

# Tomorrow's Northeast Asia



2  
0  
1  
1

Joint U.S.-Korea Academic Studies  
Volume 21



**JOINT U.S.-KOREA ACADEMIC STUDIES**

**Volume 21, 2011**

**Prospects for Emerging East Asian Cooperation  
and  
Implications for the United States**

**Symposium Sponsored by**

**Korea Economic Institute,  
Korea Institute for International Economic Policy, and  
School of International Service at American University**

**20–22 October 2010**

## **KEI EDITORIAL BOARD**

KEI Editors: Nicole M. Finnemann  
Sarah Howe  
Abraham Kim  
Florence Lowe-Lee

Contract Editor: Mary Marik

Cover Design: Stuart Johnson Jr.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors. While this monograph is part of the overall program of the Korea Economic Institute endorsed by its Officers, Board of Directors, and Advisory Council, its contents do not necessarily reflect the views of individual members of the Board or of the Advisory Council.

Copyright 2011 by the Korea Economic Institute  
[www.keia.org](http://www.keia.org)

All rights reserved, except that authorization is given herewith to academic institutions and educators to reproduce articles herein for academic use as long as appropriate credit is given both to the authors and to this publication.

Printed in the United States of America.  
ISSN 1054-6944

# CONTENTS

<b>KEI Advisory Council</b> .....	iv
<b>Preface</b> .....	vi
<b>History of Korea Economic Institute Academic Symposia</b> .....	vii
<b>Prospects for Emerging East Asian Cooperation and Implications for the United States</b>	
Tomorrow's East Asia Today: Regional Security Cooperation for the 21st Century <i>Andrew L. Oros</i> .....	1
U.S.-Russian-Chinese Cooperation for the Security of Korea <i>Doug J. Kim</i> .....	15
Korea, ASEAN, and East Asian Regionalism <i>David Arase</i> .....	33
<b>The Emerging Role of South Korea on a Global Stage</b>	
Bridging the Global Gap: Korea's Leadership Agenda for the G-20 <i>Balbina Y. Hwang and Youngji Jo</i> .....	53
<b>The Future of Energy Security in Northeast Asia</b>	
Going Global: Issues Facing South Korea as an Emerging Nuclear Exporter <i>Chen Kane, Stephanie C. Lieggi, and Miles A. Pomper</i> .....	79
Prospects for Creating a Great, Green Path to Power <i>George Hutchinson</i> .....	105
<b>Engaging and Transforming North Korea's Economy</b>	
Engaging and Transforming North Korea's Economy <i>William B. Brown</i> .....	133
Estimating the Potential Size of Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation <i>Doowon Lee</i> .....	149
<b>Finding Room for a Six Party Solution to North Korea's Nuclear Crisis</b>	
South Korea and the Six-Party Talks: The Least Bad Option? <i>Charles K. Armstrong</i> .....	165
Six-Party Talks and China's Goldilocks Strategy: Getting North Korea Just Right <i>Drew Thompson and Natalie Matthews</i> .....	179
Japanese Perspectives on the Six-Party Talks and the North Korean Nuclear Crisis <i>Michael R. Auslin</i> .....	195
Russia and the Six-Party Process in Korea <i>Stephen Blank</i> .....	207

## KEI ADVISORY COUNCIL

### Chair

The Honorable Stephen W. Bosworth  
The Fletcher School at Tufts  
University; Department of State

The Honorable James A. Kelly  
EAP Associates, Inc.

Mr. Andrew B. Kim  
Sit/Kim International

### Members

Mr. Bradley Babson  
World Affairs Council of Maine

Mr. Spencer Kim  
Pacific Century Institute

Dr. Claude Barfield  
American Enterprise Institute

Mr. Bruce Klingner  
Heritage Foundation

Dr. John Bennett  
Former KEI President

The Honorable James T. Laney  
Emory University

Dr. Thomas F. Cargill  
University of Nevada, Reno

Dr. Kirk W. Larsen  
Brigham Young University

His Excellency Yoon-je Cho  
Sogang University

His Excellency Tae-sik Lee  
Former Ambassador to the U.S.

