

Testimony of Richard P. Lawless
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- Thank you Chairman Murkowski and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the United States' alliance relationship with Japan. It is an honor to be here today.
- It goes without saying that the security relationship between the U.S. and Japan remains a vital interest for both of our countries and for the Asia-Pacific region. That relationship has provided the foundation for the peace and stability that have enabled the prosperity we see throughout the Asia-Pacific region today. It will continue to serve that role for the foreseeable future.
- Yet amidst all the crises that grab the headlines on a daily basis and that place many demands on the time of members of your committee and the time of those of us in government appearing before you today, it is so easy to lose sight of our nation's critical need to nurture such a key relationship continuously.
- That nurturing process requires us to ensure that relationships like the one between the U.S. and Japan stay ahead of the ever-increasing pace of change in the world around us. So I am especially appreciative that your committee has set aside time here today to take a look at the security relationship between the U.S. and Japan and to consider the course we are on.
- The U.S. and Japan set that course nearly three years ago, at the December 2002 "2 + 2" meeting between the U.S. Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense and their Japanese counterparts.

- At that 2 + 2 meeting, the U.S. and Japan launched a bilateral review of our respective defense and national security policies in light of the changing security environment. This review would include examination of bilateral roles and missions, forces and force structures, cooperation in regional and global challenges, participation in international peacekeeping and other multinational efforts, cooperation in missile defense, and resolution of issues related to U.S. basing in Japan.
- More specifically, we set out to do five distinct things on the basis of that meeting:
 - First, we wanted to conduct a bilateral assessment of strategy and threats. In that process, we would consider the international environment, the interests the U.S. and Japan each have, the challenges we each face, and our strategies for dealing with those challenges.
 - This work was reflected in the Common Strategic Objectives that the two countries issued at the 2 + 2 meeting in February 2005.
 - In that document, the U.S. and Japan clearly articulated key bilateral, regional and global interests that we share, as well as the common objectives we hope to achieve relative to those interests.
 - The second task we set for ourselves three years ago was to conduct an assessment of the different roles and missions the U.S. and Japan should each undertake to achieve our common strategic objectives.
 - Third, we launched an assessment of our respective force structures to help us determine what changes in force structure might be required to support our respective roles and missions.
 - Fourth, we began an examination of the basing structure of both U.S. and Japanese forces in and around Japan.

- This includes the changes that the U.S. is considering in its basing in Japan in connection with DOD's Global Posture Review.
- It also includes consideration of related realignments in the posture of Japan's Self-Defense Forces and an assessment of U.S. and Japanese abilities to conduct the training and exercises both U.S. and Japanese forces need in order to maintain their preparedness for their respective roles and missions.
- Fifth and finally, we began an examination of force presence issues and the things that could be done to ensure continuing support for stationing of U.S. forces in Japan.
 - This would necessarily focus on measures to ensure that both U.S. and Japanese citizens see the continuing benefit in the U.S. forward presence in Japan.
- From our perspective in the Department of Defense, this five-part process is larger than mere posture realignment. In short, we are working with Japan to transform our alliance, taking into account both the changes in the international security environment and the changes taking place in Japanese attitudes toward security issues.
- I think this committee is quite aware of the evolution taking place in Japanese security policy, but let me cite a few examples. Since 1999, Japan has:
 - Initiated research cooperation with the U.S. in missile defense;
 - Sent forces to the UN reconstruction mission in East Timor;
 - Enacted legislation enabling the dispatch of forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and provided at-sea refueling support, at no cost, to ten nations' fleets under that law;

- Passed legislation enabling the dispatch of forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and maintained forces in Iraq and Kuwait on reconstruction missions under that law;
 - Passed legislation strengthening its central government's authorities in emergency situations, including the authorities related to support of U.S. forces in contingencies;
 - Launched a program to acquire ballistic missile defenses;
 - Announced a relaxation of arms export policies to enable collaboration with the U.S. in development and production of missile defenses; and
 - Issued a new National Defense Program Guidelines document that recognizes the link between international stability and Japan's national security, and from that perspective the important role of the Self-Defense Forces' participation in international missions.
- Now, I would agree that, measured against the yardstick of Japanese security policy for the past sixty years, these developments are very significant. The U.S. welcomes these changes as do most countries around the world.
 - But measured against Japan's capabilities to contribute to international security, and measured against Japan's global interests and the benefits Japan derives from peace and stability around the world, these changes remain quite modest.
 - So it is in this context that the U.S. and Japan must consider how to realign U.S. forces and Japanese forces.
 - We can both see the trend in Japanese security policy toward a more active role in international security affairs. It is a welcome trend.
 - But we can also see that this trend will take considerable time to reach fruition.

- As a result, the U.S. posture realignments must address immediate needs as we see them today and simultaneously anticipate changes taking place within Japan that will make it possible for the Self-Defense Forces to do more tomorrow.
- If we under-anticipate those changes, we may end up with more U.S. capability left in Japan than we need, causing unnecessary irritants in local relations. If we over-anticipate those changes, we may eliminate critical alliance capabilities.
- That is why realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, more than in any other country, is fundamentally dependent on decisions the host country is making about its own security future.
- For realignment is not simply about reducing the size of our presence, or figuring out a workable solution for a replacement facility for the Marine Corps Air Station at Futenma, or realigning command and control functions, or expanding operational cooperation in mission areas like missile defense or intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.
- It's about all these things and more.
- In short, it is fundamentally about transforming the alliance to ensure that it remains capable of achieving the Common Strategic Objectives the U.S. and Japan have established. And it is about ensuring that the alliance remains capable in the 21st century of continuing to fulfill its historic role as the foundation of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region.
- I believe that both the U.S. and Japan recognize this opportunity and want to seize it. But we nonetheless face all the usual obstacles that keep governments and bureaucracies from transforming, even when everyone knows it's the right thing to do.

- So the question both our countries face is whether we can overcome those obstacles and do the right thing. I am optimistic that we can, and I am hopeful that we can do it this year.
- Thank you again for this opportunity to discuss the U.S. alliance relationship with Japan before this committee. I would be happy to answer your questions.