

# GPJ

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON JAPAN

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## Scope

“Global Perspectives on Japan” focuses on developing a global perspective on the study of Japan and Asia. The journal promotes innovative, interdisciplinary, inter-regional and transnational approaches to Japanese Studies.

The journal aims to be a venue for scholarship in E.M.E.A. region with a special focus on Turkey and neighboring regions. It especially encourages scholars from the Middle East, Balkans, Central Asia and the Mediterranean but also welcomes scholars from other parts of the world.

GPJ invites papers in the fields of history, humanities, and social sciences including topics of the past and the present. In addition to articles, the journal publishes occasional article size translations, book reviews, and surveys of current trends in Japanese and Asian Studies.

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# Strengthening Germany–Japan Security Cooperation: An Examination of the Trends, Reasons, and Challenges

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(Freie Universität Berlin)

## Introduction

As the world's third- and fourth-largest economies, political partners sharing democratic values, and important security allies of the United States in Asia and Europe respectively, Germany and Japan's foreign and security policy moves have significant regional or even global influences. However, for a long period of time, the two countries' security ties had been limited because of the different security environments faced by the two sides,<sup>1</sup> the frequent changes of the Prime Minister of Japan,<sup>2</sup> and Germany's lack of strategic approach to the region of Indo-Pacific.<sup>3</sup>

In September 2020, the German government adopted policy guidelines on the Indo-Pacific region against the background of increasing tensions in the region and the outbreak of the global pandemic. Security cooperation "with key partners which share common interests and values with Germany" has

- 1 "Germany and Japan – Leading Civilian Powers, or Medium-Sized Powers Further Back in the Pack?," KAS International Reports, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2011, accessed November 11, 2022, [https://www.kas.de/documents/252038/253252/7\\_dokument\\_dok\\_pdf\\_29627\\_1.pdf/ef8dc032-ddf7-da6a-8598-49d3896669ef?version=1.0&t=1539657806037](https://www.kas.de/documents/252038/253252/7_dokument_dok_pdf_29627_1.pdf/ef8dc032-ddf7-da6a-8598-49d3896669ef?version=1.0&t=1539657806037).
- 2 Nikkei, "独、連携立て直し、メルケル首相、7年ぶり来日、対ロシア、思惑一致。[Japan and Germany Rebuilds Cooperation: Chancellor Angela Merkel Visits Japan for the First Time in Seven Years and Agrees on Positions Toward Russia]," *Nihon Keizai Shimbun Morning Edition*, March 10 2015.
- 3 "Following up with Actions instead of Words: German-Japanese Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific," Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2021, accessed November 11, 2022, <https://www.kas.de/de/veranstaltungenberichte/detail/-/content/following-up-with-actions-instead-of-words>.

become an important element of German policy on the Indo-Pacific.<sup>4</sup> One year later, which was also the 160th Anniversary of Germany-Japan Friendship, a new German government of SPD, Greens, and FDP was formed; the new government wants to “promote an intensive dialogue on peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region”.<sup>5</sup> The security relationship between Germany and Japan has warmed up in this context. According to the “Progress Report on the Implementation of the Federal Government Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific in 2022”, the two sides have gained achievements in cooperation in various traditional and non-traditional security fields including digital transformation, tackling climate change, joint military exercise, and strengthening multilateralism.<sup>6</sup>

This article aims to examine the trends of, the reasons behind, and the challenges to strengthening Germany-Japan security cooperation. To this end, the first section of this article explains the concepts of “security” and “cooperation” and then examines two trends that characterize bilateral security cooperation. The second section explains three reasons at international, bilateral, and domestic levels that have contributed to the strengthening Germany-Japan security cooperation. Before concluding, section three identifies challenges to Germany-Japan security cooperation in the future.

## **The Key Concepts and Trends of Germany–Japan Security Cooperation**

### **Key Concepts: Security and Cooperation**

The meaning of security in International Relations has been broadening. As Buzan argues, security “is taken to be about the pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent

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4 “Sign of Mutual Trust: Japan and Germany Sign Agreement on the Security of Information,” Federal Foreign Office, 2021, accessed November 24, 2022, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/japan-node/japan-agreement-security-information/2449392>.

5 “Mehr Fortschritt wagen: Bündnis für Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit und Nachhaltigkeit [Daring More Progress: Alliance for Freedom, Justice and Sustainability]”, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, 2021, accessed November 28, 2022, [https://www.spd.de/fileadmin/Dokumente/Koalitionsvertrag/Koalitionsvertrag\\_2021-2025.pdf](https://www.spd.de/fileadmin/Dokumente/Koalitionsvertrag/Koalitionsvertrag_2021-2025.pdf).

6 “Progress Report on the Implementation of the Federal Government Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific in 2022 (Progress Report Indo-Pacific 2022)”, The Federal Government, 2022, accessed January 14, 2023, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/2551720/02b94659532c6af17e40a831bed-8fe57/220906-fortschrittsbericht-der-indo-pazifik-leitlinien-data.pdf>.

identity and their functional integrity against forces of change, which they see as hostile. The bottom line of security is survival, but it also reasonably includes a substantial range of concerns about the conditions of existence".<sup>7</sup> Security can thus be divided into two categories, namely traditional security and non-traditional security. Traditional security is understood as being secured from life-determining threats such as loss of territory, vital resources and sovereignty;<sup>8</sup> the means to obtain security is based on military power, including weapons, armaments systems, and military alliances;<sup>9</sup> the referent of security is states.<sup>10</sup> After the end of the Cold War, the concept of non-traditional security emerged and broadened the sectors and referents of security: Rather than focus on national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and military power, non-traditional security students pay attention to security challenges that "that fall short of the traditional military-vs.-military or state-vs.-state threat pattern and which are broadly conditioned by socio-economic risk",<sup>11</sup> such as economic security, environmental security, energy security, cyber security, international terrorism, and transnational crime.<sup>12</sup> These issues are perceived as threats not only to states, but also to societies and individuals;<sup>13</sup> all human collectivities have therefore become referents of security alongside states.<sup>14</sup>

