

# Peace-Building in Practice: Lessons from the Ground\*

## — Forging Japan’s New Strategy for Peace Building —

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### 1. Introduction

Around the turn of the new century, “failed” or “collapsed” states, or “fragile” states in more general terms, have come to be perceived as a new security threat to the emerging international order. To fix post-conflict and war-ravaged countries, there were calls for more robust international responses and thus more ambitious peace operations were mounted in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions. Nevertheless, dealing with “stateless” nations has proven to be far more difficult and time-consuming than originally assumed. A different approach is required in terms of resources, authority, and strategy. As Francis Fukuyama rightly points out, “While they (peace builders) went into actually governing a failed state, they had at the same time to build their own capacity necessary for nation building<sup>1</sup>.” This is a genuine dilemma, and Japan, as a newcomer in peace-building co-operation compared with the United States and EU countries, is not exempt.

All through the 1980s and 1990s, when its national power soared, Japan aspired to an enhanced international standing and a role commensurate with its growing economic might. At the same time, it tried to meet increasing expectations for “international contributions” to peace cooperation in the face of repeated occurrences of civil strife and humanitarian tragedies across the globe. To that end, Japan endeavored to set in motion several new initiatives for strengthening its policy framework, as well as for effectively responding to appeals for international cooperation.

This paper first reviews the evolving policy framework in Japan for peace-building and

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<sup>1</sup> Francis Fukuyama, “Stateness” First – Building Democracy After Conflict, *Journal of Democracy*, Jan. 2005

critically examines a range of concrete policy measures now in place on the ground. It further throws some light on the so-called human security approach Japan takes, which is reflected in its aid projects and programs for peace-building, and assesses their actual effectiveness. The paper finally concludes with five possible policy responses for consolidating Japan's peace co-operation strategy.

## **2. The Evolving Policy Framework for Peace Building**

There are five policy developments in Japan that have helped lay the foundation for international peace cooperation: the enactment of the so-called PKO Law; the New Policy Guidelines for ODA; the "Human Security" campaign; the diplomatic initiatives for "Consolidation of Peace"; and the recommendations of the Akashi Commission and its ensuing human resources development initiative.

### ***PKO Law***

This was a monumental breakthrough that led Japan into a new role in international peace co-operation. The PKO legislation was only adopted after heated debate in the Diet (Japan's parliament) in 1992. As a result, contingents of the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) and the National Police were dispatched to participate in the peacekeeping operations of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). There were several reasons that Japan was diplomatically motivated at that moment and in that way. The aspiration to assume a more high-profile and "muscular" role stemmed from the humiliating criticism of its contribution of US\$13 billion in support of the Gulf War in 1991. Since then, "Gulf War trauma" has haunted policy makers. In addition, Japan played a major role all through the preceding negotiations to restore peace to Cambodia, so it wished to participate in the succeeding stage of peace consolidation as one of the major guarantors. Moreover, foreign policy elites viewed participation in UN peacekeeping as a step towards obtaining an enhanced international status in line with aspirations to a permanent seat on the UN Security Council and also to restoring national pride.

An important stepping stone towards this breakthrough was the announcement in May 1988 of the "International Cooperation Initiative<sup>2</sup>," or the "Takeshita tripartite principle," named after then Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita. It proposed a new diplomatic initiative in the following three policy areas: cooperation for peace, the enhancing of ODA in both qualitative and quantitative terms, and the promotion of

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<sup>2</sup> See Ryohei Murata, *Murata Ryohei Kaikoroku* (Memoirs), Minerva Shobo. Mr. Murata was the then Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs (1987-89) and took the lead to formulate the initiative.

international cultural exchanges. Although a diplomatic campaign had already been launched to concretize a more assertive diplomatic posture based on these principles, it was aborted when a political scandal forced Takeshita out of office. A recently published memoir of a senior Foreign Ministry official involved in the campaign recalls that, thanks to its residual effects, the Ministry readily garnered support to craft and pass legislation needed for promoting peace co-operation<sup>3</sup>.

### ***New Policy Guidelines for ODA***

Secondly, given the constitutional constraints on Japan's exercise of military power, economic developmental assistance is the cornerstone of its leverage in the developing world. In the early 1990s, Japan became the largest ODA provider in the international aid community. In order to facilitate a more focused and efficient approach to development and to address internal pressures stemming from political scandals in recipient countries, Japan adopted an ODA Charter in 1992. The ODA Charter and the PKO Law became twin pillars in Japan's strategy for "international contributions" that shaped its foreign policy agenda throughout the 1990s. In 2003 the Charter was reviewed, and guidelines were also revised in response to changing circumstances and newly emerging demands. As a result, several new agendas emerged, such as human security, peace-building, and a consolidated developmental method to address the root causes of conflicts.

