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Laura Srpová

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**The U.S.-Japan Alliance:
Key Building Stone of Obama's Pivot to Asia?**

Diplomová práce

Autor práce: Bc. Laura Srpová

Studijní program: Americká studia

Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Jana Sehnálková

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Anotace

Tato práce se zabývá dopady Obamovy zahraničně-politické strategie, tzv. rebalancováním do Asie a jejími konkrétními důsledky pro bezpečnostní alianci s Japonskem. Cílem této práce je vyhodnotit úspěšnost v plnění cílů této strategie, které si Obamova administrativa vytyčila zejména s ohledem na její dopady pro bezpečnostní alianci USA – Japonsko. Ve své práci se zaměřuji zejména na hodnocení cílů a analýze vnitřních a vnějších překážek a výzev, kterým alianci za doby Obamovy vlády čelila. V neposlední řadě se práce věnuje analýze klíčových dokumentů, kterými jsou směrnice pro americko-japonskou bezpečnostní spolupráci a americká národní bezpečnostní strategie z roku 2015. Ze závěru práce vyplývá, že Obamova politika rebalancování do Asie byla úspěšná jen z části, přičemž většinu cílů se nepodařilo naplnit kvůli ekonomicky a politicky nepříznivé situaci u obou spojenců. Dalším důvodem pro pouze částečný úspěch rebalancování do Asie byla nepříznivá zahraničně-politická situace, která donutila USA soustředit svou pozornost a zdroje do jiných regionů.

Annotation

The thesis deals with the impact of the Obama administration's foreign policy strategy of rebalancing to Asia and its implications for the U.S. - Japan security alliance. The aim of this thesis is to evaluate the success in meeting the goals of rebalancing to Asia, taking into account the implications for the U.S. - Japan security alliance. In my thesis I focus mainly on the evaluation of the strategy and its goals, and analysis of the inner and outer challenges to the alliance. Finally, the thesis also analyzes the key documents of the U.S. - Japan alliance, which are the Guidelines for U.S. - Japan Defense Cooperation and the U.S. National Security Strategy from the year 2015. In the conclusion, I claim that Obama's strategy of rebalancing to Asia was only partially successful, whereas the majority of goals were not met because of the difficult domestic political and economic situation of both allies. Another reason for the partial success of the rebalance strategy were the unfavorable international circumstances, which distracted the United States and forced it to focus its financial and political resources to other regions of the world.

Klíčová slova

USA, Japonsko, spojení, Obama, směrnice pro bezpečnostní spolupráci

Keywords

USA, Japan, Alliance, Obama, Defense Guidelines

Název práce

Americko-japonská aliance: hlavní stavební kámen Obamovy politiky rebalancování do Asie?

Poděkování

Na tomto místě bych ráda poděkovala své vedoucí práce, paní Mgr. Janě Sehnálkové, za její cenné rady a konzultace při vyhotovení této diplomové práce.

Obsah

Introduction	2
1. Key Moments of U.S.-Japan Relations.....	4
1.1 Post World War II Occupation.....	4
1.2 Establishing a Bilateral Relationship	5
1.3 The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance and the G.W. Bush Administration	9
1.4 The U.S.- Japan Relations under the Obama Administration 2009-2016	13
2. The Inner and Outer Challenges to the U.S. - Japan Alliance.....	20
2.1 Collective Self-defense and the Reinterpretation of Japan's Constitution: an Inner Challenge.....	20
2.2 Fiscal Restraints on Japan's Defense Budget	22
2.3 The Okinawa Base Relocation Issue	23
2.4 The U.S. Defense Budget Cuts: Domestic Challenge for the Alliance	25
2.5 Rising China: A Challenge to the Alliance.....	26
2.6 North Korea: A Security Challenge to the Alliance.....	30
3. The Consequences of the “Pivot” for the U.S.-Japan Relations	32
3.1 U.S.-Japan Alliance and American Pivot to Asia.....	32
3.2 The U.S. Rebalancing Strategy and the U.S. –Japan Defense Guidelines.....	35
3.3 The 2015 U.S. Japan Defense Guidelines Revision.....	42
3.4 Re-balancing to Asia in the U.S. National Security Strategy	46
3.5 The Impact of Rebalance to Asia and its Implications for the U.S. - Japan Alliance	48
Conclusion	50
Summary	51
Použitá literatura.....	52
Primary Sources	52
Secondary Sources	53
Teze Diplomové práce	58

Introduction

The U.S.-Japan alliance is one of the longest military alliances in the world that still fulfills its purpose, even after more than 60 years of its existence. After the end of World War II, the alliance was established as the result of Japan's aggression and U.S. victory and following occupation. Since its creation, the alliance reflected the asymmetrical security relationships that were present after the war and at beginning of the Cold War context in the Asia-Pacific region. The United States assumed a role of the provider of security services and Japan was the receiver and basically a security-dependent ally. However, with the end of the Cold War and changing security environment in Asia-Pacific, the alliance functions and distribution of power had to change in order to face new challenges.

President Barack Obama was facing new challenges in the Asia-pacific region in form of rising China and unstable North Korea. Moreover, domestically he had to respond to the financial crisis, which among other affected the U.S. defense budget. his combination of domestic and foreign policy factors called for an update of the alliance, so it could fulfill its purpose and serve well in the upcoming years. Hence, Obama's "Pivot to Asia" strategy reflected the U.S. intention to refocus its political, diplomatic, economic, and security attention and resources away from the Middle East and Europe and to target them to the Asia-Pacific region that is strategically and economically interesting for the United States.

The literature used to support my thesis includes some key primary documents of both Japan and U.S. government including the U.S National Security Strategy from 2010 and 2015, the Guidelines for U.S. – Japan Defense Cooperation from years 1978, 1997 and 2015, and other security treaties of the allies. There is no official document that would outline the U.S. pivot to Asia/rebalance to Asia strategy, therefore my analysis of the rebalance is based mainly on secondary sources. The authors of the secondary sources come mainly from the academia, but a number of them was also part of the Obama administration and helped to shape and analyze the rebalance to Asia strategy. Therefore, it had to be reflected when evaluating the arguments in the secondary sources. The sources also vary in their approach towards the pivot to Asia strategy. While some authors claim that the pivot is a new foreign policy approach of Barack Obama, others state that America has traditionally been present in the Asia-Pacific region, both militarily and economically.

The topic of rebalance to Asia and its impact on the U.S.-Japan defense alliance is very relevant for U.S. policy making today. Even after the change of administration in the United States, the same challenges to the alliance are present and the Obama's rebalance to Asia can serve as an inspiration for future security policy making. The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most relevant for U.S. economy and security and its importance may even increase in the future, therefore it deserves attention. Although, many authors have published their opinions on pivot to Asia strategy the vast majority of them takes an Asian or American perspective, which can be bias. However, this thesis offers a European perspective on the topic.

The following thesis is a case study from the field of international relations. It attempts to evaluate and analyze the impact of the U.S. rebalance to Asia strategy on the U.S.-Japan security alliance. The first chapter outlines the historical conditions that formed the U.S.-Japan security alliance and defines the goals of the rebalance to Asia. The second chapter analyzes the domestic as well as international challenges to the security alliance. The last chapter will be an analysis of Obama's reaction to these challenges and evaluation of the pivot to Asia and its impact on the U.S.-Japan alliance.

This thesis will attempt to answer the following questions: How have the geopolitical changes in Asia impacted the U.S.-Japanese alliance? How important is Japan in the Asian pivot for the U.S.? What role does Japan play in the U.S. Pivot? What are the domestic and outer challenges to the alliance?

1. Key Moments of U.S.-Japan Relations

1.1 Post World War II Occupation

The United States established diplomatic relations with Japan in 1858. However, the relations were severely affected by the World War II and Japan's attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in 1941.¹ The security alliance between the United States and Japan has historical roots in the post-World War II occupation of Japan by the Allies and since then it became fundamental to regional stability and prosperity in Asia-Pacific region. The United States deems the alliance to be based on shared interests and values. These are for instance the maintenance of stability in the Asia-Pacific region, preservation and promotion of political and economic freedoms, human rights and democracy, mutual interest in prosperity of citizens in both countries as well as of the international community.²

The security alliance and normalized diplomatic relations were established at the end of the Japanese occupation by the Allied Powers. The occupation was terminated in 1952 with the implementation of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which also recognized Japan's right to self-defense.³ The treaty was signed in the global context of the beginning of the Cold War and regional context of the Chinese Communist Party's gains in the mainland China and the Korean War. Therefore, the United States changed its approach to Japan and started to fuel Japan's economic redevelopment. The United States was in need of a strong and reliable ally in East Asia, therefore Washington ended the occupation and used the alliance to bolster its strategic presence in the region.⁴ Since then, Japan became a de facto security-dependent ally that was allowed to possess only very limited means of self-defense and the United States maintained bases and troops on its soil.⁵ Japan maintained minimal military role and comparably smaller defense

1 "U.S. Relations With Japan." U.S. Department of State. March 11, 2016. Accessed February 8, 2017. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/4142.htm>.

2 Ibid.

3 "Treaty of Peace with Japan (with two declarations). Signed at San Francisco, on 8 September 1951." United Nations Treaty Series Online. Accessed February 19, 2017.

<https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20136/volume-136-I-1832-English.pdf>.

4 Xu, Beina. "CRF Backgrounders, The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance." CRF Backgrounders. July 1, 2014. Accessed March 2, 2017. <http://www.cfr.org/japan/us-japan-security-alliance/p31437>.

5 Dolan, Ronald E, and Robert L Worden. Japan: A Country Study. Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress: For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1992. Online Text. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/91029874/>. (Accessed February 19, 2017.), 375.

budget than the United States in the early years of the alliance, mainly because of its new Constitution that forbid to deploy troops overseas. However, Tokyo did benefit from its inferior security position economically because the American military spending secured Japan's access to American markets and the military-related restrictions included in its Constitution made excessive military spending of Japan obsolete.⁶ That allowed Japan to speed up its post-war economic redevelopment.

For most of the post-war period, Japan adapted itself to the United States's global and regional policies and was rather reluctant towards initiating its own. Its passivity and neutrality in international relations policies stemmed mainly from the pacifist clause of the Article 9 in the 1947 Constitution. Moreover, the security pact with the United States was harmonized with the grand strategy for post-war defense program of the prime minister Yoshida Shigeru's administration, which emphasized Japan relying on the United States for its security needs, so the country could focus on its own economic recovery. Japan's international economic policies and diplomatic low-profile practices adapted to the new political environment in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly towards the U.S., Soviet Union, Japan and the People's Republic of China.⁷

1.2 Establishing a Bilateral Relationship

In 1954, Japan - U.S. Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement was signed which established the presence of the U.S armed forces in Japan along with emphasis on the defensive character of the Japanese security program.⁸ Moreover, the Communist gains in China and the outbreak of the Korean War made the United States change its mind about Japan's disarmament. Therefore, according to the 1954 Defense Assistance Agreement, Japan was allowed to maintain a limited Self-Defense Force (SDF) that was created by Shigeru Yoshida's government based on the Article 9 of the Constitution despite domestic protests. The limited military force ought to be used only to deter threats within Japanese territory and waters or to help with natural disasters. The external threats were dealt with

6 Sant, Van John, Mauch, Peter, and Sugita, Yoneyuki. 2010. The A to Z Guide Series : The A to Z of United States-Japan Relations. Blue Ridge Summit, US: Scarecrow Press. Accessed February 19, 2017. ProQuest ebrary, 21-22.

7 Xu, Beina. "CRF Backgrounders, The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance." CRF Backgrounders. July 1, 2014. Accessed March 2, 2017. <http://www.cfr.org/japan/us-japan-security-alliance/p31437>.

8 "U.S. and Japan Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement." Primary Sources Workshop in American History. Accessed February 8, 2017. <http://www.learner.org/workshops/primarysources/coldwar/docs/usjapan.html>.

by the U.S. Forces stationed in Japan.⁹ The Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States, signed in 1960, replaced the 1952 Japan-United States Mutual Security Assistance Pact. The new treaty further specified the right of the United States to use the land, air, and naval forces and facilities in areas in Japan and increased the U.S. role in Asia. In return for the right to establish bases in Japan, the U.S. pledged to protect Japan's security. The protection pledge was not mutual, meaning that Japan had no obligations towards U.S. defense.¹⁰

In context of the Cold War and long-term U.S. military presence in Japan, in 1971 Japanese government passed the Three Non-Nuclear Principles—no possession, production, or introduction of nuclear weapons on Japanese territory, as concerns over presence of nuclear arms in the U.S. bases grew and could potentially be the cause of an attack by the Communist powers against Japan. The non-nuclear principles were passed by the Japanese parliament in exchange for returning of Okinawa to Japan from U.S. control. The country relied on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for protection.¹¹ The anti-nuclear accord was the result of Japanese domestic pressure on anti-militarism in combination with a change in U.S. regional and global strategy of the President Nixon administration. With escalation of the Vietnam War, President Nixon's Guam doctrine from 1969 emphasized the need to cut back regional security commitments and share the defense burden with the allies. In exchange for (non-military) support in Vietnam, Japan got Okinawa back under its administration.¹²

During the 1970's, popular consensus in Japan continued to support the security agreement and other bilateral treaties with the U.S. as keystones of the Japanese security policy. In poll taken by the Cabinet Office of the Japan, it turned out that in 1978, overall

9 Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. "Self-Defense Force JAPANESE ARMED FORCE." Encyclopedia Britannica. Accessed July 25, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Self-Defense-Force>.

10 "Japan-U.S. Security Treaty." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed February 8, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/1.html>.

11 Xu, Beina. "CRF Backgrounders, The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance." CRF Backgrounders. July 1, 2014. Accessed March 2, 2017. <http://www.cfr.org/japan/us-japan-security-alliance/p31437>.

12 Hook, Glenn D., Julie Gilson, Christopher W. Hughes, and Hugo Dobson. *Japan's International Relations: Politics, Economics and Security*. 2nd ed. New York, New York: Routledge, 2013. 2013. Accessed December 25, 2017.