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- 7 B. Buzan, "New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century," *International Affairs* 67, no. 3 (1991): pp. 432-33, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2621945>.
- 8 Alan Collins, "Non-Traditional Security," in *Routledge Handbook of Asian Regionalism*, ed. Mark Beeson and Richard Stubbs (London, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), p. 313.
- 9 Fulvio Attinà, "Traditional Security Issues," in *China, the European Union, and the International Politics of Global Governance*, ed. Jianwei Wang and Weiqing Song (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2016), p. 175.
- 10 Paul D. Williams, *Security Studies: An Introduction* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 6-8. <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10568488>.
- 11 N. Maier-Knapp, "The Non-traditional Security Concept and the EU-Asean Relationship Against the Backdrop of China's Rise," *Pacific Review* 29, no. 3 (Jul 2016), p. 413.
- 12 Maier-Knapp, "The Non-traditional Security Concept and the EU-Asean Relationship Against the Backdrop of China's Rise.," Mely Caballero-Anthony, "Non-traditional Security and Infectious Diseases in ASEAN: Going beyond the Rhetoric of Securitization to Deeper Institutionalization", *The Pacific Review* 21, no. 4 (2008/08/28 2008). <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512740802294523>, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512740802294523>; Akiko Yamanaka, "A New Vision for Non-Traditional Security with Human Security" (European Leadership Conference, UNESCO headquarters, Paris, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012).
- 13 R. Emmers, M.C. Anthony, and A. Acharya, *Studying Non-traditional Security in Asia: Trends and Issues* (Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2006). <https://books.google.de/books?id=DfC5AAAAIAAJ>.
- 14 Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-cold War Era: 25th Anniversary*, second edition, reissued ed. (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2016); Emmers, An-

Similarly, both traditional military concerns and non-traditional security issues have been addressed when framing the concept of security in both Germany and Japan. In the White Paper on Germany Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr 2016, various issues from both traditional and non-traditional security fields are taken as challenges for German security policy: On one hand, the Federal Government notices that “the renaissance of traditional power politics”, which “involves the use of military means to pursue national interests and entails considerable armaments efforts”, elevates the risk of violent interstate conflict in and beyond Europe and jeopardizes the stability of the international system;<sup>15</sup> on the other hand, transnational terrorism, cyber attacks, fragile states and poor governance, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, threats to supply lines, climate change, migration crisis, epidemics and pandemics also draw much attention from Berlin.<sup>16</sup> On 18 March 2022, German foreign minister Baerbock launched the process developing a National Security Strategy, which “goes far beyond traditional defense political issues and includes matters ranging from development cooperation to the defense against cyber risks”.<sup>17</sup> On Japanese side, China’s strengthening of its military power without transparency, and its increased activities in the sea and airspace, as well as North Korea’s continued nuclear and missile development and provocations have been identified by Tokyo as major factors contributing to the severe security environment in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile, newly emerged threats that easily cross national borders, such as international terrorism, and risks in the oceans, outer space, and cyberspace, as well as issues related to human security, including poverty and development challenges, and growing risks to the global economy, have also been viewed as security challenges faced by

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thony, and Acharya, *Studying Non-traditional Security in Asia: Trends and Issues*.

- 15 “White Paper on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr,” Federal Ministry of Defence, 2016, accessed November 29, 2022. <https://www.bundeswehr.de/resource/blob/4800140/fe103a80d8576b2cd7a135a5a8a86dde/download-white-paper-2016-data.pdf>.
- 16 The Federal Government, “White Paper on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr”, pp. 24-44.
- 17 “Answers to the Most Important Questions on the New National Security Strategy”, Federal Ministry of Defence, 2022, accessed November 19, 2022. <https://www.bmvg.de/en/news/answers-most-important-questions-on-national-security-strategy-5493316>.
- 18 “日本を取り巻く安全保障環境と課題 [Security Environment and Issues Surrounding Japan],” 2016, accessed September 20th, 2022, [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/fp/nsp/page1w\\_000092.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/fp/nsp/page1w_000092.html).

Japan.<sup>19</sup> In sum, both traditional and non-traditional security issues concern the two sides.

Based on the facts above, a broad approach to the concept of security should be adopted when analyzing Germany-Japan security cooperation; the two sides' cooperation in the fields of both traditional security and non-traditional security will be examined.

The concept of cooperation in this article is approached from two dimensions. First, cooperation should be taken as a process of mutual policy adjustment rather than an outcome or influence of the adjustment. As Keohane argues, cooperation occurs "when actors adjust their behavior to the actual or anticipated preferences of others, through a process of policy coordination".<sup>20</sup> The process involves "the adjustment of one state's policies in return for, or anticipation of, the adjustment of other states' policies so that both end up better off".<sup>21</sup> Second, the policy adjustment can be in a variety of forms, including a series of discursive and practical activities such as dialogues for information exchange, negotiation on ad-hoc or institutionalized political agreements, and pooling resources and personnel for joint military operations or joint scientific research projects.<sup>22</sup> In the practice of Germany-Japan security cooperation, all these activities can be observed: the two parties have been intensifying their information exchange and negotiation regarding security issues through multiple communication channels such as national leaders' mutual visits, Germany-Japan Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2"), G7 Summit and Germany-Japan ICT Policy Dialogue; meanwhile, joint practical activities ranging from joint military exercises in the region of Indo-Pacific to officially funded bilateral research projects against climate change have taken place.<sup>23</sup>

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19 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "日本を取り巻く安全保障環境と課題 [Security Environment and Issues Surrounding Japan]."

20 Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 51-52. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7sq9s](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7sq9s).

21 Helen V. Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations* (Princeton University Press, 2021), pp. 7-8.

22 Emil J. Kirchner, "EU-Japan security cooperation in context", in *EU-Japan Security Cooperation: Trends and Prospects*, ed. Han Dorussen Emil J. Kirchner (Routledge, 2018), pp. 6-7; Stanley Fischer, "International Macroeconomic Coordination", in *International Economic Cooperation*, ed. Martin S. Feldstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 35-38.

23 "Strategic International Collaborative Research Program (SICORP) Information on Japanese-German Joint Call 2021", Strategic International Collaborative Research Program (SICORP), 2021,

Therefore, in this article cooperation refers to a process of mutual policy adjustment. It can be observed in two forms: (a) communication for mutual information change and negotiation regarding certain issues; (b) the launch of joint practical activities to solve an issue. This article takes the increase of frequencies, contents, and cooperation areas of the information exchange, negotiation as well as joint practical activities as indicators of strengthening cooperation since these indicators have been used to identify the variation of international cooperation's level in the existing literature.<sup>24</sup>

## Two Trends of Germany-Japan Security Cooperation

Germany's strengthening security cooperation with Japan is characterized by two trends. The first trend is the increasing frequency and contents of high-level communication regarding security affairs. The two countries' high-level communication has become more frequent. In April 2021, the first Germany-Japan Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") took place, followed by a Bureau-level consultation between the foreign and defense authorities of the two countries two months later.<sup>25</sup> In 2022, three high-level officials of the new German government - German President, German Chancellor, and German Foreign Minister made official visits to Japan in the same year. Among the three German officials, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock even chose Japan as the destination of their first trip to Asia. In addition to visiting Japan, the German side has

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accessed November 20, 2022. [https://www.jst.go.jp/inter/english/program\\_e/announce\\_e/announce\\_ge\\_hydrotech.html](https://www.jst.go.jp/inter/english/program_e/announce_e/announce_ge_hydrotech.html); "Germany, Japan Seek Deeper Ties during Scholz Visit," Deutsche Welle, 2022, accessed November 20, 2022, <https://p.dw.com/p/4AVDR>.

