



# State Identity and Assistance Policy : Japan's Post-conflict Reconstruction Assistance in Afghanistan as 'Middle-power Diplomacy'

Erkan, Kivilcim

---

**(Citation)**

Kobe University law review, 47:87-107

**(Issue Date)**

2013

**(Resource Type)**

departmental bulletin paper

**(Version)**

Version of Record

**(JaLCD0I)**

<https://doi.org/10.24546/81005583>

**(URL)**

<https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14094/81005583>



**State Identity and Assistance Policy:  
Japan's Post-conflict Reconstruction Assistance in  
Afghanistan as 'Middle-power Diplomacy'**

**Kivilcim ERKAN**

**2013**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LAW, KOBE UNIVERSITY**

**ROKKODAI, KOBE, JAPAN**

**No.47**

# State Identity and Assistance Policy: Japan's Post-conflict Reconstruction Assistance in Afghanistan as 'Middle-power Diplomacy'

Kivilcim Erkan

## Abstract

Most of the existing literature on Japan's assistance policy<sup>1</sup> is written from realist perspectives that emphasise interest-based and structural variables. While these approaches have provided useful insights, they remain insufficient for understanding some of the changes that have occurred in this policy sector since the 1990s. Such changes include the introduction of the human security norm, and increasing the humanitarian and post-conflict reconstruction assistance delivered by Japan. Japan's contribution to the international efforts to eradicate terrorism in Afghanistan through post-conflict reconstruction assistance is a significant case that has received little scholarly attention in English-language literature. This paper is an attempt to fill that gap. By focusing on the policy-making process, the paper seeks to shed light on the questions of why and how Japan has become involved in the post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan in the aftermath of the United States-led coalition's military intervention in 2001. The paper analyses the initial policy-making process under the Koizumi Administration by giving special attention to the period between 2001 and 2003. Through a Constructivist lens that emphasises the role of identity and domestic political context, it is argued that the middle-power identity adopted by the political elite, and the human security norm in line with that identity, have affected the direction and content of Japan's response to terrorism.

## 1 Introduction

Realist scholars who have written about Japan's assistance policy have emphasised interest-based or structural variables. For example, according to Orr, Japan's foreign aid policy during the Cold War had three underlying motives. The first was 'resource diplomacy'—namely, acquiring raw materials in exchange for economic assistance. The second was 'strategic aid', which was provided to countries in which the United States (US) or other Western countries had vested

---

1 In this paper, the terms 'aid policy', 'economic assistance' and 'official development assistance' (ODA) are used interchangeably.

interests. The third motive, which was regarded as less important than the others, was ‘humanitarian concerns’.<sup>2</sup> The second type of aid—strategic aid—is often provided as a consequence of external pressure applied by the US.<sup>3</sup> Miyagi confirms Orr’s arguments by stating that contemporary Japan’s economic assistance to the Middle East region, including Afghanistan, is driven by energy security concerns or supporting US interests.<sup>4</sup> Ampiah has also made similar arguments with respect to Japanese assistance of African countries by stating that Japan’s actions have been a way of garnering support from African states for Japan’s bid to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).<sup>5</sup>

While these previous discussions may have provided useful insights to Japan’s assistance policy, they remain insufficient to understand some of the changes occurring in this policy sector since the 1990s. Such changes include the introduction of the human security norm, and increasing the humanitarian and post-conflict reconstruction assistance delivered by Japan. According to Arase, despite the reductions made in Japan’s total official development assistance (ODA) disbursements since the end of the 1990s, Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has been striving to improve aid quality by bringing ‘[Japanese] aid practices more in line with international norms’.<sup>6</sup> The introduction of the human security norm to Japan’s ODA policy can be understood as part of these efforts. In the revised ODA Charter of 2003, the human security norm was introduced as a guiding principle for ODA. Moreover, the establishment of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects, the introduction of the concept into Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) guidelines, and Japan’s role in establishing the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) are among the concrete changes that the human security norm has fostered.<sup>7</sup>

The support given to the UNTFHS by the successive Japanese governments show their commitment to actualise the concept and go beyond empty rhetoric. The fund was established by the United Nations (UN) in March 1999 under the leadership of Keizo Obuchi, the then Prime Minister of Japan. Initially, the Trust Fund financed projects in the areas of poverty reduction, health, education, agriculture and small-scale infrastructure development; however, gradually, the

---

2 Robert M. Orr, Jr, ed., *Balancing Act: Japanese Foreign Aid Policy in the Middle East* (Washington DC: Middle East Institute, 1990), 30.

3 Robert M. Orr, Jr, “Collaboration and Conflict? Foreign Aid and U.S.-Japan Relations,” *Pacific Affairs* 62, 4 (1989–1990): 479.

4 Yukiko Miyagi, *Japan’s Middle East Security Policy: Theory and Cases* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 45–8.

5 Kuweku Ampiah, “Japan and the Development of Africa: A Preliminary Evaluation of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development,” *African Affairs* 104, 414 (2005): 109.

6 David Arase, ed., *Japan’s Foreign Aid: Old Continuities and New Directions*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 5.

7 Kaoru Kuruusu, *In Search of a More Proactive International Role: The Political Dynamism Behind Human Security in Japan*, trans. Rikki Kersten, ed. William T. Tow (Sydney: Ashgate, 2013), 129.

scope of issue areas were widened to include projects related to conflict, refugees and other type of migrants, urban crime, the environment, poverty reduction, disasters and drug use prevention.<sup>8</sup> The geographical scope of the projects is global. As of 2013, the Trust Fund has financed 200 projects, with Japan the largest financial contributor to the fund. Japan uses its ODA to support the Trust Fund; thus, in this sense, the human security norm has brought significant qualitative changes to Japan's ODA policy. Another new domain in which Japan has become active in light of the human security norm is post-conflict reconstruction assistance, or 'peace building'.<sup>9</sup> Japan's post-conflict reconstruction assistance for Afghanistan is a significant case in this regard.

Another group of realist scholars who have written about Japan's response to the 'war on terror' have also ignored Japan's non-military contribution as post-conflict reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan. They have mainly focused on support given by the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) to the US-led military operation. For example, Heginbotham and Samuels argue that Japan's 'limited' military support was a consequence of the political elite's concern for maintaining Japan's close relations with the oil-producing countries in the Middle East. The authors highlight Prime Minister Koizumi's dispatch of special envoys to the Middle East to convey that Japan was not participating in military action. Accordingly, Japan's policies are based on a strategy of 'dual hedge', which means reassuring both the US and Middle Eastern countries that Japan is not working against them.<sup>10</sup> Midford also focuses on the dispatch of SDF as Japan's main response to terrorism, and ignores the non-military role played by Japan. His main argument is that the declining pressure from Japan's neighbours in Asia enabled the dispatch of SDF.<sup>11</sup> According to Hughes, Japan's limited military support was a confirmation of incremental expansion of its security policy.<sup>12</sup> He also mentions that Japan's actions in non-military and economic realms indicate that the political elite were following the ideas of comprehensive security and global civilian power; however, he does not verify this argument empirically.<sup>13</sup>

In response to this literature gap, the current paper aims to throw light on an overlooked aspect of Japan's response to terrorism—namely, its contribution to post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan through its ODA. Here, the main

---

8 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "United Nations Trust Fund For Human Security: Freedom from Want, Freedom from Fear, Freedom to live in Dignity," accessed <https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/HSU/Background%20on%20the%20UNTFHS.pdf>

9 Kaoru Kurusu and Rikki Kersten, "Japan as an Active Agent for Global Norms: The Political Dynamism Behind the Acceptance and Promotion of Human Security," *Asia Pacific Review* 18, 2 (2011): 116.