<https://books.google.cz/books?id=MHhE6AlgIoC&pg=PA151&lpg=PA151&dq=three+non+nuclear+principles+USA+okinawa&source=bl&ots=C0QYHxmIya&sig=yqaovWLsk7PDxxv3g5SROYCj1fM&hl=cs&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjnt-v4nLrYAhVGaFAKHd3eBII4ChDoAQgnMAA#v=onepage&q=three%20non%20nuclear%20principles%20USA%20okinawa&f=false>, 150-151.

65.6 % of Japanese respondents viewed the U.S. - Japan Security Treaty as helpful and 75.4 % of them had overall a positive view of the SDF.¹³ Eventually, the relations between both countries further improved in 1972 when the United States returned the occupied Okinawa under Japan's sovereignty. The return of Okinawa under Tokyo's control set a future standard of extended security relations between the countries. According to the 1971 Okinawa Reversion Agreement, the Okinawa Prefecture was returned back to the hands of Japanese and in return the United States maintained a large military presence and facilities on the islands. Throughout the 1970s, Japan's defense spending started to slowly but steadily increase and Japan could contribute more to the U.S.-Japanese alliance.

In 1976, the Japanese government issued the National Defense Program Outline as the first post-war defense strategy. The document satisfied the need for a more specific military strategy and more detailed guidelines for Japan's military forces, as previously the general terms of military missions were opened to wide interpretation. The subsequent Guidelines for Defense Cooperation from 1978 established a framework for the roles of the two military forces in Japan's defense. In consequence, the Japanese SDF would become a supplementary fighting power of the U.S. army and its nuclear capabilities.¹⁴

The change in the power relations since the beginning of the Cold War also affected Japanese security policy as the United States decreased its military presence in the region. The United States acted towards the rapprochement with China and with signing the Shanghai Communiqué it took a step towards normalization of relations with China.¹⁵

The 1980s marked a shift in Japan's role as a strong economic power to a more prominent international political power, especially in the Asian Pacific region, where Japan became more diplomatically active. In late 1980's Japan has become the largest creditor and the second largest investor in the United States.¹⁶ The economic role of the United States in the international arena changed as it had to rely on other nations

13 Public Relations Office, Cabinet Office of Japan. "Outline of "Public Opinion Survey on the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and Defense Issues". Ministry of Defense Japan. March 2012. Accessed December 25, 2017. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/others/pdf/public_opinion.pdf, 18.

14 Xu, Beina. "CRF Backgrounders, The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance." CRF Backgrounders. July 1, 2014. Accessed March 2, 2017. <http://www.cfr.org/japan/us-japan-security-alliance/p31437>.

15 Ibid.

16 "Foreign Holdings of U.S. Securities at the end of the period shown." Securities (c): Annual Cross - U.S. Border Portfolio Holdings. May 31, 2016. Accessed February 19, 2017. <http://ticdata.treasury.gov/Publish/shlhistdat.html>.

to finance the transformation of the former Eastern Bloc. The changed approach to diplomacy in Japan was also influenced by the relatively weakening economic position of the United States towards Japan during the oil shock crises in the 1970s. The international position of Japan grew and it was active in international organizations and with this increased political leverage it could shape the international attention towards the trouble spots according to its own interests in the region such as towards the unstable Korean peninsula. Simultaneously, the U.S and Japan had to define its future concept of mutual relations after the end of the Cold War.¹⁷

The United States and Japan had to react to the ending of the Cold War and had to adapt their policies for the new security and political environment. Despite the concerns, the mutual relationship remained just as vital to both allies in the post-Cold War period, as it was during the Cold War. In the light of this transition, the U.S. and Japan sought to redefine their alliance and prepare it for the new security circumstances in the Asia-Pacific region. Both recognized the hubs of instability in the Asia-Pacific region, including that the North-South Korea animosity or conflict in the Taiwan Strait remained a problem that persisted even after the Cold War ended. Simultaneously, the allies acknowledged that the Asia-Pacific region had globally the greatest economic growth potential out of all regions. The position of both allies remained unchanged in favor of keeping American troops and bases in Japan. These were even labeled as crucial for American ability for quick military responses in international hotspots. For the United States, the role of the alliance continued to be crucial for maintaining regional stability with the forward-deployed military forces as well as for balancing out the regional powers in East Asia and preparedness to counter emerging local threats. Japan was expected to increase its participation and activity in the region, however only within the context of the alliance with the United States.¹⁸ The Department of Defense and the Clinton administration repeatedly acknowledged the alliance as crucial for American security program in the Asia-Pacific region and its global strategy. The security alliance relevance for the United States continued because of Japans proximity to unstable hotspots in Asia

17 Dolan, Ronald E, and Robert L Worden. Japan: A Country Study. Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress: For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1992. Online Text. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/91029874/>. (Accessed February 19, 2017.), 369-370.

18 Sant, Van John, Mauch, Peter, and Sugita, Yoneyuki. The A to Z Guide Series : The A to Z of United States-Japan Relations. Blue Ridge Summit, US: Scarecrow Press, 2010. Accessed February 20, 2017. ProQuest ebrary, 25-26.

Pacific such as the Korean peninsula or the Taiwan Strait and its willingness to provide support of the SDF to U.S. military actions in the region.¹⁹ The Gulf War (1990-91) encouraged the debate on SDF participation in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations. Eventually, in 1992 the Diet passed the UN Peacekeeping Cooperation Law, which assigned the conditions for SDF deployment in such missions.²⁰ In the late 1990s, Japan officially adopted the “Japan - U.S. Joint Declaration on Security: Alliance for the 21st Century”, which extended Japanese security competences and allowed it to take part in external military operations including logistics support, however restrictions still applied to active combat.²¹

1.3 The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance and the G.W. Bush Administration

After his inauguration, George W. Bush continued to praise the strategic relationship between both allies. The Bush administration took a pro-Japan orientation and aimed to create a more equal partnership and enhance the defense cooperation. His administration took inspiration from the so-called Armitage-Nye report published by Center for Strategic and International Studies, which was a document, which analyzed multiple areas of U.S. - Japan cooperation including their security relationship and that reaffirmed the U.S.-Japan alliance as the center of the U.S. involvement in Asia. The report focused on the issues of collective self-defense right of Japan and possible reduction of U.S. personnel stationed in Okinawa, Japan. The authors of the report come from the academic field however, their views reflect the opinions of the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S defense industry. One of the authors Richard L. Armitage served as a deputy secretary of state in the Bush administration.²²

Thanks to Bush’s good relationship with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (2001-2006), who supported his initiative in controversial policies of War on terrorism

19 Ibid. 25-26.

20 Xu, Beina. "CRF Backgrounders, The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance." CRF Backgrounders. July 1, 2014. Accessed March 2, 2017. <http://www.cfr.org/japan/us-japan-security-alliance/p31437>.

21 Sant, Van John, Mauch, Peter, and Sugita, Yoneyuki. The A to Z Guide Series : The A to Z of United States-Japan Relations. Blue Ridge Summit, US: Scarecrow Press, 2010. Accessed February 20, 2017. ProQuest ebrary, 25-26.

22 Armitage, Richard L., and Joseph S. Nye. "The U.S. Japan Alliance: Anchoring stability in Asia." Center for Strategic and International Studies. August 2012. Accessed December 25, 2017. https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/120810_Armitage_USJapanAlliance_Web.pdf, 11 – 16.

and the military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the relations between the two allies were vital.²³

The strategic significance of Japan as a U.S. ally was strengthened after the terrorist attacks against the United States that occurred in September 2001. In the aftermath, Japan not only expressed support for the U.S. and British military operation in Afghanistan, but in October 2001, it passed the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, which allowed the Japanese Self-Defense Forces to join the U.S. in fight against terrorism and conduct support and cooperation activities and supply the U.S. forces. The terrorist attacks sparked new incentive for cooperation between both allies, as the issue of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in both Iraq and North Korea became the mutual point of focus of the alliance. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, the U.S. attention focused mostly on Iraq's assumed development of WMDs, but also on North Korean nuclear proliferation threat and on Iran which was accused of developing nuclear weapons and supporting terrorists. Moreover, Japan took part in the Afghanistan and Iraq reconstruction and provided humanitarian assistance and provided logistical and other support of the U.S. forces, which further strengthened the alliance.²⁴

The U.S.- Japan Security Treaty continued to play a vital role in ensuring Japanese security and the meeting of the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee (2+2 meeting) in December 2002 addressed the issue of advancing the cooperation in the changing security environment. The Bush administration cooperated closely with Japan on the nuclear threat coming from the North Korea, that was particularly concerning to the security of Japan.²⁵

In 2004, the U.S. President Bush and Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi declared their vision of the "U.S.-Japan alliance in the global context". According to this concept, Japan and the U.S., in cooperation with other countries, should work together on resolving various important challenges in the world, and agreed to further strengthen the alliance. This political proclamation illustrated the planned shift of Japan in the interpretation of

23 Sutter, Robert. "The Obama Administration and US Policy in Asia." *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal Of International & Strategic Affairs* 31, no. 2 (August 2009): 189-216. *Political Science Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed July 15, 2017), 196.

24 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2003." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2003/index.html>, 62-66.

25 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2003." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2003/index.html>, 121-122.

collective self-defense principle to a more geographically flexible approach.²⁶ It demonstrated the willingness of both allies to cooperate beyond the initial aim of the alliance to protect Japan's territory and that they were ready to play a key role in fostering and shaping the regional and global security architecture.

In 2005, Japan was allowed the supply fuel to multinational military forces operating in Afghanistan under the Special Measures Law. Both allies' representatives met in November 2005 at the Japan–U.S. Summit, where they consulted bilateral as well as international issues, including North Korea, Iraq and Afghanistan, situation in China and the realignment of U.S. forces.²⁷

In 2005, the possession of nuclear weapons by North Korea was brought up during the Six-Party Talks²⁸. The Bush administration demanded a complete and irreversible dismantling of the North Korean nuclear program and its peaceful resolution through Six Party Talks Mechanism. North Korea agreed to give up its nuclear program including weapons in exchange for energy assistance.²⁹ In the aftermath of a nuclear test announced by North Korea in 2006, the United States repeatedly reconfirmed its security commitments to Japan. In the May 2007, at the 2+2 Meeting the United States affirmed the extended deterrence to Japan and its commitment to protect it.³⁰ In 2009 following a UN Security Council criticism of North Korea over rocket launch, Pyongyang announced that it will pull out of Six Party Talks and expelled the International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors from the country.³¹

The issue of the U.S. Forces in Japan stationed mainly in Okinawa remained a sensitive political topic. Japanese public view of the U.S. military forces was negatively affected by cases of rape of local women which occurred in 1995, 2008 and 2012 and

26 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2004," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2004/index.html>, 81.

27 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2004," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2006/index.html>, 65-69.

28 Six-Party Talks is a serie of multilateral negotiations that aim to end the nuclear program of North Korea and stabilize the Korean Peninsula. Its participants are North Korea, South Korea, United States of America, Russia, Japan and China.

29 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2004," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2004/index.html>, 86.

30 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2008," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2008/index.html>.

31 "Timeline: North Korea nuclear stand-off." BBC News. April 2., 2013. Accessed December 25, 2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11811861>.

sparked negative reaction of locals towards the U.S. personnel stationed in Okinawa.³² The U.S. Forces in Japan (USFJ) and the U.S. facilities in Okinawa have also exposed local citizens to environmental, economic and security burdens associated with their stationing. That sparked protests of local citizens and local politicians against the central government in Tokyo as well as against the U.S. military. Therefore, governments of both states decided to relocate the Futenma airbase that is located in heavily populated area of Okinawa to a less populated part of the island and to transfer U.S. Marines stationed in Okinawa to a new base in Guam that is yet to be constructed.³³ In order to further improve their mutual relationship the allies agreed to continue the talks on U.S. military forces and facilities stationed in Okinawa. Improvements in the Okinawa issue were recognized in 2004 when the Joint Committee Agreement allowed the questioning of American criminal suspects by Japanese authorities and closer cooperation by investigation of these criminal cases, following the reported cases of rape and murder of a local citizens.³⁴ Adjustments to the environmental and security situation were made. Moreover, the realignment and return of U.S. facilities and areas to Japan made progress at the end of Bush's presidential term.³⁵

From the actions taken by the George W. Bush administration towards Japan, it can be inferred that some form of rebalancing towards Asia has existed before Obama's official foreign policy strategy “the pivot to Asia”. President Bush administration introduced the vision of “U.S.-Japan alliance in the global context” and was ready to let Japan play a bigger role in shaping the regional security architecture. The Bush administration increased the U.S. diplomatic and military activity in Asia because of the unstable situation in North Korea, where the United States needed strong regional allies and Japan's support in the Six Party Talks. The Obama administration has simply built on the course of rebalance set by the previous administrations.

32 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2008," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2008/index.html>.

33 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2003." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2003/index.html>, 67.

34 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2005," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2008/index.html>, 132.

35 "Diplomatic Bluebook 2008," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2008/index.html>.

1.4 The U.S.- Japan Relations under the Obama Administration 2009-2016

When the Obama administration took office, it was faced with a number of domestic as well as international challenges. This chapter will outline these challenges for the Obama administration as well as for Japan. Moreover, it will examine the concept of the U.S. foreign policy strategy of pivot/rebalance to Asia and its goals.

Initially, it was predominantly concerned with the global economic recession that hit the United States in 2008 and continued in 2009 as well as with the conflicts in South East Asia and the Middle East. The U.S. domestic economic situation overshadowed the foreign policy initiatives of the Obama administration, which were most importantly ending of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, restoring the stability in the Middle East and its surrounding regions like Pakistan, and balancing the disputes between India and China. Moreover, the unstable situation on the Korean Peninsula has been a persistent long-term challenge that the new administration had to confront. In 2009, Pyongyang executed a series of provocative moves, such as withdrawal from the Six-Party Talks framework and series of nuclear weapons tests. The Obama administration replaced the previous Bush administration's hard line approach towards North Korea with a more flexible approach, based on frequent negotiations in which Washington was seeking denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. However, this approach did not bring the expected results either, as North Korea withdraws from the Six Party Talks and performs series of nuclear tests.³⁶ The aftermath of the global economic crisis made the United States cooperate closely with major exporting economies in the Asia-Pacific, namely Japan and China, in order to ensure its economic recovery and avoid introducing of protectionist measures and trade practices in these states, so it promotes economic growth.³⁷

Strategic challenge for the Obama administration in East Asia was posed by rising China. China's impressive double digit economic growth as well as its rapid military buildup led to increasing of its influence in the region and therefore required a reaction from the United States. Many policy commentators and the media assumed that Asia could become

36 Sutter, Robert. "The Obama Administration and US Policy in Asia." *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal Of International & Strategic Affairs* 31, no. 2 (August 2009): 189-216. *Political Science Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed July 15, 2017), 189-191.