### ***"Human Security" campaign***

Japan's international effort to promote the notion of "Human Security" as a new security paradigm is one of its significant diplomatic successes. This notion, initially drawn from the 1994 *Human Development Report* by the UNDP, is composed of two functional elements: "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want." It subsequently developed in two directions: while the "primary emphasis is on security in the face of political violence," another approach emphasizes, among other matters, "the interrelatedness of different types of security and the importance of development,"<sup>4</sup> In practice the latter, steadfastly supported by Japan, is a valid approach to deal with the underlying problems of post-conflict peace-building through protection and empowerment. As I elaborate later, some of Japan's aid programs effectively reach out to the human security needs of desperate people who have slipped from under the protective umbrella of their local governments. In contrast, peace-building is in principle a top-down enterprise, usually

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<sup>3</sup> See Hiroshi Hirabayashi, *Shunou-Gaikoryoku*, NHK Press

<sup>4</sup> Mary Kaldor, *Human Security*, Polity

with UN authorization, that is supposed eventually to deliver public goods and services by restoring the broken functions of a central government. It is, however, a long haul before a rebuilding effort reaches that stage. Hence it is prone to stir up frustration and dissatisfaction among impatient people with barely enough to subsist on.

### ***Diplomatic Initiative for “Consolidation of Peace”***

Japan also responded creatively to internationally coordinated efforts in the early 2000s that evolved for crisis management, or “peace operations.” The use of this UN jargon, which could be theoretically traced back to *An Agenda for Peace* (1992), gradually acquired currency and eventually took hold in the so-called *Brahimi Report* of 2000. In fact, it implied a new, integrated approach to peace-making, peacekeeping and (post-conflict) peace-building. Japan was inspired to launch a new diplomatic initiative “of its own brand.” Although Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and East Timor became target countries of this campaign, and a variety of programs were in effect adopted and implemented, what the “consolidation of peace” implies remains unclear. In other words, it is still “half-baked.” Generally speaking, theoretical conceptions risk becoming empty slogans if they cannot be fitted to realities or given concrete shape by specific practices. That said, there are examples of successful peace-building in the field, such as DDR<sup>5</sup> programs in Afghanistan and reconciliation assistance in East Timor, to mention but a couple. In conclusion, Japan continues its “muddle-through” efforts in support of local initiatives; this is an approach that can create good outcomes by meeting the needs of local recipients and people in need, while flexibly contributing to the “consolidation of peace.” These are my considered views based on a combination of work in diplomatic missions and desk duty at headquarters.

### ***Recommendations of the Akashi Commission***

Finally, as mentioned above, Japan suffered diplomatic humiliation despite its colossal financial contributions to the first Gulf War of 1990-91. Consequently, it was agreed that Japan had to pursue a more visible role by demonstrating a high-profile presence or, in other words, by *showing the flag*. To that end, the PKO Law was meant to enable the dispatching of Japanese contingents for overseas missions, both military and civilian, but there were some flaws in its formulations. In addition, the paucity of capable and experienced human resources hindered the realization of intended policy objectives. This was the backdrop to the establishment nearly a decade later of the “Akashi

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<sup>5</sup> DDR is an abbreviation of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

Commission,”<sup>6</sup> set up under the aegis of Prime Minister Koizumi. The commission focused on how to develop and foster human resources to support more robust peace co-operation efforts. It concluded with a set of policy recommendations involving piecemeal responses, such as programs to re-train and foster junior peace builders on a very limited scale. A thorough follow-up has yet to be undertaken.

### **3. Concrete Policy Measures of Peace Building**

#### **(1) The Conceptual Overview of State Functions**

In accordance with Susumu Yamakage’s analytical overview presented in a recently published book<sup>7</sup>, the relations between what are termed respectively peace building and human security are explained in the following formulation. To begin with, the “ideal” modern state was premised on a “social contract” concluded among individuals, a political idea historically rooted in the Age of Enlightenment. Human security or the security of individuals was accordingly viewed as part of the state’s responsibility, otherwise referred to as “national security” in its broader meaning. It comprises, first of all, the protection of territories and citizens from external threats, the maintenance of internal public order and the assurance of individuals’ safety in daily life, and, more recently, protection against economic misery and difficulties by ensuring social welfare and promoting economic prosperity. In other words, these state functions correspond respectively to “national security” narrowly defined, “public (or internal) security,” and “social security” in accordance with Professor Yamakage’s terminology. On the other hand, “human security” has been redefined nowadays as a hybrid of the two conceptions of “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want.” This may be construed, in a post-conflict context, to be an attempt to restore the three above-mentioned clusters of security, or as an effort to restore the attributed “theoretical” state functions on behalf of the citizens. In practical terms this means the realization of peace and the restoration of order; the resuscitation of governing institutions and the rule of law; and the provision of public goods and services such as social welfare and economic prosperity. Moreover, it could be likened to the notion of “state (or institution) building,” an overarching task to address the three “gaps,” namely, of security, capacity and legitimacy in accordance with Stuart Eizenstat and others in their *Foreign Affairs* essay.<sup>8</sup> This formulation is also

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<sup>6</sup> Yasushi Akashi, who chaired the commission composed of a group of experts, is one of Japan’s most prominent international civil servants, whose former posts include Under Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Cambodia (1992-93) and the former Yugoslavia (1994-95).

