Chapter Four

Structural Logic and Japan’s Security Policy

This chapter seeks to analyse to what extent structural logic explains the change in Japan’s behaviour in the post-11 September 2001 global order. The chapter begins with a detailed discussion on the essence of structural realist (Waltzian) logic. The second section elaborates Japan’s increased vulnerability and the following section briefly accounts the changes in Japan’s behaviour that manifests in its security policy. The final section analyses to what extent structural factors explain changes in Japan’s security policy.

Structural realism rejects theories of international politics based on the analyses of causes at the national and individual level as reductionist, since they comprehend the international political system through the attributes and interactions of its parts. As result, methods of other disciplines are employed to comprehend international politics and Waltz deems it as a priori and inadequate for explanation (Waltz 1979).

In addition, structural realism also perceives analytical method to be wanting. Although analytical method is simple in its approach – the object of analysis is reduced to discrete parts; their properties are examined and connections are established; the relation between pairs of variables is separately examined and the final combination of all other pairs are combined as variables in the statement of a causal law – is considered insufficient. Since their utility lies only ‘where the systems-level effects are absent or are weak enough to be ignored’ (Waltz 1979). Besides, the outcomes are not only determined by the properties and interconnections of variables but also by the way they are organised. In that case, predicting the outcomes or understanding them merely on the basis of their character, properties and interactions becomes a problem.

Therefore, the similarity of outcomes despite changes in the units or parts renders analytic method weak and leaves the space for other forces that constrain the units and influence the outcomes that arise out of the interaction among them. So the forces that
seem to influence the working and outcome of units in international politics is system-level forces.

A system is composed of a structure and of interacting units. The structure gives shape to the system as a whole. A structure is defined by the arrangement of its parts and a change in their arrangement brings about structural change. Nonetheless, the structure's definition is not based on material capabilities rather by the arrangement of the system's parts and by the principle of that arrangement (Waltz 1979).

The domestic political structure is ordered according to principle with specified functions and distributed capabilities for units; hierarchy of order with an overarching authority, but the international political structure varies significantly. The units or actors in the international political structure are autonomous actors. Each unit determines its course and has equal right without any overarching authority controlling or commanding their actions. There is no unifying principle or figure in the international political system. Therefore, the ordering principle of international political system is anarchy.

Although the international-political systems are made up of interacting units, their structures are defined in terms of the primary political units of an era, be they city states, empires, or nations (Waltz 1979). Structural realism assumes that the motive of the interacting units is to seek for their survival. States (or) units may strive to survive on their own or in alliance with other states. As a result of interaction between states, certain behaviour is rewarded and some of them are punished in accordance with their adherence or non-compliance of the required actions in order to succeed in the system. Hence, the structure decides the behaviour of states if they assumed to act in their self-interest for survival with self-help or in alliance.

Still structural realism does not account for accidental or unexpected events in the international system; it offers explanation only for regularities and repetitions of state behaviour if they can be identified (Waltz 1988). Even though structural realism assumes that all the states in the system act in their self-interest and their behaviour towards one another is influenced by structural constrains, is exposed to criticism. Marxists and liberals contend that a state might respond to a perceived threat, but that perception of the threat and appropriate reaction to it is determined by the decision makers who are in-charge of foreign policy making; economic systems; social institutions and political
ideologies. Thus a state’s decision to respond to a perceived threat is not determined by structural factors alone.

However, structural realism posits that despite divergent economic systems, social institutions, political ideologies and organisations, certain identifiable condition seem to have caused wars repeatedly albeit causes varied. Neither the variations in the character of states nor the variations in the pattern of their interactions produce the outcomes (Waltz 1988). It is the structure that determines the behaviour and outcome of the interaction between the states.

