

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Japan-US Sea Power Dialogue (16-17 April, 2009)**  
**Opening Statement for the Open Forum,**  
**“An Alliance of Maritime Nations: The United States and Japan”**  
**by Ambassador Shotaro Yachi, Special Envoy of the Government of Japan**  
**(Check Against Delivery)**

**Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, I would like to start by conveying my sincere appreciation to all those who have gone to great lengths in preparing for today’s Japan-US Sea Power Dialogue. Before going into my own statement, I will deliver Prime Minister Aso’s message to the participants of this meeting.

**【PM Aso’s Message】**

**“For the “Third Japan-US Sea Power Dialogue”**  
**(Prime Minister Taro Aso)**

*I have great expectations for the “Japan-US Sea Power Dialogue” which is currently being held in Washington DC. This Dialogue sets an ambitious goal for Japan and the United States to deepen our alliance in the maritime arena and to establish a new Sea Power. This is because I believe that through this Dialogue, we can discover a key to resolving the various crises that we face, and to bringing about prosperity and stability to Japan, the United States and to the entire world.*

*The ocean has great potential. There are rich undeveloped resources hidden in the sea and the seabed. Conversion of the ocean’s power such as waves to energy would encourage the promotion of new industries and help to stop global warming. By preserving the natural environment of the seas which controls the global environmental mechanism, we may find new approaches to address the issue of climate change.*

*On the other hand, there are various issues that hinder the stable use of the ocean, including piracy and maritime terrorism which jeopardize maritime transport, excessive claims of jurisdiction by coastal states, as well as development of seabed resources that neglects international rules. Moreover, opaque build-up of naval power by emerging states has altered the balance of power at sea and has brought about instability to the maritime security environment.*

*Leadership by prominent sea powers is indispensable for sustainable development of the ocean and stabilization of its security environment. Now is the time for Japan and the US to extend our alliance - a public asset for the peace and prosperity of the world - to the ocean as its arena. This is a responsibility that we, as sea power allies*

*with extensive knowledge and capability in maritime affairs, need to fulfill.*

*By the way, Japan has found itself in rise-or-fall type situations twice in modern history. The first occasion was the opening up of the country in the Meiji restoration, and the second was the reconstruction of the country after the Pacific War. In both occasions, Japan was able to obtain peace and prosperity by cooperating with the United States and by taking the road toward maritime-based and trade-based national development. If Japan and the US work together, it is possible to create a power far surpassing our imaginations.*

*The world is now facing various crisis situations. Some examples include the financial and economic crisis said to be the biggest since the Great Depression in 1929, future shortage of resources and energy, deterioration of the natural environment as a result of global warming, and the instability of the security environment imposed by a combination of these factors.*

*I believe that we can overcome these challenges if we strengthen our alliance in the area of oceans and lead the world as new sea powers. Crises are also opportunities for a big leap forward. Surely, our sea power alliance will bring about stability to the world.*

*I have a firm belief. It is a belief that pursuit of economic prosperity and democracy is what brings about peace and happiness. By expanding such value-based diplomacy to the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean, I believe that we can form an “arc of freedom and prosperity” from the east of the Eurasian continent around the south and leading to Europe.*

*The world’s leading new sea power which will be established by the Japan-US alliance is “a contribution to the establishment of a new order” which Japan should carry out, and something that would indeed support my proposal, “the arc of freedom and prosperity,” from the ocean. I am looking forward to a great success of this meeting.*

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Now, let me make a few remarks as Representative of the Government of Japan.

### **1. Japan and the US as Sea Powers**

Japan, surrounded by the ocean, and the US, facing the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, are sea powers whose history has evolved, and national power gained, by enjoying benefits from the ocean. Japan and the US consistently share a common interest in various issues related to the ocean. It is entirely natural that our two countries as sea powers and as allies work very closely on various maritime issues, as pointed out in Prime Minister Aso’s statement.

For example, anti-piracy activities as well as enhancing assistance in the field of safe navigation and maritime policing for coastal states along our sea lanes are extremely important from the perspective of economic growth and economic security of Japan and the US.

Moreover, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in the Indian Ocean has crucial significance in ensuring the security of mainland Japan and the US, as well as the security of the international community. Ever since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Japan has been assisting the vessels of countries involved in this operation, including through refueling support activities by our Maritime Self Defense Forces.

## **2. Points to bear in mind in carrying out Japan-US maritime cooperation**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

What are some points that Japan and the US need to bear in mind in terms of creating maritime order and in carrying out concrete policy coordination? I would like to point out a few based on my own perspective.

### **【Power Balance among Great Powers and Partnership among Sea Power States】**

I believe that Great Powers continue to play a significant role in diplomatic affairs. The criteria for being a “Great Power” may be subject to controversy, but no one would object to the idea that the amount of responsibility shouldered by a particular country for the international community is an essential criterion.

