



IIPS

Current Situations in Asia and US–Japan Relations

Lecture by Mr. Richard Armitage
Former Deputy Secretary of State
U.S.A.

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ANA Hotel, Tokyo

The Institute for International Policy Studies (IIPS) hosted a lecture by the former Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, who gave a speech entitled “Current Situations in Asia and US–Japan Relations.” The event was held at the ANA Hotel, Tokyo, on October 19, 2005 with the support of the Nippon Foundation.



At the beginning of his lecture, former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage pointed out that many of the highly populous nations of the world and major energy-consuming nations are concentrated in Asia, and that change in military capacity is notable. Referring to the increasing interest in the greater

prominence of China, Armitage remarked on the significance of how it will develop and continued by noting the following.

Historically, when a big power gains ground, existing major powers tend to be slow in adapting themselves to the change. However, the US partially lacks knowledge of the fact that nationalism has become extremely influential in

Northeast Asia. While countries like China and the Republic of Korea are suspicious of the US, the US also, in part, cannot help but grow suspicious of the military build-up of China. As for North Korea, the possession of nuclear weapons is still open to question. Nevertheless, we still need to show resoluteness towards the issue as we do so towards the issue of the abductions.

The US acknowledges that the right approach is to pour energy into Asia at large rather than into how it can guide China in a proper direction. To this end, while considering the US–Japan relationship to be of primary importance, it sees that expanding relationships with other countries beyond individual issues like terrorism is also important.



In Asia, on the other hand, there has commonly been competition for influence. China has placed an extremely strong emphasis on the Asian region, making highly multidirectional approaches in recent years by leveraging ODA and direct investment. The security offered by the US also has a major impact on the very basis of numerous cooperative relationships that the US has built with Asian countries. This is why the US has recently been striving to revitalize its alliances and strengthen relationships with other nations as well.

As for the currently controversial issue of Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan, it must be pointed out that sufficient discussions are yet to be held within Japan. In particular, discussions need to be held over what role Japan should take in the world. If this is done, minor issues would naturally fall into place. As stated by the late US Ambassador to Japan, Michael Mansfield, Armitage noted that the US–Japan relationship is the most important bilateral relationship in the



world. Although a close cooperative relationship has been built, in order to maintain such a relationship, it is important for the two countries to always have a mutual understanding of issues and demonstrate closeness in the cooperative relationship to the world. As for any existing issues between the two countries, solutions are certain to be brought about if the parties concerned engage in consultation. After pointing out the above, former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage concluded his lecture and answered questions from the attendees.