Dr. Nicholas Eberstadt  
American Enterprise Institute

Dr. Young-Sun Lee  
Yonsei University

Mr. Robert Fallon  
Columbia Business School

Dr. Wonhyuk Lim  
Korea Development Institute

Mr. Gordon Flake  
Maureen & Mike Mansfield  
Foundation

Mr. Paul M. McGonagle  
Consultant

The Honorable Donald P. Gregg  
The Korea Society

Dr. G. Mustafa Mohatarem  
General Motors Corporation

The Honorable Thomas C. Hubbard  
McLarty Associates

Dr. Chung-in Moon  
Yonsei University

Dr. Hugh T. Patrick  
Columbia University

The Honorable Ernest H. Preeg  
Manufacturers Alliance/MAPI

Dr. Mitchell B. Reiss  
Washington College

Mr. Evans J. R. Revere  
Albright Stonebridge Group

Mr. Alan Romberg  
Henry L. Stimson Center

Dr. Robert A. Scalapino  
University of California, Berkeley

Dr. Jeffrey R. Shafer  
Citigroup

His Excellency Joun-yung Sun  
Kyungnam University

Mr. W. Robert Warne  
Former KEI President

Mr. Joseph A. B. Winder  
Winder International,  
Former KEI President

**KEI Board of Directors**

Sukhan Kim, Esq.  
Partner  
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld

Prof. Yoon Shik Park  
George Washington University

Prof. David Steinberg  
Georgetown University

**Officers**

Amb. Charles L. Pritchard  
President

Dr. Abraham Kim  
Vice President

Ms. Florence Lowe-Lee  
Treasurer

## PREFACE

The Korea Economic Institute (KEI) in Washington, D.C., in cooperation with the School of International Service (SIS) at American University, also in Washington, D.C., cosponsored an academic symposium at SIS on 20–22 October 2010 on “Tomorrow’s Northeast Asia.” This volume contains the papers that were presented at the symposium and subsequently refined.

The 2010 symposium focused on emerging and future challenges facing Northeast Asia. Papers and discussions fell under five broad topics:

- Prospects for emerging East Asian cooperation and implications for the United States
- The emerging role of South Korea on a global stage
- The future of energy security in Northeast Asia
- Engaging and transforming North Korea’s economy
- Finding room for a six-party solution to North Korea’s nuclear crisis.

The sponsors and authors welcome comments on the material in this volume. This is the 21st in a series of annual academic symposia on Asia-Pacific economic and security issues that bring together leading academics and policy professionals from throughout the region.

Louis W. Goodman  
Dean  
School of International Service  
American University

Charles L. (Jack) Pritchard  
President  
Korea Economic Institute

*December 2010*



## **HISTORY OF KOREA ECONOMIC INSTITUTE ACADEMIC SYMPOSIA**

- 2010 American University, School of International Service,  
Washington, D.C.
- 2009 East-West Center, Honolulu  
Additional partners: Hawaii Pacific University, Pacific Forum CSIS
- 2008 New York University,  
Center for Japan-U.S. Business & Economic Studies,  
Stern School of Business
- 2007 University of Southern California, Korean Studies Institute
- 2006 Harvard University,  
Preventive Defense Project, John F. Kennedy School of Government
- 2005 University of Washington
- 2004 College of William & Mary
- 2003 Stanford University
- 2002 University of Pennsylvania
- 2001 University of California–Los Angeles
- 2000 Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies
- 1999 George Washington University
- 1998 Georgetown University
- 1997 University of Southern California
- 1996 University of Michigan
- 1995 University of Chicago
- 1994 University of California–Berkeley
- 1993 Princeton University
- 1992 Columbia University
- 1991 Indiana University
- 1990 University of California–San Diego



# **TOMORROW'S EAST ASIA TODAY: REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY**

*Andrew L. Oros*

## **ABSTRACT**

Security cooperation in East Asia lags behind other forms of regional cooperation. The relationship among China, Japan, and the United States—the most powerful security actors in the region—exemplifies this broad pattern of extensive economic interaction with limited security cooperation to date. The chapter focuses on three questions in particular: (1) What and where is the demand for security cooperation in tomorrow's East Asia? (2) What role can China-Japan-U.S. trilateral cooperation play? and (3) What should be the role of other regional actors, including South Korea?

---

*Andrew L. Oros is an Associate Professor of Political Science and International Studies at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland. As a Japan Foundation Abe Fellow, he currently is conducting research based at Peking and Keio Universities on prospects for regional security cooperation.*

## Introduction

To a large degree, we already live in “tomorrow’s Northeast Asia.” The reality of East Asia *today* is that states cooperate far beyond what their formal rhetoric and ideologies would seem to allow, citizens work (and play) together in pragmatic ways that belie media coverage of rising nationalism, and the large number of regional institutions that has arisen to facilitate cooperation arguably better illustrates a need for the culling of redundancy than the creation of additional institutions.

