



STRATEGIC ASSISTANCE

Regional Reactions and Geopolitical Challenges

Ryo Sahashi, Abraham M. Denmark, Kei Koga, and Greg Chaffin



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1414 NE 42nd Street, Suite 300
Seattle, WA 98105, USA
Phone +1 206 632 7370
Fax +1 206 632 7487
E-mail nbr@nbr.org
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日米同盟と災害救援 第二回ワークショップ・レポート (要約)

「日米同盟と災害救援」プロジェクトは、全米アジア研究機構(NBR)と日本国際交流センター(JCIE)の共同研究として立ち上げられ、笹川平和財団および国際交流基金日米センター(CGP)の寛大な支援の下に進められている。同プロジェクトの目的は、「戦略的支援」というコンセプトの下、南アジア・東南アジアにおける人道支援・災害救援(HA/DR)政策に対して日米共通の戦略的アプローチを模索することにある。「戦略的支援」とは、HA/DR協力における活動を軍事的側面に限定せず、政府やNGO、そして民間セクターによる活動も含めたアプローチ、すなわち「全社会的アプローチ」を指す。

2014年3月、NBRとJCIEは2日間に渡る第二回ワークショップをシンガポールにて開催した。合計28名の学者、実務担当者、専門家が、アメリカ、日本、オーストラリア、インドネシア、インド、ミャンマー、フィリピン、シンガポール、タイから一同に会し、南アジア・東南アジアの災害に対する脆弱性と災害管理能力、災害救援における地域の多国間枠組みの有用性、日米両国の災害管理に対するアプローチと活動調整等について意見交換を行った。主な議題としては、(1) 南アジア・東南アジアの地理、地質、気候といった環境要素に由来する災害脆弱性、(2) 海外からの災害救援活動に対する南アジア・東南アジアの認識と戦略支援に対する見解、(3) 日本・アメリカの個別ないしは共同で行う能力支援の機会と挑戦、(4) 災害救援における地域枠組みの利点と弱点および戦略的支援による貢献の可能性の4点であった。第二回ワークショップ・レポートの要約は、下記のとおり。

1. 南アジア・東南アジアの脆弱性と災害管理

アジア太平洋地域では、21世紀の最初の10年間で既に1,227回もの自然災害が起こり、50万人近くの死者を出し、経済的損失が3,500億ドルにも上っている。中でも、南アジア・東南アジアはとりわけ被害を受けやすい。地理的に同地域は、メコンデルタ、ガンジスデルタといった経済的重要性が高く、多くの人口が集まるデルタ地域が存在するが、これらは自然災害に最も脆弱である世界三大デルタの内の二つである。地質学的には、インドプレート、ユーラシアプレートがヒマラヤ地域で、インド・オーストラリアプレートとユーラシアプレートがインドネシアの南西諸島列島沿いでそれぞれ交差する地点であり、大規模な地震に見舞われやすい。その例として、2004年インド洋沖地震等の大規模地震が過去に起こっている。気候状況については、熱帯性低気圧によって多くのトロピカルサイクロンが発生しており、ベンガル湾からフィリピン列島にかけて災害が発生している。また、森林伐採などの人口的に起こる環境変化は、長期的な気候パターンの変化を招き、洪水や干ばつを誘発する可能性もある。さらに、温暖化による気候変動は、雨量を増加させる。南アジア・東南アジアの場合、雨量と同時に湿度が高くなり、サイクロンやハリケーン等による洪水等の発生率が高まる。

社会経済的な潮流としても、南アジア・東南アジア地域の災害脆弱性は高まっている。例えば、過去25年において、都市化が急速に進むことにより、政府の年度予算による災害インフラ整備が行き届きにくくなっている。人口が増加しつつあることを考慮すれば、災害時にはこの問題は深刻となる。さらに、世界の経済相互依存が高まっているため、地域経済の成長にも悪影響を及ぼしやすい。現に、2011年のバンコクで起こった洪水では、世界の工業生産力が約2.5%も減少した。

アジア地域の最近の災害管理の実情として、2013年のハイエン台風が挙げられるが、フィリピン政府の対応はにおいて一定の成果を収めていた。省庁間調整を積極的に進め、「総合拠点 (one-stop shop)」を作り、情報提供や食料、シェルター等の提供を行うと共に、過去の災害の経験を活かし国連のクラスター・アプローチを用いた国際支援等を活用していた。この様に、災害対応における適切な対処が随所に見られた。しかしながら、それでもいくつかの課題は残っている。国内と国外の国家間の支援調整の問題もあるが、民間やNGOといった組織との連携についても調整・改善の余地があった。南アジア・東南アジアの国々は、国内調整のより一層のシステム化と共に、地域組織、特にASEANとの連携強化を進めていくことが今後の課題となってくるであろう。

2. 日米同盟を通じた災害救援に対する地域の認識

南アジア・東南アジア地域のHA/DRに関する関心は、2004年のインド洋沖地震から高まっており、それ以降のASEANにおける取組だけでも、ASEAN防災・緊急対応協定 (AADMER)、ASEAN地域フォーラム災害救援演習 (ARF DiREx)、拡大ASEAN国防相会議 (ADMM-Plus) におけるHA/DR専門家会合などが構築されている。非常に高いHA/DR能力を持つアメリカと日本は、それらの枠組みの改善に貢献することが可能であるが、日米同盟を通じた貢献は地政学的な意味合いも加わることもあり、アジア諸国は慎重な反応を見せている。

インドは、2000年代から国内の災害法を整備しつつある一方、国際的には2004年のインド洋沖地震で災害救援を行った「コア・グループ」のメンバーでもあり、HA/DRに関する関心は高まっている。また、インド経済が高度成長を続けるにつれ、世界経済や地域経済により一層依存しつつあるため、地域の

安定が自国の経済利益に繋がるということもあり、国際的な協力には前向きである。他方で、①国家主権への脅威となりうる海外からの軍事駐留や介入の可能性、②インドの勢力圏の確保、③インドのナショナリズムの高まり、といった懸念事項もあり、「戦略的支援」に対しては慎重な姿勢を見せている。インド・太平洋地域において、HA/DR協力が勢力均衡戦略の有益なツールになりうると認識しつつも、インドはASEANや南アジア地域協力連合 (SAARC) といった地域多国間枠組みに対するコミットメントを表している。

インドネシアは、地震、火山、洪水、干ばつ、森林火災等の自然災害が多く、HA/DRのニーズが高い。国内では災害管理5カ年計画や、国家防災庁の設立を通し、HA/DR能力の強化に努めている。今後の課題としては、国内外との協力における調整機能を強化していくことであり、その上で、国連人道問題調整事務所 (UNOCHA)、ASEAN、ARF、ADMM-Plus等の国際機関を積極的に活用していくことを重視している。

