

# Japan: What Power? What Strategies?

**Takashi Inoguchi**

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## Japan: What Power? What Strategies?

Takashi Inoguchi

**Takashi Inoguchi** is Professor at Chuo University. Executive Editor of the *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, he is the author of more than seventy books.

Is Japan an absentee power? Or is it that Japan exists but its existence goes largely unnoticed? Given that its Gross National Product (GNP) is second only to the United States', such questions seem strange. It is as if the Japanese state did not exist but the Japanese market existed as part of the global market. When Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was abruptly hospitalized for two weeks in September 2007 without having designated an acting prime minister, the *Financial Times* (Pilling, 2007) wondered whether the Japanese government might be able to function without a prime minister altogether. Internationally, one often hears the comment that Japan's prime minister tends to be stolid and inept in projecting Japan's message despite all the economic might, technological prowess, and cultural richness Japan has accumulated thus far. Is Japan really an absentee power without a will? In what follows here, I argue that Japan is not an absentee power without a will, message, or strategy but is becoming a power with global scope and "ordinary" style. By *global* I mean two things: 1) that Japan's economic interests are felt in each and every part of the world; 2) that Japan enjoys mildly positive reputation world-wide as a harmless actor which sometimes verges on a non-visible and non-tangible Japan. By *ordinary* I mean again two things: 1) that Japan has been steadily and slowly broadening and relaxing the interpretation of the Constitutional clause of "non-use of force for the settlement of international disputes"; and 2) that Japan has been reducing its world rank in terms of per capita GNP, the amount of official development assistance and the size of its productive population (Inoguchi et al., 2005; Inoguchi and Bacon, 2006; Inoguchi, 2008). In short, Japan is becoming a global ordinary power with will, message, and strategy.

### **Alliance: Japanese Style**

When discussing Japan and its strategies, one cannot do so without discussing the nature of its alliance with the United States, an alliance born of the Second World War and the Cold War. Of the four dominant conceptions of this alliance, which best fits? The *first* views the alliance as

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destiny – in Japanese, *unmei*. It is propounded by those who regard Anglo-American naval hegemony as the essential condition of Japan's survival.

According to this understanding, the alliance embodies the idea of free sail, free trade, and free faith, and therefore serves Japan's national interests. Two former prime ministers, Kijuro Shidehara, who signed the surrender document with the Allied Powers, and Shigeru Yoshida, who as prime minister concluded the Japan-United States Security Treaty, are regarded as the best articulators of this school of thought (Okazaki, 2002).

The *second* conception of Japan's alliance with the US views it as a shared commitment to norms and values – such as freedom, democracy, market capitalism, and human rights – and has been stressed since the events of September 11, 2001. This commitment was manifested in the coalition of the willing – *yuushi rengo* in Japanese. Junichiro Koizumi – who, as prime minister in the early 2000s, unfailingly supported the Afghan and Iraq wars by the United States and sent the Japanese Self-Defense Forces to Iraq and to the Indian Ocean to help conduct the US-led war against global terrorism – is the best-known proponent of this school of thought (Inoguchi, 2004). In keeping with this view, Taro Aso, foreign minister during Koizumi's and Abe's terms of office, propounded the "arc of freedom and prosperity" policy, according to which Japan is to lend assistance to those countries that endeavor to achieve freedom and prosperity in the rim of the Eurasian continent (Aso, 2005).

The *third* conception of the Japanese-US alliance views it as a shared commitment in principle but not necessarily as an across-the-board alignment of policies. "Allied, but not aligned," argues Hubert Védrine, French foreign minister (Védrine and Moisi, 2001). *Washite douzezu* is the closest Japanese translation of this school's policy orientation. When the influence of this school of thought manifests itself, the popular Japanese phrase is *zeze hihhi* – saying "yes" when it coincides with national interests and "no" when it does not.

Finally, the *fourth* conception views the alliance as an outdated institution, a holdover from the 19th and 20th centuries. Putting an end to the alliance is seen as the key to restoring Japan's honor and responsibility. Rajan Menon (2007) is the most prominent recent advocate of this school of thought. In the latter half of the 20th century, the communists and socialists were the principal subscribers to this school. Yet, more recently, the socialist prime minister, Tomiichi Murayama, changed his party's

position from anti- to pro-alliance in 1995. Not even the communists argue for the immediate termination of the alliance once they have taken power. Though much smaller in scale, the anti-alliance camp among the extreme right-wing ultranationalists tenaciously champions this position.