<sup>7</sup> Tetsuya Takahashi & Susumu Yamakage (ed.), *Human Security*, University of Tokyo Press

<sup>8</sup> Stuart Eizenstat, John Porter, and Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Rebuilding Weak States*, *Foreign Affairs* Jan/Feb 2005; Ashraf Ghani, a former Afghan finance minister, also presents a more general and valid

related to the “weak state” syndrome, as Robert Rotberg pointedly describes in *When States Fail*.

As defined in both *An Agenda for Peace* and the *Brahimi Report*, peace-building is a pivotal segment, together with peace-making and peacekeeping, of international peace operations. Positing that peace-building is a unique but valid policy tool in achieving the security of people in post-conflict societies, I should like to examine a range of policy practices for implementing it. The author has actually witnessed and engaged in these efforts in East Timor, where he was on a tour of duty. In this connection, in order to sketch the processes of exploring, shaping and exerting policies, an analytical account is given of a multitude of episodes pertaining to the subject. These are then assessed with a view to outlining a practical framework of peace-building.

## **(2) Japan’s Political and Diplomatic Initiative in East Timor**

In the late 1990s, and especially at the apex of the 1997-98 “Asian economic and financial crisis,” dark clouds suddenly gathered over Indonesia. The political consequences of the financial crisis, leading to the ouster of President Suharto (1967-1998) from power raised concerns about stability and security, including the nightmarish scenario of “Balkanization.” With this in mind, Japan joined forces with other powers, local and global, in picking out a “stinger stuck in the throat of Indonesia,” that is, the East Timor problem. In 1975, East Timor was invaded by Indonesian military forces and subsequently occupied with devastating consequences for its people. Indeed, Japan has consistently and uninterruptedly assisted this small and fragile country, otherwise regarded as least important in both geo-political and economic terms, from its birth to infancy. I wonder how much time will pass before an adequate volume of both public documents and personal testimonies is released to reveal how hard Japan worked to minimize the crisis, as well as to enable scholars and researchers to rewrite part of the prevailing history. One thing I can cite for sure at this stage is the fact that the political influence and trust Japan had accumulated over the preceding decades in Southeast Asia played a vital role in dealing with East Timor’s problems, as in Cambodia just a decade earlier.

In the wake of the Popular Consultation of September 1999, in which an overwhelming majority of the East Timorese signaled their desire for independence, Japan responded quickly and generously. It actively participated in consultations, both informal and public, with the core group of nations, originally composed of a limited

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formulation and refers to the “sovereignty gap.” See Ashraf Ghani & Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States*, Oxford.

number of major interested powers, namely, the US, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand, in the corridors of the United Nations. It also decided to co-host the first donor-recipient meeting for the rehabilitation and development of East Timor, which was held in Tokyo in December 1999. The range of initiatives Japan has undertaken demonstrates how one of the three slogans of its foreign policy, “Japan’s association with Asia as a natural franchise,” fits well in diplomatic practice.

At this time some members of ASEAN sought to dispatch peacekeeping troops for the first time<sup>9</sup>. There were, however, political sensitivities with regard to non-interference in internal affairs, a founding principle of ASEAN, which was strongly espoused by the member countries and Indonesia in particular. On the other hand, Australia, though prepared and ready for humanitarian intervention, was cautious about taking unilateral action. It was against this backdrop of humanitarian urgency and diplomatic complications that Japan decided to launch “quiet diplomacy.” That is, Japan tried to prevail on Indonesia, in a friendly manner and with patience, to accept prompt reception of international peacekeepers. It also announced its readiness to give financial support, to the tune of US\$100 million, to facilitate the smooth deployment of ASEAN troops. As a result, upon adoption of the relevant Security Council resolution, INTERFET multilateral forces, already planned for deployment, promptly took action and quelled the appalling violence with far fewer casualties than other comparable humanitarian crises. The success of the humanitarian intervention subsequently expanded to UNTAET, a unique form of transitional administration of territories under UN authorization.

For its part, Japan manned UNAMET and UNTAET, in volatile conditions, with civilian personnel on a very limited scale. It sent to UNMISSET, a succeeding mission after independence, its largest ever peacekeeping contingent of 2,700 troops for the following two years. Strong interest grew in Japanese political circles in support of robust diplomatic initiatives for imminent crises in Asia. At the same time, the general public in Japan became concerned and sympathetic to the humanitarian plight of East Timor, and added its support. In other words, the East Timor problem became a politically prioritized agenda item that gathered momentum, however temporarily, and that led to the laying down of a more extensive approach to assistance. This experience had significant implications for the formulation of future policy alternatives. Essentially policy makers learned from the emergency response how to overcome existing legal and political constraints, that is, how the enactment of ad hoc legislative measures could

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<sup>9</sup> See the address of Dr. Surin Pitsuwan at the JIA Forum, held on Dec 13, 2007. He is Director General of the ASEAN Secretariat from 2009 and was the Foreign Minister of Thailand at the time of Asian financial crisis.

create space for more activism within the constitutional framework. Although the utmost effort was made in the case of East Timor, it stopped short of such “sweat and toil” levels as were later seen in Afghanistan and Iraq. In these latter two cases, clearly the dictates of the Japan-US alliance played a key role in shaping Japan’s response. Several influential critics assert that the intervention in East Timor highlights the inherent problems of translating “U.N.-centered multilateral diplomacy” into more concrete form. For Japan, its response to East Timor may reflect above all its emphasis on being “A Member of Asia” and “Affiliation with other Industrialized Democracies.”