10 Eric Heginbotham and Richard J. Samuels, "Japan's Dual Hedge," *Foreign Affairs* 81, 5 (2002): 114–15.

11 Paul Midford, "Japan's Response to Terror: Dispatching the SDF to the Arabian Sea," *Asian Survey* 43, 2 (March/April 2003): 344.

12 Christopher W. Hughes, "Japan's Security Policy, the US-Japan alliance, and the 'war on terror': Incrementalism Confirmed or Radical Leap?," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 58, 4 (2004): 427–45.

13 Hughes, "Japan's Security Policy," 438.

concern is to understand why Japan's response went beyond logistic support to military efforts, and then expanded to post-conflict reconstruction assistance, and later to assistance in the security sector, especially assuming responsibility for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) in cooperation with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Contrary to the realist arguments of 'foreign pressure' and 'resource diplomacy', an in-depth analysis of the policy-making process reveals that energy security was not the primary concern among the policy-making elite, and the direct pressure from the US was considerably low, especially compared to Japan's experiences in the past. Thus, why did the Koizumi Administration and MOFA decide to contribute to post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan? What factors have led Japanese policymakers to believe that reconstruction assistance was an appropriate way to respond to terrorism? This paper argues that the middle-power identity adopted by the political elite in the post-Cold War period, and a human security approach in line with that identity, have played a significant role in determining the content and direction of Japan's assistance. 'Direction' refers to the recipient of the financial assistance, while 'content' refers to the sectors to which financial assistance is allocated. For example, during the Gulf War (1990 to 1991), financial assistance was provided to the military coalition for the purchase of logistic equipment on the condition that it was not used for lethal purposes.<sup>14</sup> In the case of Afghanistan, the aid was earmarked for such sectors as education, health, basic infrastructure, refugees and internally displaced persons, in line with the human security norm. As such, Japan's assistance to Afghanistan in the aftermath of the September 11 incidents can be understood as an instance of 'middle-power diplomacy'. The remaining sections of the paper first highlight the inadequacies of realist perspectives in explaining Japan's post-conflict reconstruction assistance. Second, the concept of identity, as applied by Constructivist literature, and the sources of Japan's middle-power identity are examined. The final section provides an empirical account of Japan's reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, where this identity manifests itself through human security-oriented assistance.

## **2 Inadequacies of Realist Explanations of Japan's Assistance of Afghanistan**

From a realist perspective, Japan's assistance of Afghanistan appears puzzling. Realist arguments might emphasise 'resource diplomacy' or 'foreign pressure' applied by the US and/or Middle Eastern countries as the main factors accounting for Japan's assistance. If this argument is true, then it is necessary to

---

<sup>14</sup> Courtney Purrington, "Tokyo's Policy Responses During the Gulf War and the Impact of the 'Iraqi Shock' on Japan," *Pacific Affairs* 65, 2 (1992): 164.

look at the economic relations between Japan and Afghanistan. Data about Afghanistan's trade and investment partners prior to September 11 are scarce. However, in data from the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and MOFA, Afghanistan is not found among the major trade or investment partners of Japan. According to MOFA records in the wake of the September 11 incidents, Japan had zero foreign direct investment in Afghanistan, and the volume of trade between the countries was meagre compared to Japan's overall trade volume. In 1999, the total amount of Japanese exports was 91 million yen, and imports from Afghanistan were 7.6 million yen.<sup>15</sup> From 2004 to 2012, there were virtually no trade relations between the two countries,<sup>16</sup> despite continued Japanese economic assistance. Japan ranked within the top five donors to Afghanistan from 2006 to 2010,<sup>17</sup> and made the second largest contribution to Afghanistan in 2010 and 2011, after the US (DAC, OECD).<sup>18</sup> Despite this assistance, it seems unlikely that Japan will establish sound economic relationships with Afghanistan in the near future, given the poor economic situation in that country.

The external pressures argument, following structural realism, also has its shortcomings. As Midford observed in the aftermath of the September 11 incidents, 'there was nothing in the way of overt congressional pressure on Japan [for a military contribution], as was the case in 1990'.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, he points out that MOFA officials may have fabricated the 'show the flag'<sup>20</sup> remark, which is an often-told anecdote in favour of foreign pressure. In fact, claiming the existence of foreign pressure depends on how one defines and operationalises the concept. Orr understands pressure as being US demands expressed during bilateral meetings between the representatives from both countries.<sup>21</sup> However, this argument neglects the agency and identity of Japanese policymakers. The current paper argues that it cannot be considered pressure unless a particular policy is imposed on policymakers against their will. In this case, the policy outcomes are not accounted for by external pressure, but by the political elite's own willingness to support US policies that are not contrary to, but consistent

---

15 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan-Afghanistan Relations (Basic Data)," accessed November 26, 2013, [http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle\\_e/afghanistan/data.html#basic](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle_e/afghanistan/data.html#basic).

16 Japan External Trade Organization, "Japanese Trade and Investment Statistics," accessed November 26, 2013, <http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/reports/statistics/>.

17 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Japan's ODA Disbursements to Afghanistan," accessed October 7, 2013, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/data/pdfs/afghanistan.pdf>.

18 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Aid Statistics, Recipient Aid at a Glance: Afghanistan*, accessed October 7, 2013, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/AFG.gif>.

19 Midford, "Japan's Response to Terror," 334.

20 The 'show the flag' remark is often raised as an indication of US pressure. It is claimed that, during the unofficial talks that took place between the US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, and Japanese Ambassador to Washington, Shunji Yanai, on 15 September, Armitage urged Japan to 'show the flag'. This remark has often been interpreted as a strong pressure from the US for a response from Japan that would go beyond 'checkbook diplomacy', which was a criticism made of Japan's response to the First Gulf War (1990 to 1991). After this meeting, it was agreed, in principle, that the SDF would provide rear-area support in the form of fuel supplies, naval transport and medical services to military personnel involved in the strikes.

21 Orr, "Collaboration and Conflict?," 486.

with, the adopted state identity. In the case of non-military assistance to Afghanistan, there was a convergence between the US expectations and policymakers own preferences.