These diverse conceptions of alliance have persisted as long as the Japan-United States Security Treaty has been in force, being modified a bit here and there as the environment in Japan changes. For instance, the school that promotes an end to the alliance contains both leftists and rightists. Also the school that regards alliance as destiny includes both great-power admirers and middle-power adherents. To overcome such conceptual difficulties, it is necessary to examine more historically the changing conceptions of alliance in relation to Japan's self-defined roles in the global community. Put schematically, Japan has had five types of self-defined roles, each reflecting changes in the nature of alliance and the international environment and each standing on the collective feet of domestic political actors. They are: (1) a defeated and protected power, (2) a free rider, (3) a systemic supporter, (4) a global civilian power, and (5) a global "ordinary" power. These roles have a roughly fifteen-year cycle (Inoguchi and Bacon, 2006; Inoguchi, 2008).

First, the domestic struggle between pro- and anti-alliance forces persisted from 1945 to 1960. Japan and the United States revised the security treaty to upgrade Japan's status in 1960. The Cold War was tense, as was the domestic debate. Second, the Yoshida Doctrine, or the policy that promoted the idea of Japan as a free rider on US military defense in order to focus Japan's energies on economic recovery, flourished from 1960 to 1975. Third, only after the perceived hegemonic decline of the US was seriously discussed and the West, in the spirit of solidarity, brought Japan into the club of major Western industrial democracies, did Japan try to configure its position in the global community as a responsible stakeholder. This it did in the period extending from the turmoil of the early 1970s to the end of the Cold War in 1989. During that period, Japan assigned itself the role of systemic supporter (Inoguchi, 1987), and not only joined efforts to coordinate the reduction of petroleum consumption but also denounced the SS-20 intermediate-range Soviet missiles that targeted Western Europe. Fourth, after the end of the Cold War came the period of global civilian power when such nations as Germany and Japan were able to play a major role in international affairs without having to resort to military force to resolve conflicts. During this period, which lasted from 1990 to 2005, Japan's aspiration to play a major role in the United Nations (UN) as a permanent member grew and its participation in the UN peacekeeping operations was initiated. Fifth, the post-Cold

War period abruptly ended with the terrorist attacks on the US on September 11, 2001. Japan has strongly supported the US in the subsequent war on global terrorism and thereby ushered in the period of what I call a “global ordinary power,” a period that will likely last until about 2020. By *global* I mean that Japan acts on a worldwide scale, neither as an introverted or insular power nor as a regional power. By *ordinary* I mean that Japan will be like many other powers that are constrained by power rivalries as well as by the pacifist impulse not to use force that was ingrained by its defeat in the Second World War and its subsequent alliance with the United States. Thus *ordinary* indicates that Japan is decreasingly an extraordinary power that precludes the use of force like some 20 other countries that have no armed forces (Maeda, 2008). Although the alliance with the United States has long been a key component of Japan’s self-defined roles, one should not underestimate the malleability of those roles even under similar circumstances of alliance with the United States.

### **Japan as a Global Ordinary Power**

I list three environmental factors and three domestic factors that, together, lead Japan to shape its grand strategy as a global ordinary power. Three major possibilities are: Japan as a nuclear power, Japan as a middle power, and Japan as an introverted power. In what follows, I explain how such factors are conducive to shaping a global ordinary power. First, because the United States has become less hegemonic in many policy domains, except for its military influence; second, because newly emerging economies in the developing world, with a cumulative population of 4 billion, have come to the fore of the world stage; and third, because in Asia both China and India have become global powers. From an internal perspective, Japan’s competitive drive not to be left behind by China’s and India’s global and regional rise has been heightened: first, because Japan’s demographic decline motivates the nation to excel diplomatically; second, because competitive pressures force Japan to become still more innovative; and third, because post-materialist Japanese yearn for more self-esteem and prestige. These considerations reinforce Japan’s self-defined role as a global ordinary power, provided that the time-tested pacifist tenet remains strong, especially at the grassroots level.