In an ideal world, tomorrow’s East Asia (as well as East Asia today) would be focused on developing pragmatic, cooperative solutions to the new challenges of the 21st century. In today’s East Asia, however, much effort is still required to address lingering issues of the 20th century, in particular, numerous territorial claims, Cold War–era divided states, and calls for development of an “accurate” history of what actually transpired in the past bloody century. One of the biggest challenges to East Asia today is to shift attention from 20th century challenges to the new challenges of the 21st century, to tomorrow’s Northeast Asia.

These new challenges are many, as illustrated by the breadth of topics that appear in this volume. Among them are energy security and broader issues related to natural resources exploitation; the mitigation of environmental damage and the challenges related to addressing global climate change; the rebalancing of the management of global governance to reflect East Asia’s rising economic, military, and political power; and so-called new security challenges (some of which, in fact, date back to beginnings of the nation-state) such as piracy, terrorism, and the spread of infectious diseases.

Fortunately, a number of multilateral and minilateral cooperative solutions have already emerged to address many of these issues—a veritable alphabet soup: APEC, APT, ARF, ASEM, EAS, PSI, SCO, and others.<sup>1</sup> The challenge is to make these new institutions more effective and perhaps even to consolidate redundancies. Quite a bit of attention has been given to the study of such institutions in recent years by both scholars and policymakers.<sup>2</sup> Comparatively less attention has been paid to the increasingly interdependent relations and policy coordination challenges among the largest actors in the regional order: China, Japan, and the United States. These actors by themselves could, in principle, lead the way

---

1 APEC: Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation; APT: ASEAN Plus Three; ARF: ASEAN Regional Forum; ASEM: Asia-Europe Meeting; EAS: East Asia Summit; PSI: Proliferation Security Initiative; SCO: Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

2 Dozens of different perspectives are offered in Calder and Fukuyama (2008), Green and Gill (2009), and Tow (2009); and these are only a few.

to solve some of the region's most pressing challenges, including, importantly, the substantial security-related concerns each holds vis-à-vis the others.

This chapter will focus on this subset of the many areas of ongoing regional cooperation: on the need for greater regional security cooperation, and in particular the potential contribution of increased China-Japan-U.S. (C-J-US) trilateral security cooperation. In conclusion, the chapter will address how trilateral C-J-US security cooperation would include and affect other regional actors such as South Korea, which is an important—and at times indispensable—player in the area of East Asian regional security. The chapter will focus on three questions in particular: (1) What and where is the demand for security cooperation in tomorrow's East Asia? (2) What role can China-Japan-U.S. trilateral cooperation play? and (3) What should be the role of other regional actors, including South Korea?

### **The Reality of Extensive Regional Cooperation Despite the Rhetoric of Conflict<sup>3</sup>**

A history of the 21st century will likely begin with the economic milestone of two Asian countries (Japan and China) becoming the second- and third-largest economies in the world, which occurred in 2007 when China surpassed Germany to become the world's third-largest economy.<sup>4</sup> The writer of this history will likely associate this milestone with the generations of peace from which the region has gained benefit—in sharp contrast to most other regions of the world that continue to suffer from interstate and civil wars—and with the greatly increased interactions among the people, businesses, and governments of the states in the region: the de facto regionalization of Northeast Asia.

This may not be the current image many East Asians hold, given the daily catalogue of suspicions, recriminations, and perceptions of threat one reads in the media of any state in Northeast Asia. But these latter issues are largely challenges of the 20th century. In the 21st century, new challenges already are apparent—including how to manage a historical shift of economic and political power toward East Asia, how to allocate the world's limited resources more fairly and efficiently, and how to provide governance in a global commons at a time of relative decline of the United States. It is imperative that the people and the leaders of the states of Northeast Asia—in particular China, Japan, and South

---

3 This and the following section develop further the ideas first presented in Oros (2010a).

4 This ranking excludes the European Union because that body represents a collection of states.

Korea—focus on contributing to this new history of the 21st century rather than dwelling on issues of the 20th century.

Anyone who has spent time in the region will have witnessed numerous occasions of East Asians putting aside personal prejudices or political dogma in favor of practical, forward-looking cooperation. The most successful firms in East Asia employ citizens from China, Japan, and South Korea not just in production or translation but in the creative teams at the core of their operations. The now annual “Asian Davos” meeting of the World Economic Forum in China is one prominent example of such practical regional cooperation. In that forum, creative thinkers and a number of so-called next-generation leaders work across national boundaries to devise solutions to pressing regional and global problems outside of rigid government-led dialogues. At the fourth annual Asian Davos meeting in Tianjin in September 2010, I witnessed frank exchanges among Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans based on such practical concerns, which was especially encouraging since at the same time elsewhere in Tianjin a school that enrolled many Japanese students was being pelted with stones (or shot at by pellet guns, depending on the account) by local Chinese residents angry about the unfolding dispute between China and Japan over the arrest by Japan of a Chinese fishing captain in waters claimed by both states.<sup>5</sup>

