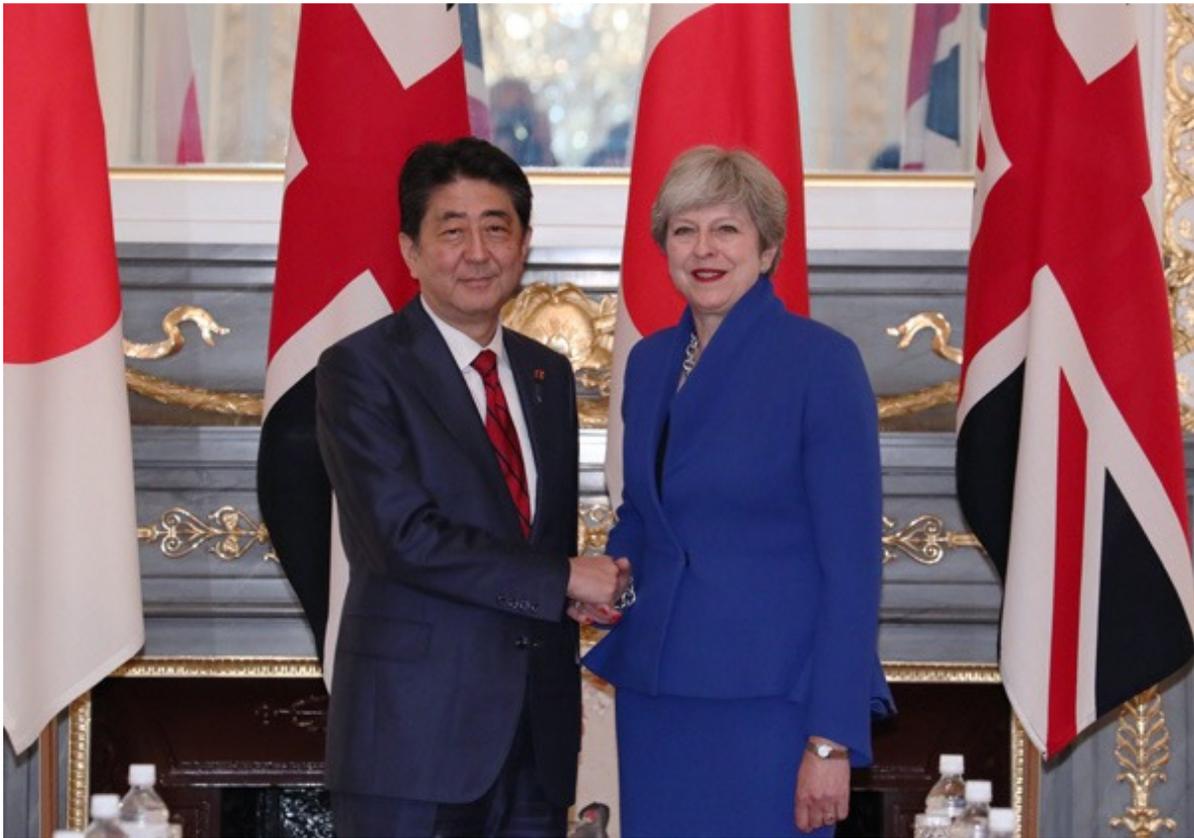


Multilayered Security Cooperation Through the **New Type** of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance



On August 31, 2017, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo held a Japan-UK Summit Meeting with the Rt Hon Theresa May MP, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, who was paying an official visit to Japan.
Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office

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Half a century has passed since the United Kingdom withdrew from the area east of Suez. The UK, which stands at the major turning point of leaving the European Union, is returning to the east. Japan is developing partnerships with the UK. The new Anglo-Japanese Alliance will make a significant contribution to the stability of the Pacific region.

Many British historians say that the modern world is strikingly similar to the time of World War I. In a situation where the great powers have begun to decline, other countries are rising and chaos and uncertainty are spreading all over the world. In Europe, the United Kingdom, which had led the unification of Europe, has decided to leave the European Union (EU). Russia has virtually annexed Crimea, which was part of Ukraine, launched a military intervention into



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the Middle East for the first time since World War II and is activating its military activities along the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea.

Meanwhile, in Asia, China is deploying its military on the islands in the South China Sea. China is focusing on building aircraft carriers, is deploying its navy to the western side of the Pacific Ocean and is steadily proceeding with maritime advances according to its One Belt, One Road Initiative.

For its part, the United States has announced its intention to withdraw from the position of the world policeman and is becoming less willing to be involved in foreign conflicts.

The most important thing in this era is to have more allies and extend the umbrella of security widely. In his speech in 1848 in the Lower House of Parliament, Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston, who was a famous British statesman who served twice as Prime Minister in the nineteenth century, said, "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow." Temple argued that for a country to survive a chaotic era, it had to make a clear distinction between enemies and friends and maintain strong strategic self-reliance.

This remark shows the realignment of alliances as a challenge to Japan as it is now.

