Japan’s Contribution to Human Security with Special Reference to South Asia after the War on Terror

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Introduction

South Asia including Afghanistan and Pakistan has been of vital importance for international security as these countries have been the hub of radical group activities. It should be Japan’s role to bring stability and sound economic conditions in the Islamic world to heighten their security, and of the international community. Japanese government and people are eager to contribute to human security in the Islamic world to reduce violence in the world. In this paper, an attempt is made to elucidate Japan’s role regarding human security especially in post 9/11, 2001.

The notion “human security” has become one of the diplomatic pillars of Japan since the end of the Cold War. As Japan has the constitution which prohibits war, it cannot cooperate with the United States (US) war efforts entirely. But, the US has been always exerting pressure on Japan for contributing militarily to its wars. Responding to the US demand, Japan dispatched mine sweeper to the Persian Gulf after the Gulf War in 1991. Japan also sent the Self Defense Forces (SDF) to Samawa in southern Iraq. This policy was pursued because of the pressure from Bush administration. More than half of the Japanese people support Article 9 of Japan’s constitution, which prohibits war. So, the best way for Japan’s foreign policy is to be conscious of human security in the world and seek fruitful results to reduce violence although
it is a long process. The Japanese believe that the growth of extremists’ activities anywhere in the world have to be stopped or curbed.

**Japan’s Human Security Idea**

According to Japan’s Foreign Ministry, human security aims to protect people from critical and pervasive threats to human lives, livelihoods and dignity, and enhance human fulfillment. For these objectives, human security tries to integrate and strengthen initiatives that emphasize human-centered perspectives. This idea is now accepted world-wide.

At the United Nations (UN) Millennium Summit in 2000, Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented a report with two key words: “Freedom from fear, Freedom from want,” stressing the need to tackle various global threats. The then Prime Minister of Japan, Yoshiro Mori, declared at the Summit that Japan would uphold human security as one of the pillars of Japan’s foreign policy, and called for the establishment of an international commission on human security to further deepen the concept. Following Mr. Mori’s proposal, Mr. Annan announced the establishment of the “Commission on Human Security” when he visited Japan in January 2001. Two leading figures, the then UN High Commissioner for Refugees (now President of JICA), Sadako Ogata, and the then Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, Amartya Sen, were appointed Co-chairs.

Japan makes efforts to disseminate and realize the concept of human security. Japan has been making efforts to facilitate understanding and cooperation on human security from other countries through taking up human security as an agenda item and discussing it at the high level bilateral and international meetings, and ensuring the reference to human security as
outcome in the documents, when appropriate. Japan has been establishing groups aiming to mainstreaming human security and cooperating actively with them.

Trust Fund for Human Security was established by Japan’s initiative in the United Nations in 1999. Till August 2009, Japan has contributed approximately JPY 39 billion (approximately USD 346.58 million) to the fund and 195 projects amounting USD 312 million were implemented in 118 countries and one area by the fund. Moreover, in FY 2006-2008, Japan appropriated JPY 31 billion for the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects, formerly the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects, which incorporates the concept of human security.

Japan will address the four priority issue of “poverty reduction,” “sustainable growth,” “addressing global issues” and “peace-building” described in the Official Development Assistance (ODA) Charter bearing in mind the perspective of “human security,” in order to reduce the vulnerabilities faced by people, communities and countries.

Japan’s basic goals for human security are as follows.
1. Assistance that puts people at the centre of concerns and that effectively reaches the people.
2. Assistance to strengthen local communities.
3. Assistance that emphasizes empowering of people.
4. Assistance that emphasizes benefiting people who are exposed to threats.
5. Assistance that respects cultural diversity.1

Iraq War: Turning Point of Japan’s Human Security

Japan sent Ground SDF to Samawa in Iraq, engaging in
construction of schools and water supply. It was the first dispatch of SDF to foreign countries beyond the framework of the United Nations. This was done considering the US-Japan alliance. The US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage said “boots on the ground,” demanding the sending of Ground National Defense Forces to Iraq. Some armed groups tried to attack Japan’s forces. But the SDF continued its activities from February 2004 to July 2006. In the same month Air Self Defense Force began to transport materials for the US army from Kuwait to Baghdad. On the other hand, the dispatch of the SDF to Iraq gave some fear of the revival of Japanese militarism to China and Korea.