Government officials in every state in East Asia (and, indeed, elsewhere in the world) could learn from the pragmatism of the new champions of Asian Davos and should work to avoid pandering to the worst instincts of their citizens evident in Internet chat rooms, polarized media, and sporadic violent demonstrations. In this area, unilateral action would make a substantial contribution to regional relations. In the short term, however, politicians have often found political advantage in pandering to these groups while the lasting consequences of such actions are much more difficult to control than the initial fanning of the flames. True political leadership—and statesmanship, which largely has been lacking in the region in recent years—rests on creating new cooperative structures and building better relations rather than scapegoating or deriding others for past problems.

On a more optimistic note, the unprecedented number of opportunities for the region’s leaders to meet in person in this new century provides one promising avenue toward future cooperative possibilities. In the autumn of 2010 alone,

---

5 Not to be outdone, Japanese nationalists angry at the subsequent release of the fishing captain by Japan attacked a Chinese tourist bus in Fukuoka a few weeks later. Numerous other minor incidents have been reported on both sides, but fortunately there had been no serious injuries by the conclusion of the National Day holidays in China in early October.

government leaders will meet in New York for the opening of the United Nations General Assembly, at the ASEM leaders meeting in Brussels, at the Group of 20 meeting in Seoul, and at the APEC annual meeting in Yokohama in addition to engaging in bilateral shuttle diplomacy. This is a remarkable change in global governance considering that the heads of state of China, Japan, and the United States met together for the first time in history less than 20 years ago, at the first meeting of APEC.

### **Great-Power Roles in Regional Cooperation**

The United States has long been an essential—if controversial—contributor to peaceful relations and community building in East Asia. It will continue to be in the 21st century, but at the same time the other major states of the region must also become more responsible for creating harmonious relations in the region as U.S. relative power declines vis-à-vis East Asia's economic and political power. This is not to say that the United States is in decline—this is a matter of debate—but the rise of the economic and political power of East Asian states in the recent past and the near future is not a matter for debate: it is a fact. Japan led the way, becoming the second-largest economy in the world about 40 years ago when it surpassed Europe's largest economies. South Korea was next, breaking into the ranks of the top 10 world economies at the end of the last century. China is the latest major entrant. At the same time, the economic power of *most* of the states of East Asia has risen markedly, including another of the most populous states in the world, Indonesia, and a host of smaller but important states in Southeast Asia.

Despite the relative shift of economic power worldwide, or perhaps because of it, the United States continues to place strategic importance on East Asia and has made clear that it intends to continue to do so notwithstanding the multiple challenges that country faces worldwide. Still, part of the strategy of the United States—which, in fact, has long been in evidence—is to ask its formal allies and other friends in the region to play a greater role in contributing to the regional and global good of security and to the development of peaceful, cooperative mechanisms.

Peaceful and cooperative relations between China and Japan in particular are essential for the realization of a cooperative Northeast Asian community in tomorrow's Asia. The past 65 years of peaceful relations between the two states already has been one of the most important factors in the region's unprecedented pace of economic development. Moreover, closer relations between the two states in the past 38 years—since the resumption of formal diplomatic

relations—surely have contributed even further to the economic development of both states. Although it is a bumpy road, there are positive signs that the two states will work past their many long-standing differences and become leaders in the worldwide challenge of reconciliation after extended conflict. Still, many potential stumbling blocks lie on the horizon, as seen in the most recent flare-up related to the territorial dispute over islands in the East China Sea that separates China and Japan.

The deepening of trade relations between the two states, with China now Japan's largest trading partner and Japan China's number two,<sup>6</sup> provides one avenue for expanded cooperation. The growth in economic exchange has led to deepening governmental ties as both sides seek to address a wide range of regulatory issues. It also has led to burgeoning trilateral cooperation among China, Japan, and South Korea as the three states face many of the same cooperative challenges. In the medium term, such interaction may even lead to a free trade area in Northeast Asia, building on China-South Korea negotiations currently under way.

Working together fosters habits of cooperation and creates diverse and multiple channels to use to weather the times of tension that are bound to arise in any deep relationship. After all, a cooperative relationship does not mean that conflict does not arise; instead, in the context of friendly relationships, conflict is managed with a cooperative spirit that is based on a mutual recognition of the benefits of the broader relationship.