Thus, despite the lack of short-term economic benefits and overt external pressure, why did the Koizumi Administration and MOFA consider post-conflict reconstruction assistance an appropriate means to respond terrorism? The answer lies in the middle-power identity adopted by the political elite, and the human security-oriented assistance policy that aligns with that identity. The next section discusses the relationship between identity and foreign policy as understood in the Constructivist literature.

### 3 Identity and Foreign Policy

The aforementioned realist approaches are either based on objective/external definitions of actors' interests based on a cost-benefit analysis, or considerations of structural factors—namely, external pressures. Constructivist scholars have long criticised realism's objective or exogenous definition of national interest.<sup>22</sup> Contrary to realism, they emphasise how actors interpret their own self-interests based on a certain conception of state identity.<sup>23</sup> State identity, as applied in this paper, refers to 'the agent's understanding of self, its place in the social world, and its relationship with others'.<sup>24</sup> Those agents are not confined to policymakers or the political elite, but can be a mixture of politicians, intellectuals, scholars and journalists—what Hirata calls 'opinion leaders'.<sup>25</sup> Thus, state identity refers to opinion leaders' conception or image of the state and state's place in international society. Here it is significant to note that Katzenstein distinguishes between state identity and national identity. He argues that national identity is internal to the state; it is about the society's conception of their own identity as a collective group<sup>26</sup>—a sense of 'we-ness' within the society.<sup>27</sup> In contrast, state identity is external; it refers to 'the self-placement of the polity within specific international contexts'.<sup>28</sup> In this sense, the concept of state identity in Constructivism is closer to 'role theory' in

---

22 Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State," *American Political Science Review* 88, 2 (1994): 384; Jutta Weldes, "Constructing National Interests," *European Journal of International Relations* 2, 3 (1996): 279; Yong Wook Lee, "Japan and the Asian Monetary Fund: An Identity-Intention Approach," *International Studies Quarterly* 50.

23 Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23, 1 (1998): 181.

24 Trine Flockhart, "Constructivism and Foreign Policy," in *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, ed. Steve Smith et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 78–109.

25 Keiko Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate? Divergent Interpretations of Japan's Security Role," *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 35, 3 (2008): 123.

26 Peter J. Katzenstein, "United Germany in an Integrating Europe," in *Tamed Power: Germany in Europe*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 1–48.

27 Thomas Banchoff, "German Identity and European Integration," *European Journal of International Relations* 5, 3 (1999): 268.

28 Banchoff, "German Identity."



foreign policy analysis. Constructivist scholars believe that identities generate 'a pro-attitude towards a certain kind of action'<sup>29</sup> or specify policy preferences.<sup>30</sup> At any given time, state identity is not fixed—there is significant contestation over the content of identities. Therefore, different actors in the domestic context can advocate different and even contradicting views on state identities. These contradicting views compete over institutionalisation in the domestic political system.<sup>31</sup>

Identities can be observed and measured in national political discourse. According to Banchoff, the debates in the legislative body on a particular policy make the most reliable data to observe conceptions of state identity.<sup>32</sup> The data used in this research consist of Diet deliberations, memoirs, official government documents, news media reports and secondary sources. These sources are examined in order to understand what kind of identities and pro-attitudes or foreign policy preferences are generated through discourse. Here, 'discourse' is understood as an observable implication of identities. Thus, in order to claim that a certain conception of identity was influential in the decision-making process, the final policy outcome should be congruent with policy preferences generated by that identity.<sup>33</sup>

#### 4 Sources of Japan's Middle Power Identity

Various scholars have tried to categorise post-Cold War debates about state identity and foreign policy in Japan, with different scholars using different names to refer to these categories.<sup>34</sup> Here, a combination of Samuels and Hirata's categorisations will be referred to in order to distinguish between four different types of positions on state identity and role in international society: pacifists, middle-power internationalists, normalists and neo-autonomists. These four groups have different views on four dimensions of Japan's foreign policy: the US-Japan alliance, the use of force in settling international disputes, international contributions and conception of state identity (that is, what kind of a state Japan should be).

Pacifists are mainly represented by Japan's left parties—the Japan Communist Party (JCP), Social Democratic Party (SDP) and New Komeito Party—as well as leftist intellectuals.<sup>35</sup> They have been critical of the US-Japan alliance.

---

29 Kuniko Ashizawa, "When Identity Matters: State Identity, Regional Institution Building, and Japanese Foreign Policy," *International Studies Review* 10, 3 (2008): 571.

30 Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism," 175.

31 Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate?," 127.

32 Banchoff, "German Identity," 270.

33 Banchoff, "German Identity," 278.

34 See, eg, Keiko Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate?"; Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 109–32.

35 Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 119.

Especially during the Cold War, but even today, they have advocated unarmed neutrality as an alternative to the alliance, and have displayed a posture against the use of force in international relations. According to pacifists, Japan should retain its peace constitution and peace clause (Article 9 of Japan's Constitution), and cultivate its 'peace state' identity.<sup>36</sup> In accordance with this identity, Japan should be active in the areas of disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and 'peaceful resolution of international conflicts, negotiation and mediation'.<sup>37</sup> The pacifists have also adopted sustainable development, eliminating inequality and social justice into political discourse.<sup>38</sup> Yet, the pacifists argue that Japan should refrain from dispatching SDF for UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs).

It can be argued that the middle-power internationalists are more positive about the US–Japan alliance than are the pacifists; however, according to Samuels, the middle-power internationalists are divided on their views on the alliance. A mercantilist camp within this group gives full support to the alliance, while the Asianist camp desires greater cooperation with Asian neighbours, instead of a one-sided cooperative relationship with the US.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, their position on the alliance seems to be less critical than the pacifists, with their pro-US stance, in general, perhaps the core feature distinguishing them from the pacifists. Similar to the pacifists, they are cautious about the use of force; however, they argue for a move-away from 'inward-looking pacifism' to 'active passivism'. They believe that Japan's international contribution, including its contribution to the alliance, should primarily be in non-military areas, especially in economic assistance and UN PKOs.<sup>40</sup> During the Cold War, they advocated Japan's identity as 'a merchant state'. In the post–Cold War period, the middle-power internationalists propagated the 'global civilian power' identity—or that of Japan as a 'middle power'.

The remaining two groups are the normalists and neo-autonomists. Like the middle-power internationalists, the normalists give priority to the US–Japan alliance. They argue that Japan should become a normal state with a military befitting its status as an economic superpower, more along the lines of the 'Britain of Asia'. Thus, Japan's international contribution should be both military and non-military to support, first and foremost, its main ally of the US, and UN-led initiatives. Therefore, normalists are in favour of incremental armament and revision of the peace clause. When necessary, the use of force is considered by normalists an appropriate means to resolve international conflicts.<sup>41</sup> Some famous normalists include Ozawa Ichiro, Abe Shinzo, Koizumi Junichiro and Aso

---

36 Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate?," 129, 132.

