed that domestic politics and popular opinion would be the main deciding factor, and the process would entail a high cost. The bilateral security tie could reaffirm the old understanding in South Korean society that the Northeast Asia is divided between "sea powers" (the United States, Japan, and South Korea) and the "land power" (China, Russia, and North Korea), and the formal alliance, many in South Korea would argue, would facilitate the actual realization of such potentially-devastating division. However, lower technical level cooperation between Japan and South Korea is possible, and one area in the category would be information-sharing. For higher degree of security cooperation, the two states require more confidence building measures by designing a multiple-stage process for upgrading the bilateral security ties.

Session 4: Security Sphere

“Japan’s Multilayered Security Strategy”

Tomohiko Satake (National Institute of Defense Studies, Japan)

Japan’s current approach toward China can be best described as the “multilayered security strategy” with four components: 1) Defense of Japan; 2) The US-Japan Alliance; 3) Cooperation with regional countries; and 4) Contribution to global security. Japan’s Dynamic Defense Force Concept introduced in 2010 is the major driving force which promoted this security design, and it emphasizes that indirect, rather than direct, balancing vis-à-vis China is important.

Concerning the first component of the multilayered security strategy – the defense of Japan – the current direction Japan is taking can be described as “four Ss”—“swift and seamless”, “sustainable”, and “smart”. Concerning the US-Japan Alliance part, despite the mismanagement of base relocation issue by the DPJ government, the bilateral tie is showing the signs of revitalization. Furthermore, Japan is engaging in cooperation with regional countries in all three levels of bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral settings. In addition, Prime Minister Noda has promised that in order to contribute to global security, Japan would continue to commit itself to such issues as counter-piracy, the eradication of terrorism, peace-building, and non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as planning to dispatch the Self Defense Forces to the newly-independent South Sudan.

Japan’s security strategy, therefore, is a multi-level approach not solely targeting China, but it can indirectly manage the rise of China by Japan’s active contribution to the regional and global stability on a wider scope.

“Middle Power’s China Policy: South Korea’s China Policy”

Seongho Sheen (Seoul National University)

South Korea currently has no concrete security strategy toward China, but it is facing a fundamental dilemma in dealing with the China issue. As a middle power situated in the midst of the US-China rivalry, South Korea’s approach toward China is further aggravated by China’s increasing leverage vis-à-vis South Korea by its influence over North Korean affairs.

Therefore, without any coherent or comprehensive policy toward China, what we are witnessing in South Korea’s strategy in general is a “little bit of everything.” Similar to the 19th century Chinese diplomat Huang Jun-shen’s advice to Korea in 1880, South Korea is currently linking itself to all regional countries in a “Complex Diplomacy.” There are five components of the complex diplomacy: 1) Balancing, as characterized by the South Korea-US alliance, Jeju Island naval bases, and South Korea-Japan cooperation; 2) Engagement, conducted by strategic partnership, military exchanges, and Korea-China FTA; 3) Binding, which encourages regional

states into the Six-Party Talks and trilateral summit; 4) Shaping, which promotes initiative such as Campus Asia in which young leaders of universities from the three East Asian states engage themselves in triple talks; and 5) Inducing, in which South Korea protest to China the deportation of North Korean defectors.

Any direct US-China rivalry is not likely at this point, but middle powers such as South Korea, nevertheless, need to play their part for lessening the tension in trouble spots in East Asia, as these spots (such as the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan Strait) could lead to heavy involvement of the United States and China with unwanted consequences. Therefore, South Korea must take the ownership of its own security design as a “conductive power” by engaging Pyongyang to stabilize the Korean Peninsula and “Koreanize” Korean security.

“Domestic Determinants of Security Policy: Politicians’ Incentives”

Amy L. Catalinac (The Australian National University)

In International Relations discipline, politicians are not seen as causal agent and most research in the past have regarded politicians as merely following the preference of public. However, politicians are strategic actors who implement policies for their political benefit, and in democracies, the most important reward they seek is re-election.

Therefore, it could be argued that rather than being mere reflection of public opinion, politicians decide policies based on their own cost-benefit calculation within the institutional framework in which they are situated. And if the highest benefit for politicians is re-election, analyzing how their calculation for adopting particular security policies shift when they experience drastic electoral reforms domestically would prove the causality of such argument.

If we look into Japan’s case, there was an electoral reform in 1994. Prior to 1994, politicians generally ignored national security policies, since their political fate depended more on dealing directly with local constituents concerned with local issues. However, in the post-1994 era, we witness that “party platforms” and politicians’ popularity across nation became more important factor in elections. In order to mobilize wider support nationwide, politicians understandably started to pay more attention to national security which concerned Japan as a whole.

Current Japanese security policy change, therefore, should be understood in this light. Rather than simply observing what is going on externally, looking into domestic variables – politicians’ incentive structure under a given electoral system - should be given more focus.

“Australia’s Relations with China and the United States: ‘The Agony of Choice’?”

Andrew O’neil (Griffith Asia Institute)

Talk of Australia being “caught between two rival powers” has once again surfaced in Australia’s public debate. The ‘choice’ between economic interests (China) and security concerns (US) has become a fixation of sorts for Australians. Some have argued that Australia must avoid dependence on China to preserve its alliance with the US, while for others the US alliance must be degraded to preserve the economic lifeline to China. Australian government is thus walking on a geo-strategic tight rope in balancing relations with the United States and China. But in the end, many believe that Australia will be forced to make a hard choice between Washington and Beijing.