### **(3) Restoring Peace and Establishing Public Order**

#### **Emergency Humanitarian Assistance and Rehabilitation**

Particularly striking in today’s recurrent civil strife is the overwhelming proportion of non-military and civilian casualties composed of the socially most vulnerable (including women and children). Moreover, as one bleak report notes, a majority of the victims are people susceptible to diseases, malnutrition, and starvation as they flee the fighting. This highlights the urgent character of humanitarian emergency tasks now confronting us all.

Generally speaking, emergency aid activity for humanitarian purposes in the early post-conflict stage is familiar to a large number of Japanese citizens. One of the developments worth noting in this area, which happened in East Timor, is the use of airborne transport operations carried out by the Air Self-Defense Force. These relief operations were primarily aimed at delivery of food, water, shelter, medicine and other necessities of life to East Timorese refugees fleeing into West Timor (the Indonesian province of Nustenggara Timor). It is now reported that serious deficiencies in transport capacity in the field hamper significantly the smooth deployment of the “hybrid” UN-AU peace operation now operating in Darfur. Insufficient transport capacity could impede further peace operations, especially if regional organizations in the developing world such as the African Union (AU) come to play a more active role in their regions by offering their troops.

Paul Collier, author of *The Bottom Billion*, estimates that “all in all, a typical civil war annually costs the warring country and its neighbors around \$64 billion.” In addition, he speculates that “The overall cost of burdens imposed on neighbors can easily exceed that of the warring country itself.” To my regret, it was not until I went on a field trip to the border region that I fully recognized how much Japan’s \$5.4 million emergency aid and rehabilitation package to West Timor had done on behalf of the refugees and local communities. I saw for myself that “cross-border” problems heavily affecting

neighboring countries should be kept in mind when gauging the real magnitude of a conflict and responding to it.

Another consequence of civil strife in East Timor is the large number of internally displaced persons (IDP) resulting from long-standing land disputes, especially in the capital city of Dili. These are the result of the country's turbulent history; in a quarter of a century it has undergone three major changes in statehood. As a result, the legal system of the country was left utterly dysfunctional. Adding to the frustrations felt by the population is the existence of "spoilers," who intend to exploit the fragile peace process by re-kindling the complaints and unease of those dissatisfied with scarcely improved daily living conditions.

### **Peacekeeping Operations**

It should be noted that the participation of Japan's peacekeeping contingent, or Japan Engineer Group (JEG), and its substantive other contributions were instrumental to the success of the expansive mission of UNMISET. At the same time, a variety of logistical support and back-up services, which JEG offered not only to other peacekeeping troops but also to the local population, helped to enhance Japan's prestige and presence. In his testimony at a special hearing of the Security Committee of the House of Representatives of the Diet (Japan's Parliament), Kamalesh Sharma, then-SRSG of UNMISET, praised JEG's contributions. He also made an unusual reference to the same effect in his interim report at the mid-term session of the United Nations Security Council, held in autumn 2003. As the foregoing statements clearly demonstrate, JEG has lived up remarkably well to expectations. The author observed firsthand the role and the usefulness of well-mechanized and trained engineering contingents such as JEG. This experience led to my firm conviction that more active use of such capacities should be pursued in Japan's future peace cooperation strategy.

Crucial among the peacekeeping activities in the field is a genre of military activity termed "civil-military affairs." This entails fostering public relations with the local communities where UN troops are deployed. JEG was involved in this, and the lessons it learned in East Timor were later applied in Samawah, a southern province of Iraq, where several contingents of the Ground Self-Defense Force were engaged in humanitarian and reconstruction activities for the war-torn local communities. There has, of course, been a shift from more conventional to "new" or irregular warfare (see, for instance, the discussion in Mary Kaldor's *New and Old Wars*) that has led to more attention being focused on civil-military affairs, the main objective of which is "to win the hearts and minds" of the local populace.

With regard to DDR, another pressing issue in the post-conflict context, East Timor was heavily preoccupied with issues relating to reintegration. Japan responded to the country's need with extended financial assistance, specifically of US\$4 million to the RESPECT<sup>10</sup> program administered by the UNDP. The program was composed of several sub-programs, ranging from temporary employment for ex-soldiers and financial subsidies for business promotion to vocational training and other self-support undertakings. However, due to a host of pervasive obstacles that impeded smooth planning and implementation, Japan's good intentions did not translate into prompt solutions.