37 Ibid., 189-191.

more China-centered in the future as the influence of China broadened and the United States was preoccupied in the Middle East. However, the reality in the region was more complex.³⁸ In South East Asia, the Obama administration chose the strategy of increased engagement in Asian regional organizations.³⁹ During his first years in office Obama made clear that the Asia-Pacific region would play a vital role in the U.S. foreign policy. He repeatedly affirmed that America is ready to play the leading role in Asia-Pacific security, in contrast to his predecessor George W. Bush, who predominantly focused the U.S. foreign policy to the Middle East.⁴⁰

Reflecting the turbulent security challenges and its growing economic potential, the Obama administration chose to focus the attention and resources to Asia. With this foreign policy strategy, also called the pivot to Asia, Obama tried to distance himself from the previous administration's focus on the Middle East. Although, the rebalance/pivot to Asia is not an official doctrine of the Obama administration, we can identify three major components of this strategy: the political, the security, and the economic component. The political component of the pivot to Asia was supported by U.S. increased diplomatic activities and high-level state visits. President Obama alone made 14 trips to Asia-Pacific and visited 14 countries, which was more than any of his predecessors during his two terms in office. He was also called the Pacific President by the media. Moreover, in numerous official documents and his speeches Obama reaffirmed the importance of the region for U.S. security and economy. The United States also actively participated in Asia-Pacific regional organizations. However, due to other domestic and international problems, the United States became distracted and Obama missed the APEC and EAS forum meeting in 2013. The security component of rebalance to Asia focused on strengthening the U.S. presence in the Asia-Pacific region vis-à-vis the security challenges posed by rising China and unstable North Korea. The aim of the strategy was to strengthen and modernize regional alliances in the regional security hub and spokes system. The United States aimed to remain the guarantor of security, while shifting some of the burden onto its allies. The goal was to maintain a cheaper but more flexible military presence in the region and ensure the freedom of navigation. The aim of the economic component of pivot to Asia was to

38 Ibid. 192-193.

39 Godement, François. "The United States and Asia in 2009: Public Diplomacy and Strategic Continuity." *Asian Survey* 50, no. 1 (2010): 8-24. doi:10.1525/as.2010.50.1.8, 24.

40 Lieberthal, Kenneth. "The American Pivot to Asia." *Foreign Policy*. December 21, 2011. Accessed December 25, 2017. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/12/21/the-american-pivot-to-asia/>.

support regional trade. The Obama administration came with a bold proposal to establish the world's largest free trade zone, the so-called Transpacific Partnership. This multinational trade agreement was signed by 12 countries in 2016, however it was not ratified by the U.S. Congress.⁴¹

In his first term, Barack Obama's administration was seeking continuity in the previous administration's course in Asia-Pacific. However, in contrast the Obama administration put more emphasis on multilateralism and had overall a more complex approach towards the region which included high-level visits to partner countries, vocal emphasizing of the region's economic and security significance for the United States, active participation in regional initiatives/forums, increased military spending and strengthening of security ties with regional powers and finally launching of the regional free trade initiative, the Transpacific Partnership.

The importance of Japan and other Asian allies was repeatedly emphasized by the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and President Obama himself during their visits to the region. Japan seemed to respond positively to all the key priorities of the Obama administration including tackling of the economic crisis, joining and expanding the Trans-Pacific Partnership, managing the threats coming from North Korea, coordination of the strategic relationship with China and the risks associated with its rise, and lastly support in environmental and climate change matters.⁴²

In reaction to the changing geopolitical environment in the Asia-Pacific region, the U.S. presidential election of 2012 managed to sustain balanced and effective relationships towards the regional powers. The challenge to manage the emerging power shifts in the region required an increased diplomatic initiative. Therefore, maintaining a constructive relationship between the U.S. and China turned out to be crucial. China decided to accept that and showed reciprocal interest in peaceful management of the emerging power transition in the region.⁴³

However, the prospect of the U.S. "pivot" to Asia began to worsen with the

41 Cha, Victor. "The Unfinished Legacy of Obama's Pivot to Asia." *Foreign Policy*. September 6, 2016. Accessed January 2, 2018. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/09/06/the-unfinished-legacy-of-obamas-pivot-to-asia/>.

42 Sutter, Robert. "The Obama Administration and US Policy in Asia." *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal Of International & Strategic Affairs* 31, no. 2 (August 2009): 189-216. *Political Science Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed July 15, 2017), 196-197.

43 Ibid., 21.

increasing of political problems and protracted economic recession in the United States and thus experienced some setbacks that affected the leading position of the U.S. in the region. The setback was mainly influenced by the struggle for promoting a healthcare reform as well as budgetary issues. In consequence, these problems undermined the U.S. ability to sustain its strategic presence in the region and maintain its influence in the eyes of its allies. In terms of foreign policy, issues that occurred in the Middle East, Persian Gulf and later Eastern Europe further distracted the U.S. government from fully implementing its “rebalance” to Asia policy. Therefore, it brought more uncertainty about the U.S. future strategic presence in Asia-Pacific.⁴⁴ Moreover, the “pivot” resulted in political support of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) regional organization and strengthening of America's Strategic and Economic Dialogue with China. These initiatives demonstrated the increased involvement of the U.S. in the region. However in comparison to Obama's second presidential term, many of the proposers of the “pivot” resigned from their functions, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, her Assistant Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific Kurt Campbell, and National Security Adviser Tom Donilon. The Obama's second administration contained less Asia focused or experienced policy makers, although the Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel was in favor of the military component of the rebalance.

However, the Obama administration made further strategic mistakes in the approach towards Asia-Pacific, while the administration started to fall behind with the diplomatic and economic component of the “pivot”. In 2013, due to the government shutdown in the United States President Obama failed to attend the regional cooperation organizations meetings, namely the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit and East Asia Summit meetings, which are considered to be very important by the Asian nations. Moreover, it sent a bad signal to the countries participating in the TPP agreement, which Obama promised to secure by the end of 2013. This lack of political initiative left the U.S. allies in doubt about the country's commitment to the region in the future.⁴⁵ In 2014, the congressional sequestration policy continued to constrain the U.S. defense spending.⁴⁶ The

44 Tow, William T. "The United States and Asia in 2013: From Primacy to Marginalization?" *Asian Survey* 54, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2014): 12-21. Accessed July 22, 2017.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2014.54.1.12>, 12-13.

45 Ibid., 13.

46 Tow, William T. "The United States and Asia in 2014 Reconciling Rebalancing and Strategic Constraints." *Asian Survey* 55, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2015): 12-20. Accessed July 23, 2017. doi:

United States faced difficulties maintaining a constructive relationship to China, as Beijing viewed the U.S. strategy as a form of containment. Similarly, the TPP efforts were proceeding slowly and the troubles in the Middle East distracted the United States from implementation of the rebalance. In 2014, President Obama conducted another tour around the region and visited Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Malaysia and met with Xi Jinping during Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting. Also, his Secretaries of state and defense made visits to the region.⁴⁷ In years 2015 and 2016 the United States seemed to lose interest in the pivot and many commentators from the politics and the media criticized Obama for this unfinished foreign policy legacy.

In 2009, the left-leaning coalition led by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) gained majority in the national Diet. In terms of foreign policy, the coalition had its objections to some aspects of the alliance, namely the presence of U.S. military bases in Japan, and doubts about joint international interventions. The coalition itself was divided into pacifist faction and proponents a state with full sized military.⁴⁸ The DPJ leadership changed again in 2012, after the victory of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP), when it had to deal with the consequences of the Great Tohoku earthquake and the following tsunami in 2011 and was further challenged with the issue of worsening economic situation and finding a non-nuclear energy solution for Japan. The newly elected Prime Minister Shinzo Abe faced challenges of worsening relations with Japan's neighbor powers, namely China, South Korea and Russia, because of territorial disputes and Russian annex of Crimea. Moreover, he had to make economic reforms in order to promote growth. That was made difficult particularly because the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands territorial dispute with China unfolded. The two neighboring powers had a vital trade and economic relationship that was negatively influenced in the aftermath of the dispute, when Japan bought three of the islands from a private owner. Thus, Prime Minister Abe had to carefully navigate the relationship with China as he had to keep the economic relations in good condition in order to promote economic growth and at the same time hold on to the hard line diplomatic approach.⁴⁹ In Japan, the new government of Shinzo Abe marked a shift in new closer

10.1525/as.2015.55.1.12, 12.

47 Ibid., 12-13.

48 Godement, François. "The United States and Asia in 2009: Public Diplomacy and Strategic Continuity." *Asian Survey* 50, no. 1 (2010): 8-24. doi:10.1525/as.2010.50.1.8, 23.

49 Paal, Douglas. "The United States and Asia in 2012: Domestic Politics Takes Charge." *Asian Survey* 53, no. 1 (2013): 12-21. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2013.53.1.12>, 15-16.

security and economic relationship with the United States. He visited Washington in 2013 and in the aftermath he agreed to participate in the TPP negotiations. In return, the U.S. proceeded to grant Japan access to its gas supplies in Alaska. Additionally, important bilateral talks on North Korea, counter-proliferation, and non-traditional security initiatives were held on the side of multilateral Asian forums or in trilateral formats with Australia and South Korea.⁵⁰ Also, the issue of U.S forces in Okinawa was discussed. In order to implement the plan to relocate the Futenma Airbase facility, Japan's central government requested the Okinawa Prefectural Government to approve a land permit for the new facility. On the U.S. side, the Department of Defense released an Okinawa Consolidation Plan, which contained the plans for shifting of the U.S. forces. On the other hand, Japan showed willingness to further develop its security policies in order to modernize the U.S.-Japan security relationship and U.S. regional deterrence and defense posture in Asia-Pacific. In July 2013, new defense White Paper was released and elaborated on Japan's "dynamic defense" position. This document included the proposal for development of collective self-defense, which widened the initial purpose of the SDF to only guard the territory of Japan. The collective self-defense principle was however still limited not to break Article 9 to the Constitution and the only to guarantee its own maritime security (the plan included new systems for East China Sea monitoring and defense capabilities). That was accompanied by the increase in Japan's defense budget to 2,2 % in 2013 and the plan was to increase it further to 5 % in the future. However, that concerned Japan's neighbors including China and North Korea, who viewed this behavior as increasingly nationalistic and threatening.⁵¹

The reforms of Japan's national security policy started in 2014. The government of Shinzo Abe showed willingness to support the U.S. efforts in rebalancing and thus initiated changes in the interpretation of the Article 9 of Japanese constitution in order to allow the deployment of Self-Defense Forces in collective self-defense. That was however viewed suspiciously by China and South Korea for geopolitical as well as historical reasons. Obama welcomed the step of the Japanese government as a form of support for his rebalancing policy. The defense reforms can be seen as a form of alliance defense burden-sharing with the United States at the times of U.S. defense budget cuts and austerity

50 Ibid., 18.

51 Ibid., 18-19.

measures. In return Obama promised to defend Japan in case of escalation of the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute.⁵²

In 2015, the Prime Minister Abe visited Washington to address a joint session of the Congress. The visit was arranged along with the updating of the 2015 U.S.-Japan defense guidelines, which expanded the allies' collaboration in various security-related areas including intelligence sharing, joint training, missile defense, maritime security and other. One of the most important impacts of the guidelines update was the expanding range of potential military actions. Japan's security interests could be defended not only on Japanese territory but also beyond it if it posed a threat to Japan's security. The motivation for both allies was to find a way to update the alliance in order for it to respond to the new security challenges in the changing environment of Asia-Pacific and at the same time apply to the pacifist interpretation of Japan's constitution. The package of security bills passed by the Japanese Diet that allowed Japan to take part in collective self-defense contributed to it. From then on, Japan could become more active in the region and beyond it.⁵³

To show the good condition of relations between the countries Obama visited he visited the memorial of nuclear bomb attack in Hiroshima in Japan in 2016. In return, the Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe paid respects to the service personnel killed by Japanese air attack in Pearl Harbor.⁵⁴

52 Ibid., 13-14.

53 Gill, Bates. "The United States and Asia in 2015 Across the Region, US–China Competition Intensifies." *Asian Survey* 56, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2016): 8-18. Accessed July 24, 2017. doi:10.1525/as.2016.56.1.8, 10-11.

54 Gill, Bates. "The United States and Asia in 2016 Challenges in the Region and on the Home Front." *Asian Survey* 57, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2017): 10-20. doi:10.1525/as.2017.57.1.10, 12.

2. The Inner and Outer Challenges to the U.S. - Japan Alliance

This chapter will analyze the domestic and international challenges that the U.S.-Japan coalition had to face during Obama's terms in office. The domestic challenges for Japan and the U.S. include defense budget cuts, Okinawa base issue and the need for reinterpretation of the Japanese Constitution, so it can exercise the right of collective self-defense. In Asia-Pacific the alliance had to face outer challenges including balancing the rise of China and the nuclear threat from North Korea.

2.1 Collective Self-defense and the Reinterpretation of Japan's Constitution: an Inner Challenge

With the security environment around Japan rapidly deteriorating and the U.S. occupations outside of Asia-Pacific such as in the Ukrainian crisis or fight against the so-called Islamic state, the cabinet of Prime Minister Abe decided in July 2014 to approve a reinterpretation the antiwar Constitution of Japan. Japan has made a progress in implementation of the legislation for the exercise of collective self-defense. For the security arrangements of the alliance it meant modifying the interpretation of "self-defense" and "use of force" in the Constitution by enhancing the alliance's capabilities to deter the threat of conflict.⁵⁵ Thus, Japan would be allowed to help its allies that are under attack. This decision marks a shift for Japan from a position, where it could only defend its own territory.⁵⁶

On September 19th, 2015 a package of bills named "Peace and Security Preservation Legislation" that aimed to reinterpret the right of collective self-defense was passed into a law.⁵⁷ Under this law, the government is allowed to assist an ally during military contingency, even if Japan is not directly attacked. Abe's administration's reasoning behind this change in Japanese legal system is a concern that the trust in the U.S.-Japan alliance might be undermined and its deterrence capacity decreased if right of collective self-

55 Gupta, Sourabh. "Abe's new security legislation doubles-down on the US alliance." East Asia Forum. September 20, 2015. Accessed July 5, 2017. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/09/20/abes-new-security-legislation-doubles-down-on-the-us-alliance/>.