24 Thomas Christiansen, Han Dorussen, and Emil J. Kirchner, "Security Cooperation in EU-China Relations: Towards Convergence?", *European Foreign Affairs Review* (2018). <http://www.kluwer-lawonline.com/api/Product/CitationPDFURL?file=Journals\EERR\EERR2018027.pdf>; Emil J. Kirchner, *EU-Japan Security Cooperation: Trends and Prospects* (2018); Fischer, "International Macroeconomic Coordination."; Jeffrey W. Hornung, *Allies Growing Closer: Japan-Europe Security Ties in the Age of Strategic Competition* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2020). [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA186-1.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA186-1.html).

25 "日独外務・防衛閣僚会合(「2+2」) [Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2")]", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2021, accessed February 2, 2023, [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4\\_009040.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4_009040.html); "日独外務・防衛当局間協議の開催(結果) [Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Affairs Consultations (Results)]", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2021, accessed February 2, 2023, [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4\\_009076.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4_009076.html).

also actively invited Japan to participate in European security affairs. For example, in March 2022, German Foreign Minister Baerbock invited Japanese Prime Minister Kishida to the joint crisis talks in Brussels to discuss the Ukraine crisis.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the first German-Japanese intergovernmental consultations will take place in March 2023, aiming to intensify the two sides' economic security cooperation.<sup>27</sup> By contrast, during Angela Merkel's last administration period (March 2018 - December 2021), only in 2019 did the three high-level officials visit Japan in the same year, but at that time it was because then German Chancellor and Foreign Minister needed to fly to Japan to attend G20 Summit and G20 Foreign Minister Meeting. During Merkel's tenure as German Chancellor, she visited China 12 times in total while only visited Japan six times, and most of them were drop-in visits during her visits to China or to attend international summits; her first special visit to Japan took place in February 2019, which was 13 years after she had come to power.

More importantly, compared with the contents of previous Germany-Japan high-level communication, the two sides have confirmed their consensus on more specific bilateral or multilateral security cooperation projects rather than merely exchanging views on certain issues. For example, at Scholz's meeting with Kishida in April, security cooperation was referred to as the priority of Germany-Japan bilateral relations: The two sides confirmed to prepare for the new bilateral inter-governmental consultation framework by the prime ministers and cabinet ministers and to continue their cooperation towards the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" by holding the "2+2" meeting; both leaders also decided to deepen their cooperation in securing supply chains, continue their joint contribution to the realization of peace and prosperity of the West Balkans, which is based on the implementation of the project for reconstructing community center in southern Serbia through Germany-Japan cooperation, and let the German government plane transport relief supplies, which were donated by Japanese people to the Ukrainian

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26 "Japan Resets Its Role in Europe in the Wake of Ukraine War", *The Diplomat*, 2022, accessed November 17, 2022. <https://thediplomat.com/2022/03/japan-resets-its-role-in-europe-in-the-wake-of-ukraine-war/>.

27 "日独が初の政府間協議…3月に調整、経済安保協力を強化 [Japan and Germany Hold First Government-To-Government Talks in March, Strengthening Economic Security Cooperation]", *Yomiuri Shimbun Online*, 2023, accessed February 7, 2023. <https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/politics/20230108-OYT1T50189/>.



Embassy in Japan during the war in Ukraine.<sup>28</sup> The agenda of security cooperation mentioned at the meeting is more concrete and substantial than Merkel's last special visit to Japan in February 2019, which mainly focused on the two sides' economic cooperation against the background of G20 and the entry into force of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).<sup>29</sup> Similarly, at German President Steinmeier's meeting with Kishida in Tokyo in November 2022, the two sides agreed to strengthen their cooperation on security issues including sanction against Russia, economic security, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, North Korean abductions of Japanese citizens, the reform of United Nation's Security Council, and climate change.<sup>30</sup> During the same German President's last visit to Japan in 2019, by contrast, the two countries' leaders only briefly emphasized "the importance of bilateral cooperation between Japan and Germany in the changing world", and "exchanged views" on the situation in East Asia without making any consensus on any specific security cooperation plan.<sup>31</sup>

The second trend of strengthening Germany-Japan security cooperation is the expanding cooperation areas. While in the past the two countries tried to strengthen their cooperation mainly on some non-traditional security issues such as climate change since 2020, both traditional and non-traditional security cooperation between the two countries have been growing significantly. In the field of traditional security, Germany and Japan signed the German-Japanese Agreement on the Security of Information in March 2021. Before the conclusion of the agreement, together with Canada, Germany had been one of the only two G7 member states that had not agreed with Japan. With the conclusion, the agreement "allows confidential information to be exchanged between authorities and companies in the two partner countries"

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28 "Japan-Germany Summit Meeting," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2022, accessed November 24, 2022. [https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c\\_see/de/page4e\\_001245.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_see/de/page4e_001245.html).

29 "Japan-Germany Summit Meeting," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2019, accessed November 24, 2022. [https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c\\_see/page6e\\_000166.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_see/page6e_000166.html).

30 "岸田総理大臣とシュタインマイヤー・ドイツ連邦共和国大統領の会談 [Meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and President of the Federal Republic of Germany Steinmeier]", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2022, accessed November 24, 2022. [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/c\\_see/de/page4\\_005691.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/c_see/de/page4_005691.html).

31 "安倍総理大臣とシュタインマイヤー・ドイツ大統領との会談 [Meeting between Prime Minister Abe and German President Steinmeier]", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2019, accessed November 24, 2022. [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/c\\_see/de/page4\\_005394.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/c_see/de/page4_005394.html).

and therefore “makes it possible to step up cooperation on security policy and military technology”.<sup>32</sup> The conclusion of the agreement is seen by the German side as a meaningful contribution to Germany’s security cooperation with partners in the region of Indo-Pacific, which is an “important element” of German policy on the region.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, a Japanese government official also spoke highly of the significance of the conclusion: “We have finally filled in the missing pieces in promoting Japan-Europe cooperation.”<sup>34</sup> At the Germany-Japan Foreign and Defense Ministers’ Meeting in November 2022, the four ministers agreed on the three points to further deepen cooperation between the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and the German Federal Armed Forces: “(1) considering the possibility of joint exercises and visits to Japan from next year onward; (2) developing further bilateral cooperation in the field of defense equipment and technology cooperation; (3) advancing coordination toward the start of negotiations for a legal framework for facilitating joint activities between Japan and Germany”.<sup>35</sup> The two sides also agreed to make coordination to start negotiations on an acquisition and cross-servicing agreement (ACSA), which Japan has concluded with the United States.<sup>36</sup> In November 2021, German Navy frigate Bayern docked in Tokyo as the first German warship visiting Japan in 20 years and conducted a series of exercises with Japan’s Maritime Self-Defense Force.<sup>37</sup> During German Foreign Minister Baerbock’s talk with Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi in July 2022, she agreed that the two countries should strengthen their defense ties in the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>38</sup> Three months later, three German fighter jets conducted the first-ever joint training with Japan