### **Judicial and Police Reform and the Establishment of the Rule of Law**

It is quite appropriate that high priority was given to the establishment of a judicial system (hitherto virtually non-existent) and police forces to restore order in a nation wracked by internal violence. Theoretically speaking, where there are no external threats, the armed forces might seem unnecessary to the reconstruction of government institutions. In the case of East Timor, there was support for the Costa Rican model of non-armament, but in the end the national military force, F-FDTL<sup>11</sup>, was created despite concerns about its role and legitimacy. Also police recruitment raised different issues concerning the possible involvement of those who were associated in the past with Indonesian colonial rule. As a result, these complex developments sowed the seeds of potential conflict and later triggered bloody clashes between these armed forces. UNMIT, the most recent UN mission in East Timor, clearly underlines in its mandate the importance of the government's own initiative "to review the roles and reasons for armed institutions, such as F-FDTL, the Ministry of Defense, PNTL<sup>12</sup> and the Interior Ministry."

Among the major programs of state institution-building, the reconstruction of a national police system, entrusted with not only the education and training of local police personnel but also daily patrolling and the maintenance of public order, was commissioned by the UN police contingent, or UNPOL. Unfortunately, due to the domestic political fallout from the killing of a Japanese police officer in Cambodia during UNTAC, there were significant constraints on the participation of Japanese police personnel in nurturing East Timor's police force. In practice this meant that Japan

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<sup>10</sup> The Recovery, Employment and Stability Program for Ex-combatants and Communities in Timor-Leste

<sup>11</sup> F-FDTL is an abbreviation of Falintil-Federal Defense of Timor-Leste. As the capital F capping FDTL implies, the newly born national army was an offspring of Falintil, the armed wing of Fretilin, a dominant underground political movement for independence under Indonesian rule.

<sup>12</sup> PNTL is shortened from Police Nationale Timor-Leste

could not adequately support UNPOL's initiatives. This raises, in my view, a more fundamental question: whether or not Japan recognizes that the maintenance of peace and stability overseas involves a lot of risks, many of them worth taking if we seek to translate our principles into concrete results. Clearly, wisdom, flexibility, as well as openness to practical hints are essential to international peace cooperation on the ground.

#### **(4) Building on the Foundation of Political Stability “Transitional Justice” and National Reconciliation**

It is imperative that those who once fought each other seek to overcome a past tainted with blood and hatred if they wish to live peacefully together. This process can be assisted by “transitional justice.” This involves relying on the judicial process to seek legal justice and accountability while creating a consensus on the truth of what happened so as to create a compelling basis for national reconciliation.

In East Timor, a mixture of the two approaches was used. Reconciliation was furthered through the establishment of the Reception, Truth and Reconciliation Committee, abbreviated as CAVR in Portuguese. Its terms of reference charged it with focusing on less serious crimes. A feature of East Timor's reconciliation mechanism is the adoption of customary norms and age-old practices of conflict solution<sup>13</sup> that fit the socio-political culture of local communities. However, the formal judicial process launched to prosecute serious crimes under UN auspices eventually stalled in the face of the stern realities of international politics facing East Timor. As a result, at the request of the government of Timor-Leste, the focus of transitional justice shifted away from the pursuit of legal justice to the realization of “justice through truth-finding.” This led to the establishment of the Commission of Truth and Friendship (CTF) between East Timor and Indonesia. The CTF was strongly criticized by human rights groups, both local and international, and church authorities. They warned the CTF not to grant or recommend immunity for perpetrators, arguing that without justice there can be no reconciliation. No matter how legitimate this effort was, it seems unfair to blame the government of such a feeble and small nation for placing amity before truth and justice because it lacks staunch political support from the international community. Given this situation, there is no other way realistically but to choose order before justice.

Japan's financial assistance (\$1 million) for the reconciliation program of the CAVR is the first of its kind. Japan's unswerving support, both political and financial, was

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<sup>13</sup> For these “capacities for peace,” see Mary Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace or War*, Lynne Rienner

accorded due credit and far surpassed that of other donors. This could provide a model for “peace consolidation,” one of Japan’s new policy slogans. Once again, however, Japan was found wanting at the level of human resources. Only one Japanese regional specialist was engaged in the research section of the CAVR, in the daunting task of collecting and sorting the documents necessary for smooth reconciliation dialogues. It was also regrettable that no Japanese were involved in the psychiatric counseling of victims of violence.

### **Electoral and Democracy Promotion Assistance**

The holding of free, fair, and competitive elections to address the “legitimacy gap” of a transitional administration is as important a measure of peace building as the reconstruction of broken state institutions. Both of these policy objectives are intended not only to facilitate unity and to increase essential cohesiveness among warring parties, but also to bring eventual peace and stability. This is the Wilsonian (or democratic) approach to state building. The real problem with democracy promotion, however, is the absence of any established method to ensure “sustainable peace” -- except for a few historical precedents, such as those of Japan and West Germany. Accordingly, as peace-building specialists invariably maintain, “no one size fits all.” Some critics of the Wilsonian approach argue that democracy promotion, if not implemented properly, might not only cause social destabilization and aggravate political divisions, but also could rekindle conflicts. They assert that elections should not be held prematurely if preconditions have not been met, or if the countries in question lack a democratic tradition. In post-conflict situations, especially *stateless* countries (“failed or collapsed states”), democracy promotion can undermine the primary objective of peace-building. As opposed to the latter, which intends to increase the strength of a state or establish a monopoly of legitimate power (*stateness*), the former struggles to limit the power and reach of government and to hold elected rulers accountable for respecting the rights of the ruled. As Francis Fukuyama argues, this is the paradox of democracy in peace-building.