It is hoped that like the Lebanese civil war of 1970s-1990, Iraqi people and armed groups will become tired of war and would try to build peace and stability. Taking the opportunity, the international community including the Middle Eastern countries should come forward to arbitrate peace in Iraq. It may be mentioned that in case of Lebanon, Arab countries played major role in bringing peace and stability.

Since then, no major clashes among different sects in Lebanon has occurred except the recent fighting between Fatah-Islam and Lebanese security forces. Even if the international community has the intention to mediate peace, peace negotiation would surely fail if some groups remain eager to fight. When all the groups wish peace in Iraq, the international community including Japan should undertake the task of mediation.

**Afghanistan and Pakistan: Weakening Violence**

The present Afghan government has negative reputation for corruption, economic mismanagement and nepotism. There has been widening gap between the rich and the poor. Poor people are very much dissatisfied with Karzai administration
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and its ability to reconstruct Afghanistan.

In Waziristan of Pakistan, which is called "tribal area," some young Pashtuns are calling themselves "Pakistan Taliban." They are much influenced by Afghan Taliban and strict Deobandi thoughts. Pakistan Taliban has been fighting with Pakistani security forces and killing tribal leaders who had collaborated with Pakistani government and had given information about Pakistan Taliban to Pakistani security forces.

Pashtuns living in Pakistan's tribal areas have families and relatives in Afghanistan as the Durand Line is very ambiguous national border drawn by the British in 19th century. There are frequent traffic between Afghanistan and Pakistan, thus giving strong ties between Talibans in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan tribal areas have an independent position from Pakistan central government. However, this independent character has made the tribal area, economically very poor.

Extremist Religious schools have been flourishing in Pakistan, providing place to sleep, foods and clothes to children from poor families. They grow up to be religious teachers of their home towns and villages, expanding extreme religious thoughts and activities.

Japan should be cautious about sending SDF to Afghanistan, because it could provoke anger towards Japan in Afghanistan and in the Middle East. Actually, one Japanese NGO person was killed in Afghanistan in August 2008. The leader of the NGO said he was killed because Japan sent Naval Self Defense Forces to the Indian Ocean to supply fuel to the US naval ships. He is against the Naval Self Defense Forces in the Indian Ocean. If the Japanese government wants to "demonstrate its flag" in Afghanistan it can do so by building hospitals or schools in Japan's name as the new Hatoyama administration has been insisting. Though Japan sent USD 13 billion to fund US-led multinational forces in the Persian Gulf
War of 1990, many conservative politicians and bureaucrats still regret that Japan failed to send troops due to constitutional restraints. Since only financial contributions were made by Japan, it stands apart from nations that provided military support and won the favour of many Muslims. Japan’s government could send civilians to provide humanitarian aid to Afghan refugees and the affected people. Japan stopped its assistance to Afghanistan after the Soviet Union invaded the country in 1979 but resumed aid in 1997 through international organizations.

From 1999 to 2001, it has also extended JPY 287.6 million in grants and disaster relief, according to the Foreign Ministry of Japan. Japan has supported Afghanistan by sending humanitarian aid and building infrastructures. The Japanese government can expand such activities further.

As an example of Japan's support, Japan sent missions to observe the elections in Cambodia in 1993, after more than two decades of civil war in the country. Using that experience, Japan can help rebuild war-torn Afghanistan when peace is completely established. Japan, which has not been involved in the country's conflicts, can also be a mediator among Afghanistan groups.

**Japan’s Contribution to South Asian Human Security**

Japanese government held the Friends of Democratic Pakistan Ministerial Meeting and the Pakistan Donors' Conference in April 2009. The Pakistan Donors’ Conference was held in Tokyo on 17 April 2009, with 31 countries and 18 organizations and agencies including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in attendance.

Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso delivered an opening address, stressing the importance of Pakistan's role in global
efforts on counter-terrorism and suggesting regional approach when tackling these challenges. As a demonstration of their commitment, both Pakistan and other participants of the meeting decided to establish follow-up mechanisms for international cooperation in the areas of development, security, energy, institution capacity building, and trade and finance.