One area where the major powers of the region should continue to cooperate is by deepening further economic ties, including mutual direct investment and promotion of people-to-people exchanges through practical interactions such as joint investment schemes, cooperative technology development and implementation, and tourism. Leaders in the region should work together to create more cooperative multilateral relations such as China-Japan-South Korea trilateral cooperation, which may perhaps extend to a large free trade area in its next steps. The 21st century has witnessed several cases of business leaders in Northeast Asia pressuring their political leadership to tone down the rhetoric of conflict when it began to endanger the positive economic climate that underpins regional trade and production networks. This is evidence of the positive role cooperative economic relations can play.

Even a cursory review of the history of world politics will reveal, however, that economic interdependence alone is not enough to ensure peaceful relations

---

6 If the EU were considered a single state, Japan would be China's number three trading partner.



among states. Thus, the states of the region should redouble their efforts to develop mechanisms for more cooperative security relationships. This should include both traditional confidence-building and conflict management efforts such as military officer exchanges, port visits, and crisis hotlines as well as new initiatives to work together in areas of common concern.

### **The Need for Greater Security Cooperation in Tomorrow's East Asia<sup>7</sup>**

Both forms of security cooperation—cooperation to reduce concerns about each other (for example, advanced weapons development, territorial disagreements) and cooperation over security concerns each party shares (for example, piracy, terrorism, climate change)—should be pursued in tomorrow's East Asia. It is important to distinguish these two very different forms of cooperation as well as the sorts of activities each is likely to engender. Already rudimentary steps toward both forms of cooperation are taking place, though not yet at the trilateral C-J-US level.

In the area of shared security concerns, a number of multilateral institutions have arisen to address a wide range of mutually perceived security challenges. The six-party-talks framework brought together China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the United States over their shared concern about North Korean nuclear weapons development. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has built on its own increased security role among its 10 members to sponsor both the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)<sup>8</sup> and ASEAN Plus Three (that is, ASEAN plus China, Japan, and South Korea) security discussions and coordinated action. In addition, the “Plus Three” parties—China, Japan, South Korea—have met in their own trilateral dialogue that has included discussion of some security-related issues such as energy and environmental security. Two other institutions that have conducted coordinated military activities are the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)<sup>9</sup> and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

---

7 This and the following section draw on passages and analysis developed more fully in Oros (2010b).

8 The ASEAN Regional Forum was established in 1994. It comprises 27 countries: the 10 ASEAN member states (Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam); the 10 ASEAN dialogue partners (Australia, Canada, China, the EU, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea, and the United States); one ASEAN observer (Papua New Guinea); and Bangladesh, East Timor, Mongolia, North Korea, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

9 The Proliferation Security Initiative, originally also referred to as the Madrid Initiative for the city where the agreement was reached on 15 June 2003, was endorsed by 11 states: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and the United States. The initiative proposed strategies for intercepting cargoes suspected of containing chemical, biologi-

(SCO),<sup>10</sup> both of which focus largely on coordinated action on counterterrorism and counterproliferation.

In addition to working together on such commonly perceived security concerns, states within the region should make every effort to work cooperatively to reduce concerns that they hold regarding each other. At this time, most such actions are taking place bilaterally. This should continue, but efforts also should be made to extend such cooperation trilaterally or even multilaterally when feasible.

Unfortunately, there still exist quite a few such concerns in East Asia today. One concern, of course, is North Korea—which perceives a grave security threat posed by the United States (and perhaps by South Korea, Japan, and even China as well) and which other states in the region perceive to pose its own threat (specifically nuclear weapons and missile development, and the proliferation of both). Several chapters of this volume address cooperative routes to resolving these concerns. Another issue is the increasing military capabilities of China, Japan,<sup>11</sup> and the United States—which to at least some degree appear to be motivated by a classic security dilemma of wanting to increase capabilities in order to be able to counter the increased capabilities of the other.<sup>12</sup>

Beyond the security concerns related to the military-related activity of states in Northeast Asia, one could as well discuss the growing military capabilities of states in Southeast Asia, particularly in missile and naval technology. In the future, greater institutionalization of confidence building, crisis management, and cooperative action in the entire East Asian region also should be further explored. Although some analysts have noted an overall decline in spending on defense as a percentage of GDP in the region, a number of military analysts are

---

cal, or nuclear weapons or missile components. In conjunction with this initiative, the United States announced an increase in surveillance in these areas in addition to increased interdiction by Australia, Japan, and South Korea. For more information, please see: [www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/psi.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/psi.htm).

10 The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental, international organization founded in Shanghai on 15 June 2001 by six countries: China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Its member states cover an area equal to about three-fifths of Eurasia, with a population of 1.455 billion, about one-quarter of the world's total. For more information, please see: [www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/int/sco.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/int/sco.htm).

