

Emerging Australia-Japan Security Cooperation: A Catalyst for Strategic Rivalry or Regional Order-Building?, March 31 - April 3, 2008, ANU

Date: 31 March - 3 April 2008

Location: Australian National University, Canberra

Event Type: Member Sponsored Event

Workshop Program (PDF, 49 kB)

The ARC Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security (CEPS) based at the Australian National University (ANU) with the financial support of the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT's) Australia-Japan Foundation (AJF) and the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU) conducted a workshop entitled, "Emerging Australia-Japan Security Cooperation: A Catalyst for Strategic Rivalry or Regional Order-Building?" on 31 March to 3 April 2008. The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) provided financial support underwriting four American participants to give papers at this event. Other project collaborators were the University of Sydney's Centre for International Studies and the Lowy Institute of International Policy.

The workshop's main objective was to assess how evolving security collaboration between Australia and Japan affects the Asia-Pacific and the global security environment. It is predicated upon Australia and Japan's effort to forge a Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) with the United States at the ministerial level in 2005-2006 during which a bilateral Joint Security Declaration was signed in March 2007.

The workshop was divided into four general components:

1. Discussions by Japanese and other workshop participants with the DFAT, Department of Defence and Parliamentary analysts and officials on key issue areas spanning both the "traditional" and "non-traditional" spectrums;
2. Discussions on key state-centric relations;
3. Discussions of "non-traditional issues"; and
4. Discussions on American feedback to preliminary conference with U.S. Assistant Deputy Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific Thomas Christensen addressing and conducting dialogue with the workshop participants under Chatham House Rules.

After four days, the workshop yielded the following major findings:

1. Japan and Australia needed to utilize emerging regional "security architectures" to press their mutual bilateral interests effectively throughout the region;
2. A judicious balance between Australia's and Japan's respective bilateral alliance relations with the United States could be achieved in the context of emerging multilateral frameworks via the application of "creative middle power"; and,
3. The Joint Security Declaration's noticeable emphasis on non-traditional security issues provided Australia and Japan with a major opportunity to exercise regional leadership in confronting and overcoming a wide array of unconventional security challenges.

Throughout the duration of the workshop, it was estimated that a total of 75 participants attended one or more of its functions. Around 35 people attended the workshop dinner on 31 March 2008 which featured DFAT's Acting Secretary, Ms Gillian Bird, as the keynote speaker. Between 50-55 participants attended the first day of panels on 1 April and around 35 participants attended both the University of Sydney and Lowy Institute components.

One of the activities was the IARU Business Meeting which involved around 18 colleagues from the IARU member universities, namely, University of California, Berkeley; National University of Singapore; the University of Copenhagen; Peking University; Cambridge University; Oxford University; the University of

Tokyo; and the ANU. The Director and Deputy Director of the ARC Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security (CEPS) and one representative from the Japan Foundation also attended.

Finally, the workshop received considerable attention as a significant number of overseas workshop participants were interviewed by local radio stations. The event was also featured in a subsequent ANU Staff Newsletter and was also covered by various media outlets. The major output was a Special Policy Paper entitled 'Assessing the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue' published by the NBR featuring six key papers emphasising American, Australian, Chinese, and Japanese perspectives of the TSD initiative and published in December 2008. The project's success facilitated a successful grant application for a follow-up project on Australian-Japanese bilateral security relations to convene in March 2009.

Publications

- *Assessing the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue*
National Bureau of Asian Research - Special Report #16, December 2008
<http://www.nbr.org/publications/issue.aspx?ID=536>
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http://www.iaruni.org/events/past/workshops/080402_asiapacific