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SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS  
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Thank you, Senator Webb, for chairing this Subcommittee hearing today on U.S. -- Japan relations.

As we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the U.S. – Japan Security Treaty, whereby Japan granted the United States military base rights on its territory in return for a U.S. pledge of protection, we are witnessing potential fundamental changes in our relationship with Japan. Much of this has to do with the historic victory in August 2009, of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) which ended the almost uninterrupted rule of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in postwar Japan. The impact of this victory is being felt across nearly every aspect of Japanese policymaking, from security alliance relations to Japan’s budget-making process to the relationship between politicians and career Japanese civil

and foreign service employees who served under the LDP -- the present opposition party -- for close to a half century.

Clearly, a transition was expected and necessary. And it is expected that those who have been out of power for close to two generations, will need time to gain on the job training in running a government.

Experienced observers, however, have remarked that this has not been a “smooth” transition by any standard. These same authorities have also suggested that part of the problem is driven by political instead of policy exigencies.

It is a fact that in July 2010, half of Japan’s Upper House seats will be up for election. The DPJ controls that chamber of the Diet by virtue of its alliance with two smaller parties, the left-of-center Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the populist/conservative People’s New Party (PNP).

The results of the July Upper House election may have a formative impact on a number of issues in U.S.-Japan relations. And it is in this

present run-up to this election that, in many observers' minds, politics is intruding into the national security decision-making process of the current leadership. There is no better example of this alleged intrusion, than in the controversy over U.S. military base realignment plans in Okinawa; the "Futenma" issue.

As you know, beginning in the Clinton, through the Bush and into the present Administration, negotiations were successfully concluded to realign and expand our mutual security alliance with Japan beyond its existing framework. A key feature of this new arrangement includes relocating the U.S. Marine's Futenma Air Station from crowded Ginowan to Camp Schwab, in the less populated part of northern Okinawa. This realignment of U.S. forces in Japan also includes the redeployment of the III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF), which includes 8,000 U.S. personnel and their dependents (when at full capacity), to new facilities in Guam, and thus lead to the return of thousands of acres of land to the Japanese. This move will reduce the

number of U.S. Marines on Okinawa by nearly half. U.S. and Japanese officials settled on Camp Schwab because of its far less populated and congested location.

But now, after 13 years of negotiations, and an agreement signed in 2006 by the U.S. and Japanese governments, the present government has stated that it might not honor the agreement in part or whole. Why?

Does the new government want to alter fundamentally the U.S.-Japan security alliance? Prime Minister Hatoyama has in the past made statements suggesting that U.S. troops in Japan either be significantly reduced or withdrawn altogether, though he backed away from these statements once he was elected, and confirmed the centrality of the alliance to Japan's security. Is it because the present government has a vision of a Japan that is more "normal," in that it is more assertive and independent on the international stage? Members of the Hatoyama government have been quoted as supporting increased contributions in

personnel and materiel to international security operations, but to do so only in missions that are authorized by the U.N. Security Council.

The answer to this question at present is that there is no answer. The Hatoyama government has put off twice giving a definitive response whether it will honor Japan's treaty commitments relating to Futenma. Unsettlingly, there are those who confidently predict that a final decision will be further delayed until after the July 2010 Upper House elections. And even if the election brings a greater majority, the present government will find itself still bound to implicit domestic political promises that fundamentally alter our longstanding security relationship.

I would be very interested in your responses to these troubling predictions, and what implication this politics over policy decision-making process allegation might have on other security related issues in the region, e.g. future provocative actions taken by North Korea against Japan.

I would like to raise another less visible, but no less important issue for discussion before this panel today on U.S. – Japan relations. It is the problem of parent child abduction.

We are experiencing an increasing problem with Japanese citizens abducting their American children and successfully returning to a safe harbor in Japan. The Department of State reports that since 1994, 269 American children have been kidnapped from America to Japan. Shockingly, it is my understanding that since 1952 when Japan regained its sovereignty, not a single kidnapped child from an American parent has ever been returned to the U.S. from Japan. In addition, I understand these American children living in Japan are often denied access to their American parent after a parental separation or divorce. And, to my knowledge, there are no joint custody or visitation rights in Japan. As a result, these children are alienated from their loving American parent, and the psychological trauma is extremely damaging. This tragedy for

these American children and their left-behind American parents is overwhelming and must come to an end.

The 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction has not been ratified by Japan. The U.S., Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, Italy, and Spain have all called upon Japan to ratify this treaty. Japan is a modern industrialized society, and ally of the US. American children, however, are kidnapped and denied access to their American parents, and no child has been returned. If Japan truly wishes to participate in the international community, it must follow international norms and ratify this treaty.

In the past, private frankness followed by public discretion had been tried to resolve this issue on a case-by-case basis, but to no avail. Recently, however, the tragedy of Japanese child abduction has been made public. I applaud Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell's

extended public discussion of the problem of child abductions at a press availability at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo on February 2, 2010. His comments can be found on the State Department's web page at: <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2010/02/136416.htm> In addition, he recently met with the American parents of abducted children last Friday, April 9, 2010 at the State Department here in Washington, D.C. It is my understanding that a number of those parents who attended that "Town Hall" meeting with Assistant Secretary Campbell and other senior State Department officials are in the audience today. Their organization, Bring Abducted Children Home (BAC Home) can be found at: [www.bachome.org](http://www.bachome.org)

I encourage this panel to study this problem, if they have had not done so previously, and contribute their scholastic efforts to end the suffering of all concerned.

Thank you again, Senator Webb, for chairing this Subcommittee hearing on U.S. -- Japan relations.