Japan and the World Bank co-hosted the Pakistan Donors’ Conference. Discussions focused on how the international community should support Pakistan, which had managed to avoid an imminent economic crisis thanks to an IMF programme with a loan of USD 7.6 billion in November 2009, after being hit by a financial crisis and the global economic slowdown, as well as worldwide hikes in food and oil prices. Japanese government also announced USD 1 billion in assistance for Pakistan, premised on the continued, steady implementation of the IMF programme.

Japanese government admits that now that the international community has entered a serious stage in countering violence, the peace and stability of Pakistan, which shares border with Afghanistan and has the radical movements inside the country, represents an even more critical issue for the international security. With the World Bank, Japan co-hosted the Pakistan Donors’ Conference and invited President Zardari to hold the Friends of Democratic Pakistan Meeting in Tokyo, which ended with the announcement of a commitment by President Zardari regarding Pakistan's counter-terrorism measures and efforts toward economic reform, as well as responding to the support by the international community for Pakistan's stable development.

In particular, these conferences were held in line with a strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan announced by the Obama administration. Thus, these conferences were held keeping in view the Japan-US alliance.\textsuperscript{11}
It is probable that the Tribal Area in Pakistan will become stable if their social and economic infrastructure is modernized and their living conditions are improved. The Tribal Area has been neglected by the Pakistani central government. There are great gap between Punjab and local areas such as the Tribal Area. Support for Pakistan by Japan should be focused more on the rural areas than big cities. Much attention should be paid to the improvement of public schools. Japan’s economic and technological development was achieved because Japan’s educational system was somewhat advanced. The best practices of Japan’s education system should be introduced in South Asian countries such as India and Pakistan. In addition, Japan is able to provide its technology and investment in South Asia for the creation of jobs for young generation, contributing to their human security.

Pakistan faces the Persian Gulf, which is the crucial sea lane for world energy and it has a good port on the Gulf. According to the former head of Karachi branch of Mitsubishi Corporation, Pakistan has great economic and commercial potentials. He insisted that the Gwadar port could become the commercial center like Dubai, creating a lot of jobs for Pakistanis. China has been making outstanding advancement, and the US is very much cautious about China’s concern in Gwadar, which is located in a strategically important area. Furthermore, Pakistan has a significant population who speak English, thus it could become a place of dispatch of information like India.

The international Islamic radicals have become more interested in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Victory over the US and NATO army is their major goal. Some media are of the opinion that radical groups in the Tribal Area are trying to take over the Pakistani government and establish Khaliphate state in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Military attacks by the US and Pakistani army should be avoided. Pakistani government, the
US and the international community including Japan should pay more attention to the human security condition there. It is very difficult to provide economic and medical assistance in those areas. But we need dialogue with the leaders of tribal and Islamic groups to cooperate regarding the improvement of the lives of the people there.

The international community has become very much interested in the economic development of India. Japanese people can have a consensus about Japan's contribution to human security in the developing areas such as South Asia.

Conclusion

Military means is not enough to weaken the Islamic extremists and their violent activities. The international community has to know the backgrounds of the growth of Islamic extremists, taking into consideration the human security issue in the Islamic world.

One of the most important international issues which bring about the growth of Islamic radicals is the Palestinian issue. Islamic extremists are very much dissatisfied with the present Middle East peace process. In order to reduce violence, the international community including Japan, Middle Eastern and European countries, and the US should promote peace process between Palestine and Israel.

Japan has been successful in disarming the warlords and their soldiers in Afghanistan under the programme called Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) where 60,000 soldiers were disarmed and 340,000 small weapons and 9,000 heavy weapons were collected. Afghanistan should not become a "forgotten country" again. In 2006, about 4,000 people died. Among them, 700 were killed by suicide attack. Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. The international community should provide Afghan peasants
enough means and capitals to replace opium cultivation.

