



RIIPA Special Webinar

Geopolitical Change and Maintaining Maritime Security in the Indo-Pacific Region:

The Prospects of Commitment of the New US Administration

Panelists Bio and Talking Points

KREAB

CREATING VALUE THROUGH COMMUNICATION

Panelist: Thailand

Keynote Speaker Closed session 1



Professor, Dr. Kitti Prasirtsuk

*Professor of international relations at Thammasat University
an advisory committee for the International Studies Center (ISC) at the Thai
Foreign Ministry*

Short-bio:

His experiences include Vice Rector for International Affairs (2018-2021) and Director at the Institute of East Asian Studies (2013-2018) at his university. He used to serve as a strategic committee at the Thai Defence Ministry (2014-19).

He was a non-resident fellow at the Center on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California (2023 – 2024). Kitti is currently a Japan Foundation fellow (2024 – 2025), researching on “local/regional revitalization” at Kyushu University.

Kitti was a visiting professor at UC Berkeley, teaching “International Relations in Southeast Asia,” and gave lectures at various universities, such as ANU, Munich, Waseda, Peking, Fudan, Korea, and Yonsei. He has been invited to speak, including at Columbia University, Nikkei Forum, Beijing Forum, Jeju Forum, and ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

Earning an M.A. from Keio University and a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley, Kitti has a wide range of publications, including those on U.S. – Thailand security alliance, Japan-Southeast Asia relations, ASEAN, maritime security, and Thai politics. His recent writings include “Thailand,” in Hall, Lee Brown, and Strating (eds.), *Blue Security in the Indo-Pacific* (Routledge, 2024).

Talking Points:

1. Maritime security has been increasingly important, as we witness potential flash points, grey-zone activities, and tension areas in the broader Indo-Pacific.
2. The concept of “blue security” which involve blue economy and environment can be helpful in propelling cooperation, starting from common denominators, non-traditional security, and capacity building. The maritime domain should not only be destined to peace, but also prosperity; not only to protect, but also to utilize and cultivate.
3. Deterrence remains indispensable to maintain maritime order, involving cooperation in both traditional and non-traditional security.
4. Amid the US-China rivalry and Trump 2.0, it is more crucial to have cooperation among the “middles,” namely Japan, Australia, ASEAN, and European countries.

Panelist: Japan

Keynote Speaker Closed session 2



Mariko Kawano

Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Law, Waseda University (Tokyo, Japan)

Short-bio:

She gave a special course in the Hague Academy of International Law in 2009 on “The Role of Judicial Procedures in the Process of the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes” and the lecture was published in the *Recueil des cours*, Vol. 346 (2009), pp. 9-473. Her lectures are also provided in the Audio-visual Library of the United Nations. She has published various articles including “The Common Interest of Communities and the International Court of Justice,” *New Trends in International Law: Festschrift in honour of Judge Hisashi Owada* (Brill, 2024), pp.219-242

Professor Kawano has been member of various committees and others of the ministries of Japan, including: the Consultative Committees on Maritime Affairs and on Ports, Ministry of Land and Transport; the Headquarters for Ocean Policy of the Government of Japan; the Advisory Group on the Ocean Policy and Ports; the Council on Customs, Tariff, Foreign Exchange and Other Transactions, Ministry of Finance; and the Bar Exam Committee, Ministry of Justice.