56 Xu, Beina. "The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance." Council on Foreign Relations. July 01, 2014. Accessed July 27, 2017. <https://www.cfr.org/backgroundunder/us-japan-security-alliance>.

57 Smith, Sheila A., and Charles McClean. "U.S.-Japan-Relations: Official Cooperation, Domestic Challenges." Council on Foreign Relations. January 15, 2016. Accessed July 4, 2017. https://esis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/1503qus_japan.pdf, 17-18.

defense is not exercised.⁵⁸ The Obama administration welcomed this move. On September 29th 2015 the Vice President Joe Biden called Prime Minister Abe to thank him for his continued efforts at strengthening the bilateral alliance.⁵⁹

According to the law, the right to use military power applies only in cases in which an armed attack from a foreign country is led against another country that has a “close relationship” to Japan and that poses a “clear danger” to the security of Japan. Moreover, Japan's military response should be conditioned to cases where no other response is available. The United States is considered one of the countries with close relationship to Japan. Furthermore, the legislation expands the range of action for logistics support during contingencies with the exceptions of war-zones and combat areas, which is yet considered unconstitutional. Additionally, the deployment of Japan's SDF overseas still requires approval of the Diet. The reason behind the change is the need for a flexible and global approach to new security threats. Moreover, the United States put pressure on Japan to acquire more responsibility for its own security and share the costs.⁶⁰

However, this shift in Japan's security policy was not unanimously accepted by the public. In the discussions of the Japanese Diet, the Prime Minister Abe and the Minister of Defense Nakatani were questioned over their intentions of sending the SDFs overseas and over justified cases of the deployment. In the Lower House of the Diet, opposition parties led by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) argued against the collective self defense right and drafted an alternative bill. In the Upper House, the DPJ opposition coalition rejected the collective self-defense rule as unconstitutional. Opinions on the new law among public differed, the opponents even went to protest against the government's proposed package of bills. In an opinion poll conducted by Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* the respondents turned out to be divided on the question of whether the package of bills would help or hinder Japan's security. Others questioned the political process that should precede the deployment of SDFs and a majority of the respondents complained about insufficiency of

58 Tanaka, Hitoshi. "Six Challenges for US–Japan Cooperation in Asia." East Asia Forum. February 15, 2016. Accessed July 5, 2017. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2016/02/15/six-challenges-for-us-japan-cooperation-in-asia/>.

59 Smith, Sheila A., and Charles McClean. "U.S.-Japan-Relations: Official Cooperation, Domestic Challenges." Council on Foreign Relations. January 15, 2016. Accessed July 4, 2017. https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/1503qus_japan.pdf, 17-18.

60 Gupta, Sourabh. "Abe's new security legislation doubles-down on the US alliance." East Asia Forum. September 20, 2015. Accessed July 5, 2017. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/09/20/abes-new-security-legislation-doubles-down-on-the-us-alliance/>.

information about the bills.⁶¹ The critics of the collective self-defense rights also pointed at the vague criteria for exercising the right of collective self-defense and the complex nature of the problem. There is a threat of entanglement into conflicts beyond Japan's geographical and strategic interests.⁶²

The divided public opinion on Japan's security role within the alliance can further constrain the relations between the two allies, especially at time of the U.S. budget cuts and its push for Japan to build its own capabilities and take greater responsibility for its own security. If the modernization of the alliance failed, it could have negative consequences for the U.S. pivot to Asia. One of the goal of the pivot is to strengthen its position in the region including through modernizing of its alliances, especially in the time of China's military rise and its assertiveness in the South China Sea and East China Sea. However, the reinterpretation of Japan's Constitution and introducing of the collective self defense principle in Japan is a major step forward for the alliance as it becomes more flexible and can respond to emerging threats more effectively.

2.2 Fiscal Restraints on Japan's Defense Budget

The commitment of the allies to enhance the alliance had been made repeatedly. Increasing of Japan's defense budget was one of the goals of the U.S. foreign policy strategy, as it sought to shift the burden of an Asia-Pacific regional security provider onto its allies. However, given the pacifist Constitution and self-imposed anti-militarism it was difficult to pass a defense budget increase in the Japanese Diet. Japan's government has for a long time kept decreasing the defense spending until 2013. In FY2013 (fiscal year 2013), it increased the defense budget for the first time by 0,8 % and continued to increase in the next years.⁶³ Japanese Prime Minister Abe's administration did not commit to increase the budget by the previous administration's decisions to a strong normative (not legally binding) ceiling on the spending of 1% of the GDP. However, Japan's neighbors including

61 Smith, Sheila A., and Charles McClean. "U.S.-Japan-Relations: Official Cooperation, Domestic Challenges." Council on Foreign Relations. January 15, 2016. Accessed July 4, 2017. https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/1503qus_japan.pdf, 17-18.

62 Gupta, Sourabh. "Abe's new security legislation doubles-down on the US alliance." East Asia Forum. September 20, 2015. Accessed July 5, 2017. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/09/20/abes-new-security-legislation-doubles-down-on-the-us-alliance/>.

63 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 5.

China and South Korea continued to increase their defense spending. In the coming years Japan's willingness to commit to increasing of its defense budget will be tied to the performance of its economy.⁶⁴

2.3 The Okinawa Base Relocation Issue

Due to the post-World War II occupation of Japan by the United States and the strategic significance of the island, Okinawa has become a host for the majority of U.S. forces stationed in Japan. More than a half of the military personnel of USFJ and about one quarter of all USFJ facilities are located in Okinawa prefecture. However, the attitude of the local Okinawan population towards the U.S. presence can be characterized as negative.⁶⁵ In the long-term, the issue of negative public opinion of the locals and the sustainability of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa remains a challenge for the alliance that has a potential to paralyze the future development of the alliance.⁶⁶

That is caused mainly by the environmental, economic and security burdens on the local population. The U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma is located in a densely populated residential area with many public buildings, which poses a greater risk of accidents. Moreover, the location of the air base negatively affects the economic potential of the area through exclusive land, airspace and maritime area usage as well as through traffic and commercial restrictions to locals in the areas surrounding the base. Lastly, some cases of crime against the locals committed by U.S. personnel contributed to the negative image of USFJ in Okinawa.⁶⁷ Additionally, Japan pays nearly 2 billion USD per year for the costs of stationing the U.S. troops on its territory.

In the year 2006, the governments of U.S. and Japan agreed to relocate the Futenma base to a less populated northern part of Okinawa.⁶⁸ The lands occupied by Futenma would

64 Ibid., 5.

65 Ibid., 3.

66 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 22.

67 "US Military Base Issues in Okinawa." Reversion Affairs Division Executive Office of the Governor Okinawa Prefectural Government. September 2011. Accessed July 28, 2017. <http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/site/chijiko/kichitai/documents/us%20military%20base%20issues%20in%20okinawa.pdf>.

68 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S. Military Presence in Okinawa and the Futenma Base Controversy." Congressional Research Service. January 20, 2016. Accessed July 28, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42645.pdf>, 1.

be given back to local authorities as a way to enhance the economic potential of the area and at the same time the American military forces would keep their strategic presence on the island.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the 2006 relocation plans counted with relocation of about 9000 U.S. personnel from the on Okinawa stationed Marine Corps to Guam, Australia (on bases of rotation), Hawaii, and continental United States. This relocation of U.S. forces is aligned with Obama's rebalance to Asia, which should provide a more geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable U.S. military presence in Asia.⁷⁰

However, the delays in implementation of the relocation made both sides agree in 2012 to handle the relocation of Futenma and transfer of U.S. Marines to Guam and other locations as separate issues. The transfer of U.S. Marines also faced criticism in the U.S. Congress regarding its high costs and feasibility.⁷¹ The U.S. as well as Japan will bear the costs of the realignment, which would increase Japan's defense spending budget that has to be passed by the Diet. The high costs of the realignment to Guam and uncertainty about the future U.S. force posture in the Asia-Pacific region were frozen from the initiative of the U.S. Congress in 2011 until 2013. Since 2014, the U.S. Department of Defense was allowed to proceed with the construction and use of Japanese funds dedicated to this purpose. Challenges to the realignment furthermore lie in the civilian infrastructure on Guam however with the restrictions from the side of the U.S. Congress removed the relocation is expected to run faster.⁷²

In 2014, the political opponent of the air base relocation Takeshi Onaga was elected as governor of Okinawa and revoked the previously approved construction of landfill in October 2015. He also filed a lawsuit against the central government of Japan, which further prolonged the project and inspired a bigger backlash from the local protestors. The timely, politically and financially costly procedures could therefore hit more obstacles. The Japanese government needed to balance out the political costs of the need for a new base to satisfy its U.S. ally without further alienating the Okinawan public. On the one hand, Japan needed to prove itself as a politically and strategically reliable ally but any forced actions

69 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 23.

70 Ibid., 24.

71 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S. Military Presence in Okinawa and the Futenma Base Controversy." Congressional Research Service. January 20, 2016. Accessed July 28, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42645.pdf>, 1.

72 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 23-24.

on Okinawa can turn the local and Japanese public against the both allies and trigger more intense protests.⁷³

A more evenly distributed and rotated placement of U.S. military personnel could ease the burden on Okinawa over the long-term and could enhance the flexibility of responses of the alliance to range of new threats.⁷⁴ The U.S. military power preponderance in Asia is vital to its rebalance strategy and its key component is maintaining bases in allies territory and developing a sustainable presence in Asia. Therefore, relocation of Okinawa airbase transfer of troops to Guam would improve the mutual relations and strengthen the alliance. However, so far the fiscal constraints in the U.S. and Japan's defense budgets hinder a fast relocation.

2.4 The U.S. Defense Budget Cuts: Domestic Challenge for the Alliance

For the United States, the alliance with Japan had a high priority in the Asia-Pacific region. However, the alliance also confronts some domestic challenges that limit its enhancement. One of such factors is the pressure on cuts in the defense budget under Obama's administration.

The U.S. Congress holds the alliance with Japan as vital to the interests of the country, particularly for its strategic value due to China's military expansion in the maritime and airspace areas. In reaction to that, the Congress issued several resolutions and letters that aimed to support Japan's side in the territorial disputes with China.⁷⁵

The concerns of the Congress centered around the budget of the alliance, while the main item of concern during Obama's presidential term was the cost of relocation of the U.S. military facilities from Okinawa to Guam. The Senate Armed Services Committee in 2013 raised the issue of the cost sharing of the U.S. military presence in Japan with the government of Japan.⁷⁶

In relation to the planned realignment of troops to Guam, the U.S. Congress imposed

73 Ibid., 23-24.

74 Gupta, Sourabh. "Abe's new security legislation doubles-down on the US alliance." East Asia Forum. September 20, 2015. Accessed July 5, 2017. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/09/20/abes-new-security-legislation-doubles-down-on-the-us-alliance/>.

75 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 2.

76 Ibid., 2.

restrictions on its funding in 2011 because it was concerned with the rising costs that were not sufficiently estimated and due to the uncertainty surrounding the realignment. In reaction to the rising costs, the Congress released the FY 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, which effectively prohibited the funding of the realignment from Okinawa to Guam until justifications and evaluations were provided by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). The freeze on DoD spending remained until 2014. In the meantime, DoD released several documents that assessed and outlined the realignment of Marines to Guam. The removal of these restrictions imposed by the Congress should facilitate the realignment and reduce military presence in Okinawa.⁷⁷

Similarly to Japan, the U.S. has made cuts in its defense budget in FY2013 in alignment with the Budget Control Act sequestration budget cut mechanism from 2011. As a part of the rebalance strategy, the U.S. government stressed that the military capacities should remain steady or be enhanced in the Asia-Pacific, however many of the U.S. allies worried how the budget cuts would impact the ability of the U.S. to fulfill its commitments.⁷⁸ Therefore, the U.S. strategy adapted and commitments to its Asian allies had to be fulfilled with a smaller yet more flexible military, that would periodically rotate among the Asia-Pacific bases, as in case of relocation of U.S. marines to Darwin, Australia. However, the eventual lack of trust in U.S. capacity to meet the security commitments it has made in Asia-Pacific threatened undermine the rebalance strategy and lead to lesser willingness of the states to cooperate with the United States.

2.5 Rising China: A Challenge to the Alliance

The economic growth of China since the economic liberalization reforms enacted since 1979 has enabled the country to project its influence both economically and militarily. Its neighbors in the Asia-Pacific region view the rise of China with suspicion, although it has brought substantial positive economic outcomes to these countries including enhanced trade and investments, low-cost imports, and cheap labor. However, China's assertiveness in maritime disputes in the South- and East China Sea do raise concerns of the U.S.-Japan

⁷⁷ Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S. Military Presence in Okinawa and the Futenma Base Controversy." Congressional Research Service. January 20, 2016. Accessed July 28, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42645.pdf>, 14-17.

⁷⁸ Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 5.

alliance about regional stability, power balance, and security of U.S. allies.⁷⁹ During the Obama administration the Chinese challenge became ever more urgent in American foreign policy and was one of the main reasons to launch the rebalance to Asia policy.