On August 30, 2017, British Prime Minister Theresa May visited Japan. It was not a round of visits to Asian countries; Prime Minister May came all the way to Japan solely to meet Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo and other government officials. The purpose of her visit to Japan was to elevate the security cooperation between the UK and Japan to a new level.

In 1968, the UK announced that it would withdraw the British security commitments from the area east of the Suez Canal. Since then, the UK has stepped down from its position as a global power and has focused solely on European security. But now the UK has decided to walk away from the EU and aims to return to being a global power as it used to be. It is Japan, an Asian partner, which the UK needs. Japan and the UK have continued to have a friendly relationship from the Meiji Restoration until today, except for the unhappy times around World War II.

The UK begins to return to the area east of the Suez Canal

Japanese Prime Minister Abe and British Prime Minister May announced the Japan-UK Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation and stated, "Japan and the UK reaffirm their commitment to elevating their global strategic partnership and cooperation to the next level." In this declaration, they announced that they would elevate Japan-UK relations from a partnership to the allies. In addition, they also stated "by Japan's policy of 'Proactive Contribution to Peace' based on the principle of international cooperation and the UK's vision of a Global Britain respectively" and clarified the UK's policy of being committed to stabilizing the Indo-Pacific region by utilizing its relation with Japan as a global power.

This policy was succeeded to by the Third Japan-UK Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting ("2+2"), which was held in London in December 2017, and was discussed in detail

between the two countries. According to the Joint Statement, which was announced after the consultations, Japan and the UK had agreed on twenty-three agenda items, including the UK deploying the newest aircraft carrier that it would deploy soon in the Indo-Pacific area to stabilize the region, working together to cope with the North Korean threats, making the joint military exercises between the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and the British forces into regular ones in an effort to deepen their exchanges, and conducting joint research about futuristic fighter aircraft.

In a press conference after the meeting, Japanese Foreign Minister Kono Taro said, “We sincerely welcome the UK’s return to the area east of the Suez Canal,” and strongly prompted the UK to revive itself as a global power.

As this shows, 2017 was the year in which the security relationship between Japan and the UK made significant progress from a partnership to a new alliance. It was probably the first time that Japan and the UK had officially called each other “allies” since the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was dissolved in 1923. It is conceivable that many people got the impression that Japan and the UK had suddenly grown closer. In fact, however, the two countries had begun to grow closer in the area of security long before this.

For example, in January 2012, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), a think tank that is closely associated with the UK government, established its Asian headquarters in Tokyo and commenced its activities to support Japan-UK security cooperation. In October 2013, RUSI invited His Royal Highness the Duke of York, the second son of Queen Elizabeth, from Great Britain, and held the first Japan-UK security conference in Tokyo. The Japanese prime minister attended the conference and announced Japan’s policy of strengthening its security cooperation with the UK. These Japan-UK security conferences have been held regularly in London and Tokyo since the first one.

In addition, the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Forces and the Royal Navy, which have been closely associated with each other throughout a long history, acted as guides and activated exchanges between Japanese and British forces. In February 2015, Liaison Officers were sent to the Maritime Self-Defense Force’s Self Defense Fleet Headquarters in Yokosuka by the Royal Navy, and they are now permanently stationed there. It was the first time that the Royal Navy had sent Liaison Officers since the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was dissolved in 1923. Additionally, it was decided that the Royal Navy would dispatch its Chief of Staff as an assistant, as was customary when the Maritime Self-Defense Force’s Rear Admiral took up his new post as Commander of Combined Task Force 151 (CTF-151), a multinational naval task force for responding to pirate attacks off the eastern coast of Somalia.

These movements accelerated rapidly in 2016. In October 2016, a unit of the Eurofighter, the British Air Force’s fighter aircraft, flew to Misawa Air Base and conducted joint drills with the Air Self-Defense Force. It was the first time that the unit of fighter aircraft of a foreign air force other than the US Air Force had conducted joint drills with the Self-Defense Force on the Japanese mainland. At the same time, the rangers of the Ground Self-Defense Force Fuji School conducted joint reconnaissance drills with the British Ground Force and the US Marine Corps

at a base in Wales in the UK. In May 2017, the first Japan-US-UK-France joint exercise was also conducted with the participation of the Ground Self-Defense Force, the British Ground Force, the US Marine Corps and the French Navy. It was a multinational drill, but it was led by Japan and the UK.

In 2018, the unit of the British Ground Force will be dispatched to the Self-Defense Forces' exercise ground on the foothills of Mt. Fuji to conduct its first joint exercise with the Ground Self-Defense Force. The Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Royal Navy will also conduct an anti-submarine joint exercise.

On the other hand, legal arrangements were also made efficiently in order to facilitate these exchanges among military units. In January 2017, an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) on cross-servicing supplies between the Japanese and UK Forces was concluded. Japan and the UK are also working on concluding a Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) on the legal status of forces visiting each other.

Geopolitical inevitability, not historical coincidence

Japan-UK cooperation is making progress with great rapidity. But although the Anglo-Japanese Alliance is being revived, strictly speaking, it is quite different from the old Anglo-Japanese Alliance in terms of both purpose and structure. It is a new type of alliance that is suitable for the twenty-first-century world.