「戦略的支援」に関しても、技術的・財政的支援を通じた能力支援等による貢献が期待されている。しかし同時に、地政学的懸念も存在し、地域大国、特に中国とアメリカとの関係においてできるだけ等距離を取りたいと考えるインドネシアは、日米同盟との協力はできるだけ多国間枠組みの中で行いたいと考えている。

ミャンマーは、2008年にサイクロン・ナルギスによって大きな被害を受けたこともあり、災害管理能力の強化を目指している。ただし、ナルギス対応では過度に国家主権維持を重視し、国際支援の受け入れに慎重になったため救援が遅れた。ASEANを通して国際的な支援受け入れが進んだことから、今後もASEANとの連携が重要となってくる。他方で「戦略的支援」に関する問題は、中国を刺激しかねないと慎重である。ミャンマーは中国への経済依存が高く、2,400kmもの距離の国境を共有しているため、中国の見解を考慮

する必要を感じている。その結果、ミャンマーはASEANを中心とした枠組みを通じた「戦略的支援」を望む傾向にある。

タイは、2004年のインド洋沖地震による津波被害に至るまで大きな自然災害を長らく経験したことがなかったが、それ以降、度重なる洪水等の被害を受け、災害管理の重要性を認識してきている。国内においてタイ政府は省庁間連携強化の方針を打ち出しており、これは災害管理強化を目指す強い意思の表れでもある。しかしタイ国内では政治的問題も存在し、その政策遂行が必ずしも成功しているとは言えない。「戦略的支援」に対しては、他の国家と同様に地政学的な懸念が存在する。中国と地理的に近接していることから、アメリカとの政治的なバランスを考える必要があり、東南アジア諸国を含めた地域国家において信頼醸成やトラック2の協力関係を強化していくことが重要であると考えている。

シンガポールは、自国に対する自然災害がほばないものの、国際的な災害救援に関しては積極的に活動している。その上で「戦略的支援」の概念は多国間枠組みに組み込まれた方が有益であるとみており、また、災害救援においては必ずしも制度化された枠組みを作ることが必要というわけではなく、「有志連合」の形で進められれば良いのではないかという見解を示している。

オーストラリアは、災害救援活動によって国防等の軍事リソースに制約がかけられてしまうことを懸念しており、「HA/DR疲労」に陥っていると言われている。しかしながら、その重要性は引き続き高く認識しており、国際的な支援は継続して行っている。日米同盟による「戦略的支援」については、日米両国の高い能力を評価しつつも、地域の懸念に考慮し、多国間アプローチをとるべきだと考えている。特に、アジア地域においてはASEANの枠組みがあるため、この枠組み、特に東アジ

ア・サミット(EAS)を積極的に活用することが望ましいとしている。

地域各国から見る「戦略的支援」は、主に地政学的な問題と国家主権の問題が挙げられるが、それが包含的な枠組みであるのか、排他的な枠組みであるのかという問題も重要な点となっている。特に、中国とアメリカを中心に地域の勢力均衡が変化する時期においては、多くの国が政治・外交的に慎重になってきており、多国間の枠組みを通じたアプローチを望んでいる。そのため、「背後からのリーダーシップ(Leadership from Behind)」を行うことが重要となる。

3. 日本・アメリカのHA/DR能力と能力支援

日本が国際的な災害救援を本格的に開始したのは、1992年に「国際緊急援助隊の派遣に関する法律」を改訂してからである。その後は1998年ホンデュラスでのハリケーン、2005年パキスタンでの地震、2010年パキスタンの洪水、2013年フィリピンでの台風と、積極的に国際支援活動に参加してきている。それらの経験を通して多くの教訓を得てきたが、とりわけ複合緊急状況における現地でのインテリジェンス共有やテロなどの脅威に対する部隊防護の必要性を認識していく必要がある。

日米協力では、2011年ハイチでの救援協力、さらに東日本大地震における「トモダチ作戦」を通じた協力で得られた教訓を基に、二国間の調整メカニズムの制度化、南海トラフ地震への対応計画、地方政府との協力プロセスの制定等の努力が行われている。2013年のハイエン台風時にはこれらの連携・調整が行われていたため、臨機応変に救援活動を協力して行うことができた。

ただ、南アジア・東南アジア地域に対する支援においては、様々な課題も存在する。東チモール等の災害インフラが整っていない国家に対しては日米両国が政策調整を行い、

能力支援を効果的に行う必要があるだろうし、日米二国間の枠を超えて、オーストラリア等の能力と意思のある国々との協力も重要である。日本においては、弱点である英語や多言語でのコミュニケーション能力の向上や法整備などについても進めていく必要があるだろう。

その中でも特に、能力支援プログラムは重要である。災害救援において最も効果的と考えられる方法は予防策であり、災害後の「対応」よりも「予防」は多くの面でコストを抑えることができる。その上で、日本やアメリカの能力支援プログラムでの協力は極めて重要になってくるであろう。その他、具体的な協力に関する課題は、①災害救援において軍隊間の作戦レベルのみならず、リーダー間の戦略レベル机上演習の実施、②救援資金の負担の共有、③複合緊急状況への対応力の強化、④複雑化する情報共有の確立、⑤民間セクターとの協力が挙げられる。

4. 地域HA/DRアーキテクチャ

ASEAN主導の枠組みであるASEAN+1、ASEAN+3、ARF、ADMM、ADMM-Plus、EASは、災害救援のアジェンダを掲げており、それらASEANの努力が2009年のAADMER制定やその他の支援制度構築に繋がっている。しかし、これらの枠組みは①ASEAN諸国内で大きな経済格差が存在していること、②ASEANの経済発展の指標が未だマクロ経済を基盤としており、社会インフラの発展という要素が見落とされていること、③地方レベルにおける「レジリエンス」が低いこと、④AADMERを遂行するメカニズムが確立されていないことにより、実効性における課題が山積している。

こうしたことから、能力面での日米両国の救援支援は非常に有効である。しかしながら、上述したとおり地政学的な問題、国家主権の問題が存在しているため、戦略的支援を最大限に活用するには、それらの問題を乗り

越える環境づくりが必要となる。その上で、まず戦略的支援の有用性について整理する必要がある。

「戦略的支援」の潜在的な有用性には①HA/DR地域協力メカニズムの構築への貢献、②日米両国の同盟管理としてのツール、③HA/DRを通じた、中国を含める地域全体への関与政策の一環、④中国に対するヘッジングやバランスングとしてのツールの4つがあるが、地域諸国の懸念を考慮すれば、①～③までの有用性を強化すべきであろう。

その場合、地域協力メカニズムの構築とその枠組みを通じた能力支援への貢献が重要となる。政府、国際機関、NGO、そして地方コミュニティとの連携を強化し、災害予防を重点においた能力支援を行い、地域のレジリエンスを高めるべきであろう。同時に、コミュニケーションインフラや空港の機能拡大等といったハード面での支援、さらに、教育や情報共有メカニズムの発展を目指すソフト面での支援も行うことが重要である。