The rise of Chinese military capabilities is perceived by the U.S. government as challenging to the U.S. military preponderance in the region. The U.S. is concerned about the consequences this it might have on security of the U.S. and its regional allies and the control of the commons (land, sea, air, space and cyber space).⁸⁰ The control of commons and the assurance of access to shared space was part of the Obama administration's strategy in both 2010 and 2015. These documents stated that the U.S. is prepared to develop strategic security systems to protect access to these and counter any aggressive behavior in these shared spaces, while stressing the importance of free flow of commerce, open sea lanes and non-aggressive use of airspace.⁸¹ The urgency to protect these global commons in Asia-Pacific from the growing capabilities of the Chinese military is a challenge that the U.S. wanted to counter by developing sufficient capabilities of its own to protect its interests.⁸² Traditionally, the U.S. military strategy relied on the command of the commons to ensure its security. China's Anti-Access/Access Denial (A2/AD) strategy and the military capabilities to support it are competing with the U.S. in regional power projection. These capabilities are designed to deter the U.S. from keeping its military presence especially near the Chinese shores. The threat posed by A2/AD is rooted in its potential to prevent the U.S. and Japanese forces to access the global commons through ballistic missiles, submarines, and offensive space and cyberspace assets or to contest its freedom of movement within that space (area denial). So far, air and sea, space and cyberspace have been used by the U.S. military unrestricted but mostly in respect to international law.⁸³ The aim of the Chinese military modernization is creation of a no-go zone to prevent the United

79 Allen, John, and Benjamin Sugg. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." ORDER from CHAOS, Foreign Policy in a Troubled World. July 2016. Accessed March 26, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Paper-2v2.pdf>,3.

80 Dian, Matteo. *The Evolution of the US-Japan Alliance: The Eagle and the Chrysanthemum*. 1.st ed. Chandos Asian Studies Series. Chandos Publishing, 2014. Accessed March 20, 2017. [file:///C:/Users/Laura/Downloads/The%20US=Japan%20Alliance%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Laura/Downloads/The%20US=Japan%20Alliance%20(1).pdf), 154.

81 "National Security Strategy 2015." National Security Strategy Archive. February 6, 2015. Accessed April 2, 2017. <http://nssarchive.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/2015.pdf>, 12-14.

82 Dian, Matteo. *The Evolution of the US-Japan Alliance: The Eagle and the Chrysanthemum*. 1.st ed. Chandos Asian Studies Series. Chandos Publishing, 2014. Accessed March 20, 2017. [file:///C:/Users/Laura/Downloads/The%20US=Japan%20Alliance%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Laura/Downloads/The%20US=Japan%20Alliance%20(1).pdf), 155.

83 Allen, John, and Benjamin Sugg. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." ORDER from CHAOS, Foreign Policy in a Troubled World. July 2016. Accessed March 26, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Paper-2v2.pdf>,3.

States to project power in the area from the First Island Chain to mainland China. That would mean difficulties in free use of bases of the U.S. allies in the Asia-Pacific area. The heavy reliance on use of forward deployed bases and bases of the U.S. Asia-Pacific allies as well as the satellite and other electronic communication opens many vulnerabilities to Chinese military modernization. The development of China's anti-access strategy could have a negative influence on U.S. capability to provide security and deterrence to its allies in the Asia-Pacific, particularly to Japan. Therefore, in reaction to China's A2/AD strategy, the U.S. must work to assure Japan of their commitment to their deterrence policies which aim to protect Japan and at the same time to carefully consider its own willingness to interfere in potential escalations in the region.⁸⁴

Japan is increasingly concerned about China's growing military as well as the disputes over islands in East China Sea (ECS). The domestic reactions to this perceived threat varied since 2009. Under Prime Minister Hatoyama, the perception of Chinese threat was downplayed and his administration put effort into seeking closer cooperation with China on the disputes. However, the *White Paper on the Defense of Japan 2010* showed that the trust between the two countries was disrupted by the lack of transparency in Chinese military modernization (particularly maritime) and its motives, which include gaining more leverage by China in the bilateral disputes over Japan's claimed waters and islands in the East China Sea.⁸⁵ The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are a disputed area between the two countries and are currently under Japanese control. In 2010, the dispute escalated, when Japan arrested the crew of two Chinese fishing vessels operating in Japan's waters. The second crisis erupted in 2012 when Japan bought the islands from a private owner and China considered it breaking of the status quo in the ECS. Following the purchase, China sent vessels and even the military in the waters and airspace near the islands.⁸⁶ Moreover, China included them under its A2/AD strategy, which make them a potential conflict hotspot. In November 2013, an air defense identification zone (ADIZ) was declared by China, that includes the airspace over Senkaku Islands. That move was condemned by Japan as well as by the United States as destabilizing the region. Although, China has not

84 Ibid., 4.

85 Dian, Matteo. *The Evolution of the US-Japan Alliance: The Eagle and the Chrysanthemum*. 1.st ed. Chandos Asian Studies Series. Chandos Publishing, 2014. Accessed March 20, 2017.

file:///C:/Users/Laura/Downloads/The%20US=Japan%20Alliance%20(1).pdf., 159.

86 Pajon, Céline. "JAPAN AND ITS ALLIANCE WITH THE US, Structure, Dynamics, Evolution to 2030." *Études de l'Ifri*. May 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017.

https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/etude_japan_and_its_alliance_2030_oksl_1.pdf, 25.

enforced the ADIZ to a large extent, its existence creates a space for potential crisis escalation, mostly because the international law does not prohibit, nor is explicit about the rules of establishing an ADIZ.

The territorial maritime dispute over Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is indirectly a concern of the United States. The U.S. distances itself from taking a stand on the issue of Senkaku sovereignty but at the same time the islands are subject to the 1960 U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. The treaty obligates the U.S. to protect the territories under the administration of Japan, which includes the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Moreover, in April 2014 President Obama described the U.S. commitment to protect Japanese interests in this territory as evident because the disputed islands were under Japan's administration and therefore he condemned any potential unilateral action against Japan's control of Senkaku.⁸⁷ In his speech in Tokyo, he stated that “our [U.S.] commitment to Japan’s security is absolute, and Article 5 covers all territories under Japan’s administration, including the Senkaku Islands”.⁸⁸

The security challenge posed to the alliance by China firstly consists of maritime territorial threat (the Senkaku Islands dispute) and the establishment of the anti-access strategy (A2/AD). The strength of the Alliance and its political credibility and deterrent capability could be tested by China's claims and actions in the East China Sea. Céline Pajon in her article *Japan and its Alliance with the US* even went as far as stating that if doubts over the strength and capabilities of the alliance emerged or if the Obama administration showed unwillingness to intervene in situations, where the U.S. interests were not directly threatened, China would escalate its claims. Additionally, the author of the article stated that the intentions to weaken the alliance were demonstrated by China by seeking the “great power relations” with the United States, which are based on U.S. recognition of China's core interests in Asia-Pacific. That is another great concern in Japan.⁸⁹ Moreover, both allies worry about China's revisionist intentions that could alter the status quo in the

87 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 9.

88 Office of the Press Secretary. "Joint Press Conference with President Obama and Prime Minister Abe of Japan." The White House, President Barack Obama. April 24, 2014. Accessed July 15, 2017. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/04/24/joint-press-conference-president-obama-and-prime-minister-abe-japan>.

89 Pajon, Céline. "JAPAN AND ITS ALLIANCE WITH THE US, Structure, Dynamics, Evolution to 2030." May 2016. Accessed July 16, 2017.

https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/etude_japan_and_its_alliance_2030_oksl_1.pdf, 27.

region and that its growth in military and political power would be reflected in changing norms, values, and international institutions that have been established after the end of the World War II.⁹⁰

2.6 North Korea: A Security Challenge to the Alliance

Since Obama's inauguration the security environment in North Korea has become more unstable as the country launched several ballistic missiles and carried out nuclear tests. In 2009, North Korea quit the Six-Party-Talks, a high-level diplomatic meeting that focused on ending North-Korean nuclear program and that involved China, the U.S., Japan, Russia and South Korea. Moreover, Pyongyang carried out missile launches and nuclear tests and its leader Kim Jong-Il announced that the country was no longer bound by terms of the Korean War truce of 1953. In 2010, the sinking of South Korean ship *Cheonan* and shelling of South Korea's Yeonpyeong Island caused an alarm among the regional powers. In 2012, the succession of Kim Jong-Un took place, but brought only little change in the North Korean issue development. In 2013, North Korea successfully tested a nuclear device and attempted several more ballistic missile tests the year after.⁹¹ More ballistic missile tests followed in the years 2014-2016 including the fourth and fifth (2016) nuclear test.⁹² The North Korean missiles were believed to be able to reach Japan's territory as well as the U.S. forces stationed in Japan. Therefore, the nuclear threat to the alliance have encouraged Japan to cooperate closely with the United States on the missile defense system. Japan is directly threatened by the North Korea's regime instability as it finds itself within the reach of the ballistic missiles. In response to that, the U.S, Japan, and South Korea cooperate on defense and participate in high-level dialogues.⁹³

The escalations in North Korea did not lead to the increased urgency in the United States. On the other hand, Obama took a more cautious and sober approach towards the country, which helped to prevent the fears of American invasion into North Korea. North

90 Ibid., 27.

91 Dian, Matteo. *The Evolution of the US-Japan Alliance: The Eagle and the Chrysanthemum*. 1.st ed. Chandos Asian Studies Series. Chandos Publishing, 2014. Accessed March 20, 2017. file:///C:/Users/Laura/Downloads/The%20US=Japan%20Alliance%20(1).pdf., 162.

92 Kim, Sam. "North Korea Missile Launches, Nuclear Detonations: Timeline." Bloomberg. September 9, 2016. Accessed April 6, 2017. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-09-09/north-korea-missile-launches-nuclear-detonations-timeline>.

93 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 8-9.

Korea was still considered a threat for the stability and security of the region and to the U.S. allies. The Obama's "strategic patience" approach towards North Korea combined the U.S. willingness to negotiate with the regime only under the precondition that the North Korean regime behaved responsibly in the international arena.⁹⁴ The National Security Strategy 2010 stated that "if North Korea eliminates its nuclear weapons program, (...), they will be able to proceed on a path to greater political and economic integration with the international community. If they ignore their international obligations, we will pursue multiple means to increase their isolation and bring them into compliance with international nonproliferation norms."⁹⁵ From that statement, it is evident that the approach assumes that irresponsible actions by North Korea would mean its isolation from the immediate neighbors. However, in the National Security Strategy 2015 following the 2012 provocative moves of North Korea in the South- and East China Sea, these are reflected and the Obama administration reassured of the commitments to their allies in the region.⁹⁶ For the United States that meant maintaining pressure on the regime while waiting for it to retreat from provocations and go back to the negotiation table.

In January 2016 North Korea conducted another nuclear test, which resulted in imposing a new round of diplomatic and economic sanctions on North Korea by the UN Security Council.⁹⁷

94 Dian, Matteo. *The Evolution of the US-Japan Alliance: The Eagle and the Chrysanthemum*. 1.st ed. Chandos Asian Studies Series. Chandos Publishing, 2014. Accessed March 20, 2017. file:///C:/Users/Laura/Downloads/The%20US=Japan%20Alliance%20(1).pdf., 162.

95 "National Security Strategy 2010." National Security Strategy Archive. May 27, 2010. Accessed April 2, 2017. <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2010/>, 25-26.

96 "National Security Strategy 2015." National Security Strategy Archive. February 6, 2015. Accessed April 2, 2017. <http://nssarchive.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/2015.pdf>, 10.

97 Gill, Bates. "The United States and Asia in 2016 Challenges in the Region and on the Home Front." *Asian Survey* 57, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2017): 10-20. doi:10.1525/as.2017.57.1.10, 15.

3. The Consequences of the “Pivot” for the U.S.-Japan Relations

3.1 U.S.-Japan Alliance and American Pivot to Asia

In the long-term historical perspective, the post-war liberal order in the Asia-Pacific region was guaranteed by the hegemony of the United States, which clearly dominated in economic as well as military power. However, that situation had shifted after end of the Cold War and began to give a way to balance of power in the region. China, witnessing a rapid economic and military rise, became the re-emerging Asian power. Its rise however caused a concern and demand for reaction from Asia-Pacific maritime nations, made almost entirely of American allies. That placed an unprecedented level of demand for support on the United States, the long-term guarantor of order and stability in the region. China's capacity to make and sustain coalitions or cause discomfort in the neighboring nations associated with its rise will determine the geopolitical and security architecture of Asia. This new geopolitical situation does not have to mean an open conflict, but the U.S. and its allies will have to adapt to the situation. In this respect the United States strategy is to balance China, while not challenging it directly.⁹⁸ However, China's sudden assertiveness around 2009 towards its maritime neighbors presents a challenge. China began to claim the vast majority of the South China Sea including the Exclusive Economic Zones to be its “core interests” and backed these claims with prominently displaying its military power. Most of the neighbors decided to hedge against China and thus strengthen security ties among themselves. In order to demonstrate the U.S. position, the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated at the ASEAN Regional Forum in 2010 that the U.S. had national interest in the freedom of navigation, open access to Asia's maritime commons and respect for international law in the South China Sea.⁹⁹ Moreover, the Obama administration decided to keep the number of personnel in the area relatively steady.

In 2010, Chinese vessels were entering the waters surrounding the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. As a result, the captain and the crew were temporarily arrested, which caused an upheaval in China. While the Japan - China relations got worse, the United States backed its ally with several expressions of support from the Obama administration and reaffirmed the security guarantee for territories under Japanese

98 Godemet, François. "The United States and Asia in 2010: Uncertain Relations." *Asian Survey* 51, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2011): 5-17. Accessed July 16, 2017. doi:10.1525/as.2011.51.1.5, 5-6.

99 Ibid., 13.

administration according to the 1960 U.S.-Japan security treaty. During his 2014 state visit to Japan, Obama stated that he will defend Japan in island dispute with China. Generally, China posed a strategic challenge to the United States as well as other countries that are located within the first island chain including Southern Japan and Okinawa.¹⁰⁰

In 2011, the secretary of state Hillary Clinton announced the so-called “pivot” or “rebalance” to Asia during her Asia-Pacific tour. President Obama mentioned the pivot in his address to the Australian parliament the same year. The “pivot” aimed to strengthen the American commitments- diplomatic, economic, strategic, and other - in that area and increase the U.S. engagement in the region as it was prepared to leave Iraq and Afghanistan and make cuts in defense budget.¹⁰¹ The Obama administration was clear about giving the region the highest priority. By refocusing the attention and resources to Asia it has reacted to the increasing U.S. economic interests and security ties in Asia. Apart from strategic and geopolitical impact, this foreign policy strategy brought economic results. In 2011, the U.S.- Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was signed and in 2016, the ambitious regional trade deal Trans-Pacific Partnership was concluded. The grand strategy of the United States had to respond to this geopolitical situation. As a consequence of this new strategy, Japan was reassured of America’s commitment in the region. However, at the same time it had to count with the effects of potential China’s military competition with the U.S. Increasingly, Japan started to take over more responsibility and share the burden of the defensive alliance, however, China’s military growth and assertiveness does make Japan more dependent on U.S. deterrence forces and includes it further into the U.S. security arrangements in the region.¹⁰² All in all, the situation escalated in the East and South China Seas and on the Korean Peninsula, which showed the fragile stability of the region in territorial, maritime, and political disputes.¹⁰³ The Obama administration attempted to ease these tensions by numerous high-level foreign policy officials visits to China assuring of common goals in stability and prosperity of the region. However, during the disputes, the U.S. allies in Asia-Pacific including Vietnam, South Korea, Japan and the

100 Ibid., 13-14.

101 Paal, Douglas. "The United States and Asia in 2012: Domestic Politics Takes Charge." *Asian Survey* 53, no. 1 (2013): 12-21. doi:10.1525/as.2013.53.1.12, 12.