#### *Hegemonic Decline*

The question of whether the United States has lost its overwhelmingly predominant position has intermittently haunted the great power since the Soviets first launched Sputnik 1 into space in 1957. It has been a

recurrent theme. Yet the widely shared view is that the US has shrunk considerably in economic size and competitiveness, cultural appeal, and politico-diplomatic leadership. Michael Mann (2005) calls the US an incoherent empire, one that excels only militarily. Without some coherence maintained in key dimensions of power, Mann contends, hegemony has to go downhill. One can argue, like Fareed Zakaria (2008), that the US is sufficiently strong and that perhaps good leadership will enable it to sustain its hegemonic position for many years to come. From the Japanese viewpoint, the United States has reduced its economic influence considerably. Its weight in trade has declined markedly in East Asia. Intraregional trade over the total trade among Japan, South Korea, and China has now exceeded 50% since the early 2000s. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) trade has been predominantly with the northern-most three – Japan, South Korea, and China – dwarfing the United States with its paltry 15%. In terms of currency, the US dollar has lost its standing in East Asia. Most East Asian countries used to peg their currency de facto to the US dollar but have had to adjust to the deterioration of US currency, with visible, decisive moves away from the greenback. In terms of norm-setting and rule-making, US negotiators have been increasingly on the defensive. Vis-à-vis the European Union (EU), the United States has been fairing badly (Laïdi and Schoch, 2008). Vis-à-vis China, the United States has been repeatedly criticized for its ill management of its economy, which is a total reversal from the situation that prevailed only a few years ago; the direction of criticism has reversed. In terms of military strength, the US Navy has been doing its job well, despite China's steady rise. In 1995, when the Chinese Navy conducted a show of strength northeast of Taiwan in a bid to influence Taiwan's first democratic presidential election, the US Navy sent two aircraft carrier groups through the Taiwan Strait to demonstrate its own naval power. Since then, some have commented that the Taiwan Strait has become China's inland sea. However, in a dramatic move in 2007, US Navy aircraft carrier groups passed through the Taiwan Strait after China had denied the US Navy's request to visit Hong Kong for a Christmas vacation on its way back to Yokosuka. And the US Navy intends to double its number of aircraft carrier groups in the next ten years to counterbalance the alarmingly fast and steady rise of China's naval ambition and strength, which was underscored by the deputy chairman of the Chinese General Staff when he expressed his dream of dominating the Western Pacific, that is, to have everything west of Hawaii under the Chinese Navy's control.

**From the Japanese viewpoint, the US has reduced its economic influence considerably**

Confronted by the hegemonic decline of the United States, what should Japan do? In my view, Japan should support the US as steadfastly as possible while vigorously enhancing its engagement with other major powers.

### *Major Emerging Economies*

Aside from the bottom billion in the developing world who are unable to escape their poverty (Collier, 2007), some 4 billion in the developing world are ascending the ladder of wealth and improved living standards. The latter group's voice has become strong and self-confident, riding high on the global shortage of fuel, food, and finance (Lagarde, 2008). A telling sign of the growing strength of the major emerging economies is that Japan, the host of the recent G8 Summit, invited some major-emerging-economy and African countries to the summit. To the surprise and dismay of the host, many were not positive about coming to Lake Toya, Hokkaido. They formed their own Group of Four (BRICs), and held their own dialogs between petroleum producing and consuming countries in Jeddah. Some of them have made statements very similar to those made in the days of the New International Economic Order in the 1970s, but with a major difference: back then the countries threatened to leave the Western-dominated order, but now they are threatening to ridicule and cause major damage to the G8 if the latter does not make massive conciliatory contributions to the developing world. From the Japanese perspective, the threat is real. Japan's manufacturing interests permeate each and every part of the globe. It cannot afford to be indifferent.

Again, what should Japan do? In my view, Japan should be robust in its global reach in terms of market access to resources, technological cooperation, and official development assistance.

### *China and India*

Demographically China and India hold one-half of the globe's population (Emmott, 2008). Both countries are eager to rise strongly and swiftly. Once their per capita income levels rise to a certain point, their demographic weight will translate into astronomical levels of food, water, and energy resource consumption, and equally staggering amounts of carbon dioxide emissions. Given the increasingly massive supply of educated manpower in both countries, it will not be long before they become the masters of manufacturing of many industrial goods and the masters of service in finance and information on a global scale. Furthermore, their security ambitions should not be underestimated. China's dream to make the

Western Pacific a de facto Chinese ocean is real unless the US acts vigorously on this front. India's security ambition was partially achieved in South Asia when Pakistan refrained from doing much in Kashmir and in nuclear weapons development. India's eyes now turn to China. Fortunately, the joint communiqué signed by Yasuo Fukuda and Hu Jintao in 2008 underlines the shared thinking of both leaders about the need for Japan and China to work together and make progress together. The joint communiqué signed by Shinzo Abe and Manmohan Singh in 2007 also underscores the shared goal of enhancing ties and cooperation between Japan and India. Among the Japanese, apprehension is increasing. In polls about the popularity of major countries, Japan no longer counts among the global leaders, a group that now includes China, India, and even Pakistan, but only among regional leaders, which include Singapore and Indonesia (PIPA, 2008).

