

# YUICHI HOSOYA

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I would like now to turn to Yuichi.

## **Yuichi Hosoya**

Thank you, Doug. Let me present the Japanese viewpoint on this difficult question. Japan is the number three economy in the world after the United States and China but, at the same time, I define Japan as a kind of a frontline state. Frontline means that Japan is located at the front line of the structural confrontation between the United States and China. That is why Japan's position is quite vulnerable.

Japan can benefit from its close relationship with both the United States and China, because China is Japan's biggest trading partner while the United States is the only Japan Security Alliance partner.

However, at the same time, if a war happens, Japan would be in a really difficult situation because Japan would be vulnerable – not just economically and financially, but militarily as well. That is why Japan needs to respond to this dilemma, difficult question – but Japan does not have any clear answer to this question.

On the other hand, I think that the Prime Minister Abe presented two strategies to this difficult question. Number one, Abe created the Quad. The Quad is a kind of collaboration among the four leading democracies in the Pacific: United States; Japan; India; and Australia. By collaborating together, the four democracies can respond to the rise in China. This is one thing.

The other strategy is FOIP – Free and Open Indo-Pacific – strategy. With it, Japan presented a much more inclusive strategy which connects subregions of the Indo-Pacific region. Subregions mean North-East Asia; South-East Asia; South Asia; Middle East; and also East Africa.

Of course, the EU can join in the region; and also the other powers as well, like, of course, China; or Russia; or any other country can join in the region – because Japan's FOIP, Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy is quite an inclusive strategy.

Why is it inclusive? Because, in the beginning, Prime Minister Abe presented the Quad strategy but it seemed that Japan was trying to encircle China. If Japan tries to encircle China,



the ASEAN cannot join in. If ASEAN cannot join in the regional vision, it means that there is a hole in the middle of the region. That is why it is really necessary for Japan to try to invite ASEAN at the middle of the regional cooperation – I mean the FOIP.

However, at the same time, ASEAN clearly disliked the idea of dividing the region into the two opposing camps. That is why it was necessary for the Japanese government particularly, and the Prime Minister Abe's diplomatic initiative, to try to invite ASEAN into the regional cooperation of Free and Open Indo-Pacific. That is why I think that the Prime Minister Abe revised the original regional strategy of the Quad, focusing on the Asian Democratic Security Diamond, to try to revise it to present a much more inclusive strategy to embrace, not just ASEAN, but other countries as well, or regional cooperation as well.

In this way, I think that Japan has been in a very important position to promote regional cooperation in the area, I mean, in the Pacific region – particularly by presenting two different strategies. On one hand, Japan still sticks to the strategy which focuses on the importance of norms and ideas of democracy, freedom, rule of law and human rights, and so on; but, at the same time, it is necessary for Japan to present a much more inclusive strategy by promoting the Free and Open Indo-Pacific vision, which can embrace China as well.

In this way, I think that Japan has been in a very important position to try to mitigate the tension between two sides. At the same time, it is also important to note that Japan is sided with the United States in the field of emphasizing the importance of norms and ideas because Japan shares important norms of democracy – freedom; rule of law; and human rights – with other like-minded partners, particularly the United States.

In this way, I think Japan has been promoting two different strategies, but combining two different strategies. I think that Japan has been in a very important position to promote the regional cooperation in the area.

**Douglas Paal**

Thank you very much.