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, there are many traditional religious schools called *Madrassa*. Some preachers indoctrinate radical ideas to children in those countries. There are not enough public schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Hence, poor families are sending their children to such religious schools. The international community including Japan should help build sound education system in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In addition, light weapons which are sold along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan should be stopped or reduced drastically.

As for the Iranian nuclear issue, the international community including Japan should demand the Iranian government to stop enriching uranium activities and accept the supply of light-water reactor as suggested by the EU countries and the US. If Iran insists that its nuclear energy development is for peaceful use, Iran could accept light-water reactor.

The growth of extremists’ activities should be stopped or curbed. For that purpose, Japan can collaborate with other countries in various areas other than military means. Japan's SDF went to Samawa in Iraq in order to rebuild schools and supply water to the people there. The international community must consider what Muslim people really want and provide what they need. As Islam preaches and works towards social justice and equality, Japan should assist Muslim people in social welfare activities. Islamic groups including Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt have been popular as they provide social works to people such as medical treatment and education. Japan should know about the social and economic conditions in the Muslim world, and support Muslims in a constructive way.

The head of the Social Democratic Party (one of the ruling parties in Japan), Mizuho Fukushima says that Japan should build schools in Afghanistan instead of sending Self Defense
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Forces to Afghanistan. Thus, Japan's new government policy to the Middle East could be focused on the improvement of social and economic welfare of the people.

The following steps are recommended in order to check Islamic radicalism:

First, the US should reflect on its policies towards the Middle East and reformulate them. It is particularly important that the US abstains from further military intervention in the Middle East.

Second, the international community, including Japan, should seek to stop the flow of money to Islamic radicals. One way to stop much of this flow would be to contribute to the long-term stabilization of Afghanistan, where radical elements produce drugs such as heroin, and send small arms into surrounding areas.

Third, it is therefore essential that the international community supports the rehabilitation of Afghanistan and Afghan refugees. Since the collapse of the Taliban, local warlords have become more powerful. The government led by Hamid Karzai governs only the capital Kabul and its suburbs. This government is mainly composed of Tajik people, who fought against the Taliban, while the Taliban itself was an organization which consisted of Pashtuns, who are now excluded from the provisional government. The Pashtuns are now endeavouring to regain their power. Without the strong and continued backing of the international community, Afghanistan will become very unstable very quickly.

Fourth, the international community, especially the more economically advanced countries, should seek to improve the economic plight of Islamic nations, and promote investment so as to reduce poverty and create jobs for the youth of South Asia. Poverty and unemployment are strong incentives for people to join Islamic radical groups.
Finally, an international conference of Islamic radicals should be organized in which representatives of Islamic, Western and Asian countries should participate. Such a meeting may enable the international community to deepen its understanding of the factors which produce Islamic radicals, and may also provide strategies for their alleviation.

To sum up, it is absolutely essential that the international community cooperates to prevent further terrorist activities, keeping in view the notion of human security. Cooperation is required in every field. There is no doubt that military retaliation against Islamic radicals is not an effective means to contain terrorism in the long run. Terrorism can only be eradicated if the conditions which spur it are identified and alleviated.

Endnotes

1 For additional information about Japan’s attitude towards human security, see MOFA and JICA homepages.

2 For more information about Armitage’s influence on Japan’s defense policy, see Sankei, 1 December 2007.

3 In April 2008, Nagoya High Court gave the verdict that the sending of Air National Defense Forces to Iraq was against the Japanese Constitution.


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6 Interview with Sayyeh Muhammad Yusef Shah, 30 August 2006.

7 Medical Doctor Tetsu Nakamura’s statement, see *Asahi*, 26 August 2008.

8 Japan’s foreign ministry regretted that Japan’s contribution did not satisfy the US, see http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bluebook/2005/html/honmon1004.html.

9 For more information on Japan’s humanitarian assistance, see http://www.jica.go.jp/afghanistan/pdf/afghanistan.pdf#search='日本のアフガニス支援'.

10 Regarding this conference, see MOFA’s homepage.

11 Interview with Mr. Akira Yamura. He was in Karachi for 11 years.


14 Interview with Rahimullah Yusfzai on 30 August 2006.

15 Interview with Sayyef Muhammad Yusef Shah on 30 August 2006.