11 Japan is somewhat of an outlier among the three in that its military spending has been *declining* for years while the spending of China and the United States has been increasing by double digits. But, despite its decline in defense spending, Japan's defense capabilities and its military-related activities are also increasing. See Oros and Tatsumi (2010) for further details on this point.

12 See Jervis (1978) on the broad concept of a security dilemma; see Christensen (1999) for one application of the concept to East Asia.

In addition, one could examine much more deeply than space allows here the so-called new security issues related to climate change, the spread of infectious diseases, and modern terrorism and piracy—all of which seem to demand cooperative action to combat effectively.

Thus, it would appear quite self-evident that more mechanisms to cooperate on regional security issues are necessary. The question is how. Just as the security challenges of tomorrow's East Asia are diverse and numerous, so should the solutions be. And, indeed, they already are. This paper will conclude with a case for one underexplored option: formal, trilateral C-J-US security cooperation. C-J-US trilateral cooperation should be considered an important component of a broader approach to regional security because the three states have the greatest regional influence and the greatest military capabilities, they are the three largest economies in the world, and even beyond the region they possess significant global influence.

### **The Critical Role of China-Japan-U.S. Trilateral Security Cooperation**

Security cooperation among China, Japan, and the United States lags behind other types of regional cooperation, both in discussions and in action. Indeed, at first thought one might well question why one would expect trilateral C-J-US security cooperation given the apparent rivalries, suspicion, and at times animosity among the three states. Although in the economic realm the three states are major trading and financial partners and people-to-people exchanges both for business and for tourism are at all-time high levels (although recent China-Japan tensions have set this back for the time being), one is as likely to characterize the security relationship among the three states as tense and suspicious as one is to see a basis for institutionalized cooperation.

An argument for trilateral C-J-US security cooperation should not be rooted in sugar-coated optimism but rather in a recognition that the *de facto* relationship among the three states already has been trilateralized: actions taken bilaterally within one dyad inevitably affect the third state, for better or for worse. Policymakers themselves report more recognition of this phenomenon and more effort to manage it; one way forward is to develop an explicit trilateral mechanism to supplement—not supplant—existing bilateral coordination. Such coordination should be expected to emerge in tomorrow's Northeast Asia and, indeed, in tomorrow's broader global governance.

International relations scholarship has long noted a fundamental tension between rising states and status quo powers.<sup>13</sup> This tension can be constructively addressed, however, and it must be. In some (especially economic) areas, common interests and in some cases an existing high degree of interdependence necessitates coordinated action: the challenge is to institutionalize and regularize this coordination trilaterally instead of relying on a series of bilateral consultations that are slower and may lead to misunderstandings among the three. In the security realm, prospects for institutionalized trilateral cooperation are greatly limited by long-standing security concerns among the three states. Still, even in the security realm, efforts at greater trilateral coordination should be pursued, if only to lay the groundwork for more substantial cooperation in the future. Beyond symbolism, increased trilateralism (in particular, through greater dialogue, parallel actions, increased transparency, and even jointly coordinated actions) can play a concrete role in addressing both security concerns *among* the three actors as well as *mutual* security concerns.

Two principal challenges to enhanced C-J-US trilateral security cooperation are (1) the need to balance rivalries with shared concerns, and (2) the need to manage different perceptions of security and security threats, different military capabilities, and varying degrees of political will to face perceived threats among the three actors.<sup>14</sup> Despite these challenges, some progress has been made in recent years toward trilateralism: if not true trilateralism, then at least toward enhanced bilateralism that has led to increased formal cooperation among the three parties although some describe the limited cooperation of recent years not as the result of cooperative intent but rather as a hedging strategy.<sup>15</sup> Despite each party publicly expressing concern about the perceived hedging strategies of the others, the presence of a degree of security threats perceived among the three parties can serve as a vehicle for cooperation as well as for concern. Indeed, when one looks at other regions and time periods, institutionalized cooperation among adversaries has been evident and arguably successful in limiting escalation of tensions inherent in a security dilemma.<sup>16</sup>

---

13 One classic example of this genre is Gilpin (1981); a recent study focused on the challenges of China's "ascent" is Ross and Zhu (2008).

14 This point is developed further in Oros (2010b).

15 The term "hedging strategy" is now widely adopted in policy as well as academic circles; see Christensen (2006) and Medeiros (2005–06) for two recent applications.

16 U.S.-USSR cooperation during periods of the Cold War—in particular the period of *détente* in the 1970s—that allowed for negotiated arms limitations and direct hotlines between heads of state and between military commanders is one example; French-German dialogue after the World War II about broad historical issues as well as military planning under NATO is another.