Once more, what should Japan do? Engagement of the two future superpowers is the natural answer, and invigorating the East Asian Summit to which both China and India belong is a good platform.

### *Demographic Decline*

The Japanese population is steadily dropping from its current level of 120 million. The decline is proceeding at an alarmingly rapid pace. New couples produce only slightly more than one child on average. The Japanese figures on demographic decline are on par with those of South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. A think tank at the Ministry of Treasury recently published a report on demographic decline and its impact on Japanese economic growth. It estimates that the population will decrease from 127 million in 2005 to 95 million in 2050, with a drastic decrease in the size of the working population, that is, 15- to 64-year-olds, from 84 million in 2005 to 49 million in 2050. Such an impact on the workforce will in turn have a very negative effect on Japan's annual growth rate. The report predicts further that by the mid-2030s Japan will have a negative growth rate (Zaimusho, 2008). To stem the tide, the government has been striving to substantially improve the facilities and environment for childbirth and childrearing, including reducing gender bias in employment. The governing party, the Liberal Democratic Party, has announced the plan to substantially increase the number of migrants to 10 million by 2050. Among Asians, Japanese have been known to be reluctant to emigrate. Compared to the Irish, Italians, Chinese, Indians, Philipinos, and Koreans, Japanese tend to remain at home even when

**The demographic decline is proceeding at an alarmingly rapid pace**



poverty or other difficulties threaten their daily lives. Japanese have been known to be reluctant to accommodate immigrants, including refugees. Despite some public reluctance, the actual number of immigrants has been steadily increasing at an alarming rate in the 2000s. Immigrants, including illegal aliens, are said to have exceeded 2 million in total. The general lack of proficiency in English among Japanese makes such immigration very serious.

What should Japan do? Despite its initial reluctance, Japan should open the door to immigrants on a scale unprecedented since ancient times when Continental Asians, as distinguished from Maritime Asians, immigrated to Japan. The government has already approved a scheme, using the official developmental assistance budget, to bring in from abroad caretakers and nurses for seniors on a rotational basis. The steady increase in the number of seniors coupled with astronomical government budget deficits has resulted in an acute care crisis for the elderly.

### *Innovations*

Japanese are generally proud of their manufacturing strength. Short of natural resources and yet endowed with an intelligent and hardworking population, Japan has achieved a high degree of wealth. Japanese are generally proud of being mindful of other persons. They are also proud of their service. But when work in financial services and information technology becomes the topic of discussion, Japanese tend to shy away. Why? Because a solid command of English is indispensable to excel in these areas. And Japanese generally do not have much facility with languages.

### **Thousands of Indian professionals work in Tokyo in financial services and information**

These two areas of work attract migrants often on a temporary visa. For instance, thousands of Indian professionals work in Tokyo in these two areas. Platforms at some subway stations only 30 minutes away from the Tokyo Station are crowded by hundreds of South Asians every morning. Most importantly, the government has been reluctant to deregulate the financial service and information technology sectors irrespective of whether Japanese are strong in those areas (Tiberghien, 2007). Deregulation is taking place only slowly. In view of this situation, then, it is manufacturing that must be the battlefield for the Japanese. Because Chinese and Indians are advancing much faster and more steadily than Japanese would like, Japanese manufacturing must develop much faster and much more vigorously. When India-made automobiles are priced at no more than \$3,000, how can Japanese automobiles priced at \$30,000 to \$100,000 compete? This is a key driving

force behind the increasingly immensity of the government's budget for science and technology. Not only scientific discovery and technological innovations but also organizational and social innovations are encouraged in order to maximize the results of this national drive, which can be glimpsed in speeches, symposia, and other kinds of mostly government-sponsored events, where, for example, Nobel Laureates from around the world lay out how they did it.

What should Japan do? It should strive to reach technological frontiers as quickly as possible by taking advantage of its accumulated "edge" in science and technology in a number of key areas.

