

FY2017-19 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
“Foreign/Security Affairs Research Project Grant”
Area A: International Politics and Circumstances

The Resilience of the “Open Liberal International Order”:
The Situations of the US, China and Europe, and their Impacts

1 . Project Overview

Since the end of WWII, peace and development in the international community have been promoted under the “open liberal international order.” Under this open, liberal and rule-based order, many countries have enjoyed stability and prosperity. Japan is one of the countries that has contributed to the preservation and development of this order and shared in the bounty of it.

The biggest challenge currently facing the international community is this order becoming unstable and its outlook uncertain.

The first factor is the United States. The inauguration of an “America First” Trump administration will have a great impact on the international community as well as the US, which has been a leader of the liberal international order, as it gives the impression that the country no longer has any significant interest in the importance of this order and is even ready to face off against other countries for the sake of its own national interests.

The second is China. China, which has grown in self-confidence in its political and economic systems and expanded its leverage over neighboring countries, has developed its diplomacy to forge a new international framework and become increasingly assertive in the seas surrounding China.

The third is Europe. In European countries, as grievances and antipathies to globalization have spread, populist parties that call for preserving national interests in a chauvinistic manner have been on the rise. If European countries, which have traditionally been regarded as the core supporters of the values of the liberal international order, increasingly became inward-looking following “Brexit”, the turmoil in the order will further deepen.

In view of the above, this project will analyze (1) the Trump administration’s foreign policy and Japan-US relations, (2) China’s foreign policy and other countries’ policies toward China, and (3) the EU’s and European countries’ domestic politics and foreign policies. We will also aim to find out the impacts of these three elements

and their interactions on the current international order. We will then use these findings to make recommendations on foreign policies Japan should adopt to maintain the current international order and its national interests in collaboration with other countries over the medium to long term.

2 . Project Structure

The research for this project includes the following three sub-projects. Results of the three sub-projects will be integrated to achieve the above purposes.