地域枠組みに関しては、日米両国はASEANの「ASEAN中心性」を尊重し、アジェンダセッティングに関わるとともに、軍事レベルの協力を行うADMM-Plusの枠組みを活用することが有益であろう。ASEANを中心に置くことにより、大国間の緊張の高まりを予防することに繋がる可能性があるからである。

5. 「戦略支援」の今後の展望

以上のことから、「戦略支援」において強調すべき点は、大きく分けて下記のとおりとなる。

1. 能力支援

- ・ 災害管理サイクルを基礎とした能力支援
- ・ 地方から国家レベルにおけるレジリエンス構築支援
- ・ 「背後からのリーダーシップ」の原則

2. コミュニティ構築

- ・国際機関、国家、民間等の能力評価とそれに基づく支援計画
- ・国家におけるコミュニケーション・ネットワークの構築
- ・国家主権の尊重
- ・地位協定、迅速な対応計画、各国との役割分担等のルール構築
- ・作戦レベルおよび戦略レベルにおける机上演習の実施
- ・地域における多国間軍事演習の促進

3. 地域多国間枠組みの活用

- ・AADMER等の既存の地域支援枠組みと整合性
- ・既存の地域枠組みの活用
- ・地政学的懸念の緩和を目標としたASEAN枠組みの活用
- ・政治的正当性と救援有効性のバランス

4. 民間セクターの役割

- ・企業や各国の市民社会に向けた関与

5. 部隊防護

- ・複合緊急状況に対応する新しいタイプの部隊防護に向けた準備

6. 責任分担

- ・HA/DR活動の資金負担の共有

7. 最終策

- ・国家・地方政府が完全な機能停止に陥った場合を想定した「戦略支援」を基盤とした支援策の計画

As Asia becomes the geopolitical center of gravity in the 21st century, large-scale disasters will pose profound political, economic, and security challenges. Sudden disasters resulting in mass casualties, the widespread destruction of property and essential infrastructure, and the prolonged displacement of large populations will severely test existing national and international institutions and could present a broader threat to regional prosperity and stability. Faced with these challenges, Japan and the United States—owing to their unique capabilities and shared interests—should elevate humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) to be a key component of their combined regional engagement strategy. To that end, it is imperative that Tokyo and Washington work together to develop and establish a more cooperative approach to regional HA/DR. This report, therefore, will explore opportunities to enhance coordination between the United States and Japan on HA/DR and will develop recommendations to support a more combined and strategic approach for managing the challenges posed by major disaster events in the Asia-Pacific—a concept termed Strategic Assistance.

In the spring of 2014, the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) and the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) convened a two-day workshop in Singapore, which included the participation of 28 scholars, practitioners, and specialists on HA/DR and related issues from nine countries: the United States, Japan, Australia, Indonesia, India, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. The participants discussed a number of topics, ranging from regional vulnerability to indigenous capacity for managing major disasters to the utility of multilateral regional organizations in South and Southeast Asia in facilitating HA/DR initiatives to the perspectives of regional nations on the prospect of the United States and Japan approaching HA/DR operations in a more coordinated and strategic fashion. Specific items of discussion included the following:

- Geographic, geological, climatological, and other environmental factors, which stand to increase vulnerability to major disaster events in South and Southeast Asia
- Regional perceptions regarding foreign HA/DR activities and operations conducted in South

and Southeast Asia, and the implications for the development and implementation of Strategic Assistance in the region

- The challenges and opportunities for capacity-building efforts conducted individually and collaboratively by the United States and Japan in South and Southeast Asia
- The strengths and weaknesses of existing regional multilateral frameworks designed to facilitate HA/DR cooperation and how the Strategic Assistance concept might contribute to their objectives

The workshop concluded by emphasizing the necessity of developing a comprehensive approach to mitigate the effects of major disaster events and the importance of appropriately situating the Strategic Assistance concept geopolitically and strategically. It also raised a series of geopolitical challenges to the implementation of such a concept—challenges that Washington and Tokyo will need to account for in order to ensure the long-term efficacy and sustainability of their efforts.

The following report provides initial findings based on the conference papers presented and the discussions held during the project's second workshop. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of JCIE or NBR, the authors of this report, or the conference participants. They represent, rather, an intermediate phase in the project's attempt to capture the issues and strategies that will contribute toward the further intellectual development and operationalization of Strategic Assistance.

Vulnerability and Disaster Management in South and Southeast Asia

The Asia-Pacific is the most vulnerable region on earth to natural disasters. According to the International Disaster Database, during the first decade of the 21st century, 1,227 natural disasters occurred in this region, killing nearly half a million people and costing over \$350 billion.¹

¹ Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, International Disaster Database, <http://www.emdat.be/database>.

Within this broader region, South and Southeast Asia are particularly vulnerable due to a number of factors, including geography, geology, extreme weather, environmental and climate change, and socioeconomic trends. Finally, although improving, international assistance efforts continue to suffer from coordination issues that detract from their overall effectiveness.

Factors That Heighten Vulnerability

First, South and Southeast Asia face several geographic factors that heighten their vulnerability to natural disasters. Approximately 600 million people in the world live less than ten meters above sea level, and the majority of them are concentrated in these subregions. The Mekong Delta and the Ganges Delta, both of which are vital to South and Southeast Asia economically and the locus for very large population concentrations, are two of the world's three deltas that are most susceptible to disaster. Vulnerable coastal areas are at the forefront of economic development throughout the region, and are increasingly becoming densely populated. Critical infrastructure, especially electrical power generation, is principally located along coastlines due to local water scarcity and the proximity to large population centers. However, the location of this infrastructure makes these cities highly vulnerable to major disasters.²

Second, the geology of South and Southeast Asia is particularly unique. The convergence of major tectonic plates—the Indian plate and the Eurasian plate meet in the Himalayan region; the Philippine plate, the Eurasian plate, and the Indo-Australian plate meet on the western coastlines of the Philippines; and the Indo-Australian plate and Eurasian plate meet along the southern island chains of Indonesia—renders the region highly susceptible to major earthquakes. For example, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami that resulted in over 280,000 deaths across the region and the 3.11 disaster that devastated Japan were both caused by major earthquakes (respectively, the third and fifth most powerful earthquakes ever recorded) occurring along ocean fault lines.³

Third, extreme weather has increasingly affected South and Southeast Asia. Massive tropical cyclones have occurred with growing regularity and intensity—the most recent incident affecting the Philippines in 2013. Such storm systems can reshape coastal geology and have lasting effects on social stability. The risks posed by major cyclones are most pronounced along the coastal areas extending from the Bay of Bengal to the Philippine archipelago. In addition to destructive storm systems, long-term climatological trends affecting annual precipitation levels have contributed to extensive flooding and prolonged periods of drought, both of which negatively affect food production.⁴