32 Federal Foreign Office, “Sign of Mutual Trust: Japan and Germany Sign Agreement on the Security of Information.”

33 Federal Foreign Office, “Sign of Mutual Trust: Japan and Germany Sign Agreement on the Security of Information.”

34 “日独「情報保護協定」発効 インド太平洋協力を後押し [Japan-Germany “Information Protection Agreement” Comes into Effect, Boosting Indo-Pacific Cooperation]”, Asahi Shimbun, 2021, accessed November 24, 2022. <https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASP3O6W7VP3OUTFK00S.html>.

35 “Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers’ Meeting”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2022, accessed November 24, 2022. [https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c\\_see/de/page4e\\_001299.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_see/de/page4e_001299.html).

36 “Japan, Germany Agree on Coordination to Start ACSA Negotiations”, Nippon, 2022, accessed November 24, 2022. <https://www.nippon.com/en/news/yjj2022110300554/>.

37 Ryall, “Germany, Japan Seek Deeper Ties during Scholz Visit.”

38 “Japan, Germany Vow to Guard Rules-Based Int’l Order Amid Ukraine War,” Kyodo News+, 2022, accessed November 24, 2022. <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2022/07/033e3232483a-japan-germany-foreign-chiefs-seek-cooperation-amid-chinas-rise.html>.

Air Self-Defense Force in Japan.<sup>39</sup>

In the field of non-traditional security such as cyber security and climate change, the 6<sup>th</sup> Germany-Japan ICT Policy Dialogue was held in March 2022, in which the German side “explained its efforts for 5G and 6G deployment, including the Gigabit Strategy and the Open RAN development support project, which are intended to promote the development of 5G, R&D projects in 6G, and security measures”, and both sides promised to “continue to share their latest information and cooperate in ensuring the openness and safety of networks”.<sup>40</sup> The Federal Ministry of Education and Research has also been providing funding for research cooperation on green hydrogen with Japan since September 2021. The joint funding supports cooperation focusing on “efficient and sustainable materials for hydrogen technologies and environmentally friendly propulsion systems for maritime transport”, “the development of highly efficient synthetic fuels”, “research on and analysis of combustion processes as well as the design and analysis of new combustion systems, and innovations on highly efficient fuel cells for maritime propulsion”.<sup>41</sup>

## Reasons at Multiple Levels

### Germany’s Security-Economy Dilemma with China

Germany-Japan relations are affected by international, bilateral, and domestic factors jointly.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, several reasons at different levels have contributed to their strengthening of security cooperation. The first reason, which is at the international level, is Germany’s security-economy dilemma with China. A content analysis of German official documents shows that there

39 “ドイツ空軍総監及びドイツ空軍機の訪日について [Visit to Japan by Luftwaffe Inspector General and Luftwaffe Aircraft]”, Japan Air Self-Defense Force, 2022, accessed January 30, 2023. <https://www.mod.go.jp/asdf/news/release/2022/0930-2/>.

40 “Results of the 6th Japan-Germany ICT Policy Dialogue”, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2022, accessed November 24, 2022. [https://www.soumu.go.jp/main\\_sosiki/joho\\_tsusin/eng/pressrelease/2022/3/28\\_06.html](https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/joho_tsusin/eng/pressrelease/2022/3/28_06.html).

41 “Funding Call for Green Hydrogen Research Cooperation with Japan,” Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2022, accessed November 24, 2022. <https://www.bmbf.de/bmbf/en/home/documents/funding-call-for-green-hydroge-esearch-cooperation-with-japan.html>.

42 “Germany’s Quietly Growing Relations with Japan”, The Diplomat, 2022, accessed February 1, 2023. <https://thediplomat.com/2022/11/germanys-quietly-growing-relations-with-japan/>.

is a negative correlation between Germany-Japan security cooperation and Germany-China relations: In the policy guidelines on the Indo-Pacific region adopted by German government in 2020, the words “China” and “Chinese” appear 34 times when the German government mentions its ongoing or future cooperation with China, while “Japan” and “Japanese” only 24 times in the similar context in the 68-page document.<sup>43</sup> However, in the “Progress Report on the Implementation of the Federal Government Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific in 2022” issued two years later, the Federal Government only mentions the word “China” twice, while “Japan” and “Japanese” are mentioned 12 times in the 11-page document - the only achievements related to China mentioned in the progress report are two movements in agricultural cooperation, which are the setting up of Competence Centers for the German Agricultural and Food Industry in Beijing and Shanghai, and the presentation of technologies from the German livestock industry at an international conference in Nanjing; by contrast, Germany’s cooperation progress with Japan in various traditional and non-traditional security fields, including digital transformation, tackling climate change, joint military exercise and strengthening multilateralism is recorded in the document.<sup>44</sup> It can be stated that although Germany paid more attention to China than to Japan when formulating its Indo-Pacific policy guidelines, the progress of cooperation between Germany and China has been very limited in the process of the guidelines’ implementation, while security cooperation with Japan has been increasingly valued by Germany.

The phenomenon can be attributed to Germany’s security-economy dilemma with China, which means Berlin finds it increasingly difficult to manage the two countries’ divergences on security issues and maintain its economic cooperation with China simultaneously. First, the divergence between Beijing and Berlin regarding certain non-traditional security issues, such as human rights, has had a spillover effect on economic and trade exchanges between the two countries. In June 2021, to counter Western

43 “Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific,” Federal Foreign Office, 2020, accessed November 15, 2022. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/2380514/f9784f7e3b3fa1bd7c5446d274a4169e/200901-in-do-pazifik-leitlinien--1--data.pdf>.