102 Dian, Matteo. *The Evolution of the US-Japan Alliance: The Eagle and the Chrysanthemum*. 1.st ed. Chandos Asian Studies Series. Chandos Publishing, 2014. Accessed March 20, 2017. file:///C:/Users/Laura/Downloads/The%20US=Japan%20Alliance%20(1).pdf., 152.

103 Paal, Douglas. "The United States and Asia in 2011: Obama Determined to Bring America “Back” to Asia." *Asian Survey* 52, no. 1 (2012): 6-14. doi:10.1525/as.2012.52.1.6, 6.

Philippines made clear they want to keep the United States as close security partners and counterbalance China's rising power.¹⁰⁴

The “pivot” to Asia was often criticized for losing cohesion in economic, security and diplomacy and only turned into rhetorical statements used for political effect at home and abroad for the Obama administration, that aimed demonstrate the government’s actions towards the China challenge. However, in 2012, the policy of “rebalance” towards Asia seemed to have a bipartisan support on the U.S. domestic political scene and seemed to have been accepted through most of the Asia-Pacific region as well. In the U.S., including Asia in the national security strategy traditionally enjoys the support of both parties in the Congress, however the approval of the TPP seemed difficult.¹⁰⁵

Obama's rebalance strategy was directly linked to the American alliance and military strategy in the region. During his second term in office, he managed to solidify and update existing alliances with key regional partners. It was the *Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement* with the Philippines, signing of *Force Posture Agreement* with Australia and most importantly the 2015 revision of Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation.¹⁰⁶

The economic component of “pivot” to Asia moved forward in 2015 when 12 nations including Japan agreed to join the TPP trade deal which was accompanied by some high profile visits to Washington and Obama's trips to the region. China was not part of the agreement because of the agreement's rules concerning state-owned enterprises, transparency, labor regulation, market-based competition and investor state disputes. Moreover, with China joining the TPP the United States would have more leverage in enforcing the intellectual property rights and correcting the trade imbalance between the two countries. The TPP was the most visible economic initiative in the rebalance strategy. Therefore, the agreement became one of the most important achievements of the Obama administration. For the sake of this agreement, the Obama administration limited the Congress' capacity to change the wording of the final deal and therefore it successfully was passed through Congress. The TPP was also viewed as vital feature for deepening of alliances and partnerships in the region by Washington. According to Washington, the TPP

104Ibid., 9.

105 Paal, Douglas. "The United States and Asia in 2012: Domestic Politics Takes Charge." *Asian Survey* 53, no. 1 (2013): 12-21. doi:10.1525/as.2013.53.1.12, 13.

106 Tow, William T. "The United States and Asia in 2014 Reconciling Rebalancing and Strategic Constraints." *Asian Survey* 55, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2015): 12-20. Accessed July 23, 2017. doi: 10.1525/as.2015.55.1.12, 13.

helped sustaining common values and strategic interest vis-a-vis China, which Obama said during his address in October 2015.¹⁰⁷

However, the in following year the TPP faced criticism from most of the presidential candidates from both the Democratic and the Republican party, reflecting the growing anti-free trade mood in the United States. Moreover, the winning candidate Donald Trump questioned the loyalty of the United States to the alliances with Japan and South Korea in his presidential campaign and even questioned the long-standing one China policy.¹⁰⁸

However, since the formal announcement of “pivot” to Asia, the initiative achieved some success in diplomatic initiatives in South East Asia such as U.S. participation in East Asian Forum in 2011 or establishing of U.S. diplomatic mission to ASEAN. Moreover, the President himself made 11 trips to the Asia-Pacific region and visited 14 countries. As a President, Barrack Obama visited Japan four times during his presidency, which together with South Korea made it the most visited country out of Asia-Pacific. Moreover, he made more visits to the region than any other U.S. president before him.¹⁰⁹ These examples cannot be considered as large-scale relocations of U.S. troops to Asia from other areas such as the Middle East, however it sends an important signal to China and to U.S. allies that the United States is ready to defend its interests in the region and be involved in the peaceful resolution of the South China Sea dispute.

3.2 The U.S. Rebalancing Strategy and the U.S. –Japan Defense

Guidelines

The U.S rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region was one of the global strategic goals of the Obama administration. The reasons for pursuing this strategy reflected the recognition of strategic and economic interests of the U.S. in Asia-Pacific that should have been achieved through strategic engagement and leadership and would be beneficial for the U.S. The goals of this strategy included economic, security and political incentives and should have provided America with economic and security benefits. The rebalancing should have

107 Gill, Bates. "The United States and Asia in 2015 Across the Region, US–China Competition Intensifies." *Asian Survey* 56, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2016): 8-18. Accessed July 24, 2017. doi:10.1525/as.2016.56.1.8, 9-10.

108 Gill, Bates. "The United States and Asia in 2016 Challenges in the Region and on the Home Front." *Asian Survey* 57, no. 1 (Jan. & feb. 2017): 10-20. doi:10.1525/as.2017.57.1.10, 10-11.

109 Ibid., 11.

been achieved through increased diplomacy, strong alliances, expanded trade and investment and a diverse security posture. The *U.S. Department of State-USAID FY 2014–2017 Joint Strategic Plan* stated the security goals of the rebalance to be “halting North Korea's proliferation activities, defending freedom of navigation and managing growing tensions over territorial and maritime disputes, or ensuring transparency in the region’s military activities.”¹¹⁰ The U.S. interests contain economic and political goals such as supporting trade liberalization, economic development, support of democracy and human rights in the region and nations pursuing their objectives peacefully and in accordance with international law and shared norms and principles.¹¹¹ One of the priorities is to initiate cooperation among states in the region in order to promote sustainable growth and rules-based regional order and to address regional and global challenges.¹¹²

The Obama administration put forward a strategy that aimed to achieve the goals of rebalancing. This included modernization of the U.S. treaty alliances, including the one with Japan and other Asia-Pacific allies, in order to enhance the flexibility of responses to security threats.¹¹³ Today, this system of bilateral defensive alliances is still in the center of its regional security arrangements.¹¹⁴ Treaty alliances with U.S. allies including Japan are the cornerstone of the U.S. strategic position in the Asia-Pacific.¹¹⁵ Moreover, the U.S. supports the buildup of the capacities of Asian allies to deter transnational threats including terrorism, violent extremism, cyber crime and proliferation. In the economic sphere the U.S. seek to foster trade and investment liberalization and strengthen regional economic integration, with the goal of achieving a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific, and advance its interests mostly through multilateral organizations active in the region.¹¹⁶

In the context of the rebalance strategy, Japan was perceived as one of the core allies for the United States. The advancing relations between the two allies were reflected in the

110 "FY 2014-2017 Department of State and USAID Strategic Plan." U.S. Department of State. April 2, 2014. Accessed April 1, 2017. <https://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/dosstrat/2014/>, 18.

111 Ibid., 18.

112 "FACT SHEET: Advancing the Rebalance to Asia and the Pacific." The White House, President Barack Obama. November 16, 2015. Accessed April 10, 2017. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/11/16/fact-sheet-advancing-rebalance-asia-and-pacific>.

113 "FY 2014-2017 Department of State and USAID Strategic Plan." U.S. Department of State. April 2, 2014. Accessed April 1, 2017. <https://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/dosstrat/2014/>, 18.

114 Przystup, James J. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Review of the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation." Strategic Perspectives 18 (March 2015). Accessed February 28, 2017.

<http://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratperspective/inss/Strategic-Perspectives-18.pdf>, 5.

115 "FY 2014-2017 Department of State and USAID Strategic Plan." U.S. Department of State. April 2, 2014. Accessed April 1, 2017. <https://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/dosstrat/2014/>, 18.

116 Ibid., 18.

revised *Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation* (April 27, 2015). The revised defense guidelines allow Japan to deploy its self-defense forces not only to defend Japan itself in case of an attack on its territory or interests. Under certain conditions, Japan will also be allowed to help an attacked ally under the collective defense principle. The revised guidelines bring a shift in the power dynamic and strengthen the role of Japan in the alliance. The U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter called the revision of the defense guidelines an important step in the rebalance's next phase, with more phases to come. The Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida affirmed the mutual interest at a joint press conference in April 2016 with his statement that the revised defense guidelines enhance solidarity and cooperation of the allies and that these align with Japan's new proactive foreign policy based on international cooperation as well as with the U.S. rebalance policy.¹¹⁷

The original defense guidelines were created in 1978 in order to establish a framework between the U.S. military and the Japan's Self-Defense-Forces in case of a military aggression against Japan. The *Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation* have been revised twice since their creation, firstly in 1997 and secondly in 2015. Consequently, the defense guidelines updates followed the changes in the political and security environment of the Asia-Pacific region, after the security concerns shifted from the Soviet Union to the regional hotspots such as Taiwan Strait or Korean Peninsula.¹¹⁸ The 1978 guidelines consist of three major parts, the first being dedicated to posture for deterring aggression, the second focusing on actions in response to an armed attack against Japan, while Japan undertakes the tasks on its territory and its surrounding waters and airspace and the U.S. ensuring its assistance in areas beyond Japan's capacity. The final part explains the course of action in the case of contingencies in the Far East outside of Japan which have an important influence on the security of Japan. This last paragraph of the defense guidelines specifies that Japan shall extend the facilitative assistance to the U.S. forces. The 1978 defense guidelines assign Japan with maintaining its own self-defense capabilities as well as countering a small-scale attack on its territory. The United States with the large-scale deterrence means such as the nuclear-capabilities and the forward-deployed forces should

117 Garamone, Jim. "Carter: U.S. Japan Defense Guidelines 'Break New Ground'." U.S. Department of Defense. April 27, 2017. Accessed March 31, 2017.

<http://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratperspective/inss/Strategic-Perspectives-18.pdf>.

118 Rinehart, Ian E. "New U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines Deepen Alliance Cooperation." CRS Insights. April 28, 2015. Accessed April 1, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/IN10265.pdf>.

provide assistance in case the attack exceeds the SDF capabilities. In addition, in case of attack against Japan, the two allies should cooperate in operations, intelligence, and logistics.¹¹⁹

Prior to the adoption of the 1978 guidelines, officials of both countries agreed to introduce the annual meetings of defense ministers and creation of a Subcommittee on the U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation (SDC) under the existing U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC) that should broaden the defense cooperation. However, the allies agreed to leave out sensitive domestic issues such as the deployment of U.S. forces in Okinawa. Additionally, these were also matters concerning “prior consultation” regarding the changes in deployment of U.S. forces, those concerning Japanese constitutional limitations, and the Three Non-Nuclear Principles. Instead, the document focuses on operations, logistics and intelligence sharing.¹²⁰

The operational aspect of the 1978 guidelines focused on the possible Soviet invasion of Japan, however it also specified the U.S. - Japan security cooperation and clarified the particulars of the alliance advancements in case of attack against Japan, in the long-run it also helped to improve the prospects of interoperability. The new element of joint operational planning introduced in the 1978 guidelines however did not go beyond the case of attack against Japan and it fell short in advancing the bilateral planning for regional contingencies.¹²¹ Consequently, the allies worked out studies of contingencies in Japan and the Far East and performed several joint military exercises.¹²² Finally, the 1978 guidelines did expand and specify Japan's security role within the alliance and for the first time defined the roles and missions of the allies. Moreover, for the first time it authorized mutual defense planning, training and exercises. However, Japan did not exceed its role of a dependent ally of the United States. The alliance continued to be the basis for Japan's defense planning.

119 "The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (November, 27 1978)." September 23, 1997. Accessed April 5, 2017. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/anpo/19781127.html.

120 Green, Michael J., and Koji Murata. "The 1978 Guidelines for the U.S.- Japan Defense Cooperation: Process and the Historical Impact." The National Security Archive. Accessed April 6, 2017. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/japan/GreenMurataWP.htm>.

121 Przystup, James J. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Review of the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation." Strategic Perspectives 18 (March 2015). Accessed February 28, 2017.

<http://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratperspective/inss/Strategic-Perspectives-18.pdf>, 6-7.

122 Green, Michael J., and Koji Murata. "The 1978 Guidelines for the U.S.- Japan Defense Cooperation: Process and the Historical Impact." The National Security Archive. Accessed April 6, 2017. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/japan/GreenMurataWP.htm>.