Another aspect of structural realism is that it conceives that the great powers rather than all of the actors in the system define the structure. Although all the states are autonomous and sovereign, their ability to influence the outcomes favourable to them in their interaction with other states is constrained by their powers. Because the possession of wealth, power, size and form vary widely among states; only great powers have the capability to shape the structure and change the outcomes of interactions in the system. Other middle and minor powers only respond to those changes brought out by great powers as their ability to shape the outcomes of interaction is constrained by their limited material capabilities.

As a result, power is defined or equated in terms of resources or possession of material capabilities by a state. In the process, these resources are assumed to be fungible\(^6\) and relational, multidimensional notions of power\(^7\) are rejected in favour of lump concept of power (Schmidt 2005). Accordingly, the economic, military and other capabilities of nations are weighed in order to rank them, which depend on the size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence (Waltz 1979).

Nonetheless, the criteria with which aggregate power can be measured or a method for combining them into single entity of capability is not specified. Besides, Waltz does not also identify what he means by capability and the question of ‘capability

\(^6\) Fungibility refers to the ease with which power resources useful in one issue-area can be used in other issue-areas.

\(^7\) Relational power is conceived as the ability to demonstrate a change in outcomes. It defines and specifies power in a multidimensional, causal manner. The dimensions of power consist of scope, domain, weight, and its costs.
to get whom to do what" is never indicated (Schmidt 2005). Ultimately, military strength
is characterised as power.

In addition, the distribution of capabilities is the key independent variable through
which wars, alliances and balance of power in the international system is explained. Although, capabilities
are attributes of units, the distribution of capabilities is not (Waltz 1979). Therefore, states strive to accumulate
appropriate amount of power in order to survive the anarchical environment, where security, not power is the ultimate concern of
the states. The end result, according to Waltz, is that states are security maximisers. On
the other hand, a state cannot possibly estimate the amount of power required to secure its
security because of the uncertainty of state intentions; therefore states would strive to
amass as much power as possible in order to survive in the self-help world (Mearsheimer
2001).

As the case may be, whether states attempt to augment their security or power,
any such action would provoke other states to respond. The augmentation of capabilities
by any state would be perceived by other states in the system as aggressive in intent.
Because any increase in the relative capability of one state results in the decreased
capabilities of others. As a consequence, it transforms into a threat to the survival of other
states. Therefore, states resort to balancing strategy if the aggressor is more powerful and
expansionist in nature.

In essence, balancing is a countervailing strategy (Layne 2006: 28 a). It can also
be defined as a state allying with other state or states to counter a prevailing threat (Walt
2007). There are two factors that compel states to resort to balancing strategy: one, failure
to counter a potential hegemonic power would jeopardise their survival and depending on
a dominant power for survival would be at its munificence; two, states prefer to join
weaker coalitions as they would offer more room for manoeuvre and influence in
decision making as their contribution to the coalition is valuable unlike dominant
coalitions, which may not require their assistance, hence less influence in the coalition
that can render them at the mercy of the dominant power (Walt 2007: 110-111).

Besides, states resort to certain measures to make balancing strategy work. First, a
signal is sent through diplomatic channel to the aggressor regarding their commitment to
maintaining balance of power even at the cost of war, where confrontation rather than
conciliation is stressed. Second, at times states attempt to build a defensive coalition to facilitate their counter against the aggressor, although this ‘external balancing’ is confined to bipolar system due to the lack of potential alliance partners albeit the possibility of aligning with minor powers exists. Notwithstanding the difficulties in formulation, and smooth functioning of such a balancing alliance, states strive for it as it minimises the cost of checking the aggressor – all the states share the burden of the cost (Mearsheimer 2001: 156). Third, states strive to accumulate additional resources on their own through improved economic capability, increased military capability and developing a clever strategy to counter the aggressor (Waltz 1979: 118).