44 The Federal Government, “Progress Report on the Implementation of the Federal Government Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific in 2022 (Progress Report Indo-Pacific 2022).”

countries' sanctions "under the guise of safeguarding democracy and human rights" and to "safeguard national sovereignty, security, and development interests",<sup>45</sup> China adopted Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law, which enables China to punish any groups or individuals that comply with the sanctions against China;<sup>46</sup> the law makes German industry worried that foreign companies will be targeted.<sup>47</sup> On the German side, to ensure respect for human rights in supply chains, the Supply Chain Act was passed by German Bundestag in June 2021 and came into effect in January 2023. Regarding the law, Chinese Ambassador to Germany Wu Ken said: "China clearly opposes some countries using the 'Supply Chain Law' to make irresponsible remarks on other countries' internal affairs. We will continue to pay attention to the impact of the German 'Supply Chain Law' after it has taken effect, and will continue to take all necessary measures to resolutely safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies."<sup>48</sup> Second, economic cooperation with China itself has raised security concerns in Germany. 65.9 percent of the rare earth imported into Germany from January to November 2022 came from China;<sup>49</sup> the high dependency upsets Germany, especially after experiencing the energy crisis because of its dependence on gas from Russia.<sup>50</sup> Chinese state company Cosco's plan to buy the shares of Container Terminal Tollerort (CTT), which belongs to a shipping company that runs the Humburg port terminal, caused concerns from multiple ministries in the

45 "关于《中华人民共和国反外国制裁法(草案)》的说明 [Explanation on the "Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law of the People's Republic of China (Draft)"]", The National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, 2021, accessed February 6, 2023. <http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/c30834/202106/99804919249244e593383c9da4e39ddf.shtml>.

46 "(受权发布)中华人民共和国反外国制裁法 [(Authorized to Publish) Anti-foreign Sanctions Law of the People's Republic of China]", Xinhua News Agency, 2021, accessed January 31, 2023.

47 "German Industry Group Criticises China over New Sanctions Law", Reuters, 2021, accessed January 31, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/business/german-industry-group-criticises-china-over-new-sanctions-law-2021-06-15/>.

48 "吴恳大使接受德国《商报》专访 [Ambassador Wu Ken Accepted an Exclusive Interview with German Handelsblatt]", 2023, accessed February 6, 2023. [http://de.china-embassy.gov.cn/sgyw/202301/t20230109\\_11004495.htm](http://de.china-embassy.gov.cn/sgyw/202301/t20230109_11004495.htm).

49 "Januar bis November 2022: 66 % der importierten Seltenen Erden kamen aus China [January to November 2022: 66% of Imported Rare Earths Came From China]", Statistisches Bundesamt, 2023, accessed February 7, 2023. [https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/ZahlderWoche/2023/PD23\\_04\\_p002.html](https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/ZahlderWoche/2023/PD23_04_p002.html).

50 „Nächster Winter bereitet mir Sorgen“ [“I'm Worried about Next Winter”], Tagesschau, 2023, accessed February 7, 2023. <https://www.tagesschau.de/wirtschaft/iea-chef-birol-gasversorgung-101.html>.

Federal Government over possible Chinese influence over European critical infrastructure.<sup>51</sup> In April 2022, for the reason of public security, Germany prohibited the takeover of German respiratory manufacturer Heyer Medical by Chinese company Aeonmed.<sup>52</sup>

The difficulties in dealing with China have brought Germany closer to Japan, because Japan has set a good example to Europeans, as Adachi and Ghiretti argue, on how to maintain its cooperation with China on one hand, and secure itself in its tensions with China on the other.<sup>53</sup> For example, Japan's territorial disputes with China over Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands once made Beijing restrict its rare earth export to Japan in 2010. While the restriction posed a huge challenge to Japan's economic security, the Japanese government chose to cooperate with the United States and the European Union to sue China at WTO and made a series of domestic policies to promote recycling, develop alternative technologies, and explore mines, which managed to make Japan's rare earth dependence on imports from China in 2018 dropped by 40 percent compared to 2012.<sup>54</sup> Meanwhile, despite of being involved in conflicts regarding territorial disputes and human rights between Japan and China, Japanese companies such as Toyota and Uniqlo have managed to avoid huge loss of their business in China with the strategies of diversification and technological advancement.<sup>55</sup> In German officials' view, this is something worth learning for Germany. In an interview during his visit to Tokyo, German President Steinmeier said: "We should wisely balance economic ties, political differences, and security challenges

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51 "Germany Reaches Compromise on China's Hamburg Port Investment, Reports Say", Politico, 2022, accessed November 28, 2022. <https://www.politico.eu/article/report-germany-deal-china-hamburg-port-investment-cosco/>.

52 "Regierung untersagt chinesische Übernahme von Beatmungsgeräte-Hersteller [Government Bans Chinese Takeover of Ventilator Maker]", Handelsblatt, 2022, accessed February 6, 2023. <https://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/deutschland/heyer-medical-regierung-untersagt-chinesische-uebernahme-von-beatmungsgeraete-hersteller/28281882.html>.

53 "A Japanese Solution to the EU's Economic Security Struggle", Mercator Institute for China Studies, 2022, accessed November 29, 2022. <https://merics.org/de/kurzanalyse/japanese-solution-eus-economic-security-struggle>.

54 "レアアース紛争、立役者2人が語る「日本勝訴」の舞台裏 [Behind the Scenes of Japan's Victory in the Rare Earth Dispute, as Told by Two Key Players]", METI Journal ONLINE, 2022, accessed November 29, 2022. <https://journal.meti.go.jp/p/22987/>.

55 "Fasten Your Seatbelts: How to Manage China's Economic Coercion", Mercator Institute for China Studies, 2022, accessed January 31, 2023. <https://merics.org/de/studie/fasten-your-seatbelts-how-manage-chinas-economic-coercion>.

in our relationship with China. I think Germany can learn a lot from Japan here.”<sup>56</sup> At a press conference ahead of the G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting 2022, German Foreign Minister Baerbock also told reporters: “Japan... has repeatedly pointed out how important it is that we recognize that China has changed in recent years and that it is not only a partner in international issues but also a competitor and much more a rival”.<sup>57</sup> In sum, in German side’s view, Berlin will benefit from closer Germany-Japan ties by learning how to deal with its economic and security relations with China more smartly.

### Japan’s Issue-Linkage Tactic Towards Germany

The second reason, which is at the bilateral level, is Japan’s issue-linkage tactic in its discussions with Germany. Issue-linkage means “the simultaneous discussion of two or more issues for joint settlement”, which aims to increase the probability of agreement or motivates states to remain committed to an agreement.<sup>58</sup> Since the time of Shinzo Abe’s administration, Japan has been actively engaged in security affairs in Europe, and this has enabled Tokyo to link its engagement in Europe with its request for European partners’ assistance to Japan in Asia. For example, at G7 Summit in 2014, Abe endorsed the European side’s Russia policy on one hand and stated that the situation in Ukraine was linked to the situation in Asia on the other, in order to make the European countries pay more attention to China’s behaviors in the East and South China Seas.<sup>59</sup> In April 2022, representing a NATO’s partner from the Asia Pacific, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi was invited to attend the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs in response to Russia’s invasion into Ukraine. During the meeting, Hayashi said that

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56 Kichiro Minami and Shogo Akagawa, “ドイツ大統領、ロシアとの協力「信頼損ねた」 一問一答 [German President Says Cooperation With Russia ‘Damaged Trust’: Q&A]”, *Nikkei Breaking News*, October 31 2022.