At present, security cooperation to reduce threat perception, increase transparency, and manage crises is taking place solely at the bilateral level (China-Japan and China-United States) and has faced its own substantial challenges to achieve even limited success. Both dyads have achieved limited officer and other military-related personnel exchanges, limited port visits of maritime vessels, and more regularized meetings of senior defense officials. China-U.S. agreements to establish a military-to-military hotline for crisis management and a military maritime consultative agreement to establish safe and cooperative practices for operating in a close maritime environment are, however, only in the discussion stages in the case of China-Japan security cooperation. Still, it is not too early to consider trilateralizing this process, particularly given the extensive Japan-U.S. cooperation in maritime patrolling in East Asia. The September 2010 row between China and Japan over the Japanese Coast Guard interception of a Chinese fishing trawler—which ultimately led to extended detention of the trawler’s captain and a crisis in diplomatic relations between the two states as a result—is a good example of how even a bilateral incident ultimately has clear trilateral consequences.

In addition to cooperating for security via confidence building and crisis management, all three states in the C-J-US triangle increasingly perceive *shared* security threats that provide a basis for at least limited security cooperation or coordination, or both. This shared threat perception is evident when one compares the three states’ defense white papers and the academic and military discourse over security issues in these states over time. All three states demonstrate a clear shift in their perception of the sources of threat and the necessary responses to it. The three states also share a degree of similarity in identifying among these threats international terrorism, environmental challenges, the global spread of disease, and both conventional and nuclear weapons proliferation. All three states thus perceive both nontraditional as well as traditional security threats. On the surface at least, this would suggest a strong basis for trilateral security cooperation since many of these new issues involve cross-border challenges. Indeed one finds such cooperation emerging to a degree in areas such as energy security, pollution control, and the illegal movement of people.

Cooperation in these areas has been limited, however; and traditional military actors have not been the primary drivers or participants in such cooperation. In addition, recent forms of cooperation over nontraditional security issues also have not yet been institutionalized trilaterally. Instead, as with traditional security issues, they have either taken the form of enhanced bilateralism, large-*n* multilateralism, or the six-party model. For example, China has been invited to join planning and discussion between Japan and the United States in select areas

(enhanced bilateralism), and all three states have joined with more than 20 other states to decry international terrorism as part of the ARF (large-*n* multilateralism). Coordinated action related to North Korea is one example of a mutually perceived threat, although it is also a good example of how coordination over even a mutually perceived threat presents significant challenges.

The surprise eruption of the Mt. Sinabung volcano in Indonesia this year is a stark reminder of the threat of natural disasters the entire region faces. Why not use this common concern to work together toward a future coordinated response, building on lessons each state learned in its assistance to previous regional natural disasters? Joint humanitarian relief and disaster response provide opportunities for developing habits of cooperation, including simply through the act of planning for such a response.

At the same time, more coordinated action should be pursued over traditional security concerns such as counterterrorism, antipiracy, and counterproliferation. Outside of the region, already the naval forces of China, Japan, and the United States are communicating with each other in the course of their antipiracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. Why not formalize such cooperation in anticipation of extending it to other areas in the future, such as coordinated patrol of vital sea lanes?

China's power in the international system is expected to continue to rise, contributing to an increasingly multipolar world in the coming decades. As such, now is the time to work to build on positive bilateral cooperative actions that have taken place in the past several years in order to have a more solid trilateral and broader multilateral cooperative security environment to face future security challenges in the region and elsewhere. Both forms of cooperation—cooperation to reduce threat perception or enhance crisis management among the three states and cooperation together to address shared threats—should be pursued trilaterally as soon as possible.

### **Conclusion: Working toward Tomorrow's East Asia Today**

Deepening trilateral C-J-US cooperation would comprise only a part of a larger fabric of cooperation necessary to ensure peaceful and prosperous relations in tomorrow's East Asia. C-J-US trilateralism should not be confused with some sort of 19th-century-style "concert of powers" that would determine the future course of the region among the parties involved—a natural concern in a region whose past was often determined by outside great powers.

In the 21st century, however, such concerns are unwarranted. First of all, given that North Korea is among the largest security challenges to the region and South Korea naturally needs to play a leading role in addressing this challenge, a C-J-US concert is a nonstarter from the get-go. Indeed, a long-term intractable challenge like relations with North Korea would not be a good agenda item to begin a fragile process of trilateral C-J-US cooperation.