Fourth, environmental change—primarily the result of human activity—heightens the vulnerability of South and Southeast Asia to natural disasters. Reckless land use, unsustainable irrigation practices, contamination of surface water resources, depletion of groundwater reserves, and the destruction of forests, including mangroves, all serve to exacerbate regional vulnerability. The consequences of such actions can be far-reaching. Tropical rainforests, for example, play a crucial role in maintaining stable weather and rainfall patterns in Southeast Asia. Yet this fragile system is likely to become progressively unstable due to deforestation, contributing to changes in weather patterns that increase the incidence of extreme weather events and lead to prolonged flooding and droughts.⁵

Fifth, climate change resulting from global warming is likely significantly affecting weather patterns in the region. In Southeast Asia and large parts of South Asia, the amount of rainfall will likely increase due to global warming. This is primarily the result of the greater retention of water in the atmosphere as the earth warms, with its capacity to hold moisture projected to rise by as much as 7% for every one degree Celsius increase in surface temperature. As a consequence, South and Southeast Asia will become increasingly humid, rainfall will likely become heavier, and cyclones, hurricanes, and the resulting floods may become more frequent.⁶

² Abhas K. Jha and Zuzana Stanton-Geddes, eds., *Strong, Safe, and Resilient: A Strategic Policy Guide for Disaster Risk Management in East Asia and the Pacific* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2013).

³ "Indonesia Quake Toll Jumps Again," BBC, January 25, 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4204385.stm>.

⁴ Presentation given at the "Strategic Assistance: Disaster Relief and Asia Pacific Stability" workshop, NBR and JCIE, Singapore, March 8–9, 2014.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

These five factors—geography, geology, extreme weather, environmental change, and climate change—are expected to increase the vulnerability of South and Southeast Asia to natural disasters.

Moreover, socioeconomic trends will also heighten Asia's vulnerability to natural disasters. In particular, the region is undergoing rapid urbanization. Populations that were once more diffusely scattered in rural areas are now concentrated in urban centers. In the past 25 years the number of cities with populations between 600,000 and 1 million increased to eight hundred.⁷ This rapid urbanization creates fiscal constraints on the capacity of cities to manage potential risks. It has become increasingly difficult for these cities to ensure that they have appropriate and disaster-resilient infrastructure. Typhoon Haiyan, known as Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines, is a case in point. This typhoon killed 6,201 people, displaced 4 million people, and resulted in over \$12.9 billion in damages.⁸ Considering the Philippines' material and economic disadvantages—which are commonplace throughout South and Southeast Asia—it was difficult for the country to effectively prepare for or respond to such a disaster.

In addition to these challenges, disasters in one country will increasingly have spillover effects for other Asian economies, as trade networks and other forms of economic interconnectedness increase through the process of globalization. For example, in 2011, flooding in Bangkok ravaged seven major industrial sections of the city that produced components for transportation equipment, setting back global industrial production by around 2.5%. This had a negative impact on economic productivity in Japan in particular, as 449 of the 804 companies in the seven affected industrial sections were Japanese.⁹ Furthermore, while burgeoning coastal cities and infrastructure accelerate trade relations among regional countries, these areas, as discussed above, are inherently vulnerable to natural disasters, which can drastically affect region-wide economic activity.

As a consequence of the various trends outlined above, South and Southeast Asia face a growing number of interconnected risks and vulnerabilities—a “stress nexus”—that will pose a grave threat to human security.

International Assistance

In response to Typhoon Haiyan, the Philippines attempted to foster an effective relief scheme that incorporated international assistance in an effort to overcome its many vulnerabilities. Manila initiated interagency efforts through the Ministries of Customs, Finance, Immigration, Foreign Affairs, Social Welfare, Health, and Civil Defense, and created a “one-stop shop” to provide food and shelter for personnel at air and seaports and foster information sharing among the various actors. Additionally, the government assisted with importing food and military assistance so that it could overcome several challenges, such as coordinating donations and distribution with other countries. Because the Philippines had previous experience in conducting combined military exercises with foreign counterparts, and in cooperating with international aid and relief organizations utilizing the UN Cluster Approach, international assistance was relatively well-coordinated and effective. This approach provided a clear point of contact and reliable information to determine appropriate levels and disbursement of humanitarian assistance and ultimately fostered effective coordination.

Nevertheless, despite the successes described above, several challenges remain. Coordination problems persist among many national institutions and between host nations and outside actors (including foreign countries and international NGOs). For example, some NGOs are not willing to cooperate with other NGOs or engage with militaries, creating inefficiencies that reduced the speed and effectiveness of their overall response. Some private groups and NGOs simply arrive at affected sites and act as “disaster tourists.” Both of these issues were manifest in the international response to Typhoon Haiyan. Such lack of coordination can actually add to the burden of responding governments, NGOs, and militaries.

⁷ Presentation given at the “Strategic Assistance: Disaster Relief and Asia Pacific Stability” workshop, NBR and JCIE, Singapore, March 8–9, 2014.

⁸ U.S. Agency of International Development, “Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda Fact Sheet,” no. 22, April 21, 2014, <http://www.usaid.gov/haiyan/fy14/fs22>.

⁹ Japan Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), *White Paper on International Economy and Trade 2012: Extending the Frontiers of Growth through Global Linkages* (Tokyo, 2012), chap. 2, section 3, <http://www.meti.go.jp/english/report/downloadfiles/2012WhitePaper/2-3.pdf>.

Another major challenge in South and Southeast Asia is whether the host government can provide mechanisms to effectively coordinate operations among the private sector, NGOs, foreign governments, and their counterparts. Too often, affected nations lack the ability to coordinate a robust international response—the result being a less effective response. For example, China’s inexperience with requesting appropriate aid and coordinating response teams during the 2008 Sichuan earthquake highlighted the importance of effective host government response management. In 2009, the response to an earthquake in Sumatra, Indonesia, saw a mismatch by the host nation between the amount and type of aid requested and the actual conditions on the ground.¹⁰ Overall, the region needs to increase its capacity for effective coordination between states as well as with international and regional organizations, such as the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). To this end, it is imperative that regional capacity be improved across several areas.

Regional Perceptions of Strategic Assistance¹¹

South and Southeast Asian states are well-aware of the necessity to strengthen HA/DR capabilities within the region. Since the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, there have been a number of improvements in terms of cooperation, resulting in new regional frameworks and joint military exercises, such as the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercises (ARF DiREx), and ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (ADMM Plus) experts’ working groups on HA/DR. However, improvements in coordination efforts are not simply a response to the threat of severe natural disasters, but rather due to strategic calculations in the context of changing security dynamics in East Asia. Indeed, the regional geopolitical state of affairs can serve as both an

accelerator and a hindrance to enhancing regional HA/DR mechanisms.

The United States and Japan have the most advanced military capabilities in East Asia, and their military assets are particularly useful in responding to regional national disasters and may be seen as regional public goods. Yet, these benefits are not necessarily seen as universal within the region. While most countries in South and Southeast Asia tend to agree with the purpose and necessity of improving cooperation on HA/DR, particularly with strong and capable actors such as the United States and Japan, these efforts cannot be disassociated from the region’s geopolitical context. This causes a number of concerns for some countries, and as such, regional states each have a different perspective on the prospect of cooperation on HA/DR, including Strategic Assistance.