An increasing challenge for Australia at this point is how it hedges against China’s rise in the security sphere, while avoiding entrapment in a US-led containment strategy, since the American administrations will seek to shift the burden to allies to promote America’s strategy of preventing China from emerging as a great power challenger. But since alliances are characterized not only by the fear of entrapment, but also of abandonment, Australia is faced with the security dilemma in which it must find the right balance in its relations with the United States to avoid both entrapment and abandonment, while making sure that its continuous linkage with the United States does not look like an offensive strategy in Beijing’s eyes.

Q&A Session:

The main discussion of this session was related to Dr. Catalinac’s presentation. The increase of Japanese politician’s public statements on foreign policy in recent years, rather than a product of the electoral reform of 1994, could be equally explained by the fact that the rise of crucial foreign policy issues in recent years forced politicians to react. Also, politicians’ increasing interest in foreign policy is actually normal in a democratic state, and thus it could be equally argued that previous Japanese politicians were abnormal from international standard. Finally, it must also be noted that politicians’ increasing statements do not necessarily translate to actual policy outcome, since there are significant gap and debate between politicians and bureaucratic decision-makers. But it was agreed among the panelists that we need to look deeper into such unit-level domestic dynamics in order to understand actual decision-making process.

Moreover, it must be also emphasized that US-China relations is not only about rivalry, since there are also cooperative elements in the bilateral relations. US-China interaction is always a mix of cooperation and competition.

Live Telecast SNU-ANU Panel Session

1. Middle Powers and the China Factor

South Korea and Japan are similarly facing their region characterized by the rising China and the comparative weakening of the US influence. The two US allies fear the prospect of the United States leaving the region, in the midst of China becoming more assertive in territorial and economic issues. The two countries are heavily depended on the United States for security, while their dependence on China economically is becoming more extensive as well. In the backdrop of such circumstances, middle powers in the region are increasingly realizing the necessity for cooperation in order to tackle their fear by finding an “issue-oriented balance.” No single state can deal with the security challenges brought by the Chinese preoccupation with traditional security areas. However, at the same time, we must also recognize that rise of China is a challenging for everyone, including China, as the phenomenon is ultimately a result of changes at the international relations level. Australia is in a similar situation as South Korea and Japan, but there is a difference of geographical proximity and the existence of a real and viable choice. What it means is that Australia, in case the United States and China falls into confrontation, does not have a room to maneuver and is certainly going to side with the United States.

One of the aspects this workshop has highlighted is that we must recognize how the middle powers’ actions are viewed and interpreted by China. China’s value system and decision-making process are not necessarily the same as those of the middle powers. For example, when the Western, liberal democracies use the term “confidence building measures (CBM),” their understanding is that CBM will result in “trust.” In the Chinese case, however, the order is the opposite, meaning that China insists on trust first, CBM later. Also, while the middle powers perceive the rise of China as a new security challenge, the Chinese see their rise as a natural step toward going back to its historical “normalcy.” From this perspective, China is not the object which must be “socialized” by the middle powers, but the main power which “socializes” them. Viewing the current regional dynamics from both sides, therefore, is crucial.

Another topic that was discussed concerned the definition of “middle power.” Is the concept dealing with capability and power of a particular state, or the nature of its behavior or actions? Professor Soeya elaborated the term by arguing that it is a strategic concept used for gauging the nature of a particular state’s way of dealing with foreign policy issues; thus, it is less important to categorize a given state as a middle power, than to understand whether the state’s external behavior conforms to the characteristics of a non-hegemonic power. Japan clearly falls under the category of a middle power, since there is a gap between outsiders’ interpretation of Japan intending to become a super power, versus the actual foreign policy behavior of Japan, which is guided by the “invisible hand of Japan” as suggested by Professor Soeya.

2. The Korean Peninsula and the Alliance Politics

The two Koreas are going through regime transitions, and the fate of North Korea, particularly the prospect of the new Kim Jung-un regime’s survival and power consolidation, is still an open-ended question. Under the current circumstances, the utility and the commitment-

level of the US-South Korea alliance has become a significant topic among Korean policymakers. But if we go beyond the US-South Korea bilateral alliance, other middle powers in the region must also realize that the alliance web the United States has formulated in the region with Japan and Australia is clearly not only targeted against North Korea. Middle powers in the region must be prepared to face future situation in which the United States asks its allies the extent they are willing to commit themselves to America's counter-China strategy, and thus the alliance with the United States could turn out to be more costly than expected.

The workshop has highlighted the fact that any regional issue – including alliances – is heavily influenced by domestic politics, particularly in Japan and South Korea. All regional middle powers are concerned with North Korea and China, but their cooperation is often hindered by domestic factors. For example, Japanese stance toward North Korea cannot be purely strategic, as a result of the abductions issue still angering Japanese public. And South Korea's level of security cooperation with Japan – and even with the United States – often turns to an unexpected direction as a result of domestic polarization on those topics. Professor Soeya concluded the session by emphasizing that the United States forces in Japan are stationed there for contingencies abroad, and thus Japan is sustaining the US forces directly linked to Korean security. Such contribution on Japan's part for the peace of the Korean Peninsula must be discussed in more detail.