

December 12, 2019, WP136E

Japan should not normalize the overseas deployment of Self-Defense Forces
-Japan should realize the danger making the intention, for exertion of
the collective right to self-defense, an accomplished fact
and rather should develop a proactive non-military peace-building initiative. -

Committee of Seven to Appeal for World Peace

Kinhide Mushakoji, Yoshino Oishi, Michiji Konuma, Satoru Ikeuchi,
Shin-ichiro Ikebe, Kaoru Takamura and Susumu Shimazono

The deployment of a Self-Defense-Forces Fleet and a patrol plane in the Middle East is reported to be decided shortly by the Japanese Cabinet Meeting. This plan was made public on 18 October 2019 by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe gave instruction to the National Security Council to investigate this plan and Japan will not join the coalition of the willing, Naval Security Initiative, encircling Iran proposed by the United States in June 2019. In its place Premier Abe decided to authorize the Middle East Deployment of the Japanese Self Defense Forces for "Survey and Research" by the sole decision of the Minister of Defense without consultation with the Diet and the Cabinet.

It was said that this deployment would not cover the Holmes Strait where the U.S-Iran tension is focused, and hence there was no danger of being involved in military conflicts. The Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga declared that there was no security problem for the Japanese Fleet and Japan pays due respect to Iran which is a friendly nation. But the close cooperation with the United States in the Middle East is firmly confirmed.

The present US-Iran conflict began in late May 2019 with the U.S. total ban of Iranian petrol. In June, a Japanese oil tanker was attacked by an unknown party, and in September Saudi Arabian petrol extraction institution was attacked also by an

unidentified party. Thus, the tension in the Middle East was intensified and in November the above-mentioned Naval Security Coalition of Willing began its activities only by Seven countries.

The necessity to deploy a Self-Defense Forces Fleet and a Patrol Aircraft for “Survey and Research” was not explained to the citizens of Japan and was decided by the cabinet with only the agreement by the LDP and New Komeito composing the government. The Government explained that the area of deployment and its objective will be adapted to the circumstances, and restriction of its use of weapons can be loosened. Under this lack of precision, this is the beginning of a de-facto deployment which will endlessly expand.

Such an overseas deployment of the Self Defense Forces by Japan is not an activity that this country, which should not have military forces except a minimal Self-Defense Force by the Japanese Constitution, should initiate. Japan should rather lead a worldwide effort to transform the present military international tension in the Middle East, decreasing all trends of insecurity in this region, and contribute diplomatically through humanitarian cooperation to peace and security.

Contact: Michiji Konuma Prof.
mkonuma@keio.jp
Secretary General,

The Committee of Seven to Appeal for World Peace