In East Timor, several attempts at holding elections were undertaken to address the “legitimacy shortfalls” created by the UN-administered peace operation since its inception. To begin with, a so-called Popular Consultation was carried out under the auspices of UNAMET in August 1999. This was followed by the constitutional election of 2001 and the presidential election of 2002 under the control of UNTAET. In 2007 two national elections, presidential and parliamentary, were held for the first time since independence. Although popular consultation was rendered chaotic due to bloodshed,

the rampage of local militias, and external forces, the other democratic initiatives helped facilitate a national process of reconciliation and integration. The democratic elections are therefore said to have successfully worked to promote peace-building in East Timor.

In April 2007, the author visited East Timor as the head of an election observation team, authorized in accordance with the PKO law by the Japanese government, to participate in monitoring the first round of the presidential election. During this stay I tried to persuade some old friends in political circles how important compliance with the rule of law and respect for democratic values was at a time of peace- and nation-building. They listened quietly and apparently they took note of this message. Subsequently, Foreign Minister Taro Aso delivered a message about the necessity of fair and just elections in a telephone conversation with the head of state, President Xanana Gusmao. The same message was conveyed again in a diplomatic demarche of the ambassadors of Japan, the United States, Australia and Portugal in Dili. Another initiative was a team of monitors carefully selected from a variety of walks of life, in other words, not only governmental officials and academics but also representatives from the private sector. Special emphasis was given to both the professionalism and experience of would-be team members so as to ensure the effectiveness of monitoring activity on the ground, and to sensitize the general public to the mission's purpose. Overall, the presidential elections proceeded smoothly without violence, intimidation or fraud, a result that is gratifying and reflects the strong support of the international community.

## **(5) Meeting Challenges for Increasing Social Security**

### **Economic Reconstruction and Development**

The author is firmly of the view that the core element of peace-building is *development*. This conviction was strengthened by fieldwork in East Timor, where peace-building was in full swing. He also discovered that Japan has many developmental aid tools and methods well-suited for its policy objectives and the goals of peace-building. These are the focus of the following pages, together with five suggestions for policy improvement.

First, for better or worse, bilateralism is a salient characteristic of Japan's peace-building strategy involving economic reconstruction and development assistance intertwined with another track of security and political efforts. Peace-building moves forward on these two operationally separated, though inherently inseparable, tracks.<sup>14</sup> The problem arises from operational constraints on policy implementation. Generally

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<sup>14</sup> Robert Zoellick, *Fragile States: Securing Development*, address at the Plenary of the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), held on September 13, 2008, at Geneva, Switzerland; Marla Haims, David Gompert, Gregory Treverton, and Brooke Stearns, *Breaking the Failed-State Cycle*, Rand

speaking, the economic and development process is affected by “supply-driven” rather than “demand-driven” forces, especially at the early post-conflict stage. This is in part due to the absence or weakness of local ownership and capacity on the recipient side. This phenomenon is prevalent in the aid community among such actors as donor countries, international development agencies, NGOs and recipient partners. Abetting the foregoing are the aid coordination efforts, sometimes clumsily facilitated by the World Bank, that tend to be ad hoc and practical in nature. This is also the case with East Timor.

Secondly, several bitter lessons have to be learnt from the unsatisfactory outcomes in technical transfer co-operation, the main causes of which were miscalculated organizational arrangements and self-righteous political decisions. In this connection, in order to imagine what the actual peace building process was like, it is advisable to envisage and compare the workings of foreign advisers and consultants in the Meiji era (1868-1912)<sup>15</sup>, who were employed on a contract basis to aid in nation-building for a modern Japan. They were truly instrumental in promoting modernization and transferring technology in the wake of Japan’s opening to the world. In East Timor, too, the development of governmental institutions relied on the guidance and counsel provided to local officials by international consultants. Working closely with their local counterparts, the latter lent their support not only to day-to-day administrative routine but also to on-the-job-training to impart with great patience hands-on knowledge and techniques. The shortage of Japanese specialists hampered Japan’s extensive cooperation. Follow-ups are very much needed for remedies and improvements.

Thirdly, as opposed to the foregoing, Japan is highly regarded for its expertise and track record in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of basic infrastructure facilities. This was on show in a small town at the completion ceremony of a water supply system funded by the Japanese government. A UNDP field officer who also attended the ceremony stepped forward and said to the author, “Hey! This is really needed. Since enough attention is not paid, things tend to worsen everywhere immediately after the PKO leaves.” This episode indicates one of the real causes as to why peace building fails – not enough development. In practice, a road rehabilitation project is implemented on a large scale to multiply economic “spillover” effects on an ongoing basis, including jobs, transfer of basic know-how on road maintenance and community relationships that benefit a wide range of rural populations and communities. Such infrastructure projects drew criticism from development specialists, but now their contributions are garnering

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<sup>15</sup> In order to expedite the realization of “strong army, wealthy state” policy adopted by the Meiji government, over 2,300 foreigners were said to be employed.

more praise. Under the leadership of Robert Zoellick, the new president of the World Bank, its conventional strategy of relying heavily on social welfare programs has been reassessed. In a press interview in August 2007, when he first visited Tokyo as the new president, Mr. Zoellick humbly advised Japan to re-value the importance of the infrastructure-oriented assistance that it does so well. Judging from the remarkable growth of the developing world, including even Africa, during the 1990s, the growth strategy Paul Collier subscribes to in a bid to reduce global poverty by connecting developing countries to the dynamic of market forces has apparently been vindicated.