In the Asia-Pacific region in particular, apart from Japan and the US, I believe China, Russia and India can be listed as major players. Furthermore, we must not forget the presence of ASEAN which is making progress, albeit slowly, towards the formation of a regional community.

Amid these countries, China’s advancement to the ocean is particularly spectacular. The Chinese Navy is proactively modernizing. We also have information that China is working to build aircraft carriers. China’s opaque expansion and modernization of its military, including the Navy, may greatly impact the maritime security environment which is so important for both Japan and the US. Moreover, Russia is increasingly more actively engaged in military activities in the Far East.

From the perspective of Japan and the US, when we bear in mind that these countries’ influence will likely increase over time, what will become increasingly more important for us is how we ensure that these countries are directed so that their actions are compatible with the interests

of Japan and the US, or at minimum, that they do not undermine them.

Neither Japan nor the US can resolve all issues on its own. Moreover, since the ocean is public property for all countries, isn't it necessary for Japan and the US to work together so that cooperation and collaboration among these "Great Powers" leads to concrete results that contribute to the stability of the world?

In guiding ocean affairs among Great Powers in the desired direction, I also believe that it is important to partner with countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia which share the same fundamental values, and are also sea powers. Wouldn't it be a good idea to enhance cooperative relations in the maritime field by developing a "Sea Power Network" in which countries with an insatiable spirit of inquiry and generosity as well as strong governance, such as Japan, the US, the UK and Australia, are involved as key countries?

### **【The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity】**

Here, I would like to introduce to you the idea of an "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" which is a concept launched by Japan when Prime Minister Aso was Foreign Minister.

The "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" includes Japan, the Republic of Korea, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, Central Asia, GUAM, Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic region and Scandinavia, roughly speaking.

The "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" is a concept founded upon "value-oriented" diplomacy based on "universal values" including freedom, democracy, basic human rights, the rule of law, and the market economy. Furthermore, the idea is to create an economically rich and stable region by expanding the circle of freedom through democratization, provision of market economy support and development while strengthening bilateral ties with emerging democracies on the outskirts of the Eurasian continent.

The concept of an "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" is not intended to contain China or Russia, or to impose values or to change a regime. It aims to achieve stability of the international community with due regard to the culture, history, and the different stages of development in respective countries. Therefore, I believe that Japan and the US can share a deep understanding of this concept. Because the greater part of the "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" overlaps with extremely crucial sea lanes for Japan and the US including the East China Sea, the Malacca Straits, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, as well as the Gulf of Aden, we believe the "Arc of

Freedom and Prosperity” is a meaningful concept in promoting Japan-US relations on maritime affairs.

### **3. The challenges that we face**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Now I would like to pick up some of the issues that we are confronted with that are deeply related to maritime affairs, and discuss the possibility and outlook for concrete cooperation between Japan and the US, in light of the perspectives that I have just mentioned.

#### **【Counter-Piracy】**

Since summer last year, we have seen a rapid increase in the number of piracy incidents off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, marking 111 in 2008. Having reached 2.5 times the figure for 2007, it is widely regarded that the situation is severe. The UN has been calling on countries for cooperation to deter piracy by adopting four Security Council resolutions. Japan’s Maritime Self Defense Force has also commenced escorting Japan-related vessels since 30 March. The US has been assuming leadership in this area, for example through the establishment of CTF-151. Moreover, the UK-operated UK-MTO in Dubai has been playing an extremely important role as a center for transmitting incoming rescue requests from pirate-attacked private vessels to relevant foreign militaries.

We have seen multi-national military cooperation in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. However, counter-piracy operations off the coasts of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden go beyond the conventional range of cooperation, involving close to 20 countries. Have there ever been multi-national forces involving China, Russia and India along with the US and NATO countries? We have never seen cases in which so many countries are getting together to prevent piracy which is the “common enemy to the human race.” In other words, I believe that the counter-piracy effort off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden is significant as a unique example which provides a “training ground” for cooperation among all the countries I mentioned earlier: Japan, the US, the UK, China, Russia and India.

Moreover, from Japan’s perspective, the recent dispatch of the Self Defense Forces under the commission of “maritime security operations” is in fact the very first example in the history of the SDF of being dispatched for the purpose of protecting the lives and property of Japanese citizens abroad. Furthermore, it is also the first time in the history of the SDF that it has been involved in “front-line escort missions” as opposed to “logistical missions” such as transportation and replenishment, which the SDF has consistently been involved in.

From now on, it is important that each country respond not only militarily but by making efforts in the capacity building of maritime security authorities of the coastal countries as well in stabilizing the situation in Somalia.

