

1st Tokyo Global Dialogue Concept Paper

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The Japan Institute of International Affairs

1. Overarching theme

“Is it possible to build an international order based on free, fair and transparent rules?”

The rules-based international order now faces serious challenges from the rise of nationalism and populism, widespread authoritarianism, growing skepticism about liberal values, rampant expansion of unilateralism, and the malfunctioning of international institutions.

Underlying this is a huge wave of change propelled by widening economic disparities and reactions against the economic globalization, intensifying racial and religious conflicts partly due to the explosions in the numbers of migrants and refugees, the widespread dissemination of inflammatory and divisive rhetoric facilitated by dramatic improvements in communication capabilities, rapid changes to security environments caused by the development of cutting-edge military technologies, and global warming and other environmental issues.

This dialogue will take a broad and multifaceted approach in discussing whether it is possible under such circumstances to rebuild a free, fair and transparent rule-based international order, and what actions should be taken by states, international institutions, think tanks and other elements of civil society to this end.

2. Topics for plenary session (featuring internationally prominent figures and experts as panelists)

a. Challenges to democratic political system and the liberal international order:

The waves of anti-globalism, populism, nationalism, unilateralism, and religious/ethnic intolerance sweeping over the international community are undermining the foundations of democratic political systems in countries around the world and posing challenges to the liberal international order. This session will identify the background causes of these developments, and then discuss the actions that national leaders should take both within their own countries and in the international community.

b. The new US-China strategic rivalry and the international community:

There is an increasingly prevalent view that China, which has achieved a remarkable rise in recent years, has assumed the mantle of the Cold War-era Soviet Union in challenging the post-WWII US-led international order, and that the US is striving to fend off this challenge. This session will examine the validity of this viewpoint and discuss how the US, China, Russia, Europe, Japan and other countries should and could behave.

c. Is it possible to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth? :

Economic globalization continues to widen economic disparities within individual countries and between developed and developing countries. Concurrently, developed countries are faced with deepening concerns about growth engines, with their populations aging and their growth slow, in combination with more frequent resort to unilateral measures in international trade and unemployment fears as technologies advances. Also, with a rising global population, there are heightening concerns about environmental problems, access to healthcare, and swelling numbers of migrants and refugees. This session will discuss whether it is possible to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth in the face of these difficulties and, if so, what measures should be taken.

d. Digitalizing societies and the international order:

Advances in digital technologies have radically improved convenience across all aspects of society, from state administration and industry to individual lifestyles, and they have already reached an irreversible level. At the same time, however, negative phenomenon such as cyberattacks against various targets, bitter divisions in public opinion due to the proliferation of fake news, interference in the elections of other countries, and national surveillance and data hoarding by authoritarian states have been adversely affecting the international order. This session will consider these elements in the need for the international community to construct common rules compatible with advances in digital technologies.

3. Topics for breakout sessions (featuring panels of Japanese and international experts)

a. Seeking out a new order in the Indo-Pacific Region (BRI and FOIP):

The Indo-Pacific is currently the region garnering the most attention worldwide due to its geopolitical importance and economic potential. China's actions in the South China Sea are already regarded as a challenge to the maritime order, but does this mean that China's BRI constitutes an extensive challenge to the regional order in terms of connectivity (investment, cash flow, communications networks, infrastructure improvements, capacity building, etc.)? In this session, experts from relevant countries within the region will broadly address this question, and its relations with the FOIP (Free and Open Indo-Pacific vision) advocated by Japan, the US and others, in terms of security, economics, finance and development.

b. Developments surrounding the Korean peninsula and steps toward forming a new order:

The historic North-South and US-North Korea summit meetings and other developments since last year had given rise to expectations of an official end to hostilities, a lifting of sanctions, and the conclusion of a peace treaty, but a divergence of views between the US and North Korea over North Korea's denuclearization has brought the process to a halt. The third round of US-North Korea leaders' meeting in Panmunjeom seems to paved the way for the resumption of the talks, but the way forward is unclear. With no clear prospect being spelled out on future plans, experts from the countries involved will discuss the actions that these countries should take to establish a new order for the East Asia region as a whole.

c. Challenges to arms control and the nuclear non-proliferation regimes:

While worsening US-Russia relations and the US' withdrawal from the INF so far offer little hope for bilateral arms control negotiations between the US and Russia, China has also rejected the idea of participating in

arms control talks on intermediate-range nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the US' withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and Iran's reaction as well as the stalemate in the North Korean denuclearization process continue to pose challenges to the entire nuclear non-proliferation regime. This session will discuss the best direction for future efforts in this regard.

d. Challenges to multilateral systems (UN, WTO, IMF, World Bank, G7, G20, etc.):

With a “self-interest first” attitude gaining greater traction among countries, confidence in multilateral systems that have bolstered the post-WWII order in various fields – e.g., politics/security, economics, international trade, and international finance – is wavering. Given the need to maintain and restore the functions of these multilateral systems for the sake of preserving multilateralism, this session will feature experts from various fields discussing specific approaches to accomplishing this end.

e. Actions by key powers in the Middle East and their impact on the international security:

Islamic State's power has substantially diminished, but actions by both the US and Russia pertaining to Iran and Syria as well as the varying motives of players such as Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey are making the situation in the Middle East even more fluid. Experts from the countries involved will discuss the approaches that should be taken to stabilize the Middle East and restore order there.

f. Territorial/maritime issues and challenges to the rule of law:

Attempts are being made in Crimea, the South and the East China Seas and elsewhere to change the status quo by force. This session will feature discussions that examine varying perspectives on the current status and then consider measures to be taken to uphold the principle of the rule of law.