Beyond the North Korea issue, however, formalized C-J-US trilateralism can serve as both a practical means for addressing some real security challenges that exist largely among the three as well as an enabler of other sorts of minilateral cooperation alternatives such as greater Japan-South Korea-U.S. security cooperation, Australia-Japan-U.S. security cooperation, ASEAN Plus Three security dialogue, and so-called Plus Three (China-Japan-South Korea) coordinated action. Moves toward greater trilateral security cooperation among China, Japan, and the United States should develop in tandem with greater trilateral cooperation among other states to enhance the already existing multilayered security architecture of today's East Asia.

Small steps (at least initially) toward trilateral and broader multilateral security cooperation are unlikely to negatively affect existing (and useful) bilateral strategies currently being pursued between several states in the region. Instead, moves beyond a bilateral security focus are more likely to reassure other states of cooperative intentions by enabling person-to-person trust building and institutional transparency. Regionally, even such small steps would need to be balanced with additional outreach to other regional actors not included in any one particular trilateral framework to ensure that such actors do not feel excluded from important decision making. In this way, trilateralism should serve to enhance—not supplant—existing bilateral alliances on the one hand and large-*n* multilateral efforts on the other.

More broadly, trust building and institutionalized, habituated cooperation among the three largest economies in the world in the noneconomic realm can only serve to enhance global cooperative efforts—both as cooperative efforts among the three actors (such as in energy security, containment of extraregional conflicts, or reduction of small-arms proliferation) and as a demonstration to other actors in the global system of the benefits of institutionalized cooperation despite existing rivalry.

Institutionalized C-J-US trilateral security cooperation faces numerous challenges and substantial uncertainty in terms of implementation. It is unlikely to surpass cooperation in other areas—by China, Japan, and the United States



themselves, or in security cooperation with other actors; and it should not be included on a future agenda out of idealistic aspirations to bypass legitimate security concerns each state holds vis-à-vis the others. Instead, such cooperation has the potential to deepen ties among the three states, enabling a better future for all three states and for their neighbors in the years to come.

In tomorrow's Northeast Asia, a wide range of cooperative security mechanisms is almost certain to be called upon to help ameliorate a future security crisis that otherwise would threaten the now long history of cooperation in the region. It is time to prepare for that tomorrow today.

### List of References

- Calder, Kent, and Francis Fukuyama, eds. 2008. *East Asian Multilateralism: Prospects for Regional Stability*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Christensen, Thomas J. 1999. "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia." *International Security* 23, no. 4 (1999): 49-80.
- Christensen, Thomas J. 2006. "Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and U.S. Policy towards East Asia." *International Security* 31, no. 1 (Summer): 81-126.
- Gilpin, Robert. 1981. *War and Change in World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Green, Michael, and Bates Gill, eds. 2009. *Asia's New Multilateralism: Cooperation, Competition, and the Search for Community*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Jervis, Robert. 1978. "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma." *World Politics* (January): 167-214.
- Medeiros, Evan S. 2005-06. "Strategic Hedging and the Future of Asia-Pacific Stability." *Washington Quarterly* 29, no. 1: 145-67.
- Oros, Andrew L. 2010a. "Pragmatism Should Triumph over Ideology in Asia." *Korea Times*, 21 September.
- Oros, Andrew L. 2010b. "Prospects for Trilateral Security Cooperation." In *Getting the Triangle Straight: Managing China-Japan-U.S. Relations*, ed. Gerald Curtis, Ryo-sei Kokubun, and Jisi Wang. Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange.
- Oros, Andrew L., and Yuki Tatsumi. 2010. *Global Security Watch: Japan*. Santa Barbara: Praeger.
- Ross, Robert S., and Zhu Feng, eds. 2008. *China's Ascent: Power, Security, and the Future of International Politics*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Tow, William T., ed. 2009. *Security Politics in the Asia-Pacific: A Regional-Global Nexus?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.





# 2 Academic 0 Symposium 1 1

## **Prospects for Emerging East Asian Cooperation and Implications for the United States**

Andrew L. Oros, Doug Joong Kim, David Arase

## **The Emerging Role of South Korea on a Global Stage**

Balbina Hwang, Youngji Jo

## **The Future of Energy Security in Northeast Asia**

Chen Kane, Stephanie C. Lieggi, Miles Pomper, George Hutchinson

## **Engaging and Transforming North Korea's Economy**

Doowon Lee, William Brown

## **Finding Room for a Six Party Solution to North Korea's Nuclear Crisis**

Charles Armstrong (on South Korea), Drew Thompson, Natalie Mathews  
(on China), Michael Auslin (on Japan), Stephen Blank (on Russia)

---

October 20-22, 2010

## Sponsored by:

The Korea Economic Institute

The Korea Institute for International Economic Policy

American University School of International Service