### *Self-esteem and Pride*

Japanese are honest, diligent, and proud people – so wrote a number of Westerners in the late 16th century when many Christian missionaries reached Japan, as well as in the mid-19th century when Western powers opened Japan and its ports. When Onono Imoko, a 7th-century Japanese statesman and the closest aide to Empress Suiko, sent a letter to his counterpart in a small country in what is now northern China, it began with: From the country where the sun rises (Japan) to the country where the sun sets (China). When the Mongol ruler sent his emissary to Japan demanding surrender and submission in the 12th century, General Tokimune killed the emissary immediately after he listened to the Mongol demand. When the United States and its allies imposed economic sanctions on Japan for the latter's aggression in China in 1940, Japanese resorted to force in 1941, even though their eventual defeat was a foregone conclusion. Self-esteem, honor, and pride are often the common traits that can be found in anyone. Still, Japanese cherish such traits, especially when their honorable position is at stake in the world. For instance, country ranking is something they worry about seriously. Therefore, a great deal of attention is paid in the mass media to the ranking of Japanese primary school students in math, to the ranking of Japanese official development assistance, and to the number of Japanese Nobel Laureates. This concern became paramount as Japan attempted to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The Tokyo government was extremely distressed when not one member of ASEAN supported the resolution to make Japan a permanent member and when defection took place en masse among African countries. The Japanese government had counted on both regions to support its bid.

What should Japan do? Despite the three dramatic actions taken by Japanese leaders in history as illustrated above, Japan in the 21st century is

not prepared to build an ancient state de novo, or to back an ultimatum with force. In such instances, a state may have to be willing to rush to war. Japan is no longer such a place. Japan will choose mature, moderate, well-reasoned postures of a global ordinary power when confronted by circumstances in which self-esteem, honor, and pride are or could be injured.

### **What Strategies?**

A global ordinary power needs to acquaint itself with multiple strategies. Various factors, from the country's size, demographic makeup, economic strength, and issues at stake, to its ability to respond, all have an impact on the shape of these multiple strategies. In my view, four major strategies should be combined: bi-multilateralism, aggressive legalism, sci-tech fundamentalism, and human developmentalism.

#### *Bi-Multilateralism*

A shift from predominantly bilateral to multilateral diplomacy has been fairly steadily under way, despite dogged resistance to multiculturalism in the institutional structure of the central bureaucracy, whose policy orientation has been dubbed "bilateralism at any cost" (Inoguchi, 2007). In the 2000s, multilateralism has become mainstream and is called bi-multilateralism. This term was coined to reflect Japan's belief that multilateral agreements should be reached through bilateral *nemawashi*, or in-depth bilateral consultation and persuasion. More concretely, two bi-multilateral pillars shape the Japanese prime minister's schedule: (1) the G8 Summit towards which bureaucrats work in the former half of the year, and (2) regional multilateral meetings, such as the ASEAN plus Three and the East Asian Summit (and the UN General Assembly), that fall in the latter half of the year. Needless to say, functionally defined multilateral conferences are held regularly at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), many UN agencies, and countless others (Dobson, 2004). They constitute what might be termed segmented technocratic governance schemes. Such segmented technocratic conferences lay the groundwork for subsequent top-level conferences emphasizing human interaction and personal touch, such as the G8 Summit, the ASEAN plus Three Summit, and the World Economic Summit, also called the Davos Conference. Again, the core of Japan's diplomacy has been with the United States. As long as that core was markedly bilateral, it would have been premature to announce that Japan's diplomacy had become multilateral. Yet one can argue that the United States itself has in many ways become

much more multilateral and rule-of-law based and that many bilateral issues are resolved at multilateral conferences that provide solutions. Often bilateral issues only arise in reference to multilaterally determined or at least emergent norms and rules. This new American tendency is visible in calls for a “league of democracies” by authors such as Robert Kagan (2008) and Ann-Marie Slaughter (2007). The motivating belief is that only among democracies can rule-based global governance be achieved.