Regional Perspectives and Concerns

India. India has played an important role in enhancing regional HA/DR activities. As it demonstrated through its participation in the Tsunami Core Group activities in 2004, the Indian military, particularly its naval forces, is emerging as a net provider of security in the Indian Ocean region and beyond. Indeed, India views HA/DR operations as a key component for military engagement with the international community, including the United States, Japan, and other actors in the Indo-Pacific littoral. In addition, with India’s growth and prosperity increasingly tied to the globalized economy, New Delhi’s security interests have expanded beyond its traditional concerns with territorial defense and internal security.

In fact, however, India has competing views on improving multilateral HA/DR cooperation. On the one hand, in terms of its external relations, three factors affect its views regarding international HA/DR activities. First, India seeks to avoid any foreign military presence or intervention, especially from great powers, due to its emphasis on national sovereignty issues. Second, India is highly sensitive to issues along its periphery and within what it perceives as its own sphere of influence and views attempts by external actors to shape regional security with great trepidation and suspicion. Third, Indian

¹⁰ Jon Ehrenfeld and Charles Aanenson, *Strengthening the Alliance: HA/DR Cooperation in the Asia Pacific* (Seattle: Peace Winds America, 2013).

¹¹ For a full description of the Strategic Assistance concept, see “Strategic Assistance: Disaster Relief and Asia-Pacific Stability,” NBR and JCIE, Report, 2014, http://www.nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/psa/HADR_report_081114.pdf.

nationalism is rising in tandem with the country's economic development. Because of these three factors, India is unlikely to accept U.S.-Japan HA/DR operations on its soil, or on the subcontinent, and is concerned about the possibility that the United States will negotiate status of forces agreements or other arrangements with states on India's periphery, such as Bangladesh and Maldives.

Despite these concerns, India considers HA/DR cooperation useful for its balance-of-power strategy and policy of heightened engagement throughout the greater Indo-Pacific. In the context of a rising China, India could strengthen its defense ties with the United States and Japan, while showing its commitment to the region by cooperating on HA/DR through regional multilateral frameworks such as ASEAN and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Finally, given the frequency of natural disasters in India, New Delhi has also developed an internal management mechanism, enacted by the Disaster Management Act in 2005 and the Disaster Management Policy in 2009. This mechanism emphasizes prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, relief, and rehabilitation and considers use of the armed forces only as a last resort. Nevertheless, this change is a relatively recent phenomenon, and some from the political and strategic communities argue that the role of the military needs to be concentrated only on traditional security concerns.

Indonesia. Indonesia's views on HA/DR are similar to India's. Indonesia regards regional cooperation on HA/DR as highly important, particularly given the country's intense vulnerability to natural disasters, which is clearly illustrated by its experience with earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, landslides, droughts, and forest fires. Because of these challenges, the Indonesian government has sought to strengthen its national disaster-management mechanisms. These efforts include the creation of a five-year disaster-management plan mandated by Indonesian law, the establishment of the National Disaster Management Agency and local disaster management offices, and its efforts to enhance the capacity for disaster-response and recovery programs. This heightened awareness of the necessity for disaster management propelled the government and Indonesian society to shift their focus from reaction to

prevention and incorporate principles of disaster-risk reduction into mainstream national policies.

To implement these national efforts, however, it is imperative that Indonesia create further cooperative linkages inside and outside the country. Nationally, although the National Disaster Management Agency acts as the coordinating institution, it still depends on cooperation from local communities and the private and the public sectors. Regionally, Indonesia focuses on building cooperation through ASEAN, the ARF, and the ADMM-Plus. Internationally, coordination with international organizations, including the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, is important. Within this three-tiered context, Strategic Assistance based on the U.S.-Japan alliance could contribute to building Indonesia's capacity through technical and financial assistance, human development, knowledge management, and policy coordination. This would increase Indonesia's capability to mitigate the effects of disasters and maintain regional stability in East Asia.

Nevertheless, the Strategic Assistance concept carries geopolitical implications that could trigger Indonesian sensitivities. One of the country's security principles is its aversion to military or security pacts, as illustrated by the Natalegawa Doctrine of "dynamic equilibrium." Whether or not an operation is motivated by geopolitical considerations, Jakarta will inevitably perceive Strategic Assistance with great skepticism from its own national standpoint, and potentially in the context of the emerging competition between the United States and China. Since Indonesia's foreign and defense policy preference (mirroring that of many Southeast Asian nations) is to maintain an equidistance from both great powers, supporting Strategic Assistance would be a difficult task. Consequently, any concept based on the U.S.-Japan alliance would raise a number of political complications for Jakarta. Indonesia would likely offer lukewarm support for Strategic Assistance by stating either that HA/DR efforts need to be coordinated through multilateral frameworks, such as ASEAN, or that Strategic Assistance should focus on institutional capacity building covering the four-stage cycle of disaster management—prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Myanmar. Myanmar is also concerned about its vulnerability to natural disasters. In May 2008,

Cyclone Nargis affected over 2 million people and caused approximately 140,000 deaths in Myanmar. In the aftermath of the disaster, the ruling junta did not immediately accept international assistance. Only after harsh global criticism did Myanmar's government take action and begin responding to the disaster with the formation of a national disaster preparedness central committee. ASEAN played an important role in convincing Myanmar to accept international assistance, after which the regional body formed the coordination mechanism for the post-Nargis response. ASEAN established the Tripartite Core Group to provide an operational umbrella to facilitate and lead the post-Nargis efforts between the Myanmar government, ASEAN, the United Nations, and international NGOs.

Like Indonesia, Myanmar is also quite sensitive to East Asian geopolitics. Although the government has become increasingly cooperative in the area of disaster management with the international community—including with the United States and Japan—China's continued importance to Myanmar's economic prosperity, not to mention the 2,400 km border between the two nations, would make it difficult for Myanmar to fully support Strategic Assistance unless China were also comfortable with the concept. Because of Myanmar's desire to maintain a stable and peaceful regional environment, relations between major powers become an important factor in determining whether the country endorses great-power initiatives. In this setting, ASEAN-led frameworks are perceived as better mechanisms for pursuing regional cooperation, including on issues like HA/DR. If Strategic Assistance could operate in conjunction with these regional frameworks and with other major regional powers, Myanmar would be much more comfortable with the concept. However, because the country has a weak civil society and national NGOs, it is important that Myanmar's civilian capabilities for disaster management are enhanced through international cooperation. Although many challenges would need to be overcome, Myanmar could greatly benefit from Strategic Assistance if it were implemented with due consideration to national and regional political concerns and perspectives.