37 Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate?," 132.

38 Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 119.

39 Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 127.

40 Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate?," 137.

41 Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate?," 139–42.

Taro.

The final group is the neo-autonomists. They belong to the far right of the political spectrum and advocate an autonomous security policy, independent of US influence. They argue for the remilitarisation of Japan and the acquisition of nuclear weapons. They glorify Japan's militarist past and romanticise the Meiji era.<sup>42</sup> They believe in the uniqueness and specialness of Japanese people and Japan, which is a discourse known as the *nihonjinron*. However, the concrete foreign policies of this group are unclear.

It is significant to note that the aforementioned categorisation is very approximate, and the divisions between different groups are not clear-cut and static. These groups' diverging positions on the four dimensions of Japan's foreign policy are summarised in Table.1.

**Table 1: Divergent Positions on Japan's Identity and Foreign Policy**

	Pacifists	Middle-power internationalists	Normalists	Neo-autonomists
US-Japan alliance	Against—support unarmed neutrality	Pro	Pro	Against
Use of force in settling international disputes	Against	Against	Possible, if necessary	Possible
International contribution	Non-military	Non-military	Military, non-military	Unclear
State identify	Peace state	Global civilian power/middle power	'Normal country'	Meiji Japan

Middle-power internationalism became the dominant discourse in the 1990s, especially during the short tenure of Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi. Today, some of the most significant middle-power internationalist politicians are not grouped under a single party, but are divided across parties both within the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). Hirata states that the middle-power internationalists consist of the LDP's Kouchikai faction members, the Yamasaki faction, moderate DPJ members, scholars such as Soeya Yoshihide, and journalists such as Funabashi Yoichi.<sup>43</sup> The content of the middle-power identity and the specific foreign policy preferences entailed with that identity were stipulated in a government-commissioned advisory group's<sup>44</sup>

42 Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate?," 143–5.

43 Hirata, "Who Shapes the National Security Debate?," 138–9.

44 On 30 March 1999, Prime Minister Obuchi established a Commission with a mandate to explore Japan's goals in the twenty-first century. Among the members of the Commission were Yoichi Funabashi; Masako Hoshino (director of Japan Nonprofit Organisation Center); Akihiko Tanaka; the current president of JICA; and various well-known professors of Japanese politics, such as Makoto Iokibe and Yoshihide Soeya. Additional experts in various fields were also invited to

report to Prime Minister Obuchi, entitled *The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium*. In this report, Japan's state identity was considered a 'global civilian power' that contributes to international public goods that are non-military, including global human security (understood as poverty-, environment-, education- and health-related issues affecting individuals) and peace operations—both peacekeeping and peace building.<sup>45</sup> In line with this identity, Japan's national interest was defined as 'enlightened self-interest'.<sup>46</sup> This required Japan to pursue a long-term and broad strategy, along with growing interdependence in the world.

This conception of Japan's identity shows significant similarities with the academic discourse on middle-power diplomacy, which is based on a number of characteristics:

1. activism in foreign policy 'in that they interfere in global issues beyond their immediate concern'.<sup>47</sup> In so doing, middle powers' foreign policy often seems to be devoid of self-interest<sup>48</sup>
2. multilateralism—namely, coalition building behaviour on a given issue with like-minded actors<sup>49</sup>
3. 'efforts to perpetuate the status-quo', in which middle powers function as 'the stabilizers and legitimizers of the world order'<sup>50</sup>
4. middle powers have 'foreign policy niches', which means that they specialise in certain areas of conflict management.<sup>51</sup> For example, Canada's niche diplomacy has been international peacekeeping.

Nevertheless, 'all traditional middle powers are generous donors of official development assistance'.<sup>52</sup> As an active promoter of Japan's middle-power identity, Yoshida Soeya argues that Japan's foreign policy since the end of the World War II has been consistent with the aforementioned characteristics,<sup>53</sup> and that human security constitutes Japan's niche diplomacy.<sup>54</sup> Thus, if middle-power identity was influential in Japan's response to the September 11 incidents, one would expect to see a discourse and practice in line with that

form a very large expert community. The final report of the Commission—*The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium*—was submitted on 18 January 2000.

45 Official Website of the Prime Minister and His Cabinet, "Chapter 6," in *The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium*, accessed November 26, 2013, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/21century/report/htmls/>.

46 Official Website of the Prime Minister and His Cabinet, *The Frontier Within*.

47 Eduard Jordaan, "The Concept of a Middle Power in International Relations: Distinguishing between Emerging and Traditional Middle Powers," *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 30, 1 (2010): 167.

48 Jordaan, "The Concept of a Middle Power," 166.

49 Richard A. Higgot and Andrew Fenton Cooper, "Middle Power Leadership and Coalition-Building: Australia, the Cairns Group, and the Uruguay Round of Trade Negotiations," *International Organization* 44, 4 (autumn 1990): 609–10.

50 Jordaan, "The Concept of a Middle Power," 167.

51 Andrew F. Cooper, "Niche Diplomacy: A Conceptual Overview," in *Niche Diplomacy: Middle Powers after the Cold War*, ed. Andrew F. Cooper (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1997), 1–24; Jordaan, "The Concept of a Middle Power," 177.

52 Jordaan, "The Concept of a Middle Power," 174.

53 Yoshihide Soeya, *Nihon no Midoru Pawa- Gaiko: Sengo Nihon no Sentaku to Kozo* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shinsho, 2005).

54 Soeya, *Nihon no Midoru Pawa- Gaiko*, 211–5.

particular identity. This stance would support US policies through non-military contribution, human security-oriented assistance and active foreign policy in multilateral settings. The next section empirically demonstrates that Japan's post-conflict reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan was congruent with the policy preferences stipulated by the middle-power identity.

## 5 Japan's Post-conflict Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan

### 5.1 Content of Japan's Assistance: Military<sup>55</sup> and Non-military Contribution

Japan's response to the September 11 terrorist attacks and the following US-led military operation in Afghanistan had two major dimensions:

1. symbolic or limited military support given to the multinational military coalition through the dispatch of Japan's SDF for logistic support
2. post-conflict reconstruction assistance in Afghanistan through ODA.