### *Aggressive Legalism*

Aggressive legalism is nothing new to Japan. It used to be an instrument by which Japan, a self-perceived weak nation, asserted and protected its interests in the world of nations. Thus, for instance, when Japan and China were negotiating the diplomatic normalization of relations following Henry Kissinger’s visit to China, Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai called Japan’s chief negotiator, Masuao Takashima, *fafei* or a legalistic bandit. At issue was the status of Taiwan with which Japan had concluded its Peace Treaty along with other Allied Powers at the end of the Second World War. The Japanese argument was that if Taiwan were negated abruptly, Japan’s peace with the Allied Powers would be injured. Instead of abrogating it, Japan argued that it had become obsolete. Masuao Takashima won over Zhou Enlai on this matter. Of late, Japan’s aggressive legalism has been noted much more often. In fact, “aggressive legalism” is taken from the title of a scholarly book authored by Saadia Pekkanen (2007). In such policy areas as world trade, intellectual property rights, tax regulations, and human rights, Japanese negotiators are known for their thorough and stubborn attitude. Given the increasing need to conduct international relations in reference to agreements made multilaterally, Japan’s strategy of aggressive legalism befits the *Zeitgeist*, or the spirit of the day. In fact, “Our Diplomacy Should Be Able to Use International Law More Effectively” is the title of the special issue of the monthly journal *Gaiko Forum*, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the G8 Summit in Japan.

### *Sci-Tech Fundamentalism*

“Sci-tech fundamentalism” is perhaps too strong a phrase. But it aptly captures the spirit of Japan in the 21st century. Japan’s objective in the 20th century was to build a nation by exporting manufactured products and importing resources from abroad. A resource-poor country must be competitive in producing industrial goods, be they rubber sandals, cotton cloth, automobiles, semi-conductors, special steel, or nano-technological

products. Well before entering the 21st century, the objective had changed. Emerging economies are almost capturing many of them as their competitive items in due course. What is absolutely necessary is the non-stop development of scientific discovery and technological innovation. While excellence in manufacturing has to continue, a country dare not rely on it alone for too long, since emerging economies are quickly catching up with advanced industrial economies. Given that Japan is resource poor, it must excel in the creation of new ideas and technologies, which will open up new opportunities for Japan. The Japanese government has demonstrated its awareness of this fact by massive budgetary investments in research and development over at least the last ten years. And this state of affairs has been confirmed beyond Japan's borders. For instance, Vladimir Putin, after noticing Japan's resource-poor circumstances but excellence in science and technology, has sent two major high-level missions to Japan since 2007 to facilitate scientific and technological cooperation. Though now rich in resources, Russia must prepare itself for the future, when resources have been depleted. Japan is a country that has built a very high-income society from no other resource other than brains – so Putin argues (Hakamada, 2008). The Russian statesman aside, Japan is determined to advance its frontier positions in science and technology, because unless it takes the lead in many areas, Japan's standing in the world is more likely to wane.

### *Human Developmentalism*

Human developmentalism states that advances in economic development are based on freedom of an individual to choose his or her course of action (Sen, 2000). It is the idea of economic development that the Japanese have contributed to shape in their gradual moving away from their focus on state-led developmentalism (Johnson, 1982). It is more widely known that the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has championed the idea, as is attested by its *Journal of Human Development*. Thus Japan has shifted its priorities in official development assistance from the spheres of manufacturing and its industrial infrastructure to those of medicine, nutrition, education, the environment, and gender equality – in short, to human development. That former emphasis, which lasted from the 1950s through the 1980s, was visibly and tangibly replaced in the 1990s by Japan's new attention to human development. This policy move coincided with the shift of Japanese developmental assistance from East and Southeast Asia to Africa (and South Asia), as is evidenced by Japan's steadfast endeavor since the mid-1990s to promote human development in Africa through the Tokyo International Conference on African

Development (TICAD). In 2008, at the fourth TICAD, leaders of nearly 40 African countries assembled in Tokyo in order to advance African development through face-to-face meetings with Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda.

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### Japan as a Global Ordinary Power

Japan is becoming a global ordinary power, one that places great stock in global peace and development. It aspires to promote peace, freedom, and prosperity – even though the United States, its key ally, appears to be on the decline; even though the burgeoning of the developing world's population to 4 billion might place Japan in the category of one of the less endowed countries; even though the rise of Japan's neighbors, near and afar, is visible and tangible; even though the size of Japan's population is shrinking dramatically; and even though self-esteem, honor, and pride may not always be the best traits to help Japan to navigate among powers filled with jealousy and enmity. Given all these uncertainties, Japan should adopt the four-pronged strategy of a global ordinary power: bi-multilateralism, aggressive legalism, sci-tech fundamentalism, and human developmentalism. In all these, the Japanese government should try to play its distinctive and indispensable roles despite any and all adversity.

**Japan aspires to promote peace, freedom, and prosperity**



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