A Modern U.S.-Japan Alliance

Remarks
Frank A. Rose
Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance
American Center
Tokyo, Japan
February 23, 2015

Introduction

Thank you very much for allowing me to join you today.

My name is Frank Rose, and I am the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance.

I have had the privilege of being welcomed to Japan many times to discuss our nations’ shared interest in and commitment to international peace and security.

Those discussions have focused on several important topics, including nuclear policy and disarmament, extended deterrence, missile defense, and outer space security.

I’m especially pleased to be here this week, as our governments are nearing the end of their work to finalize a review of the guidelines for U.S.-Japanese Defense Cooperation. This review process aims to make the links underlying the U.S.-Japan Alliance stronger than ever and thus contribute more effectively to regional and global peace and security.

So today, I’d like to offer a few comments on our joint efforts to strengthen our alliance, particularly in the areas of new strategic capabilities like cyber and outer space security.

I will also cover two other critical areas of the modern-day U.S.-Japan Alliance: missile defense and space. After that, I look forward to your questions.

A Modern U.S.-Japan Alliance

The United States-Japan Alliance long has been the cornerstone of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region.

As you know, at the 2013 “2+2” meeting in Tokyo, Secretary of State Kerry, then-Secretary of Defense Hagel, and their Japanese counterparts announced their decision to review the U.S.-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation.

The bilateral defense guidelines, which serve as the policy framework that outlines each country’s roles, missions, and capabilities within the Alliance, were last updated in 1997.

The world is much changed since 1997. While longstanding threats to Japan such as North Korea’s nuclear and ballistic missile programs remain a concern, emerging threats in areas such as cyber security, space security, and freedom of navigation present new challenges.

U.S. policy affirms that as long as nuclear weapons exist, the U.S. nuclear arsenal will play a role in our extended deterrence commitments to Japan and our other allies. That said, it is important that we recognize the full range of strategic capabilities beyond the nuclear that contribute to effective deterrence—to include space, cyber, and missile defense.

The updated guidelines will provide a framework for Japan to expand its contributions to international peace and security in concert with the United States and like-minded partners during the coming decades. This is important as Japan is an increasingly important participant in international security operations, from counter-piracy to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Ultimately, strengthening the U.S.-Japan Alliance will allow our countries to more effectively contribute to peace and stability both here in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world.

Missile Defense in the Asia Pacific

In 1998, the DPRK irresponsibly test launched a long range ballistic missile that overflew Japan and dropped a rocket stage very near Japanese territory. The launch was not successful, but it did succeed in being highly provocative and, as a result, the United States and Japan initiated a more concerted effort to monitor, deter, and counter North Korean ballistic missiles.

Since 1998, North Korea has continued to make quantitative and qualitative advances in its ballistic missile force. For example, in 2012 North Korea unveiled what appeared to be a mobile ICBM that potentially could reach the United States.
In response to this growing threat the United States and Japan continue to deepen their cooperation on BMD.

Just this past December, the United States and Japan announced the deployment of the second AN/TPY-2 radar to Kyogamisaki, and we greatly appreciate Japan’s hard work in making the deployment possible despite a challenging timeline.

As many of you are aware, this asset will serve as a critical addition to our regional deterrence and defense architecture, enhancing the protection of both Japan and the U.S. homeland against the threat of ballistic missile attack.

This deployment builds on a deep and broad cooperative relationship that includes a AN/TPY-2 deployed to Shariki, Japan in 2006, cooperation on an advanced interceptor known as the SM-3 Block IIA, and continuing work on enhancing interoperability between U.S. and Japanese forces.

We also welcomed the inclusion of missile defense in the interim report on the revision of the defense guidelines, and we hope the final revision will reflect the valuable contribution of BMD to our collective self-defense as well as to regional stability.

