

## **Overview of Policy Recommendations for US in East Asia**

As China continues to rise as an economic and military power on the world stage, U.S. focus on East Asia has become increasingly important. With traditional security alliances with Japan and South Korea and significant economic ties to China, the United States has much to gain – and to lose – from substantial shifts of power in the region. As our military is transforming from a static forward-deployed force to a more flexible U.S.-based force, the U.S. must reevaluate its position in the region not only military, but also politically, socially and economically.

### **The Korean Peninsula**

The Korean Peninsula has traditionally been a point of tense relations between the United States and Eastern Asia. Since the end of Korean War, North and South Korea are still at a standoff on the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, and the U.S. still stations nearly thirty thousand troops on South Korea. North Korea's nuclear capabilities and its isolation from the rest of the international community make it an increasingly dangerous neighbor for nearby East Asian nations. In addition, an increasingly economically powerful and politically active South Korea has changed the dynamics of U.S. policy towards the two Koreas. We see the U.S. taking a less interventionist role in the Korean peninsula in the next few years, while continuing to work alongside the United Nations to disarm North Korea's nuclear capability. Scaling back military forces in the peninsula and promoting smaller party talks amongst Eastern Asian nations will improve relations within the region and hopefully open up North Korea to eventual reunification.

Along with its policy towards North Korea, the United States should work with the Republic of Korea to preserve political and economic stability within the Korean peninsula. As

South Korea establishes itself as a major player in the region, the U.S. should help South Korea strengthen its democratic system as well as its capitalistic economy through the current alliance between the two nations and future FTA agreements the countries will establish. In addition, the United States should prioritize military alliance over presence: the United States should install pre-positioned equipments in South Korea, allowing a quick military action—if needed—without permanently stationing troops in South Korea. Finally, the United States should encourage the Republic of Korea to have a summit with China and Japan in order to solve numerous cultural challenges and disagreements over history standardization in textbooks.

The Korean peninsula is a crucial part in establishing and maintaining security and long-term stability in the region. The United States should work with both North and South Korea to prevent nuclear proliferation, foster democratic values, support human rights, and enhance economic partnerships.

## **Japan**

Since the end of World War Two, Japan has been a strong ally of the United States. Nonetheless, monumental changes are entering Northeast Asia and presenting new obstacles and opportunities for US-Japan relations. The three foremost issues involving the two nations currently are Japan's economy, defense sector, and the resolution of historical tensions with its neighbors.

Specifically, the United States wishes to see continued cooperation with Japanese businesses while making its own industries more competitive. More controversially, the United States sees two paths, which will come out of Japan's increased normalization of military operations. On the positive side, Japan's increased strength can help deter conflict in the region, most specifically in dealing with North Korea. However, this result will also include the loss of

American influence in the region. Since the United States respects the individual nature of Japan, it should cooperate with Japan on all matters that will bring stability to the region. That is not to say that it will support arbitrary militarization, but that the United States should support Japan's increased efforts in improving its regional defenses. One aspect related to this is the transfer of US forces from the home islands of Japan to Guam and Tinian. While keeping US forces in the general region, it will give more flexibility for Japanese control of its own land.

In terms of the historical tensions with its neighbors, the United States desires to remain respectful of the differing opinions concerning the islands disputes that Japan has with Russia, South Korea, and China at Kuril, Takeshima, and Senkaku, respectively. Given the peaceful balance of power in the region currently, the US should emphasize the importance of peacefully resolving the island issues. Most importantly, the energy deposits at Senkaku are an especially sensitive topic that must be mediated with extreme care due to the complicated multi-nation involvement.

To help alleviate past historical tensions in the region, the U.S. should recommend a summit of all nations involved in the Pacific theater of WWII. The summit gives them an opportunity to openly discuss and officially record the events of WWII finally putting to rest the discrepancies in history.

As globalization continues, the U.S. must adapt to the changes associated with globalization and support those nations wishing to integrate themselves into the global community. The U.S. should continue its current policy of openly supporting Japan's bid for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council. We believe that the modernization of the U.N. is in the best interest of the country.

## China

Strategic relations with China continue to be a centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy. Over the last decade, U.S. and Chinese relations have improved, but several challenges still remain.

While the United States has an enormous interest in trading with China, the United States must press for resolution to several concerns. First, the dangerously flimsy regulations and quality control on Chinese exports threaten US consumers. The United States must press the Chinese government to better monitor and uphold the safety standards on their exports.

Secondly, the US and China must collaborate to open Chinese markets to US producers. To this end, China must enforce intellectual property rights laws so US companies are protected in selling products to Chinese consumers. The United States has been respectful of Chinese producers selling in the United States, and the United States should call for reciprocity in this respect.

In exchange of Chinese enforcement of intellectual property rights, the United States could offer Chinese business a gift of green technology. The United States recognizes pollution and environmental damage as an international concern with international consequences, and the United States should provide this support to China in exchange for protection for US exports to China.

The United States must continue to pressure China to respect human rights. China's abuse of the human rights of Tibetans, Uyghurs, and other ethnic and religious minorities is unacceptable, and the United States must redouble efforts within the United Nations to discourage these practices. The more international awareness and pressure the United States can bring to bear on these injustices, the more likely China is to capitulate.

The United States must continue to reduce tensions between the U.S. and Chinese militaries. Exchange programs and joint search and rescue programs, for example, support the efforts of both countries to reduce the likelihood of unintended conflict and the ensuing escalation. Furthermore, the United States and China can enhance their respective securities by sharing anti-terrorism intelligence.

Debate over the United States' position on Taiwan's defense remains unresolved. Some believe that United States must increase their commitment to Taiwan's defense by including binding language in US legislation. Others suggest that any such action would be provocative and unnecessarily aggravate an already tenuous peace. Until this debate is resolved, the United States must continue to support Taiwan at its current level.

On the broadest level, this study encourages the United States to continue the policy of constructive engagement with China as China continues rise in regional and global influence. However, the United States must continue to advocate for US producers, human rights, and a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question. The United States seeks an friendly relationship with China, and friends may respectfully disagree with each other.