

Japan's Contributions to International Peace : @PKO Now!

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3 areas and 2 types of Japan's Contributions to International Peace

This year marks 20 years since Japan's enactment of the Act on Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations, or the International Peace Cooperation Law, and its first participation in UN peacekeeping operations in 1992. In the last two decades, Japan has contributed to international peace in accordance with the Five Principles¹ under this International Peace Cooperation Law.

Japan's contributions to international peace consists of three pillars; participation in UN peacekeeping operations, international humanitarian relief operations, and international election observation operations². These three areas are the realm of Japan's contribution to international peace defined by the International Peace Cooperation Law. The first contribution immediately after an enactment of the law in 1992 was to Angola and Cambodia.

The most active area is the participation in UN peacekeeping. As of April 2012, Japan is deploying peacekeepers on the ground in four missions; UNDOF (Syria), MINUSTAH (Haiti), UNMIT (Timor-Leste), and UNMISS (South Sudan).

The contribution to international humanitarian relief is to benefit refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). In most cases, this type of contribution includes air support for

transport relief supplies. In Rwanda in 1994, Japan provided medical, water supply, quarantine, and further assistance to refugees, by air transport, through international humanitarian agencies³.

Japan's contribution also extends to international observation on elections and referendums in post-conflict states. It is called international election observation operations. Recently, Japan dispatched 15 civilian observers to the referendum on the secession of Southern Sudan in 2011. The observation mission consists of experts and members of NGO as well as government officials.

Japan's contribution to international peace is comprised of two types of cooperation; by personnel and in kind. The contribution of personnel includes dispatching personnel and/or contingent of the Self-Defense Force and civilians to three areas of contribution mentioned above for local populations directly. This type of contribution is entitled International Peace Cooperation Assignments under the International Peace Cooperation Law⁴. In contrast, the in-kind contribution is to support UN peacekeeping operations in providing supplies, and to provide relief supplies for refugees and IDP s caused by armed conflicts through humanitarian agencies and organizations. This processes is entitled Contribution in Kind⁵.

International Peace Cooperation Assignments (Dispatch of Personnel)

Japan has implemented 27 International Peace Cooperation Assignments since 1992. These consist of participations in UN Peacekeeping 13 times, 5 contributions to international humanitarian relief operations, and 9 contributions to international election observation operation. In March 2012, a total of 8415 personnel have been dispatched under the International Peace Cooperation Assignments. Most of them were of the Self-Defense Force amounting 8082 personnel, and 78 civilian police officers and 251 civilians were also dispatched. According to the past result, military personnel and civilian police officers tend to be dispatched to UN peacekeeping and international humanitarian relief operations and other civilians were often sent to international election and referendum observation operations.

There are two types of dispatch for Self-Defense Force personnel. One is to dispatch contingents. This is very popular and people usually imagine this type of dispatch when participating in UN peacekeeping. A large-scale contingent is prominent in host countries and it is often assigned construction and infrastructure repairing tasks. In this regard, the dispatch of contingents usually achieves visible results.

Another type is dispatch of personnel, instead of contingents. These personnel, for example, conduct village profiling as Military Liaison Officers (MLOs) currently practices in UNMIT. In UNMISS, dispatched personnel, such as intelligence, logistics and engineering staff officers, mainly conduct desk work at the mission headquarters.

Contribution in Kind

Japan also contributes supplies to activities within three areas of contribution to peace at a lower price than the market. Those supplies are distributed to people struggling against conflicts through UN Peacekeeping missions and international humanitarian agencies. Japan has implemented 21 Contribution in Kind; 6 to UN Peacekeeping operations and 15 to international humanitarian relief operations.

In particular, Japan holds the framework of contribution to international humanitarian agencies in order to enable quick response to humanitarian crises due to armed conflicts. It is called Humanitarian Relief Supply Stockpile System. In accordance with this system, Japan maintains stocks of five primary humanitarian relief supplies including tent, blanket, sleeping mat, water storage and plastic sheet, at a warehouse in UAE.

Following the Changes of UN Peacekeeping

As it is mentioned, Japan has contributed to UN peacekeeping, international humanitarian relief operations and international election observation operations both in personnel and in kind under the International Peace Cooperation Law since 1992. On the other hand, the context of international relations was dramatically changed in the last two decades and it requires adequate reaction of the UN and international community. In response to such

changes influencing the character of conflicts and diversification of post-conflict operations, the UN tends to expand its peacekeeping mandates. As a result, Troops Contributing Countries (TCC) including Japan are confronting crucial issues to keep pace with the expansion of peacekeeping operations.

End Notes

¹ The Five Principles consists of 1) Agreement on a cease-fire shall have been reached among the parties to armed conflicts 2) Consent for the undertaking of UN peacekeeping operations as well as Japan's participation in such operations shall have been obtained from the host countries as well as the parties to armed conflicts 3) The operations shall strictly maintain impartiality, not favoring any of the parties to armed conflicts 4) Should any of the requirements in the above-mentioned guideline cease to be satisfied, the International Peace Cooperation Corps may suspend International Peace Cooperation Assignments. Unless the requirements be satisfied again in a short term, the Government of Japan may terminate the dispatch of the personnel engaged in International Peace Cooperation Assignments 5) The use of weapons shall be limited to the minimum necessary to protect the lives of personnel, etc.

² Secretariat of the International Peace Cooperation Headquarters, *Paths to Peace: History of Japan's International Peace Cooperation*, 2010 ed. accessed 14 March 2012, https://www.cao.go.jp/pko/pko_e/data/michi_e2010/michi-e.pdf.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The Act on Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (Chapter III), accessed 14 March 2012, https://www.cao.go.jp/pko/pko_j/data/law/pdf/law_e.pdf.

⁵ Ibid (Chapter IV).