The old Anglo-Japanese Alliance was the military alliance in which the UK and Japan, which are sea powers, worked together to prevent Russia, a Eurasian land power, from expanding outside the sphere. The alliance continued for almost twenty years after the first treaty was signed in 1902, and the treaty was renewed twice before it was dissolved in 1923.

At that time, Japan thought of making inroads into the Chinese continent and was vigilant against Russia's showing an interest in Manchuria. In the meantime, the UK was also vigilant against Russia's attempting to make inroads into China and the Middle East. But because the UK was focusing on its war in South Africa at the time, and could not afford to focus on Asia, it needed help from Japan, an emerging power. In this situation, Japan was expected to heighten its status in the international community, and that was what actually happened. After Japan won the Russo-Japanese War of 1904, it began to attract a great deal of global attention as an Asian nation that first defeated a European nation in history. Subsequently, however, the United States came to be vigilant against the rise of Japan, and the old Anglo-Japanese Alliance was broken off in 1923.

It is a historically significant fact that the old Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which Japan concluded with the UK for the first time as a modern nation, elevated Japan, an emerging Far Eastern power, to become a major power in Asia and helped it forge a strong position in the international community.

In contrast, the new Anglo-Japanese Alliance in the twenty-first century is not a military alliance against war. It is intended for Japan and the UK to build comprehensive cooperative

relationships in every security area that is becoming more and more diverse, such as maritime security, counter-terrorism measures, cyber security, intelligence, humanitarian disaster assistance, peacekeeping operations and defense equipment cooperation.

Now, what does it mean for Japan and the UK to forge an alliance and strengthen security cooperation for the stability of the world?

From the Cold War era to the present, the United States, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand and Australia have concluded individual bilateral alliances in the Asia-Pacific region. They are called “hub and spoke alliances.” The United States has consistently been the hub, and its partners have been spokes. On the other hand, a relationship in which multiple countries conclude alliances with one another and cooperate with one another, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), is called a “networked alliance.”

The largest problem of the hub and spoke alliance is that because there is always only one partner country, the alliance malfunctions in the case of a conflict of interests. In addition, if there is a significant gap in the power balance between two allied countries, the weak always tends to depend on the strong; it is strategically difficult for the spoke country to be self-reliant. Because of this, spoke countries began to cooperate more closely after the 2000s.

More specifically, since the Abe administration was established, senior Japanese government officials have visited Southeast Asian countries, South Asian countries and European countries almost every month in an effort to expand security cooperation. The Self-Defense Forces also conduct regular joint drills with Australia, India and other countries. In addition, there is progress in trilateral security cooperation, such as Japan, the United States and India. Countries that share alliances with the United States conclude separate alliances in order to support their alliances with the United States.

But these networked alliances need core bilateral relationships just like the United States and the UK for NATO. The New Anglo-Japanese Alliance can be this core.

Japan and the UK are sea powers that are located at opposite ends of the Eurasian continent and are fated to exert pressure on a Eurasian land power for their security. Japan is vigilant against Chinese maritime advances, and the UK has put Russian hegemony on hold. The UK seems to be individually confronted with Russian threats, and Japan seems to be individually confronted with Chinese threats. In fact, however, Japan and the UK are confronting the large land power of Eurasia, which is essentially the same threat.

In addition, both Japan and the UK are strategically important partners for the United States. Japan and the UK are connected with the United States through deep alliances and have strong cooperative relationships in every area, including intelligence and military and diplomatic issues. That is, the fact that Japan and the UK are making a shift to an alliance now is not historically coincidental, but geopolitically inevitable.

The UK possesses nuclear weapons. The UK has the strongest and largest intelligence agencies, comparable to those of the United States. The UK has globally influential media organizations, such as Reuters and the BBC. The UK has two of the six so-called supermajor oil companies. The UK has the function of defining the world’s insurance premium rates through

the Lloyd's insurance market. The UK also has the City, the world's financial center. It is in Japan's greatest interest for it to conclude an alliance with this country.

Japan is expected to play a unique role as part of the "equilateral triangle"

What is important in this context is how both Japan and the UK can maintain their alliance in good harmony with their existing alliances with the United States. In the end, this will lead to the pursuit of a trilateral alliance between Japan, the UK and the United States. It must be "an equilateral triangle of peace and stability" as a new framework of security, not a hegemonic trilateral alliance. The new Anglo-Japanese Alliance is truly significant in this respect. If it comes to pass, Japan's international status and diplomatic capability will improve dramatically.

On the other hand, it means Japan's breaking away from its current dependence on the Japan-US alliance and achieving strategic self-reliance for the first time since World War II. Japan will always be expected to play a unique role in security and diplomacy.

The UK has maintained its self-reliance by upholding multilayered alliances, such as NATO, the EU and the Commonwealth, and using them flexibly. Japan will also have to build and manage multilayered alliances by formulating well-balanced alliances with Asia-Pacific nations on the basis of its "equilateral triangle" with the United States and the UK.

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