When we look at this in such a manner, although it is a regrettable situation arising from anarchy in Somalia, I believe we can say that the piracy issue off the coasts of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden has the potential to significantly expand the depth and horizon of Japan-US cooperation in maritime affairs. From this perspective, it can also provide the international community with a great opportunity for cooperation.

### **【Global Warming】**

As you are aware, the Obama administration has been taking an extremely active policy in the field of global warming. The government of Japan has also been taking initiative in this field, taking it up as one of the major issues at last year's G8 Toyako Summit Meeting. Japan hopes to take the initiative in building an international framework to reduce GHG emissions in close cooperation with the United States. It goes without saying that in addressing the issue of global warming, cooperation by all major emitters is indispensable.

At the same time, we must also be prepared if and when further impacts of global warming become a reality despite our efforts. If outbreaks of large scale disasters occur as a result of climate change, if densely populated coastal areas are submerged, maritime transport may be severely affected. The memories of Hurricane Katrina that hit New Orleans several years ago remain vivid in our minds, but we must be prepared for such disasters occurring around the world.

Japan and the US need to prepare ourselves so that we can effectively manage such crises, and to enhance our response capability and inter-operability in the area of disaster relief.

Moreover, if the Arctic icecap melts, an Arctic sea lane connecting Europe and the Far East may open up. Japan and the US need also to have a thorough discussion on how this may affect the balance of the world's maritime transport.

### **【Elements of Instability in the Asia Pacific Region】**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

While we are seeing new areas opening up for potential cooperation among major countries, there still remain maritime related elements of instability in the Asia-Pacific region

including the Taiwan Straits and territorial issues.

In this context, we must discuss the state of Chinese maritime activities in this region. As the weight of their responsibility in the international community increases, China's actions are drawing attention from the world. Japan recognizes that it is extremely vital that China plays a positive and constructive role in this region. Chinese development can bring about significant benefits to both Japan and the United States, and we welcome this.

On the other hand, some of China's actions must be watched carefully. Regarding the Senkaku Islands, which have clearly been Japan's territory historically, China and Taiwan have suddenly started insisting on their own claims, ever since UN research in 1968 reported that this region holds underground oil reserves. Recently, there were incidents in which they dispatched government vessels, intruding into Japan's territorial waters.

With regard to the oil and gas development issue in the East China Sea, Japan and China have different positions on the continental shelf and have not been able to agree on demarcation as a first step. The agreement between Japan and China on joint development in June last year was epoch-making. However, the path to materialization of the agreement is not smooth. Japan intends to spare no effort, but the regrettable thing is that even under such circumstances, China continues to carry out unilateral development based on its own claims. This cannot be considered to be an action of a responsible major power.

Furthermore, Chinese moves towards upgrading its Navy to a blue-water Navy is creating increased concern in neighboring countries.

Moreover, we must keep a close eye on the activities of the far eastern Russian military in the Asia-Pacific region. Russia has a construction plan of a strategic nuclear-powered submarine base on the Kamchatka Peninsula. President Medvedev has in various occasions announced his intention to carry out construction of new strategic nuclear-powered submarines. We must carefully consider how an open Arctic sea lane would influence Russian naval deployment capabilities.

These are issues that Japan and the US need to closely monitor together. We understand that the US must be careful about openly stating a position on issues that may appear to be bilateral issues between Japan and China or Russia. However, we hope that the US, as our only ally, will understand our concern regarding China and Russia's activities in the areas that I

have mentioned, and to respond based on a common awareness of the issues.

#### **4. Closing Remarks**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As I have mentioned, maritime affairs include an extremely broad range of issues from security and environment to resource development. The interests of major powers are intertwined in a complex manner in this field. Potential for new cooperation is opening up, while flash-points of confrontation still remain.

Major powers have responsibilities. These are responsibilities to become the cornerstones of the peace and prosperity of the international community. The key to decent development of the international community is cooperative relations among states that share universal values such as freedom, democracy, basic human rights, the rule of law and the market economy. Under such circumstances, global cooperation by the US and Japan as the world's largest and second largest economic powers could bring about immeasurable impact. As former US Ambassador to Japan, Mr. Mansfield put it, Japan-US relations are "the most important bilateral relationship in the world." These are words with which I fully agree. Close cooperation between our countries is indispensable in order to maximize the benefits we can gain from the ocean while minimizing the risks against us. I am confident that Japan and US will continue to cooperate to this end.

Since yesterday, prominent figures from Japan and the US have been engaged in rounds of discussions on this issue from various perspectives. I have been informed that the results of these discussions will be reported by Mr. Akiyama, Chairman of the Ocean Policy Research Foundation, on behalf of the organizers. I would like to conclude my remarks by trusting that those gathered here are now bearing in mind an image of a future robust alliance between Japan and the US as sea powers.

Thank you very much for your attention.

**【end】**