The original guidelines were revised in 1997 due to changes in political and security environment in the Asia-Pacific with the end of the Cold War.¹²³ During the Cold War, Japan refused the involvement in the U.S. military affairs and resisted participating in “collective security”, because of the pacifist interpretation of its Constitution.¹²⁴ However, the end of the Cold War brought new security challenges in the Middle East and on the Korean Peninsula. Prior to adopting the revised defense guidelines in 1997, Tokyo participated in the Persian Gulf War 1990-91 with financial and non-military assistance. The *Operation Desert Storm* was initiated by the UN Security Council resolution, however it posed a constitutional dilemma for Japan. Its participation was anticipated by the United States, however the 1978 defense guidelines or the Article 9 of the constitution did not operate with Japan's military participation beyond defense of Japan's territory. Thus, Japan was criticized for a chequebook diplomacy by the U.S. Secretary of State Baker during his visit to Tokyo in 1991, when Japan, unable to deploy troops in Gulf War because of pacifist interpretation of the Constitution, only contributed financially to the U.S. military efforts.¹²⁵ This event revealed serious differences in the U.S. and Japan's approach to the role of the alliance and the need for its revision for the new security challenges in the post-Cold War environment. Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa called for analysis of the new security challenges and following the findings of the so-called Higuchi Report, which reflected the international criticism of Japan's chequebook diplomacy, Japan revised its stance towards more active role in international security affairs. The Higuchi report also resulted in supporting the SDF missions in the UN peacekeeping operations. The division of security roles in the U.S.-Japan alliance remained identical in the Higuchi Report as in the 1978 defense guidelines with U.S. having the deterrent capacity and Japan possessing only enough capabilities in order to protect its territory. However, newly the SDF could defend the maritime traffic and territorial airspace and respond in case of a limited missile attack, an illegal occupation, a terrorist attacks, and influx of armed refugees.¹²⁶

123 "Joint Statement U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee Completion of the Review of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation." September 23, 1997. Accessed April 16, 2017. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/anpo/review19970923.html.

124 Lind, Jennifer. "Japan's Security Evolution." POLICY ANALYSIS NO. 788. February 25, 2016. Accessed April 13, 2017. <https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/japans-security-evolution>.

125 The New York Times. "Japan's Better Example." *The New York Times*, April 20, 1992. Accessed July 20, 2017. <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/04/20/opinion/japan-s-better-example.html>.

126 Przystup, James J. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Review of the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation." Strategic Perspectives 18 (March 2015). Accessed February 28, 2017. <http://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/stratperspective/inss/Strategic-Perspectives-18.pdf>, 7-8.

The joint statements of the alliance reaffirm its key role in promoting stability and peace as well as U.S. interests in Asia-Pacific and its importance to the security framework of Japan. The changed structure of the *Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation* 1997 highlights three key situations in the defense planning: cooperation under normal circumstances; actions in response to an armed attack against Japan and cooperation in situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security. The 1997 guidelines avoid addressing situations in specific areas.¹²⁷

However, the contemporary security situation in the Asia-Pacific was affected by North Korean nuclear program launch, ballistic missile tests, provocations along the demilitarized zone. Specifically, the third section of the 1997 defense guidelines, which focuses on the situations in areas surrounding Japan, can be considered to offer guidance in case of a North Korean attack. It determines the allies' course of action in case of refugee influx or non-combatant evacuation operations, possibly from South Korea, where the Pyongyang regime was deemed most likely to strike and where Japanese nationals live, or the rulings on economic sanctions against another party.

The 1997 defense guidelines revised the gray areas in the alliance's defense policies that have previously occurred and were not addressed in the 1978 guidelines. The gray areas cover the functioning of the alliance under normal circumstances as well as during contingencies and additionally it specified the advancements of the alliance in areas outside of Japan. Unlike in the 1978 version, the new document specifies the importance of constitutionality of the guidelines and its accordance with the three non-nuclear principles which was very important for Japan's public opinion. The principle of Japan's responsibility for its own self-defense, the support of the U.S. forward deployed forces in defense of Japan, and the nuclear deterrence capability of the United States remained unchanged. In the first part of the defense guidelines, which focuses on defense planning under normal circumstances, the governments of the allies commit to collaborate on logistical support, supplies and services between their armed forces. Under normal circumstances, the document also recognizes Japan's participation in regional and global security promotion, for instance participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations or international humanitarian or disaster relief operations and stresses the allies'

127 "Joint Statement U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee Completion of the Review of the Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation." September 23, 1997. Accessed April 16, 2017. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/anpo/review19970923.html.

cooperation in these missions. The revised guidelines also establish a bilateral coordination mechanism which improved the defense coordination during normal circumstances and is also operated during contingencies.

In case of an armed attack against Japan, the alliance commits to joint operational planning. Moreover, the document specifies the roles of each military force on ground, in air and in the sea operations as well as principles of bilateral coordinated actions and outlines the requirements of these operations.

Lastly, the incidents in areas surrounding Japan's that might have serious consequences for Japan's peace and stability. These areas are not only geographic but also situational according to the document. Therefore, incidents that occur outside of areas surrounding Japan geographically but have negative impact on Japan's security can lead to Japanese SDF involvement. That might imply an increased flexibility in the SDF's sphere of action.¹²⁸ It suggests that almost any global threat to Japan's security interest can be a reason for a non-combatant SDF's action. This interpretation of the guidelines was put into practice during Japanese involvement in War on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan, where SDF provided logistical and other support to U.S. troops.

The third part of the 1997 defense guidelines addresses several functions and fields of cooperation, firstly in areas initiated by the government including relief activities, measures targeting refugee influx, rescue and search and non-combatant evacuation operations. Secondly, Japan's assistance to U.S. Forces rests in the availability of Japan's facilities for training, supplies and other purposes. Next, the operational assistance to U.S. Forces activities in areas around Japan that have an impact on its peace and stability includes surveillance, mine-sweeping and sea and airspace management, navigational safety, etc. Lastly, Japan provides the rear area support to U.S. Forces and operational support pursuing activities such as supplies, transportation, maintenance of facilities and equipment, medical services, communication and others. Moreover, the 1997 defense guidelines established the Bilateral Coordination Mechanism (BCM), which introduced the bilateral coordination center in order to respond to an armed attack against Japan and in situations in areas surrounding Japan. The BCM further includes close coordination of

128 "The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (September, 23 1997)." Japan Ministry of Defense. September 23, 1997. Accessed April 4, 2017. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/anpo/19970923.html.

operation, intelligence sharing and logistical support in bilateral operations.¹²⁹ In consequence, the *Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation* 1997 expanded the role of Japan in its defense to the areas surrounding Japan and gave it the opportunity to back U.S. Forces' activities that were considered to protect Japan's security. The role of Japan in the alliance went beyond the regional cooperation and became more global as the guidelines allowed the forces to participate in the UN peacekeeping operations and provide humanitarian relief.

3.3 The 2015 U.S. Japan Defense Guidelines Revision

The newest revision of the defense guidelines from 2015 was issued as a response to the increasingly changing security environment, transnational nature of security threats and the increasing relevance of the Asia-Pacific region and its stability for the United States. The revised guidelines allow the allies a greater flexibility in responding to security threats.¹³⁰ Because of the new geopolitical environment and modified relationship between the U.S and Japan, the two allies have moved towards a more balanced partnership in the 21st century. Previously, the 1997 defense guidelines helped to initiate Japan's involvement in overseas missions including the assistance to the United States in reconstruction of Iraq and operations in Afghanistan. The cooperation between the U.S. and Japan's command facilitated their coordination. Additionally, in the 21st century, new forms of cooperation emerged such as cooperation on the ballistic missile defense system, cyber security and military use of space. Japan gradually deconstructed its self-imposed restrictions on military use and particularly on collective self-defense which increased the potential of the interoperability of the alliance.¹³¹

The new update to the existing 1997 mutual defense guidelines has been negotiated since October 2013. The objectives of the negotiations aimed at creating a more robust, modernized alliance that extended the responsibilities shared by the allies. The new defense guidelines included several important areas of cooperation: an alliance

129 Ibid.

130 Tatsumi, Yuki. "4 Takeaways From the New US-Japan Defense Guidelines." *The Diplomat*. April 29, 2015. Accessed April 3, 2017. <http://thediplomat.com/2015/04/4-takeaways-from-the-new-us-japan-defense-guidelines/>.

131 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 10, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 3.

coordination mechanism that covers all phases of defense responses, from peacetime to contingencies, enhanced cooperation in regional and global areas, new areas of cooperation such as in space and cyberspace, faster humanitarian and disaster relief (in Japan and elsewhere), and enhanced sharing of technology, intelligence, and research.¹³² In the U.S., the important concept of rebalance to Asia that aims to enhance the U.S. presence in the region, added significance to the 2015 revision of the defense guidelines. The reasons for a new revision include, according to the Joint Statement of the Security Consultative Committee (a body consisting of ministers (secretaries) of foreign affairs and defense), the new challenges in the security environment¹³³, coming from the instability of the North Korean regime, the military buildup of China and its maritime assertiveness in South- and East China Sea as well as recurrent intrusion of Japan's air space by Russia.¹³⁴

Secondly, the revision of the mutual defense guidelines reflects Japan's changed perspective on its role in the international security environment. Abe's administration passed several security-related bills in the framework of pursuing the so-called proactive contributions to peace laid out in the 2013 Japan's National Security Strategy.¹³⁵ Aiming for strengthening its role in the U.S.-Japan alliance and a more active approach in international security affairs, Japan has breached its traditional passivity and relying on “cheque book” diplomacy since adoption of the 1997 mutual defense guidelines. Since 1997, Japan was involved in conducting operations along the United States in the anti-piracy operations in Gulf of Aden, reconstruction of Iraq, assisting the coalition in Afghanistan, number of other UN peacekeeping operations and providing humanitarian and disaster relief, particularly during the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

Lastly, one of the incentives that led to the revision was a shift in the interpretation of Japan's constitution by Shinzo Abe's administration. As a result, the government was thus enabled to authorize collective self-defense policies, export of weapons and

132 Ibid. 14-15.

133 "Joint Statement of the Security Consultative Committee." Japan Ministry of Defense. April 27, 2015. Accessed April 12, 2017. http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/anpo/js20150427e.html.

134 Sakoda, Robin. "The 2015 U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines: End of a new beginning." Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative. April 30, 2015. Accessed April 18, 2017. <https://amti.csis.org/the-2015-u-s-japan-defense-guidelines-end-of-a-new-beginning/>.

135 Hornung, Jeffrey W. "Gauging Japan's 'Proactive Contributions to Peace'" The Diplomat. October 27, 2015. Accessed April 18, 2017. <http://thediplomat.com/2015/10/gauging-japans-proactive-contributions-to-peace/>.

technologies, and regulations for space and cyber security.¹³⁶ The issue of collective self-defense rests in the interpretation of Japan's constitution. According to the Japanese Constitution, Japan does not have the explicit right to implement collective self-defense. However, Abe's government approved the reinterpretation of the Article 9 in 2014. According to the government Japan is allowed to intervene in areas not surrounding Japan in case the situation in these areas poses a security threat to Japan and its people.

One of Abe's foreign policy goals since the 2000s was to balance the asymmetric aspects of the U.S.-Japan alliance. The right of collective self-defense approved by the constitutional interpretations have previously granted Japan the right to defend a country under attack. However, at the same time such interpretation violates the pacifist Article 9. Abe's efforts to change the interpretation of the constitution and thus enable Japan to participate in international security promotion resulted in a new interpretation of the constitution in July 2014.

Under this new understanding, it is constitutional for Japan to defend another country under following circumstances: firstly, when an international partner is being attacked which threatens Japan's survival and interests, secondly when there are no other options left, while keeping a low profile of the response. The proposal was passed through the Diet, however it is still considered to be restrictive in terms of Japan's involvement in crises outside of its borders.¹³⁷ It has expanded Japan's ability to engage in non-combat support of the U.S. forces including logistics, humanitarian relief and reconstruction assistance in areas that are outside of Japan.

The debate over the extent of Japan's international involvement in operations abroad is still open. Some Japanese, particularly from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Komeito party have reservations towards Japan's involvement in foreign conflicts, as they consider it to be in conflict with the pacifist constitution. On the other hand, some voices in the international community and particularly among Japan's allies call for a greater participation of Japan in major crises. The country still keeps low-profile in its international involvement in conflicts, because of its self-imposed restraints on military

136 Sakoda, Robin. "The 2015 U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines: End of a new beginning." Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative. April 30, 2015. Accessed April 18, 2017. <https://amti.csis.org/the-2015-u-s-japan-defense-guidelines-end-of-a-new-beginning/>.

137 Chanlett-Avery, Emma, and Ian E. Rinehart. "The U.S.-Japan Alliance." Congressional Research Service. February 9, 2016. Accessed April 10, 2017. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>, 4.

actions outside its territory, the pacifist interpretation of its Constitution and the negative reactions it would face from other regional powers such as South Korea or China.¹³⁸

The mutual defense guidelines of 2015 proceed with addressing the operational procedures in the gray-zone areas that fall between the situations of peace and conflict. Such as foreign vessel refusing to leave Japan's waters or armed landing in the disputed island areas. The nature of Japan's security agenda remains of a defensive character. The extent of implementation of the mutual defense guidelines in Japan rests on legal changes in Abe's government. The Japan's cabinet approved the limited re-interpretation of the constitution on the right of collective self-defense in 2014. Japan's SDF's since then are allowed to support the U.S. forces in defense of Japan's territory and assets including in peacekeeping operations and air and missile defense. This change sparked a debate in the Diet, among public and in the media as it goes against Japan's pacifist heritage and legitimacy of the constitution. Supporters of the reinterpretation speak against the uneven risks the Americans take in defense of Japan. The opponents fear Japan's entanglement in foreign conflicts of the United States that could have direct implications on Japan's security.¹³⁹

Additionally, one of the major changes included in the document is replacing the Bilateral Coordination Mechanism that could be launched exclusively when crisis situation occurred with a standing Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) that covers also the gray-zone areas between peacetime and conflict situations to be able to respond to any situation required and cover greater variety of security challenges. Under the gray zone areas, we count natural disasters such as the tsunami and earthquake i.e. that affected Japan in 2011. These fell exactly in between the conflict and peacetime situation.

The arms export policies have been passed thanks to the liberalization of Japan's security program. The 2015 defense guidelines introduce “Partner Capacity Building” showed a progress in regional capacity building in order to respond to the security challenges. This result has an important implication for the rebalance strategy and confirms the reinterpretation of the pacific Constitution. Thanks to this reform Japan will be able to supply the U.S. and other allies globally in cases of a military conflict that posed a threat to

138 Hornung, Jeffrey W. "Gauging Japan's 'Proactive Contributions to Peace'" *The Diplomat*. October 27, 2015. Accessed April 18, 2017. <http://thediplomat.com/2015/10/gauging-japans-proactive-contributions-to-peace/>.