A state’s technological advancement or economic development or both might result in accruing instruments of war even for defensive purposes provoke a response from other states. Moreover, any attempt on the part of the coalition or a member state to improve the coherence of the alliance or increase its membership would provoke opposing alliance to resort to countermeasures (Waltz 1988: 619). On the one hand, the state that strives to build defensive measures construes the reaction of other states as a confirmation of its perceived vulnerability. On the other hand, the opposing states perceive it as an attempt to dominate the system by reordering the governing principles of the system through war. Consequently, the system is destabilised and a crisis ensues.

A crisis in the international system is signified in war, which involves the great powers in the system because only they possess the requisite capability to bring about any change in the system. The war between opposing alliances is waged and the balance in the system is restored with the defeat of the aggressor. Rarely such alliances outlast their purpose and the victorious powers determine the shape of the international system according to its priorities and strategies.

The balance of power that emerged following the Second World War had two opposing camps with the United States and the Soviet Russia leading them. Apart from the two super powers, the other great powers in the system were the United Kingdom, France and People’s Republic of China. The principal reason that ensured stability in the

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8 The governing principle of an international system is balance of power. The stability of the system is maintained if any state or an alliance that attempt to dominate system is countered by other powerful state or an alliance.
bipolar system was the emergence of nuclear weapons. The overwhelming destructive element of nuclear weapons has altered the pattern of interaction among states in the international system. As it is the outcomes of conventional wars are difficult to prognosticate due to the complexities involved in gauging the ‘comparative qualities of troops, weapons, strategies and leaders’ (Waltz 1990: 734). But, the uncertainties in predicting the outcome of a conflict emboldens states to enter into a war with the presumption that victory could be attained at a manageable cost. In the case of a nuclear war, the outcome is obvious – annihilation (Waltz 1990). Therefore, post-war peace and stability depended on maintaining a balance with nuclear weapons as the vulnerability of both nuclear and non-nuclear states has increased.

As post-war stability had rest upon nuclear balance, an attempt was made to establish nuclear order. The imperative being the utter destructibility of nuclear weapons in matter of hours, acquisition of nuclear weapons by more states would constantly destabilise the system – although Waltz argues that more the better – and the spread of materials, technology and know-how to manufacture nuclear weapons certainly would spread (Walker 2000:705). Hence, the two super powers along with other great powers in the system established a nuclear order to preserve the peace and stability of the system.

The proposed nuclear order was based on two premises: (a) “A managed system of deterrence, whereby a recognised set of states would continue using nuclear weapons to prevent war and maintain stability, but in a manner that was increasingly controlled and rule-bound, (b) A managed system of abstinence, whereby other states would give up their sovereign rights to develop, hold and use such weapons in return for economic, security and other benefits” (Walker 2000: 706).

Nonetheless the efforts of the nuclear weapons states to institutionalise the envisioned nuclear order, that failed to deter other states from pursuing nuclear weapons. Because the competitive nature of the international system forces states to adopt strategies and instruments of war that are deployed by rival powers to survive. So, states strive to cross the nuclear threshold in order to obtain the strategic advantage of nuclear deterrence9. As a result nuclear weapons has become the raison d’être of peace and balance in the international system.

9 Nuclear deterrence is the ability of a state to prevent another state from using nuclear weapons against it in a war through its retaliatory capacity and the damage is calculated not on the basis of future action but on present capability to inflict damage.
Although various causes are attributed to states’ attempt to acquire nuclear weapons such as domestic political and bureaucratic interests or symbols of state modernity and development (Sagan 1996/1997), national security considerations remains the primary driving force. Since the acquisition and accumulation of resources, both economic and technological, leads states to compete with other great powers in the system for domination. In this regard, Waltzian structural realism predicts that Japan would emerge as one of the possible counters to the unipolarity of the United States following the collapse of Cold War bipolar global order. How?

Structural realism although makes predictions about structural impact on individual state’s behaviour, it neither sets time frame for the state actions nor account for their response to structural impact. In addition, structural realism predicts that unipolarity is ephemeral for two reasons: one, dominant powers attempt to overstretch their power and influence beyond their borders, as a result they get weakened in the longer run; two, even if a dominant state behaves in a moderate and restraint fashion, it does not preclude weaker states of their apprehensions about the future behaviour of the dominant state (Waltz 2000).