Thailand. Over the past decade, Thailand has faced sporadic but devastating natural disasters. The

country had not experienced a major disaster event for some time before the 2004 tsunami. Only seven years after the 2004 disaster, however, Thailand experienced a large and destructive flood in 2011. These events drove Bangkok to take action and the Thai government fostered interagency cooperation among the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Defence aimed at strengthening each component of Thailand's disaster-management cycle. For political reasons, however, Thailand still faces difficulties in effectively coordinating these efforts. Moreover, every actor involved in Thailand's HA/DR activities has its own agenda, which complicates these coordination problems. Ongoing and long-term national political turmoil has only exacerbated this issue.

Like many other Southeast Asian nations, Thailand is sensitive to regional geopolitical pressures. It is a formal ally of the United States, but its economy is largely dependent on China, thus necessitating that Bangkok seek to balance, to some degree, the interests and perspectives of the two greater powers. Consequently, Thailand may be unwilling to move too far too fast in engaging the United States and Japan on HA/DR out of concern that it might antagonize China and feed Beijing's perceptions that Washington seeks to use its allies and partners in Asia to contain China. General mistrust among countries in the region makes it even more difficult for Thailand to smoothly carry out HA/DR cooperation. To overcome such difficulties, it is necessary to foster confidence-building measures among Southeast Asian countries through such means as education, training, and Track 2 activities.

Singapore. Singapore also views national sovereignty as essential. In terms of civil-military cooperation, the Singaporean government takes the lead in every dimension of disaster management at all domestic levels. In terms of international cooperation, the Singapore Armed Forces are widely spread throughout the world for training, including in areas as varied as New Zealand and Texas. It is for this reason that the Singapore Armed Forces could contribute to HA/DR activities during Hurricane Katrina relief efforts and following the 2010 Christchurch earthquake in New Zealand. These cases demonstrate Singapore's somewhat unique position in that it is one of the few nations in the

region capable of contributing to HA/DR operations abroad and views doing so as a way to strengthen its national soft power.

However, Singapore shares many of the same geopolitical concerns as its regional peers. It would likely consider it important that the Strategic Assistance concept be multilateralized through regional institutional frameworks. Although Singapore would prefer it if Strategic Assistance were approached through regional frameworks, multilateralization efforts based on a “coalition of the willing” model, if conducted with political adroitness, might also be acceptable as the city-state views HA/DR activities as an important aspect of maintaining regional stability.

Australia. Australia understands that the Asia-Pacific region needs stronger HA/DR cooperation. Though this emphasis places some strain on Australia’s military resources and has resulted in a degree of HA/DR fatigue, the country remains ready and willing to provide and support HA/DR operations through a highly transparent, predictable, and phased approach.

Although Australia, as one of the United States’ treaty allies, is comfortable with Washington’s leadership in the region, Canberra recognizes the political sensitivities that inhibit greater cooperation on the part of other regional actors. Consequently, while it would likely support and contribute to a primarily U.S.-Japan bilateral approach to Strategic Assistance, Australia is likely to counsel the need for the allies to adopt a more multilateral approach that leverages existing regional political frameworks. Moreover, because Asia already possesses several HA/DR frameworks led by ASEAN, Australia would likely argue that Strategic Assistance needs to be carefully coordinated with these initiatives so that it can be more politically palatable to regional states. In this sense, multilateralizing HA/DR activities is a less controversial policy option that a number of states could pursue. However, if multilateralization is pursued too vigorously, these efforts might undermine operational effectiveness or the visibility of contributing states to the point that some states may question the value of incurring the burdens associated with HA/DR efforts.

From the Australian perspective, the best way to enhance regional disaster-management capabilities

is to work within existing frameworks, in particular the East Asia Summit (EAS). The EAS has already developed several schemes for disaster response, making it is less burdensome to develop this HA/DR framework, particularly through existing capacity-building mechanisms. However, rather than focusing only on response, greater effort needs to be devoted to the planning, preparedness, and recovery phases.

The Question of Legitimacy

Given these regional perceptions, it becomes clear that the effectiveness of any HA/DR activities led by foreign actors can be seen as a function of their legitimacy. Foreign intervention, therefore, will need to occur in accordance with terms stipulated by the affected nation. It is equally important that any foreign nation providing assistance also possess an effective and rapid exit strategy, timed to prevent the rise of local or national political doubts among affected populations over the intentions of the intervening power.

The legitimacy question has direct implications for how nations in South and Southeast Asia might perceive and respond to Strategic Assistance. In particular, questions over how the concept might be structured to alleviate these concerns, whether the concept would be seen as potentially encroaching on the sovereignty of regional nations, and whether it should be structured as an exclusive, alliance-oriented framework or an inclusive multilateral mechanism are crucial from the standpoint of regional actors.

With respect to the question of sovereignty, while many states in the region would benefit from the higher capabilities of the U.S.-Japan alliance, there are concerns about the degree to which assistance might be intrusive with regard to a nation’s physical territory and surrounding sphere of influence, as well as undermine the political legitimacy of the government of the affected nation. These concerns partly stem from the traumatic legacy of colonialism and more recently from concerns over interventionist doctrines such as the “responsibility to protect” (R2P), which is viewed by some circles in the region as merely an excuse to legitimize external intervention in the domestic affairs of other nations.

The latter question of whether Strategic Assistance should be exclusive or inclusive is also a source of particular concern for some countries. Due to the ongoing shift in the regional balance of power between the United States and China, many nations currently seek balanced relations with both great powers and are quite wary of taking actions that might be misperceived and create tension with either side. The multilateralization of Strategic Assistance is one potential way to address this issue. Thus, it is important for the United States and Japan to consider a more nuanced and less visible approach to cooperative regional disaster management, such as leadership from behind.

The United States and Japan therefore face a difficult quandary should they seek to enhance cooperation and coordination on HA/DR in South and Southeast Asia. While political legitimacy in the eyes of the region is an essential factor, it must be weighed against operational effectiveness. Indeed, a criticism that is constantly levied against existing regional and international coordinating and assistance organizations is that their open nature diminishes the speed and efficiency with which they are able to act—at times with dire human consequences. As the Strategic Assistance concept continues to evolve, it will be imperative that an appropriate balance be struck between political legitimacy and inclusiveness, on the one hand, and operational effectiveness, on the other. Both components will be crucial, however, to realizing the objectives of Strategic Assistance.

Japanese HA/DR Capabilities and Allied Capacity-Building Efforts

Japanese Capabilities

Japan's active involvement in international disaster relief began on the basis of the Law Concerning the Dispatch of Japan Disaster Relief Teams in 1992.¹² Since then, Japan has actively participated in a number of operations, including the Honduras hurricane in 1998, the Pakistan earthquakes in 2005, the Pakistan flooding in 2010, the Haiti earthquake in 2011, and the Philippine typhoon in

2013. Through these missions, Japan learned many important lessons—for example, that intelligence coverage and force protection need to be taken into consideration in order to execute effective operations. Because operations are sometimes conducted in unsafe areas, the operational teams need to gain information on the ground beforehand, and the staff needs to be protected. For this reason, it became clear that disaster-relief operations should at times be conducted in conjunction with other operations, such as counterinsurgency and counterterrorism, depending on local conditions.