57 “G7 Discuss Ukraine Support Amid Attacks on Infrastructure”, *Deutsche Welle*, 2022, accessed November 28, 2022. <https://p.dw.com/p/4lzgl>.

58 Paul Poast, “Issue Linkage and International Cooperation: An Empirical Investigation”, *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 30, no. 3 (2013/07/01 2013): 287. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894213484030>.

59 “「G8後」描けぬ国際秩序 G7サミット閉幕 [The “Post-G8” Undrawable International Order: G7 Summit Closing]”, *Nikkei*, 2014, accessed February 3, 2023. [https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGX-NASF05015\\_V00C14A6MM8000/](https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGX-NASF05015_V00C14A6MM8000/).



Russia's invasion of Ukraine posed challenges to the international order, and "the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific region cannot be discussed separately".<sup>60</sup>

Similarly, Tokyo has also adopted the issue-linkage tactic in its bilateral communication with Berlin: At Kishida's meeting with Scholz in April this year, after mentioning that Japan was cooperating with Germany to impose severe sanctions on Russia and strengthen support for Ukraine, the Japanese Prime Minister also emphasized to his German counterpart that the security of Europe was "inseparable" from the security of the Indo-Pacific.<sup>61</sup> The tactic has been proved to be effective afterwards: three months later, to explain why she chose Japan as a destination of her first Asian trip, German Foreign Minister Baerbock stated in a statement that Germany can "rely 100 percent on Japan" in Indo-Pacific, because "the Government in Tokyo has demonstrated this very clearly in both theory and practice in the face of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine."<sup>62</sup> During his visit to Japan in October 2022, German President Steinmeier expressed his appreciation to Japan's actions regarding the war in Ukraine, and Germany's interest in cooperating with Japan to deal with China: "Japan recognized early on that this (war in Ukraine) was not simply a regional conflict in Europe... That is why I would like to express my deep gratitude to Japan for its clear position and courageous actions... we must seek cooperation with China on global issues. In this regard, we would like to collaborate with many partners in Asia, especially Japan."<sup>63</sup> In short, by linking the security challenges in Europe and in East Asia together, Japan's issue-linkage strategy has largely contributed to strengthening German officials' policy preference of cooperating with Japan on security issues.

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60 "Foreign Minister Hayashi Attends the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2022, accessed November 30, 2022. [https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/ep/page4e\\_001226.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/ep/page4e_001226.html).

61 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan-Germany Summit Meeting."

62 "Statement by Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock Prior to Her Departure for the G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting in Indonesia and a Visit to Palau and Japan", Federal Foreign Office, 2022, accessed November 28, 2022. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/baerbock-asia-g20/2541110>.

63 Minami and Akagawa, "ドイツ大統領、ロシアとの協力「信頼損ねた」 一問一答 [German President Says Cooperation With Russia 'Damaged Trust': Q&A]."



## Germany's Domestic Preference Structure in Favor of Value-Based Foreign Policy

The third reason is at Germany's domestic level, namely Germany's domestic preference structure which is increasingly in favor of the value-based foreign policy. Domestic preference structure refers to "the relative positions of the preferences of important domestic actors on the issue at hand".<sup>64</sup> When more important domestic actors' preferences tend to support a foreign policy conducive to international cooperation, international cooperation will be more likely, because the actors can "exert a powerful influence on how domestic politics affects international cooperation".<sup>65</sup> After being appointed as German Foreign Minister in 2021, Baerbock said that she would pursue a "values-based foreign policy (wertgeleitete Außenpolitik)",<sup>66</sup> which means seeking for more cooperation with democratic partners with shared values while taking a tougher stance towards authoritarian regimes.<sup>67</sup> Two out of the three parties in the current German ruling coalition - the Greens and FDP - mentioned the necessity of cooperating with other democracies in various security issues such as climate change and Taiwan issue, and clearly named Japan in this context as one of Germany's strategic partners in their election programs.<sup>68</sup>

With the two parties' participation in the coalition, great importance is attached to the role of democratic values in Germany's foreign policy. Germany's coalition agreement states that Germany will defend its "values of freedom, democracy, and human rights"; to this end, the coalition will "seek close cooperation with our democratic partners"; the coalition will make Germany's foreign, security and development policy "value-based

64 Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations*, 16.

65 Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations*, 16.

66 "„Schweigen ist keine Diplomatie“ [“Silence is Not Diplomacy”], TAZ, 2021, accessed November 30, 2022. <https://taz.de/Annalena-Baerbock-ueber-Aussenpolitik/!5819421/>.

67 "How Germany's New Government Might Pursue Its "Values-Based" Foreign Policy in Europe", Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, 2022, accessed November 28, 2022. <https://us.boell.org/en/2022/01/03/how-germanys-new-government-might-pursue-its-values-based-foreign-policy-europe>.

68 "Das Programm der Freien Demokraten zur Bundestagswahl 2021 [The Program of the Free Democrats for the Federal Elections 2021]", Freie Demokraten (FDP), 2021, accessed December 1, 2022. [https://www.fdp.de/sites/default/files/2021-06/FDP\\_Programm\\_Bundestagswahl2021\\_1.pdf](https://www.fdp.de/sites/default/files/2021-06/FDP_Programm_Bundestagswahl2021_1.pdf); "Bundestagswahlprogramm 2021 [Bundestag Election Program 2021]", Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, 2021, accessed December 1, 2022. [https://cms.gruene.de/uploads/documents/Vorlaeufiges-Wahlprogramm\\_GRUENE-Bundestagswahl-2021.pdf](https://cms.gruene.de/uploads/documents/Vorlaeufiges-Wahlprogramm_GRUENE-Bundestagswahl-2021.pdf).

and more European”; the government’s goal is “multilateral cooperation in the world, especially in close connection with those states that share our democratic values”.<sup>69</sup> The agreement also specifically mentions Japan as one of Germany’s “important value partner” in its Indo-Pacific strategy, with which the German government wants to start regular governmental consultations.<sup>70</sup>

Moreover, while supporters of values-based foreign policy inside of the ruling coalitions have increased, their policy preferences have also become more important and powerful because of the support from German voters. A series of polls conducted by Infratest-Dimap indicate that German voters have been increasingly inclined to distance themselves from authoritarian states and to cooperate more with democracies since 2020. For example, in a poll conducted in November 2022, only 9 percent of the interviewees view China and Russia as a trustworthy partners;<sup>71</sup> the percentage have dropped dramatically compared to the outcomes in 2019, in which China got 38 percent of the interviewee’s trust and Russia 28 percent.<sup>72</sup> In a survey outcome released in February 2022, 66 percent of the interviewees think the awarding the Olympic Games to China is wrong, and 68 percent among them think so because of political conditions in China.<sup>73</sup> In November 2022, 90 percent of the interviewees answered that the Federal Government should make Germany more economically independent of non-democratic countries in general, and almost half of German voters believed that Germany should reduce its economic cooperation with China.<sup>74</sup> By contrast, an opinion

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69 Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, Bündnis 90, and Freie Demokratische Partei, “Mehr Fortschritt wagen: Bündnis für Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit und Nachhaltigkeit [Daring More Progress: Alliance for Freedom, Justice and Sustainability]”, 104, 13.