Talking Points:

1. Diversifying aspects of maritime security in the current international community
2. Concerns regarding China’s assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region
3. Maintenance of maritime security as a matter of concern of the coastal States or States in the region and that of the States outside the region
4. International adjudication as measures to ensure the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific region

Panelist: Japan



Dr. Takashi Terada

Professor, Faculty of Law, Doshisha University

Short-bio:

Takashi Terada is Professor of International Relations at Doshisha University, Kyoto Japan. He received his Ph.D from the Australian National University in 1999. Before taking up his current position in April 2012, he was an assistant professor at the National University of Singapore (1999~2006) and associate and full professor at Waseda University, Tokyo (2006~2011). He has also served as a visiting fellow at University of Warwick, U.K. (2011~12), a Japan scholar at Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington D.C. (2012), and an operating adviser for the US Japan Institute (USJI) (2011~2019). His areas of specialty include international political economy in Indo Pacific, theoretical and empirical studies of Asian regionalism and regional integration, and Japanese domestic politics and foreign policy linkage. He co edited with Peter Drysdale five volumes of *Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation* (Routledge 2007). His books in Japanese entitled East Asia and Asia Pacific; Institutional and Normative Competitions in Regional Integration published by University of Tokyo Press (2013) and Geo-economics in Indo Pacific and US China Hegemonic Competition (editor, Sairyu-sha 2023) His latest book chapters in English include "Politics on TPP /CPTPP : Turning Japan into One of the World's Major FTA Powers " in *Critical Review of Abe Administration* (Routledge, 2023) and "The Evolution of Japan ASEAN Relations: Core Moves for Japan's Initiatives in Asian Regionalism beyond Southeast Asia" in *The Oxford Handbook of Japanese Politics* (OUP, 2022).

Talking Points:

1. Freedom of navigation and rules-based maritime governance are essential for economic stability, as nations such as Japan rely on maritime trade for over 99% of their imports and exports.
2. China's control of over 5,500 registered ships, compared to the US's 200, gives it significant leverage in global trade and security, raising concerns about the potential 'weaponisation of ships' by China to exert geo-economic influence.
3. The Trump-Ishiba meeting in DC highlighted the need for secure LNG transport, but current shipbuilding constraints and the risk of 'ship weaponisation' pose a danger.
4. Overdependence on Chinese (and in business terms, South Korean) shipbuilders for LNG carriers threatens the economic security of Japan and the US, making the revival of domestic shipbuilding in both nations a strategic priority.

Panelist: Germany



Source by RTI

Dr. Martin Eberts

*Präsident der Deutsch-Japanischen Gesellschaft Berlin
Former Consul General of Germany in Osaka/Kobe (2020-2023).*

Short-Bio

Former Director General of the German Institute Taipei (i.e. German Envoy to the R.O.C. Taiwan; 2014-2018). Mr. Eberts, historian by training, worked as a career diplomat in the German diplomatic service for 37 years, also including postings to Tokyo and Jakarta, and as a Policy Planner in the Head Office in Berlin.

Talking Points:

1. Gradual realignment or paradigm shift? How to maintain a rules-based international order and universal values in a rapidly changing security policy environment.
2. Lessons learned or loss of control? What the war of aggression against Ukraine and the militarization of the South China Sea can teach us for the North East Asian theatre.
3. Global responsibility or intrusion from outside? Perspectives for German, EU- and wider European involvement in East Asian security affairs.

Panelist: United States of America



Professor, Dr. James Kraska

Chair and Charles H. Stockton Professor of International Maritime Law in the Stockton Center for International Law, U.S. Naval War College

Short-bio:

Prof. Kraska is also Visiting Professor of Law and John Harvey Gregory Lecturer on World Organization at Harvard Law School, where he teaches a popular International Law of the Sea course. Prof. Kraska previously served as a Visiting Professor at the College of Law, University of the Philippines, a Distinguished Visiting Professor of Law at Gujarat National Law University in India, a Visiting Professor of Law at the University of Maine School of Law in Portland, Maine, Mary Derrickson McCurdy Visiting Scholar at Duke University Marine Laboratory in the Nicholas School of the Environment, and Office of the Chief of Naval Research Fellow at the Marine Policy Center, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. He spent 20 years as a Navy judge advocate, including service in Yokosuka and Okinawa and the Pentagon, where he was Director of International Negotiations on the Joint Staff. His most recent books are "Cultural Influences on the Law of the Sea (Oxford), Disruptive Technology and the Law of Naval Warfare Oxford), and Emerging Technology and the Law of the Sea (Cambridge).