Japan has extensive experience in cooperating on HA/DR operations with the United States, including the 2011 Haiti earthquake, where Japan rescued 34 U.S. citizens. The most notable instance of U.S.-Japan cooperation on HA/DR was Operation Tomodachi, which propelled the two countries to institutionalize coordination mechanisms for future HA/DR activities, including bilateral response procedures for practical cooperation, the Nankai Trough earthquake response plan, procedures for local government cooperation, and a revised acquisition and cross-servicing agreement. The creation of extensive human networks between American and Japanese personnel through joint exercises and training have also facilitated the development of common procedures.

Cooperative mechanisms and initiatives developed by Japan and the United States through and following Operation Tomodachi allowed the two allies to better cooperate and coordinate with one another during disaster-relief operations in response to Typhoon Haiyan in 2013. For example, the Philippine government at first did not allow outside military forces unless the country had a visiting forces agreement (VFA). The United States, as a VFA country, could quickly send troops to the Philippines. Through consultation and cooperation with the United States and the Philippines, Japanese forces were allowed to enter and provide assistance.

U.S.-Japan bilateral coordination efforts are also important for enhancing capacity building in the region. These efforts could provide nations such as East Timor, which currently lacks any real defense infrastructure or capability, the capacity with which to begin reducing vulnerability and acquiring the means to better prepare and respond should a disaster

¹² For information on U.S. HA/DR capabilities, see "Strategic Assistance: Disaster Relief and Asia-Pacific Stability."

strike. Inviting other like-minded and capable powers, such as Australia, to contribute to regional capacity building efforts would provide an opportunity to advance this endeavor. Vesting such an approach within an existing regional framework, such as the ADMM-Plus, would allow for the promulgation of rules, norms, and standard operating procedures, while also diminishing potential regional concerns over intentions or legitimacy.

However, Japan faces a number of challenges that may limit its ability to conduct successful combined HA/DR missions. For example, Japan has encountered difficulties communicating with other actors in English or other languages, has limited military contact and cooperation with other countries except for the United States, and still faces legal restrictions that prevent it from participating in HA/DR operations that include a peacekeeping component.

Enhancing Regional Preparedness and Overcoming Obstacles to HA/DR Cooperation

The most effective method for enhancing HA/DR is to concentrate not only on response but also on prevention. Response is ultimately crisis and consequence management, but if preparation is well conducted, the task of such management becomes less burdensome, allowing affected nations to better absorb the shocks that natural disasters create. In this sense, focusing on the first two components of the cycle of disaster management—prevention and preparedness—is particularly important: it is both more economical and efficient to invest resources in these areas in order to mitigate significant social damage than it is to focus on response and recovery after a major disaster has occurred.

In terms of U.S.-Japan cooperation to enhance the capacity of regional nations to better prepare for and manage major disaster events, both countries can provide a model to demonstrate to the region how cooperation can be conducted by sharing the experiences and lessons of Operation Tomodachi. A potential method by which to do this is for both the United States and Japan to convene a regional HA/DR table-top exercise and invite the regional states and other actors. Such engagement would help identify

and clarify the HA/DR capabilities and potential roles for regional actors. Further, this may help mitigate regional political skepticism and geopolitical concerns regarding China. In this context, creating a narrative regarding U.S.-Japan HA/DR cooperation that reduces suspicion and fear through a deliberate outreach strategy is imperative.

There are several challenges that the current HA/DR activities face. First, leadership is particularly important in dealing with a crisis situation. To nurture capable leadership, the region needs to conduct not only operational level table-top exercises but also strategic level table-top exercises for leaders. Second, a critical question revolves around the sources of funding for future HA/DR activities, particularly as the United States faces a future of greater budgetary constraint despite its pursuit of a “rebalancing” policy to Asia. Third, the nature of HA/DR operations may change drastically. Although potentially an outlier, the situation in Syria has demonstrated to the international relief community that it may increasingly need to consider how to provide assistance in hot conflict zones while also protecting itself from a range of security threats. Consequently, it becomes necessary to consider how to ensure force protection and how to gain knowledge and training about emerging uncertainties on the ground. Fourth, planning and methods of information sharing should be clarified and organized. Given that disaster situations on the ground can be highly complex and evolve quickly, rapid information sharing is imperative for crafting an effective response. It is also important to engage in advance planning so as to mitigate other issues that might emerge and inhibit cooperation, such as difficulties arising from the need to quickly negotiate or revise a Status of Forces Agreement. Finally, private actors should be incorporated more systematically into HA/DR operations. Each actor in the private sector has a different role to play, but these roles tend to be *ad hoc* and opaque to other actors. Clarifying them could help create a more effective management system.

Regional HA/DR Architecture

East Asia has several multilateral frameworks that have propagated mechanisms that aim to deal with natural disasters, most of which are led by ASEAN, ASEAN +1, and ASEAN +3. The ARF, the ADMM, the ADMM-Plus, and EAS all have discussed the dangers of natural disasters and their potential impact on political, economic, and social infrastructure in East Asia. A number of these initiatives were seriously considered in the 2003 Bali Concord II, which aimed to create ASEAN communities by 2020 (later the timeline was advanced to 2015), including a political-security community, an economic community, and a socioeconomic community. As the 2007 ASEAN Charter describes, these communities are principally centered on people, and the governments planned to reach out at the local levels to foster unity and to address the issues that most affected the livelihood, prosperity, and security of the people, including natural disasters. In this context, ASEAN created the AADMER, which went into force in 2009. A number of initiatives have already been undertaken under the agreement, and rather than reinventing the wheel, it will be important to build on the existing one. Strategic Assistance can contribute to strengthening these frameworks.

However, these initiatives are far from complete, and ASEAN faces several challenges in implementing them to achieve its objective vis-à-vis regional disaster preparedness, management, and response. First, a significant economic gap exists among ASEAN member states. The level of infrastructure differs significantly from nation to nation (as well as among local communities within nations), and thus so does vulnerability to major disasters. To increase regional resiliency, this gap needs to be narrowed, which speaks to the need for greater region-wide development. Second, ASEAN still operates on the belief that economic development should be based on traditional concepts of macroeconomic development and growth. However, improving sociocultural infrastructure, including local resiliency to natural disasters, has a large impact on such growth. For this reason, ASEAN should factor in this element to enhance regional resiliency. Third, resiliency at the local community level is still weak. To strengthen local resilience, four areas need to be strengthened: economic development,

information and communication, social capital, and community competence. Fourth, AADMER has yet to develop a rigid implementation mechanism. Admittedly, there has been some progress, such as the creation of the NGO networks supporting AADMER, which include Child Fund International, HelpAge International, Mercy Malaysia, Oxfam, Plan International, Save the Children International, and World Vision International APG. However, implementation is still weak.

