

Abstract

The U.S. Asia-Pacific Rebalance and the U.S.-ROK Alliance: Three Tasks for the 21st Century "Strategic Alliance".

SAKATA, Yasuyo (Professor, Kanda University of International Studies)

The U.S.-ROK alliance is facing new challenges from the U.S. policy on the Asia-Pacific rebalance. In response to the post-9.11 U.S. Alliance Transformation, the U.S.-ROK alliance was redefined as a 21st century "strategic alliance" which meant U.S.-ROK strategic cooperation not only on the Korean peninsula but also on regional and global security challenges. The U.S. Asia-Pacific rebalance, however, forces the U.S. and ROK to reexamine the role of the "strategic alliance" in a new security context. This article focuses on three strategic challenges: deterrence and defense vis-à-vis North Korea, hedging vis-à-vis China and maritime security, and U.S.-ROK-Japan security cooperation. It concludes that the strategic value of the U.S.-ROK alliance has risen in the U.S. rebalance strategy, and the two allies are carefully beginning to define its new role as a "strategic alliance" in response to the three challenges.

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