

## **Study Group on “Maritime Security and Safety”**

May 27, 2011

### [Purpose]

This Study Group will examine the role that Asian countries should play in establishing a stable maritime security environment in East Asia and offer recommendations on policies that Japan should adopt.

### [Overview of Research]

It is no exaggeration to state that many of the factors destabilizing the regional order in East Asia derive from maritime issues. One of these is the rapid and opaque modernization of the Chinese navy. It was only just recently that China declared the East China Sea and the South China Sea to be “core interests.” China’s opportunistic behavior in the East China Sea and the South China Sea against the backdrop of this opaque upgrading of its naval capabilities has sparked concern among the region’s countries. At the same time, China’s rise threatens America’s current status as the stabilizer for the regional order. During last July’s meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), US Secretary of State Clinton emphasized that the safety and freedom of navigation in the South China Sea is an American interest, and her criticism of China’s actions highlighted the struggle for maritime supremacy between the US and China. With 80% of Japan’s petroleum imports passing through the Malacca and Singapore Straits, it goes without saying that maritime safety and stability are vital for Japan’s security.

Taking into consideration the aforementioned developments in East Asia’s maritime order over recent years, this Study Group will examine the future of the region’s maritime security order focusing on three points: (1) regional efforts to ensure a stable maritime security order,

- (2) the perspectives and policies of neighboring countries on regional maritime security, and
- (3) Japan's role in regional maritime security.

[Overview of Activities]

The Study Group as a whole meets once every four to six weeks. Study Group meetings feature presentations by specialists and progress reports on Study Group members' research. Through conducting research and interviews and carrying out surveys, Study Group members prepare reports in their respective areas of responsibility, and these research findings are made available to the broader public through symposiums and reports.

Among the specific topics to be addressed are:

- ① Security Environment in East Asia and the regional maritime order
- ② Maritime security in the Indian Ocean
- ③ Capacity building for maritime security in East Asia
- ④ Maritime security and international law
- ⑤ Japan's maritime policies concerning remote border islands

[Study Group Members]

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