The dispatch to the Indian Ocean was allowed when the Diet passed the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law (ATSML) on 29 October 2001. Originally, the law had two years duration; however, it was extended five times—in 2003, twice in 2004,<sup>56</sup> 2005 and 2006. It was replaced by a similar law in January 2008, after its expiration. The replacing law—the *Act on Special Measures Concerning Implementation of Replenishment Support Activities*—was extended for a year (until January 2009), overcoming the opposition at the Upper House of the Diet. In August 2009, when the DPJ came to power in a majoritarian government, the new Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama pledged not to extend the refuelling mission. Consequently, the SDF's mission was brought to an end in January 2010, despite the Obama Administration's requests to continue the mission. Instead, Prime Minister Hatoyama declared that Japan would provide civilian assistance for Afghanistan's reconstruction. Based on ATSML and the replacing law, the Maritime SDF supplied fuel and water to the military vessels of Operation Enduring Freedom in the Indian Ocean. The military vessels from 11 countries benefited from this fuel and water supply.<sup>57</sup> Under the ATSML (between 2001 and 2007), Japan provided approximately 126 million gallons of fuel to the military vessels of the multinational coalition. According to Pentagon data between 2001 and 2003, Japan provided one-fifth of the total fuel consumed by the coalition. Since 2003, this proportion has reduced to seven per cent.<sup>58</sup>

Prior to the September 11 incidents, Japan had delivered humanitarian

---

55 Here, 'military' refers to the logistic support given by the SDF to the military operations.

56 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Chapter 3: Japan's Foreign Policy in Major Diplomatic Fields," in *Diplomatic Bluebook 2005*, 12, accessed October 15, 2013, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2005/ch3-a.pdf>.

57 Japan's Ministry of Defense, "Japan's Replenishment Support Activities in the Indian Ocean," *Japan Defense Focus* 11 (2008), accessed December 12, 2013, [http://www.mod.go.jp/e/jdf/pdf/jdf\\_no11.pdf](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/jdf/pdf/jdf_no11.pdf).

58 Justin McCurry, "Japan Pulls out of Afghanistan Coalition," *The Guardian*, November 1, 2007.

assistance to Afghanistan through UN agencies. In addition, the MOFA had made diplomatic efforts to reconcile the conflicting Taliban and non-Taliban factions in that country, including a proposal to convene an international conference in Tokyo on reconciliation and reconstruction in Afghanistan by inviting the conflicting factions. These attempts failed mostly because the Taliban authorities did not agree to come together with other factions.

The Koizumi Administration significantly increased its assistance after the September 11 incidents, following demands from US state officials. This resulted in the First Tokyo Conference in January 2002, when Japan pledged US\$500 million worth of assistance in the fields of resettling refugees and internally displaced peoples, demining, education, health and medical care. Japan also became co-chair of the Afghan Reconstruction Steering Group, together with the US, the European Union (EU) and Saudi Arabia.<sup>59</sup> In 2002, during the meetings for Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Afghanistan in the framework of G-8, Japan volunteered to become the lead country responsible for implementing DDR of ex-combatants in cooperation with UNAMA. Following this, another conference on 'Consolidation of Peace' (DDR) in Afghanistan was held in Tokyo on 22 February 2003.<sup>60</sup> The assistance pledged during the First Tokyo Conference was implemented by February 2004. Japan pledged additional assistance around US\$400 million until March 2006.<sup>61</sup> In January 2006, at the London Conference on Afghanistan, Japan further extended US\$450 million worth of assistance.<sup>62</sup>

As of March 2013, Japan has implemented US\$4.935 billion worth of post-conflict reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan in six main sectors: (1) political process, (2) security, (3) infrastructure, (4) human resources development and humanitarian assistance, (5) agricultural development and (6) culture and higher education. Moreover, in the Tokyo Conference held on 8 July 2012, the government pledged up to US\$3 billion of assistance to Afghanistan for the following five years, and declared that its assistance would continue even after 2017. It is significant to highlight that a large amount of assistance was earmarked for addressing basic human needs, such as healthcare and basic education, in light of the human security approach. Since 2006, to date, Japan ranks within the top five donors in bilateral assistance to Afghanistan, and, since 2011, Japan has been the second largest donor of bilateral assistance to

---

59 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Chapter 1: Terrorist Attacks in the United States and the Fight against Terrorism," in *Diplomatic Bluebook 2002*, 26, accessed October 15, 2013, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2002/chap1-b.pdf>.

60 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "The Middle East and North Africa," in *Diplomatic Bluebook 2005*, 109, accessed October 15, 2013, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2005/ch2-f.pdf>.

61 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Chapter 3: Japan's Foreign Policy in major Diplomatic Fields," in *Diplomatic Bluebook 2005*, 15, accessed October 15, 2013, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2005/ch3-a.pdf>.

62 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Chapter 2: Regional Diplomacy," in *Diplomatic Bluebook 2007*, accessed October 15, 2013, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2007/chapter2.pdf>.

Afghanistan, following the US. The next section examines the origins of Japan's involvement in the post-conflict reconstruction assistance of Afghanistan by giving special attention to the years 2001 to 2003.

## 5.2 The Policy-making Process

Following the September 11 attacks, Prime Minister Koizumi and the Cabinet Secretariat Fukuda Yasuo repeatedly mentioned that Japan would give 'maximum support within the limits of its Constitution', if the US decided to take military action, thereby reflecting the government's 'pro-US attitude'. After these verbal assurances, Prime Minister Koizumi announced his government's first official response on 19 October. In this official statement, combating terrorism was regarded 'Japan's own security issue'. The government's official stance composed of seven concrete measures. The seven-point action plan, which was formulated by the Cabinet Secretariat under the leadership of the Cabinet Director for Crisis Management, Kazuhiro Sugata, was as follows:

1. The Government of Japan (GOJ) will promptly take the measures necessary to dispatch the SDF to provide support, including medical services, transportation and supply, to the US forces and others taking measures related to the terrorist attacks that have been recognised as a threat to the international peace and security in the UNSC Resolution 1368.
2. The GOJ will promptly take the measures necessary to further strengthen the protection of facilities and areas of the US forces and important facilities in Japan.
3. The GOJ will swiftly dispatch SDF vessels to gather information.
4. The GOJ will strengthen international cooperation, including information sharing, in areas such as immigration control.
5. The GOJ will extend humanitarian, economic and other necessary assistance to surrounding and affected countries. As a part of this assistance, the GOJ will extend emergency economic assistance to Pakistan and India, who are cooperating with the US in this emergency situation.
6. The GOJ will provide assistance to displaced persons as necessary. This will include the possibility of humanitarian assistance by SDF.
7. The GOJ, in cooperation with other countries, will take appropriate measures in response to the changing situation in order to avoid confusion in international and domestic economic systems.<sup>63</sup>

The Cabinet Secretariat's aforementioned response gave priority to the dispatch

---

63 Official Website of the Prime Minister and His Cabinet, "Japan's Measures in Response to the Simultaneous Terrorist Attacks in the United States—Press Conference Statement by the Prime Minister," accessed November 26, 2013, [http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/koizumispeech/2001/0919terosoti\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/koizumispeech/2001/0919terosoti_e.html).