Fourthly, Japan achieved greater international visibility in East Timor through the successful implementation of the said project. The presence of Japanese business people as project developers and managers had a strong impact on the local residents, who were both beneficiaries of the project and its employees or end users. It is one thing to underline the theoretical importance of “quick impact projects” on paper at the planning stage. It is quite another, however, to retain contractors who act with courage and strong commitment, and who are willing to embark on a construction plan in precarious conditions. In fact, it is a recurring dilemma for peace-building efforts that these attempts in post-conflict situations are not free of security risks.

Finally, Japan was able to put its principles of “south-south co-operation” into practice in East Timor. This is a unique scheme to encourage the more advanced developing countries to become development partners in multilateral cooperation to benefit less developing nations. This is an optimal model of assistance well-suited to the developmental needs of the recipients. Japan, in its diplomatic commitment to stand by ASEAN countries, worked together with several of them in implementing this concept. It funded bilateral programs of technical cooperation directed toward East Timor, such as an English language education program by the Philippines and an administrative training program of young government officials by Malaysia. Japan can be proud of its humble but meaningful achievements in this field because both the ASEAN countries concerned and East Timor, the recipient of the programs, appreciated Japan's support. Some of the other ASEAN countries and Brazil also showed strong interest in this development initiative.

### **NGOs and Civil Society**

Although not numerous, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and volunteer members of civil society have been an integral part, from the very beginning, of Japan's overall peace-building strategy for newly independent nations. In fact, they acted with such courage and enthusiasm that they played a substantial role in emergency

humanitarian relief operations. However, four years after the peak of emergency operations, I noticed a marked shift in the mode and scope of NGO activities from “emergency response and humanitarian relief” to “long-term residential and indigenous capacity building.” This reflects a welcome evolution, and accordingly a pleasant change in local needs. Some Japanese NGOs and volunteer groups have uninterruptedly engaged in far-reaching programs to build on and increase local capacity. For instance, there are many initiatives involving development of agricultural skills, community empowerment and partnership, supply of limited medical services and health counseling, and support of micro-credit financing. Those dedicated Japanese have persevered in the field, but all have confronted serious financial problems because some of the requirements for government funding approval are unrealistic and inflexible in light of applicants’ needs and the complexities of local communities.

Bluntly stated, the members of NGOs and civil society cannot match either central or local governments in terms of their capacity to deliver public services and goods. They can, however, often complement and take the place of the latter on behalf of those citizens whose human security is in imminent danger when governments collapse or cease to exist, or when citizens are stripped of protection by the government. NGOs have valuable advantages in contrast with government services in serving needy niches. One of the real strengths of NGOs and civil society lies in “differentiation,” that is, they can discriminatingly supply their services and goods to meet specific public purposes. Even though their activities are limited in scope, NGOs and volunteers can amplify the power of civil society as a whole. When these efforts satisfy the customized needs of local communities, they meet with success. This means, in other words, they find “where to settle down and set to work.” There is a great scope of activity available to Japanese volunteers in East Timor not only because the government is weak but also because it is so physically divided, socially fragmented and culturally diverse.

Japan’s senior volunteer activities involving the work of retired professionals is also worthy of note. After retirement from the Ground Self-Defense Force, a group of ex-military engineers founded a NGO. They assumed JEG’s half-finished task of technical training and capacity building for the maintenance of trunk roads, a life-line of the feeble nation. Now that Japan has become a “graying society,” there are a growing number of senior citizens willing to donate their specialist skills to post-conflict nation-building tasks. They can become a new force in Japan’s peace mission, and to this end a “participatory and cyclical” mechanism of recruitment has the potential to lessen the acute problems of insufficient human resources. They should be included in new strategy formulations aimed at strengthening Japan’s role in international peace

co-operation in decades to come.

### **Cultural and Sports Activities**

Unfortunately, due to my personal bias, insufficient attention has been paid to the roles culture and sports can play as constructive tools and means for promoting peace building. Given some of the components woven into the peace building menu for East Timor, a cultural program to assist in restoring and promoting the traditional identities of indigenous communities can be an important policy measure. Formulating a Japanese-funded research program for collecting, preserving local dialects and compiling a grammar of the Tetun language, for example, was much appreciated. In addition, programs such as the reconstruction of communities through cultural activities should also be accorded priority in terms of usefulness and efficacy in peace-building.