Talking Points:

What does an "America First" foreign policy look like in Indo-Pacom and how will it shape the international maritime order? The new U.S. administration is rebalancing U.S. foreign policy toward homeland security and economic security, but does this mean Europe and the Indo-Pacific regions will become less safe? The policy is designed to strengthen America, thereby strengthening the global alliance system that depends on American power. With the rise of Russia in the West and China in the East, the United States can no longer balance these threats alone. Security in both regions will require greater burden sharing or inputs from U.S. treaty allies and partners.

Panelist: Malaysia



Shahrman Lockman

Director (Special Projects), Institute of Strategic & International Studies, Malaysia

Short-bio:

Shahrman's research focuses on Malaysian foreign and defense policies, Southeast Asian maritime security, and Malaysia-China relations, particularly in the South China Sea. He advised Malaysia's Defense Ministry on the 2019 Defense White Paper and contributed to a Five Power Defense Arrangements (FPDA) security assessment for 2020–2031. A member of CSCAP Malaysia, he holds a Master of Strategic Affairs from the Australian National University.

Talking Points:

- 1. Tensions in the South China Sea will persist, with escalation remaining a risk:** Confrontations – particularly between China and the Philippines – are expected to continue but will likely stay localized.
- 2. Beijing consolidates, others adjust:** China expands control through steady enforcement and infrastructure, while Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia fortify their positions.
- 3. Trump's return injects unpredictability:** US policy could swing between confrontation and disengagement. There are fears that the South China Sea could be a victim of a broader US-China deal.
- 4. ASEAN is fragmented, external powers drive events:** The Code of Conduct remains stalled, while regional states hedge between strategic alignment and self-preservation.
- 5. Slow the shift, shape China's calculations:** Changes to the status quo are inevitable, and regional states will have to adapt. The goal is not to prevent this shift but to delay it – creating conditions that push Beijing to exercise restraint in advancing its ambitions.

Panelist: United States of America



Leonald Kosinski

Former Director for Logistics, The Joint Staff, U.S. Department of Defense and Deputy Commander, Fifth Air Force, U.S. Forces Japan

Short-bio:

Lt. Gen. Leonard Kosinski recently retired after 31 years of service completing a pinnacle assignment as Director for Logistics, Joint Staff, at the Pentagon. As Director for Logistics, he integrated logistics planning and execution in support of global operations and assisted the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in fulfilling his responsibilities as the principal military advisor to the President and Secretary of Defense.

Lt. Gen. Kosinski received his commission from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1993 as a distinguished graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Operations Research. He has served in operational assignments flying the KC-135 Stratotanker, C-5 Galaxy, and C-17 Globemaster III. He is a distinguished graduate of the Defense Language Institute and was an Olmsted Scholar in Tokyo, Japan. Lt. Gen. Kosinski has also served in major operations including Operations Southern Watch, Allied Force, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and United Relief. Prior to his Joint Staff role, the general was Deputy Commander, Fifth Air Force, Yokota Air Base, Japan.

He earned a M.S. from Texas A&M University, MALD from The Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, Tufts University, and an M.B.A. from Hitotsubashi University where he completed his thesis under Prof. Ikujiro Nonaka on Knowledge Creation Theory and leadership. In 2023, he received the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon from the Government of Japan.

Talking Points:

- Acceleration of Japan-U.S. military alliance and need for increased operational capabilities
- Increasing threats from the “Axis of Upheaval” (PRC, Russia, Iran, North Korea and proxies)
- Technological threats: hypersonics, drones, AI, info ops/disinformation campaign, nuclear weapons
- Foundational importance of logistics, supply chain resilience, defending Cyber & Space domain
- Defense Industrial Base challenges and opportunities in Indo-Pacific
- Insights and perspectives from recent trip to Brussels (NATO, EU, EDA)