of the SDF. The plan called for the dispatch of logistic support for a possible US-led military action, for humanitarian assistance, and for information-gathering activities. Even though emergency economic assistance to Pakistan and India were promised, nowhere in the seven measures nor in the discussions leading up to those measures was post-conflict assistance to Afghanistan considered. As noted by one of the Prime Minister's private secretaries, the initial debates within the *Kantei* (the Prime Minister's official residence) on how to respond to the September 11 incidents mainly revolved around two points: providing rescue and relief assistance to the victims in the US, and dispatching the SDF and the legal basis of a possible dispatch.<sup>64</sup>

In searching for a legal basis for the dispatch, the government officials were considering using the law on emergencies surrounding Japan (*shuhen jitai hou*), using the existing Peacekeeping Activities Cooperation Law, or creating a new law. The former Defence Agency wanted to use the first option; however, the Foreign Ministry required the enactment of a new law on the grounds that it would be difficult to regard Afghanistan as an area surrounding Japan. In addition, the Ministry considered the dispatch constitutional as long as the SDF's missions were limited to non-combat activities, such as transportation of fuel, water and food,<sup>65</sup> while some members of the ruling coalition and Defence Agency wanted SDF to transform weapons and ammunitions as well.<sup>66</sup> The New Komeito Party—a member of the ruling coalition—requested a number of limitations to the law. These included that the law be a temporary legislation, effective for one or two years; be based on a UN resolution; and give importance to UN activities.<sup>67</sup> As a result, the ruling coalition managed to reach a consensus on enacting a new law that would enable the SDF to give rear-area support to US or any other multinational coalition force that would take part in a possible military operation. The mission would be restricted to non-combat activities and provision of logistic support. Hence, the Cabinet decided to legitimise the law based on UNSC Resolution 1368.

However, during the drafting process of the law, a number of points remained unclear and controversial. The Defence Agency wanted the government to ease the restrictions on the use of weapons. Based on the proposed legislation, the SDF was going to provide assistance to refugees in Pakistan. The UN Peacekeeping Activities Cooperation Law imposed strict restrictions on the use of force by SDF troops. The SDF members were only allowed to use weapons for self-defence or for the defence of another SDF member. In addition, they were

---

64 Isao Iijima, *Koizumi Kantei Hiroku* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 2006), 126.

65 "Houfukuji no Beigun Shien, Shuhen Jitaihou no Tekiyou Kentou- Kaishaku Henkou wo Boueichou Giron," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 16, 2001, 4.

66 "Taibei Shien de Tokureihou wo Kentou- Tero Houfuku no Gentei Seifu Yotou," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 19, 2001, 1.

67 "Taibei Shien Shinpou, Yotou Naibu niwa Netsuyoi Shinchouron," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 19, 2001, 3.



not allowed to use weapons to protect field hospitals.<sup>68</sup> For this reason, some LDP members wanted to revise the PKO law; however, the New Komeito Chief Executives were against that idea. In the final draft, the SDF was authorised to use weapons to protect refugees and military personnel from other countries, in addition to self-defence. New Komeito wanted the removal of the restrictions as an exception only applicable in the scope of the new law.<sup>69</sup> The new draft bill also allowed the SDF to transport ammunitions and weapons to US forces. On 4 October, the ruling coalition came up with draft legislation for three bills: an anti-terrorism bill, a bill to revise the SDF Law and a bill to revise the Japan Coast Guard Law. Together with the main opposition parties, the establishment of a committee to discuss the bills was decided. The draft bills were presented to the Diet on 5 October.

From this time on, the official government stance and proposed bill entered a period of domestic scrutiny. The idea to provide reconstruction assistance surfaced during the Diet deliberations on the proposed bill. Yukio Hatoyama, the leader of the main opposition party at the time (DPJ), made a statement acknowledging the US's right for self-defence in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks; however, other party members later criticised this statement as premature. Related to the anti-terrorism legislation, the DPJ was against the transportation of arms and munitions and the relaxation of the use of weapons. The DPJ also wanted the government to specify combat and non-combat zones, and sought Diet approval before the SDF dispatch.<sup>70</sup> In one of his speeches at the Diet, Hatoyama argued that international efforts to eradicate terrorism were not limited to logistic support, and that Japan could pursue alternative paths of diplomacy or the strategic use of ODA to cope with the underlying causes of terrorism.<sup>71</sup> DPJ members continuously emphasised non-military assistance as a way to support the eradication of terrorism. It was DPJ that first set forth the idea that the Japanese Government should provide post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan by revitalising MOFA's previous policy of reconciliation and reconstruction assistance for the conflict in Afghanistan in the 1990s.<sup>72</sup> The DPJ proposed an alternative policy centred on reconstruction assistance, diplomatic efforts for the improvement of the Middle East Peace Process, assistance for refugees and civilians, and giving importance to UN-centred activities to eradicate terrorism.

---

68 "Shinpou de Nanmin Shien, Buki Shiyo Kanwa ga Shouten ni- Bei Douji Tahatsu Tero Meguru Taiou," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 26, 2001, 2.

69 "Bei Tero Houfuku, Nanmin Shien mo Shinpou de Tokurei no Kitei, Yotou ga Goui," *Asahi Shimbun*, September 26, 2001, 1.

70 Tero Tokuchi Hoan, Kyou Kokkai Teishutsu Yotou to Minshu, Shusei Kyougi Yotsu no Kadai," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 5, 2001, 3.

71 Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 1 October 2001 (statement by Yukio Hatoyama, MP).

72 Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Councilors, 3 October 2001 (statement by Tomiko Okazaki, MP).

In contrast, the pacifists fiercely criticised the Koizumi Administration's SDF-centred policy for being 'military oriented' and 'US-centred', and demanded UN-centred non-military contribution. These criticisms provided an alternative understanding of terrorism and a non-military approach for its eradication. They questioned the legitimacy of the US military retaliation, calling the act 'a war of revenge' (*houfuku senso*) and highlighting the costs of war for unprotected civilians in Afghanistan who had equally suffered from the Taliban regime. Pacifists emphasised that the bombings should be understood as a crime and not an act of war, and the main response should be capturing the culprits and trialling them at the International Criminal Court. For the pacifists, the UNSC Resolution 1368 was not clear enough to legitimise the use of force.<sup>73</sup> Komeito members also pointed out that Japan should follow a 'non-violent' (*hibouryoku no michi*) path.<sup>74</sup> For example, Akihiro Oota emphasised the significance of addressing structural violence—namely, the root causes of conflicts, such as poverty, starvation and discrimination.<sup>75</sup> In addition, as a member of the coalition government, Komeito played a significant role in placing a time limit on the anti-terrorism legislation.

In justifying the government's stance, the normalists and more hawkish nationalists often referred to the Gulf War analogy and peer pressure.<sup>76</sup> Koizumi often argued that other countries were attempting to do as much as possible to support US policies, with only Japan giving excuses. If Japan failed to provide visible support, as occurred during the first Gulf War, it would be isolated.<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, some normalists, such as Ozawa, even argued that the government could send SDF troops to International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Ichiro because it was a UN-sanctioned international coalition. MPs from Japan's Conservative Party (*Hoshuto*), a member of the ruling coalition, were calling for a stronger response. They even argued that Japan could provide logistic support to US forces, including the transportation of weapons and ammunitions, based on the *shuhen jitai hou*.