These regional missile defenses help to reassure Japan and deter North Korea from seeking to coerce or attack its neighbors. Missile defenses contribute to regional stability because the protection that defenses offer can reduce pressures for a preemptive strike, or a large retaliation to a provocation that can escalate a crisis. We continue to encourage our allies to contribute to their own defense but also to provide capabilities in a multilateral context that can enhance their own security and contribute to stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

There has been a lot of discussion in the press recently about the possible deployment of a Terminal High Attitude Area Defense or THAAD system in the region. Let me be clear, this system is a purely defensive system to defend against short- and medium-range regional ballistic missiles from North Korea. It does not and cannot impact broader strategic stability with Russia and China. Such a system would provide additional defensive capabilities to support our forces on the peninsula. That said, there are no negotiations ongoing between the U.S. and the Republic of Korea to deploy THAAD to the Republic of Korea.

U.S.-Japan Cooperation on Outer Space Security

Finally, as some of you may know, I am in Tokyo this week to lead the U.S.-Japan Space Security Dialogue and attend the Japan Space Forum. So let me conclude my remarks with a few thoughts on U.S.-Japan cooperation on outer space security.

Space cooperation between the United States and Japan has a long history, built on the extensive civil and scientific cooperation among NASA, NOAA, and other U.S. agencies and their Japanese counterparts. Our discussions on these issues have grown into one of the most important relationships we have with our Allies and partners on outer space security issues.

The United States’ rebalance in the Asia-Pacific reflects a recognition that we must broaden and deepen our engagement in the region at all levels including the long-term sustainability, stability, safety, and security of the space environment.

Cooperation on space security is now part of the Common Strategic Objectives of the Alliance, and bilateral cooperation on civil and security space was recognized in the outcomes of summits between President Obama and former Prime Minister Noda in 2012 and again with Prime Minister Abe in 2014.

Recognizing the numerous opportunities for cooperation on space issues, the United States and Japan have held several space security dialogues in the last five years, in addition to ongoing civil space dialogues.

In fact, due to the success and robustness of our space security and civil space dialogues, our governments have also established a Comprehensive Dialogue on Space in order to address the bilateral relationship at a strategic level and to ensure a whole-of-government approach to space matters. We have held two Comprehensive Dialogues to date, with a third meeting to be held later this year in Japan.

Through these dialogues, we not only discuss possible avenues of cooperation and exchange space policies; we also have made tremendous progress in furthering our tangible space security cooperation.

In regards to improving our space situational awareness – specifically, improving our shared ability to rapidly detect, warn of, characterize, and attribute natural and man-made disturbances to space systems – in 2013 the United States signed a Space Situational Awareness (SSA) information sharing agreement with Japan.

Building on the foundation of that agreement, we are also exploring the possibility of establishing “two-way” SSA sharing with Japan. We hope that as our space surveillance capabilities improve, we will be able to notify satellite operators earlier and with greater accuracy of a need to maneuver a satellite in order to prevent collisions in space.

We are also looking at how we can expand cooperation on utilizing space systems for maritime domain awareness. To that end, the United States and Japan held the first “Use of Space for Maritime Domain Awareness” table top exercise last year.

Multilateral Cooperation

We also work closely together to cooperate and to coordinate positions on multilateral space issues. We hold an annual trilateral space security dialogue with Australia and Japan to coordinate our positions on these space security issues.

Our joint efforts to advance the work of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) Working Group on Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (LTS) continue to make progress.

Perhaps one of the most beneficial transparency and confidence-building measures, or TCBMs, for ensuring sustainability and security in space could be the adoption of an International Code of Conduct to prevent mishaps, misperceptions, and mistrust in space. A code would establish guidelines, or rules of the road, to reduce the risks of debris-generating events, including collisions.
The United States is working with the European Union and other spacefaring nations, like Japan, to advance such a Code in the Asia-Pacific region. Both Japan and Australia have also endorsed its development.

Conclusion

In his State of the Union Address, President Obama spoke of the need to modernize our alliances in the Asia Pacific to meet common international challenges. With the Government of Japan as a strong partner both on the guidelines as well as on a host of strategic issues, we are working together to do just that. Thanks very much, and I look forward to the discussion.