Ultimately, the opportunities and challenges to realizing and utilizing Strategic Assistance in South and Southeast Asia depend on how the United States and Japan develop and link the concept to existing regional frameworks. As mentioned above, this decision has both geopolitical and operational implications. Regarding the geopolitical implications, the future development of Strategic Assistance without considering its political impact may send the wrong signal to the region in light of concerns over national sovereignty and external intervention, while simultaneously being misinterpreted and seen as an attempt to build a balancing coalition to contain China. In order to mitigate such misperceptions, it is imperative to foster more favorable political perceptions of the concept by clarifying the objectives and operational focus of Strategic Assistance.

The concept can have at least four policy objectives that may be either directly attributed to it or inferred from it by others: contributing to the creation of an effective HA/DR cooperative mechanism, utilizing HA/DR cooperation as an alliance management tool, utilizing cooperation on HA/DR to enhance engagement with regional nations (including China), and utilizing cooperation on HA/DR to actively balance or hedge against China. While the first three items listed should be, and indeed are, objectives of Strategic Assistance, the fourth is not. Finally, balancing the trade-offs between legitimacy and effectiveness with regard to the engagement of the concept with or through regional political institutions is a difficult issue. Engagement is certainly necessary to mitigate regional concerns over Strategic Assistance, but this should not come at the expense of severely diluting operational effectiveness.

Operationally, the U.S.-Japan alliance can principally focus on prevention and preparedness in order to increase resilience in South and Southeast

Asia. To this end, strengthening national and local capacity and the coordination mechanisms between governments, international organizations, NGOs, and community-level entities are necessary first steps. In addition, because these HA/DR activities are desired by regional states but geopolitically sensitive, efforts to build benign “hard capacity” (e.g., building airports capable of accommodating large cargo aircraft, building roads, and enhancing the resilience of national and local electrical and communications networks) and “soft capacity” (e.g., improving information sharing and education at the community level) would be less controversial options to increase preparedness and resilience within the region. The government, private sector, and NGOs from the United States, Japan, and other countries should participate in these efforts.

Given this, the ADMM-Plus could be an effective framework for approaching Strategic Assistance in the region in the short and medium term. As the region’s leading framework for defense cooperation, working through the ADMM-Plus could help facilitate greater technical and functional cooperation between and among member states. This would also be useful in fostering greater trust and confidence among the various participants. Crucially, the decision-making process of the ADMM Plus is strictly based on the concept of ASEAN centrality. Agenda setting for the ADMM Plus is entirely dependent on the ADMM, and therefore this framework may help lessen suspicion of and between regional great powers.

The Future Direction of Strategic Assistance

South and Southeast Asia face an increasing threat of natural disasters due to a number of factors, including environmental change, geography, geology, urbanization, and demographic and development trends. As a result, the need for HA/DR has risen exponentially. The United States and Japan are well-positioned to help address this need, but they must be cognizant of the myriad challenges that must first be overcome. In addressing the need for HA/DR in South and Southeast Asia, the United States and Japan must attempt to better understand and account for the geopolitical concerns of regional states and

consider their sovereign rights and interests. Due to these complexities, HA/DR activities conducted under the Strategic Assistance conceptual framework should be directed toward the following areas.

Capacity Building

- Connect Strategic Assistance to existing HA/DR arrangements in the region, for example through articles 8–15 in AADMER, which stipulate the necessity of capacity and capability building
- Seek to further incorporate capacity building based on the disaster-management cycle (e.g., preparedness, prevention, response, reconstruction) into current national and regional mechanisms
- Facilitate resilience in the region from the local to the national level
- Remember the principle of leadership from behind

Community Building

- Plan according to capability assessments at the international, national, provincial, and local levels
- Develop national communication networks between all levels of potentially affected nations
- Consider sovereignty concerns and local sensitivities
- Foster the creation of rules and norms for all elements of HA/DR, to include:
 - Status of forces agreements
 - Flexible, customizable rapid-response planning
 - The division of labor among national governments in the region (particularly those which maintain significant capabilities, such as Australia, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and the United States)
 - The host nation’s request for foreign assistance
- Conduct not only operational but also strategic table-top exercises to strengthen national leadership
- Continue fostering multilateral military exercises in the region—existing HA/DR-related exercises,

such as those included in the Cobra Gold exercises, and the connections these exercises establish—in order to further enhance an inclusive overall framework while also building HA/DR capabilities

Use of Regional Multilateral Frameworks

- Utilize the existing regional frameworks, which offer a number of mechanisms for HA/DR cooperation
- Engage with ASEAN, the ARF, the EAS, and the ADMM Plus, which could help mitigate regional geopolitical sensitivities
- Balance political legitimacy through multilateral engagement and improve the effectiveness of operations by strengthening multilateral guidelines and principles (e.g., community building)

Role of the Private Sector

- Incorporate and work with corporations and civil society, which could play an essential role in strengthening countries' preparedness for and response to natural disasters

Force Protection

- Prepare for new types of force protection issues that challenge the ability to conduct HA/DR in complex environments, as suggested by the case of Syria
- Work on planning and implementing force protection arrangements at the operational level with partner nations

Burden-sharing

- Clarify who would finance HA/DR activities and how this can be achieved, given the resource constraints that both the United States and Japan face

Last Resort

- By way of developing a plan B option, direct Strategic Assistance to prepare for and respond to grave natural disasters, which local, national, and regional mechanisms would be unable to manage, as well as for extreme scenarios where national and local governing authorities have collapsed ≈

About the Project

The Strategic Assistance project is a collaborative research initiative between the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) and the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE), drawing on the generous support of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation and the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership. The project seeks to develop a more coordinated, strategic, and bilateral approach between the United States and Japan on HA/DR operations in Asia through a whole-of-society concept we have termed Strategic Assistance. Considering that emerging demographic and climatological trends will over time intensify Asia's vulnerability to natural disasters, this project is designed to develop an effective mechanism through which U.S. and Japanese officials and policy analysts can achieve the following objectives:

- exchange analyses of recent and forthcoming security, political, economic, demographic, and climatological developments in order to deepen mutual understanding regarding the importance of HA/DR operations in addressing and mitigating the severe impacts of natural disasters and other calamitous events in Asia;
- identify strategies, policies, and posture changes necessary to build and maintain bilateral and multilateral efforts to address the challenges posed by major disaster events in Asia, as well as develop the capabilities and organizational structures needed to address the disasters that will inevitably affect the region in the future; and
- develop a framework for a broader coalition of mutually concerned Asian nations to engage in collective action in advance of and in response to regional disasters.



THE NATIONAL BUREAU *of* ASIAN RESEARCH

Seattle and Washington, D.C.

1414 NE 42ND STREET, SUITE 300
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98105 USA
PHONE 206-632-7370, FAX 206-632-7487

1301 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW, SUITE 305
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004 USA
PHONE 202-347-9767, FAX 202-347-9766

NBR@NBR.ORG, WWW.NBR.ORG