The three anti-terrorism bills passed in the House of Representatives on 29

---

73 See, eg, Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 18 September 2001 (statement by Tomio Yamaguchi, MP); Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 2 October 2001 (statement by Kazuo Shii, MP); Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 2 October 2001 (statement by Takako Doi, MP).

74 Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 19 September 2001 (statement by Yuichiro Uozumi, MP).

75 Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 1 October 2001 (statement by Akihiro Oota, MP).

76 See, eg, Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 18 September 2001 (statement by Kenzo Yoneda, MP); Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates, House of Councilors, 19 September 2001 (statement by Tadashi Hirouno, MP).

77 Japan's National Diet, Parliamentary Debates Plenary Session, House of Representatives, 3 October 2001 (statement by Junichiro Koizumi, Prime Minister).

October 2001. The bill requiring the overseas dispatch of SDF for logistic support passed with the majority vote from the ruling coalition parties. The total number of votes was 240, with 140 positive and 100 rejections. The government rejected the DPJ's insistence on previous report of SDF dispatch.<sup>78</sup> The second bill for the revision of the SDF Law passed with the approval of the ruling coalition and DPJ. Finally, the third bill on the revision of the Japan Coast Guard Bill passed with the approval of the ruling coalition, DPJ, JCP and Liberal Party.<sup>79</sup> Each party's position on three different legislations is presented below in Table 2.

**Table 2: The Political Parties' Stances on the Anti-Terrorism Legislation**

	Ruling Coalition	DPJ	JCP	SDP	Liberal Party
Anti-terrorism legislation	Yes	No	No	No	No
Bill on the revision of SDF Law	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Bill on revision of Japan Coast Guard Law	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Source: *Yomiuri Shimbun*<sup>80</sup>

While the debates were proceeding in early October, the US side proposed that Japan could provide state-building assistance in post-Taliban Afghanistan. This was mentioned by both the then US Secretary of State, Colin Powell,<sup>81</sup> and US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage.<sup>82</sup> Thus, the demands of the US side converged with those of the middle-power internationalists. After these statements, Prime Minister Koizumi and Foreign Minister Tanaka stated that the Foreign Ministry was contemplating a post-conflict assistance scheme.

At the bureaucratic level, MOFA officials of the Second Middle East Division were responsible for formulating a concrete policy for post-conflict reconstruction assistance. They highlighted the need to focus on Afghanistan itself and support Afghanistan in such a manner that it would not again become a base for Al-Qaida or other terrorist groups' activities. In so doing, the Second Middle East Division officers decided to revive and reconstruct MOFA's previous policy towards the conflict in Afghanistan that was initiated in the mid-1990s.

78 "Tero Kanren 3 Hou Seiritsu Minshu, Fukuzatsu, Yotou to Seisaku Sekkin, Kiken 4 nin Shikkoubu Hihan mo," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 30, 2001, 4.

79 "Tero Taisaku Shienhou, Seiritsu Jieitai (Senji) Haken e—Beigun ni Kyouryoku, Kuji mo Kokunai Yuusou," *Mainichi Shimbun*, October 29, 2001, 1.

80 "Tero Kanren 3 Hou Seiritsu Minshu, Fukuzatsu, Yotou to Seisaku Sekkin, Kiken 4 nin Shikkoubu Hihan mo," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 30, 2001, 4.

81 "Nihon no Afugan Shinseiken e no Shien Jyushi- Bei Tero Taiou de Kokumuchoukan Shisa," *Asahi Shimbun*, October 4, 2001, 1.

82 "Tero Tokusouho no Souki Seiritsu wo Jietai no Yakuwari Kitai/Armitage Bei Kokumu Fukudaijin," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 6, 2001, 1.

This policy aimed to help achieve reconciliation between the various conflicting factions in Afghanistan, and help reconstruct the war-torn country. To this end, Japan's intention to organise a reconciliation and reconstruction conference for Afghanistan was declared in the context of UN in 1996 by Japan's Ambassador to the UN at that time.<sup>83</sup> The leaders of the Taliban and other factions were separately invited to Tokyo several times. However, the parties to the conflict did not want to come together in a single meeting. MOFA's efforts continued until 2000, right before the September 11 attacks. Before the September 11 attacks, Japan had provided more than US\$400 million worth of assistance to Afghanistan. In addition, in cooperation with UN agencies, the Japanese Government initiated the Azar and Tizin project in eastern Afghanistan. MOFA formulated the following four-point policy:

1. to advise the appointment of Takahashi Hiroshi—a world-renowned Japanese specialist on Afghanistan, who was also Japan's current Ambassador to Afghanistan—as the assistant of Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN's special envoy for Afghanistan
2. to hold a Reconciliation and Reconstruction Conference for Afghanistan in Tokyo
3. to advise the appointment of Sadako Ogata as the Prime Minister's special envoy in charge of the post-conflict reconstruction assistance.<sup>84</sup>

MOFA wanted to play a significant role in the peace talks and reconciliation process between different factions. To this end, MOFA officials contacted the former king of Afghanistan in Italy, Zahir Shah.

It is significant to note that, unlike the UN missions in Kosovo and East Timor, where the UN exercised direct state-like authority through transitional administration, the structure of the peace-building mission in Afghanistan was characterised by the UN's low presence, which is known as the 'light footprint approach'. The UN's mandate was limited to 'providing political assistance and advice'. As such, the peace-building process in Afghanistan was based on three separate dimensions: the peace process, in which the UN played a significant role; the SSR; and a reconstruction dimension. In addition, in the case of Afghanistan, the military component was not a UN peacekeeping force, but a UN-sanctioned 'multinational coalition force'—namely, ISAF. In the framework of the G-8 meetings, it was decided that the SSR in Afghanistan would be undertaken in a lead-nation structure. Accordingly, each donor country would be responsible for a single sector and would cooperate directly with the relevant ministry of Afghanistan. The US took the lead in creating an Afghan National Army, the United Kingdom became the lead nation to counter narcotics, Germany was responsible for leading the police reform, Italy was responsible for

---

83 Nobutaka Miyahara, interview by Kivilcim Erkan, December 4, 2012.

84 Nobutaka Miyahara, interview by Kivilcim Erkan, December 4, 2012.

justice reform, and Japan became the lead nation for DDR in cooperation with the UNAMA.