70 Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, Bündnis 90, and Freie Demokratische Partei, “Mehr Fortschritt wagen: Bündnis für Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit und Nachhaltigkeit [Daring More Progress: Alliance for Freedom, Justice and Sustainability]”, p. 125.

71 “ARD-DeutschlandTREND November 2022 [ARD-DeutschlandTREND November 2022]”, Infratest Dimap, 2022, accessed November 28, 2022. <https://www.infratest-dimap.de/umfragen-analysen/bundesweit/ard-deutschlandtrend/2022/november/>.

72 “ARD-DeutschlandTREND Januar 2022 [ARD-DeutschlandTREND January 2022]”, Infratest Dimap, 2022, accessed December 23, 2022. <https://www.infratest-dimap.de/umfragen-analysen/bundesweit/ard-deutschlandtrend/2022/januar/>.

73 “ARD-DeutschlandTREND Februar 2022 [ARD-DeutschlandTREND February 2022]”, Infratest Dimap, 2022, accessed December 23, 2022. <https://www.infratest-dimap.de/umfragen-analysen/bundesweit/ard-deutschlandtrend/2022/februar/>.

74 Infratest Dimap, “ARD-DeutschlandTREND November 2022 [ARD-DeutschlandTREND November 2022].”

poll on Japan conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan from October 2020 to January 2021 in Germany shows that 44% of German citizens view Japan as an important partner for Germany in security and economic relations in the Indo-Pacific region, and 49% of German citizens chose Japan as a country outside of Europe with which Europe should strengthen its partnership under the impact of the spread of COVID-19; Japan got the most votes in both questions' answers, followed by the United States.<sup>75</sup> Politicians favoring values-based foreign policy have also become more popular among German voters: Baerbock became the second most satisfying politician in the Infratest-Dimap poll in March 2022, and between April and December 2022, she was the most favorable politician in every survey together with her party colleague Habeck, who is also German Vice Chancellor and Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action.<sup>76</sup> The facts above show that Germany's structure of domestic preference has become more conducive to Germany's cooperation with democratic countries such as Japan.

## Future Challenges

### China's Foreign Policy Towards Germany

Although the two countries' security cooperation is strengthening, it still faces three potential challenges. The first challenge is China's foreign policy towards Germany in the future. Facing Berlin's demands for Beijing's cooperation on some security and economic issues, China may use the demands as a bargaining chip to influence Germany's further security cooperation with Japan. During Scholz's visit to Beijing in November 2022, the German Chancellor "asked General Secretary Xi to use his influence on Russia" and expressed his hope that "it would be possible to eliminate difficulties for German companies trying to access markets in China and to enforce intellectual property rights".<sup>77</sup> Scholz also announced that the Germany

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75 "外務省令和2年度対日世論調査(欧州) [Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2020 Opinion Poll on Japan (Europe)]", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2021, accessed February 1, 2023. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100187850.pdf>.

76 Infratest Dimap, "ARD-DeutschlandTREND November 2022 [ARD-DeutschlandTREND November 2022]."

77 "Federal Chancellor Scholz on His Inaugural Visit to China", The Federal Government, 2022, accessed December 24, 2022. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-en/news/federal-chancel->

and China would deepen their cooperation against the pandemic, climate change and for biodiversity. Faced with Germany's request for cooperation, on one hand, China expressed its willingness to cooperate with Germany on the issues such as the war in Ukraine, the approval of the Biontech/Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, and climate change; on the other hand, it also expressed its tough political stance, that is, it does not want Germany to contain China with other western countries on political issues. Xi reminded Scholz that "it is easy to destroy political mutual trust, but it is difficult to rebuild it", China and Germany should "jointly resist the interference of faction confrontation, pan-ideology and other factors"; he also said that "Sino-Euro relations are not targeted at, dependent on, or controlled by a third party".<sup>78</sup> Only three days after the Sino-German bilateral meeting, Beijing said it urged the G7, which includes Germany and Japan, to "stop clinging to the Cold War mentality and ideological prejudice", stop "interfering in other countries' internal affairs" and stop "stirring up regional conflicts", because a joint statement made by the Foreign Ministers of G7 countries under Germany's presidency mentioned security issues related to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, China may require Germany not to get too close to Japan on some security issues with the incentive of offering further cooperation opportunities, or with the coercion of stopping ongoing cooperation or cancelling future cooperation with Germany. The same tactic has been used by Beijing to deal with Washington: After the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced eight countermeasures against the United States, including the suspension of Sino-US climate change talks.<sup>80</sup>

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78 "习近平会见德国总理朔尔茨 [Xi Jinping Meets with German Chancellor Scholz — Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China]", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2022, accessed December 24, 2022. [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/zyxw/202211/t20221104\\_10800441.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/zyxw/202211/t20221104_10800441.shtml).

79 "2022年11月7日外交部发言人赵立坚主持例行记者会 [Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian's Regular Press Conference on November 7, 2022, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China]", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2022, accessed December 24, 2022. [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/fyrbt\\_673021/jzhsl\\_673025/202211/t20221107\\_10801513.shtml](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/fyrbt_673021/jzhsl_673025/202211/t20221107_10801513.shtml).