In retrospect, it is encouraging to note that there were a number of unique ideas and programs put into practice by Japanese NGOs and volunteers who acted with imagination in the process of peace-building. Among these was a psychotherapeutic approach to mental soothing for those schoolchildren and infants who had suffered traumatic mental anguish from the violence they had witnessed. Also important were attempts by one Japanese local municipality to promote pictorial education and youth exchanges for lower-grade schoolchildren through drawing exhibitions. There is one underlying target common to these different attempts: promoting reconciliation at the community and individual levels. In this connection, one more striking episode is the unexpected impact that the author witnessed when a Japanese finger language team, the theatre troupe “Kazenoko,” visited Dili and gave a performance before a local audience.<sup>16</sup> Their show used the creative shapes of combined fingers. It was perceived as a method to help develop mental capability, to foster sound emotional feelings and to stimulate imagination and intellectual joy. Afterwards, the author was surprised by the positive reactions and delighted to hear from some international observers that this simple, freer approach, aimed at youth, is both novel and suited to destitute circumstances.

Vagrant unemployed youngsters also pose a problem in Dili’s streets. As with the Intifada of Gaza and the West Bank of Palestine, these youths are perceived as a potential source of destabilization and unrest in East Timor; they did in fact go on a rampage in Dili in May 2006. As for policy alternatives, apart from social reintegration, a high priority has to be given to basic measures such as job creation, employment, and vocational training and education. At the same time it is desirable to promote soccer and

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<sup>16</sup> See The Roles of Cultural Initiatives in Peacebuilding, *The Japan Foundation*, Feb 2008

other sports among youngsters. In this regard, Japan's traditional martial arts such as judo may help foster spiritual well-being and discipline, as well as offer a healthy pastime for youth tempted by vandalism and crime.

#### **4. “Human Security” Approach and Consolidated Measures**

As noted, ingrained in the Japanese aid method of peace-building is a “human security” approach. Numerous policy responses have been formulated and implemented with a view to extending helping hands to needy people left beyond the reach of their governments or exposed to imminent threats. To be more specific, there are programs that are put into practice with funding from “human security grassroots assistance in grant,” a similar funding scheme at JICA (Japan's semi-independent government aid agency), and the “United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security.” In the mid-term report of the current Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) Program, two aid projects are identified and listed as exemplary cases of human security practice. They are respectively the community-participation water supply project in Senegal and the HIV/AIDS prevention program in Cambodia. For successful implementation, a totally new approach diametrically opposite to the conventional mode of assistance based on “yousei-shugi” (“request principle”) is required. It involves working together with a wider range of aid actors such as international development agencies and both international and Japanese NGOs. Moreover, there should also be new normative guidelines to decentralize and delegate more authority to field-operators and, as a result, to consolidate the bottom-up orientation of project identification, project formulation and decision-making. Here the input of NGOs and civil society can play a critical role.

Finally, the author should like to point out, based on his experience in the field, five possible policy suggestions aiming at enhancing Japan's contributions to peace-building.

*The strengthening of headquarters functions as a focal point of coordination:* As noted, peace-building involves drawing on a variety of forces -- political, legal, economic, cultural and public relations – and the key to success lies in the combination and coordination of these dimensions of power. Therefore further study is required to seek a more balanced and better combination of policy alternatives without heavily or solely leaning on ODA. At the same time, however, I am rather cautious about an institutional “solution” that seeks to create a new set-up aimed at comprehensive and flexible policy coordination.

*A combination of bringing in young talent and of re-activating able and qualified retirees:* The pressing need for Japan is to improve its contributions to peace operations

by overcoming human resource constraints. I note that steady efforts have already been made to realize the recommendations of the Akashi Commission for international cooperation. Clearly, there is a need to provide opportunities for basic training and field experience to younger recruits while also devising a participatory or revolving system of recruits, especially those retirees equipped with relevant professional skills from both the public sector and the non-governmental/private sector.

*Review of present development policy and more flexible application:* Contrary to development policy that presupposes the existence of peace and stable circumstances, peace-building naturally requires quite different political terrains, assumptions and aid conditions to implement and effectively mobilize resources. Flexible, swift and adroit responses in volatile situations are intended to ensure success. To facilitate the above, either a review or re-tailoring of the present system and operational rules of developmental assistance is crucial.

*Multi-dimensional utilization of the Self-Defense Forces:* It should be noted that, to maximize aid effect, it is strategically appropriate to develop as many policy prospects for peace-building as possible. The core of Japan's peace building co-operation, however, should rest on the flexible use of the multi-functional capabilities of the Self-Defense Forces under the present constitutional framework. Their careful deployment would help erase perceptions that Japan evades risks that are faced by other countries. Bearing this in mind, new life should be given to policy debate on whether new permanent, rather than ad hoc, legislation, is necessary for Japan to embark on more active internationalism.

*The strengthening of political and diplomatic initiatives:* Peace-building is not an isolated element but instead a crucial part of the whole peace operation, together with peace-making and peacekeeping. Accordingly, when we work on policy options for peace-building assistance, neither political and diplomatic measures of prevention and mediation in the early stages nor post-conflict measures should be precluded. Japan can play an important role, and make more meaningful contributions to peace building, through these measures.