After formulating MOFA's assistance policy, MOFA officials started consultations with their counterparts in the US and Britain, as well as with Lakhdar Brahimi. By mid-October, on his way to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings in Shanghai, Prime Minister Koizumi declared that he would offer President Bush Japan's assistance for reconstruction in Afghanistan. During a press conference after the meetings in Shanghai, Koizumi officially announced that Japan would be involved in two main areas: the role of peace mediator among various parties in Afghanistan, and provider of assistance in rehabilitation efforts. However, in contrast to what MOFA was planning, at the international level, the peace process (also known as the 'Bonn Process') and reconstruction scheme took separate paths. It seemed that those European countries that had stronger ties with various factions in Afghanistan were more influential in the negotiations leading up to the Bonn Agreement.<sup>85</sup> This explains why the meetings were hosted in Bonn, rather than Tokyo. As a result, Japan could not play a significant role as a peace mediator, as MOFA initially intended. As such, MOFA decided to focus on the reconstruction dimension.

Sadako Ogata, who was appointed as the Prime Minister's special envoy in early November, played a significant role in instilling the human security perspective into the reconstruction assistance policy by proposing that assistance be provided in such areas as refugee repatriation and resettlement, demining, education, health, and improvement of the status of women, state-building. Consistent with these suggestions, the government announced Japan's assistance package to Afghanistan by the end of December, before the Tokyo Conference.

In Tokyo's assistance package, DDR was not included; however, on 25 April 2002, it was declared by the then Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi that Japan would be responsible for implementing DDR in Afghanistan.<sup>86</sup> MOFA officials

---

85 The Bonn Agreement—*Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions*—was signed 5 December 2001. The agreement was a result of negotiation between the different factions that fought against the Taliban regime, and other interested parties in post-Taliban Afghanistan. The agreement marked the beginning of concrete efforts to establish a new government and other state institutions in Afghanistan. The negotiations leading up to the agreement, from 27 November to 5 December, brought together four major factions: (1) the Northern Alliance, also known as the United Islamic Front, which mainly consisted of Tajiks; (2) the Rome group who supported the former King of Afghanistan, Mohammad Zahir Shah; (3) the Cypress group supported by Iran; and (4) the Peshawar group, who mainly consisted of non-Taliban Pashtuns led by the moderate Hamid Karzai. The negotiations were undertaken under the leadership of the UN's special envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, in the city of Bonn. In accordance with the final agreement, the interim administration was established in December 2001, and later replaced by a transitional administration in June 2002. The new Constitution was created in 2004, and a parliament was established in December 2005, which marked the end of the 'Bonn Process'.

86 Yoriko Kawaguchi, "Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs Yoriko Kawaguchi on Her Upcoming Visit to Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran," Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed December 2, 2001, [http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle\\_e/fmv0204/speech.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle_e/fmv0204/speech.html).

volunteered to be in charge of DDR during the G-8 meetings on SSR in Afghanistan. According to some Japanese Government officials who took part in the project, this decision was based on asserting Japanese visibility in the international arena. Japan's Ambassador to Afghanistan at that time pointed out that the Japanese officials thought they could contribute to the reintegration aspect—the 'R' of DDR—based on Japan's previous experiences in that area.<sup>87</sup> The reintegration of ex-combatants generally involves job training for ex-combatants. Similarly, Isezaki pointed out that the Japanese delegation thought that Japan could use its own experiences with reconstruction and disarmament to assist Afghanistan.<sup>88</sup> This was the first time that Japan's ODA was used for DDR.<sup>89</sup>

The successive LDP-led government continued economic assistance to Afghanistan, as well as the SDF's refuelling mission. However, the latter became increasingly unpopular among the general public, as demonstrated by public opinion polls.<sup>90</sup> Following a national election that brought the DPJ into power in a majoritarian government in 2009, the SDF's refuelling mission was terminated.<sup>91</sup> The new Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama mentioned that Japan would provide civilian assistance instead, and the new government decided to extend reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, which was much more costly than continuing the refuelling mission. The cost of the proposed post-conflict reconstruction assistance as a replacement of the SDF's refuelling mission was 450 billion yen—seven times more than the cost of the refuelling mission since 2001 to 2009.<sup>92</sup> As such, Japan's role as a civilian power was consolidated.

## 6 Conclusion

This paper examined Japan's contribution to international efforts to eradicate terrorism in Afghanistan since 2001. Japan has provided limited military support to the multinational coalition (the logistic support provided by the SDF for the multinational military coalition). In the long-term, Japan's contribution has been largely non-military, and in the form of post-conflict reconstruction assistance in Afghanistan. Here, it has been argued that middle-power state identity and the human security norm aligned with that identity have determined the content and direction of Japan's contribution. The middle-power internationalist discourse

---

87 Shinichi Komano, *Watashi no Afuganisutan: Chu Afuganisutan Nihon Taishi no Fukkou Shien Funtou* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2005), 98.

88 Kenji Isezaki, *Busou Kaijyo: Funsouya ga Mita Sekai* (Tokyo: Kodansha Gendai Shinsho, 2004), 152.

89 Isezaki, *Busou Kaijyo*, 153.

90 See, eg, "Fukuda Shusho, Tedumari Etsunen Tokusohou saigiketsu Sara ni geraku danen, Kyushinryoku Shometsu Shijiritsu kyuraku," *Asahi Shimbun*, December 21, 2007; "Fukuda Naikaku Shiji, Teimei 34% Asahi Shinbunsha Seron Chousa Shitsumon to Kotae," *Asahi Shimbun*, January 13, 2008.

91 Martin Fackler, "Japan Ends Naval Support for Afghan War," *The New York Times*, January 16, 2010.

92 "Election 2009—Battle for Power/Hatoyama Clarifies Stance: 'No Extension of Refueling,'" *Daily Yomiuri*, June 31, 2009.

has situated Japan as a global civilian power, or middle power, in the international system that makes non-military contributions to international peace and security, in addition to other global issues.

In the case of Afghanistan, the Koizumi Administration initially wanted to dispatch the SDF, and did not consider providing post-conflict reconstruction assistance. The Koizumi Administration decided on post-conflict reconstruction assistance after a request from the US. In order to dispatch the SDF, the ruling coalition managed to enact the ATSMML, despite resistance from the main opposition and pacifist segments of the society. An analysis of the Diet Debates shows that there were diverging views on what kind of contribution and response Japan should make. The traditional pacifists were against the dispatch of SDF, while the middle-power internationalists, led by DPJ members, advocated a policy of non-military assistance, including post-conflict reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan. However, they did not deny the legitimacy of the US's right for self-defence or collective self-defence. The DPJ's opposition to the ATSMML was based on the idea that the law undermined civilian control over military control, whereas most traditional pacifists opposed the law because they considered the SDF mission a violation of the pacifist principles enshrined in Japan's Constitution. The normalists dominating the leading party of the ruling coalition, LDP, were in favour of a military response and the dispatch of SDF. In 2009, when the DPJ came into power in a majority government, its first task was to terminate the SDF's refuelling mission and further extend Japan's post-conflict reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, despite disapproval from the US. This act subsequently consolidated Japan's global civilian power identity.