80 "外交部宣布针对佩洛西窜台反制措施 [The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Announces Countermeasures against Pelosi's Treachery to Taiwan]", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2022, accessed December 24, 2022. <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/zyxw/202208/>

## Japan's Foreign Policy Towards Russia and China

The second challenge is Japan's foreign policy towards Russia and China. Despite being Germany's democratic partner with shared values, Japan's foreign policy is not exactly in line with Germany, especially regarding security issues related to Russia and China that are relevant to Japan's own interests. For example, while Germany has frozen Nord Stream 2 gas project because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Japan is still trying to maintain its energy import from Russia: In "Basic Policy for Achieving GX (Green Transformation)" issued by Japanese government on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2022, the government claims that its energy projects jointly conducted with Russia such as Sakhalin 1, 2 and Arctic LNG2 will retain their interests at present due to their importance to Japan's energy security.<sup>81</sup> Facing Japanese domestic non-life insurance companies' decision to stop providing insurance covering the sinking of ships in all waters of Russia and Ukraine caused by war, which may increase the risk of suspension of liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports from Sakhalin 2, Japan's Agency for Natural Resources and Energy and Financial Services Agency sent a letter to the General Insurance Association of Japan, asking them to consider expanding their insurance underwriting capacity;<sup>82</sup> Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry also asked the insurance companies to take action, and will carefully assess whether it is necessary for the ministry to respond if the situation does not improve.<sup>83</sup> Regarding China's human rights issues, unlike the EU and US, Japan has not imposed any sanction on China over Xinjiang due to the lack of corresponding legal frameworks and the concern over possible confrontation with its biggest trading partner.<sup>84</sup> In sum, Japan's approaches to Russia and China issues are somehow different from Germany's. If Japan cannot adjust its policy timely

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81 "GX 実現に向けた基本方針(案) [Basic Policy for Achieving GX]", Cabinet Secretariat, 2022, accessed December 28, 2022. [https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/gx\\_jikkou\\_kaigi/dai5/siryou1.pdf](https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/gx_jikkou_kaigi/dai5/siryou1.pdf).

82 Nikkei, "エネ庁など、サハリン2対象の船舶保険継続を要請 [Energy Agency, Etc. Request Continuation of Ship Insurance for Sakhalin 2]", *Nihon Keizai Shimbun Morning Edition*, December 28 2022.

83 Nikkei, "サハリン2、輸送停止懸念ロシア全域の船舶保険停止日本の損保再保険会社との交渉焦点 [Sakhalin 2, Concern about Transport Suspension Suspension of Ship Insurance throughout Russia, Japanese Non-life Insurance, Focus of Negotiations with Reinsurers]", *Nihon Keizai Shimbun Morning Edition*, December 25, 2022.

84 Nikkei, "ウイグル人権問題、日本政府は対中制裁に慎重 [Uighur Human Rights Issue: Japanese Government Cautious About Sanctions Against China]", *Nikkei Newspaper*, March 23 2021.

to reduce the two countries divergence, further bilateral security cooperation may become more difficult.

### **Germany's Shifting Policy for the Indo-Pacific**

The third challenge comes from Germany's shifting policy for the Indo-Pacific. The increasing diversification of Germany's partners in the Indo-Pacific region may lead to a relative decline in Germany-Japan security cooperation's priority. The Federal Government's documents reveal that Germany's partner selection principles in the Indo-Pacific region are changing. In Germany's "Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific" issued in 2019, the Federal Government emphasizes that closing ranks with "democracies and partners with shared values in the region" is important to Germany's interests in the region, and it will "expand cyber-security cooperation and dialogue with partners with shared values in the region... to enhance the protection of its own information and communications systems, collective defense capabilities and resilience to growing threats in cyberspace and the information arena".<sup>85</sup> However, in the document "Stronger Engagement in the Indo-Pacific Region" issued in September 2022, which announces Germany's future engagement in the region, the Federal Foreign Office states that the Federal Government's offers of cooperation are "extended to all partners in the region that are committed to the principles of the rules-based order".<sup>86</sup> The partner selection principle of shared values and democratic institution is diluted.

The shift may lead to a decrease in Japan's priority in Germany's security policy for the region. Echoing the adjusted policy guidelines, Germany has begun to expand its partner list by including some Indo-Pacific countries that are governed by non-democratic regimes from the western perspective. For example, Scholz visited Singapore and Vietnam in November 2022 to deepen Germany's cooperation with the two countries on both traditional and non-traditional security issues. In Singapore, the two sides showed their resolution

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<sup>85</sup> The Federal Government, "Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific," 9.

<sup>86</sup> "Stronger Engagement in the Indo-Pacific Region", Federal Foreign Office, 2022, accessed November 28, 2022. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/regionaleschwerpunkte/asien/indo-pacific-progress-report/2551714>.

to strengthen their cooperation including information sharing between their cybersecurity agencies, building reliable resilient supply chains, and bilateral training between their navies, armies, and air forces;<sup>87</sup> in Vietnam, the two sides concluded agreements on defense cooperation, after the first German frigate had docked in Vietnam in January in the same year.<sup>88</sup> It can be seen that the deemphasis of partners' shared values and democratic institution will lead to the increase and diversification of Germany's security partners in Indo-Pacific, which may result in Germany's less input into its security cooperation with Japan in the future.

## Conclusion

Since 2020, against the background of the German government's adoption of its policy guidelines for the Indo-Pacific region and the formation of Germany's new government, Germany's security cooperation with Japan has been strengthening. The two countries' strengthening security cooperation are characterized by the increasing frequencies and contents of high-level communication regarding security affairs, and the expansion of cooperation areas ranging from traditional security issues to non-traditional security issues.

Three reasons at international, bilateral, and domestic levels have contributed to the growing bilateral security cooperation. At the international level, Germany's security-economy dilemma with China has brought Germany closer to Japan, since Japan has been viewed as a good example showing how to wisely balance economic ties, political differences, and security challenges in the relationship with China; at the bilateral level, by linking its engagement in Europe with its request for European partners' assistance to its security concerns in Asia, Japan's issue-linkage tactic towards Germany has largely contributed to strengthening German officials' policy preference of cooperating with Japan on security issues; at Germany's

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87 "Joint Declaration between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Singapore: Partners for a Resilient and Sustainable Future", Germany Embassy Singapore, 2022, accessed December 29, 2022. <https://singapur.diplo.de/sg-en/aktuelles/-/2566212>.

88 "Germany's Scholz kicks off Asia tour with stop in Vietnam", Deutsche Welle, 2022, accessed December 29, 2022. <https://p.dw.com/p/4JRpw>.



domestic level, Germany's domestic preference structure in favor of value-based foreign policy has become more conducive to Germany's cooperation with democratic countries such as Japan.

However, the strengthening Germany-Japan security cooperation still faces three potential challenges. First, facing Berlin's demands for Beijing's cooperation on some security and economic issues, China may use the demands as a bargaining chip to influence Germany's further security cooperation with Japan; second, if Japan cannot adjust its policy towards Russia and China timely to reduce Tokyo and Berlin's divergence, further security cooperation between the two countries may become more difficult; third, Germany's shifting policy for the Indo-Pacific, which recently deemphasizes partners' shared values and democratic institution, will lead to the increase and diversification of Germany's security partners in Indo-Pacific, and that may result in Germany's less input into its security cooperation with Japan in the future.

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