139 Mochizuki, Mike M. "Transformation of the Japan-US Alliance." *Economy, Culture & History JAPAN SPOTLIGHT Bimonthly*, September 15, 2015. Accessed April 26, 2017. https://global-factiva-com.ezproxy.is.cuni.cz/ha/default.aspx#!?&_suid=149417873386106557389477077882.

its security and stability. The re-interpretation of Japanese Constitution together with updating of the alliance's security guidelines, open the Japan's path to exercising of collective self defense. The rebalance strategy also emphasizes burden sharing with U.S. allies in Asia-Pacific as an important step towards a more equal and flexible alliance.¹⁴⁰

3.4 Re-balancing to Asia in the U.S. National Security Strategy

In the 2010 National Security Strategy, the Obama administration claimed to renew the American leadership in the international arena so that the United States could pursue its interest more effectively.¹⁴¹ Simultaneously, it stressed the increased importance of economic rise in Asia-Pacific, therefore engagement of the U.S. through regional organizations, new dialogues, and high-level diplomacy was deemed essential. When it comes to the relationship with China, the document emphasizes constructive relations and responsible leadership of the rising state. At the same time, it considers its military modernization a potential threat to its allies in the region. The newly established Strategic and Economic Dialogue should be seen as a key tool to improve communication between the administrations and reduce mistrust. Although, the rebalance to Asia is not explicitly mentioned in the 2010 National Security Strategy, the document emphasizes the importance of regional allies (including Japan) for maintaining security in Asia and the need to update and deepen the alliances.¹⁴²

In the 2015 National Security Strategy, the Obama administration emphasized deepening the ties with its allies in Asia. Simultaneously, the United States remained cautious of Chinese military build-up and the territorial disputes in Asia-Pacific, while stressing the importance of ties with allies in the region including Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. Moreover, the NSS stressed the importance of peacefully settling the South China Sea dispute between China and ASEAN nations. The document stresses the U.S. support for the early conclusion of a code of conduct for the South China Sea between

140 Sakoda, Robin. "The 2015 U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines: End of a new beginning." Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative. April 30, 2015. Accessed April 18, 2017. <https://amti.csis.org/the-2015-u-s-japan-defense-guidelines-end-of-a-new-beginning/>.

141 "National Security Strategy 2010." National Security Strategy Archive. May 27, 2010. Accessed April 2, 2017. <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2010/>, 2.

142 Ibid., 42.

China and ASEAN.¹⁴³ As to the rebalancing to Asia and Pacific, the United States claimed its leadership to be essential for enhancing regional stability and security, trade facilitation and respect for universal rights and freedoms. To realize this strategy the United States pledged in the NSS to diversify its security relationships and strengthen U.S. defense and presence in the region. Modernization of the key old alliances including the one with Japan is the core of the strategy to prepare them for new challenges. The United States also pledge to promote open and transparent economies and support the regional adherence to international economic norms. The TPP is a key component of the economic strategy. China remains a challenge in terms of the territorial disputes, military modernization, trade practices and cybersecurity, but the U.S. seeks constructive relationship and aims to increase China's stake in the international system.¹⁴⁴

In several cases, the Obama administration has put its rebalance strategy into practice. The U.S. managed to modernize the alliances with its regional partners including Japan. The U.S. - Japanese alliance was modernized through the 2015 revised guidelines for U.S. - Japan security cooperation, which newly specified the U.S.- Japan military cooperation in „gray zones“ in the alliance, and defined new areas of cooperation such as cyberspace and space. However, it remained blurry on the topic of cooperation of both countries' defense forces in regional and global activities. Moreover, it became evident that Japan has de-facto revised the interpretation of the Article 9 of its Constitution, however its right of collective self-defense, is still limited to certain circumstances. Additionally, the United States attempted to ease the burden on locals posed by the U.S. military bases and personnel stationed in Okinawa and Obama reached a deal in 2012 that promised to relocate about 9000 marines to U.S. base in Guam and other stations such as in Australia and Hawaii. In 2012, President Obama also reached the so called U.S.-Australia Force Posture Agreement deal with Australia that resulted in relocating of U.S. marines to Darwin.¹⁴⁵ In 2016, the U.S. strengthened its military presence in the Philippines as a response to the escalated disputes in the South China Sea.¹⁴⁶

143 "National Security Strategy 2015." National Security Strategy Archive. February 6, 2015. Accessed April 2, 2017. <http://nssarchive.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/2015.pdf>, 13.

144 Ibid, 24.

145 Siegel, Matt. "As Part of Pact, U.S. Marines Arrive in Australia, in China's Strategic Backyard." The New York Times. April 4, 2012. Accessed December 25, 2017. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/05/world/asia/us-marines-arrive-darwin-australia.html>.

146 Tilghman, Andrew. " <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2016/03/21/the-u-s-military-is-moving-into-these-5-bases-in-the-philippines/>." The Military Times. March 21, 2016. Accessed December

3.5 The Impact of Rebalance to Asia and its Implications for the U.S. - Japan Alliance

The execution of the rebalance to Asia strategy met with partial success. Initially, President Obama took the presidential office facing global financial crisis, wars in the Middle East and need for a domestic healthcare reform. These issues eventually overshadowed his foreign policy strategy of rebalancing as they took away a lot of financial and political capital. The Obama administration laid out several goals of the rebalancing strategy: including the engaging of the rising China into the system of Pacific relations and balancing its rise with strong regional alliances, mainly the one with Japan, and reforming the bilateral trade agreement system with the regional powers and offer the multilateral Transpacific Partnership initiative. The Obama administration did not reach these goals and faced obstacles while pursuing them, however Obama prepared the ground for the next administration.

The U.S. strategic relationship to China was emphasized in many of Obama's speeches and he affirmed this rhetoric by paying a visit to China, refusing to sell arms to Taiwan during his first years in the office and refusing to meet the Dalai Lama. However, the growing assertiveness of China in South- and East China Sea would worsen the mutual relations and cause concern among U.S. allies in the region, especially with the U.S. defense budget cuts. Therefore, the credibility of the United States as a security provider in the region was hurt. The goal of the pivot to engage with China, manage to include it into the system of Pacific relations and thus ensure its peaceful rise was not met.

In North Korea, initially the Obama's approach was to engage the country in multilateral talks on dismantling its nuclear program. However, after its failure and North Korean withdrawal from the Six Party Talks, Obama changed his strategy and contained Pyongyang, while imposing multilateral sanctions. Therefore, the goal of the pivot to address the North Korean problem was not successful. During Obama's administration North Korea evolved its nuclear capabilities, performed three nuclear tests and number of ballistic missile provocations.

In Japan, Obama's strategy of rebalance to Asia was partially successful. The initial aim of the Obama administration was to modernize and strengthen the mutual security

alliance. The major achievement for both countries was the publishing of the Guidelines for U.S. Japan Defense Cooperation from 2015, which contained updates to the alliance. The guidelines together with Japan's reinterpretation of the Constitution lead to lifting the ban on Japan's collective self defense, which allowed the alliance to be more flexible and respond to international threats more effectively. Thus, the U.S. shifted some of its burden and costs as a security provider in the region onto Japan. However, Japan anti-military approach in its security policy remains strong and hinders Japan to support its ally in its global military engagements. Furthermore, the low defense budget and the Okinawa issue remain a challenge for the future for the future administration to address.

The Transpacific Partnership represented the Obama administration's attempt to tighten U.S. the economic relations to Asia-Pacific, encourage mutual trading, replace the bilateral agreement system with a multilateral one and support the domestic economy vis-à-vis the economic recession. However, the trade initiative has not received support from the U.S. Congress and was not ratified. Without the United States the Transpacific partnership was considerably weaker and its future remained uncertain.

The last major problem of the U.S. pivot to Asia strategy was its political and financial under-resourcing. Due to many unexpected issues that the Obama administration had to devote its attention to, such as the crisis in Ukraine, the rise of the so-called Islamic State and the domestic discussion on healthcare reform, Obama did not have enough political capital to launch a substantial rebalance to Asia. Therefore, did not get as much U.S. attention that it deserved.¹⁴⁷

147 Cha, Victor. "The Unfinished Legacy of Obama's Pivot to Asia." *Foreign Policy*. September 6, 2016. Accessed January 2, 2018. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/09/06/the-unfinished-legacy-of-obamas-pivot-to-asia/>.

Conclusion

After analyzing the literature, the thesis proved that Japan played an important role as an ally in president Obama's Pivot to Asia policy. Due to the unstable situation in the Asia-Pacific region with China's assertiveness and its claims in South and East China Sea as well as the instability in North Korea, the United States under President Obama relied on South Korea and Japan, its traditional and economically developed allies in the region. However, the practical impact of the pivot on Japan was not substantial and the legacy of the pivot to Asia appears to remain unfinished.

The U.S. rebalance strategy highlighted the importance of modernization of its alliances and the need to restore more equal relations within the security alliance with Japan. This approach was reflected in the 2015 revised U.S. - Japan Defense Guidelines as well as in the 2015 U.S. National Security Strategy. Yet, in the power dynamic between the allies, Japan position remained inferior. The main hindrance to equality within the alliance is the constitutional and self-imposed anti-militarism of Japan, that remains a key part of Japan's security policy. Nevertheless, the geopolitical challenges to the alliance led to re-opening of the discussion on Japan's right of collective self-defense and eventually to re-interpretation of the pacifist Article 9 of Japan's Constitution. Eventually, Japan passed a law that permitted the export of military equipment. However, Japan still has the obstacle in the form of the traditional pacifist constitution that prohibits the country from engaging in military conflicts and keeps its Self-defense forces capacities low. Moreover, the relocation of U.S. airbase in Okinawa remains a challenge to be solved in the future, although the Obama administration made some reforms in order to ease the burden on local citizens.

The rebalance strategy did not reach its full potential and the United States met its goals in Asia-Pacific only partially. The reason behind the unsuccessful implementation of the rebalance was firstly the domestic issues: mainly the cuts in U.S. defense spending caused by the domestic economic recession and the unwillingness of the Diet to increase Japan's defense budget. Secondly, the United States seemed to devote less financial and political resources to the Asia-Pacific region, because the Obama administration had to face international challenges in other parts of the world: mainly in the Middle East and Ukraine. These unexpected challenges caused that the Obama administration had to target its resources away from the Asia-Pacific.

Summary

The U.S. pivot to Asia strategy of Barack Obama's administration is not a new concept in American foreign policy. The American economic and military presence in Asia is traditional. However, President Obama put more emphasis on the multilateral approach in the region in comparison to the previous administrations. Obama aimed to strengthen the security and economic ties to regional allies as a response to the growing military build-up and increasing assertiveness of China in South- and East China Sea. The key ally in the rebalance to Asia strategy was Japan. However, the goal of the United States to modernize the mutual security alliance and establish more equal security relations was met only partially because of Japan's self-imposed anti-military restraints and its pacifist Constitution. The most important implication of the defense guidelines revision was the opening of the discussion on re-interpretation of Japan's Constitution and the right of collective-self defense. Moreover, the pivot to Asia strategy did not reach its full potential mainly because of domestic and outer challenges that made the Obama administration focus its attention elsewhere: namely the domestic economic crisis, healthcare reform, crisis in Ukraine and in the Middle East.

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Teze Diplomové práce

Jméno: Laura Srpová
E-mail: srpoval@gmail.com
Semestr: 6.
Akademický rok: LS 2016/2017
Název práce: U.S.-Japan Alliance: Key Building Bloc of Obama's Pivot to Asia?
Předpokládaný termín ukončení (semestr, školní rok): Zimní semestr 2017/2018
Vedoucí diplomového semináře: doc. PhDr. Miloš Calda
Vedoucí práce: Mgr. Jana Sehnálková
V čem se oproti původními zadání změnil cíl práce? Cílem práce bude analyzovat dopady zahraničně politické strategie "Pivot to Asia" prezidenta Baracka Obamy na bezpečnostní alianci USA a Japonska.
Jaké změny nastaly v časovém, teritoriálním a věcném vymezení tématu? Práce se bude zabývat konkrétními východisky a dopady "rebalancování" do Asie prezidenta Obamy a jejich dopadům na americko-japonskou bezpečnostní alianci. Zabývá se obdobím Obamovy vlády mezi lety 2009-2016 a z teritoriálního hlediska se zaměří na region Asie a Pacifiku.
Jak se proměnila struktura práce (vyjádřete stručným obsahem)? V práci jsou nejprve shrnuta východiska a klíčové momenty vzájemných vztahů spolu s historickým vývojem spolupráce mezi USA a Japonskem. Druhá kapitola se věnuje domácím i zahraničním výzvám, kterým spojenectví USA a Japonska čelí v souvislosti s bezpečnostní situací v Asijsko-pacifickém regionu. Třetí kapitola se věnuje Obamově politice "rebalancování" do Asie a konkrétním dopadům na Japonsko.
Jakým vývojem prošla metodologická koncepce práce? Diplomová práce začíná popisnou částí, která uvede čtenáře do problematiky a uvede hlavní výchozí body japonsko amerických vztahů. Poté bude analyzovat zahraničně politickou koncepci "rebalancování" do Asie a jeho konkrétní dopady na Japonsko. Součástí bude i analýza konkrétních vládních dokumentů, které byly schváleny za vlády Baracka Obamy a jejich praktické dopady. Práce se pokusí odpovědět na otázku jakou roli hraje Japonsko v Obamově "rebalancování" do Asie a jaké geopolitické změny v regionu Asie-Pacifik měly dopad na japonsko-americké spojenectví.
Které nové prameny a sekundární literatura byly zpracovány a jak tato skutečnost ovlivnila celek práce? Byly zpracovány primární dokumenty týkající se Národní bezpečnostní strategie USA z let 2010 a 2015 a Směrnice japonsko-americké bezpečnostní spolupráce z let 1978, 1997 a zejména 2015. Sekundární literatura se zaměřuje na analýzu "pivotu" do Asie a na japonsko-americkou alianci.

Charakterizujte základní proměny práce v době od zadání projektu do odevzdání tezí a pokuste se vyhodnotit, jaký pokrok na práci jste během semestru zaznamenali (v bodech):

Práce byla změněna z původního tématu zaměřeného na Obamovu politiku vůči Latinské Americe na jeho politiku "pivotu" do Asie a jeho dopady na japonsko-americkou alianci.

Podpis studenta a datum:

Schváleno:	Datum	Podpis
Vedoucí práce		
Vedoucí diplomového semináře		