Moreover, structural realism establishes a strong correlation between unipolarity and great power emergence (Layne 1993: 31), in this case Japan. Because of the anarchical structure and imbalance of power, the hegemon’s existence is viewed through it capabilities rather than intentions, thereby they perceive to be vulnerable to the hegemon’s domination (Layne 1993). Further, a state’s economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence (Waltz 1993: 50) have been deemed as prerequisites for an aspiring great power. Credible economic capability is the primary requirement, which Japan fulfils as the second largest economy in the world.

Although the choice of becoming a great power at the face increased vulnerabilities is a constrained one, ‘because of the extent of their interests, larger units existing in a contentious arena tend to take on system-wide tasks’ (Waltz 1993: 55), but for an eligible state to relinquish the choice of becoming a great power is a structural anomaly-(Waltz 1993: 66). A state’s ordeal of inattention and disrespect along with the failure to have its way would instigate domestic reaction against the government if it fails to move in that direction. Besides, a conflict or crisis situation would certainly force
Japan to rethink the disadvantage of limited military capability. The nuclear inhibitions of Japan resulting from Second World War memories would fade with the emergence of new generation. The 'probability of Japan becoming nuclear power in due course is all the higher' (Waltz 1993: 67) because it can easily do so and the impediments are more political than economic or technological.

Therefore, structural realism predicts that Japan crossing the nuclear threshold is highly probable as it possess all the prerequisites and increased vulnerabilities to its security both from emerging China and nuclear North Korea would accelerate that process. This leads us to the next question to what extent change in Japan's security policy reflect structural realist predictions of crossing the nuclear threshold.

**Japan's Increased Vulnerability**

The post-Cold War period witnessed the emergence of China as an economic power with a modernised military. The post-1978 economic reforms in China propelled rapid economic growth. The annual average economic growth rate of China between the years 1993-1997 was 11 per cent. China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased from 21617.8 (Million Yuan) in 1991 to 79395.7 (Million Yuan) in 1998. Simultaneously, the per capita GDP also increased from 1879.0 in 1991 to 6392.0 (in Million Yuan) in 1998. (China's GDP and Per Capita GDP 2003). Burgeoning Chinese market attracted a great deal of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as well. So, China’s growing economic strength and attraction as an investment destination has multiplied its influence in East Asian region.

Although Japan's economy grew at the rate of 10, 5 and 4 per cent from 1960s to 1980s, the Tokyo Stock Market crash in 1989 stalled the growth. In the 1990s the growth rate stagnated and the annual GDP growth rate remained at 1.5 per cent (Japan's Growth Rate 2009). Japan’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) had an incremental growth from 462,242 (in 10 Billion Yen) in 1991 to 489,281 (in 10 Billion Yen) in 1998. In addition, the per capita GDP of Japan grew at a slower rate of 3,787 (in 1000 Yen) in 1991 to 3,996 in 1998 (Japan’s GDP and Per Capita GDP 2009). The continued recession of the 1990s has significantly altered equation between China and Japan. Japan’s position as second largest economy though remained intact; it was certainly under threat from China. So far Japan remained the engine of East Asian miracle and China was fast replacing it.
But this failed to deter trade between Japan and China as it grew from $18.2 billion in 1990 to $66.2 billion in the year 1999. The Japanese foreign direct investment into China increased from $438 million in 1989 to $4.5 billion in 1995 (Green 2003). Therefore, Japan's 'triumph card' in world politics i.e. economic power was challenged.

Further China's increasing military expenditure has also become a cause for Japan's security concerns. The military expenditure of China in 1991 was 54.1 billion Yuan. It multiplied into 169 billion Yuan in 1999. The increase in constant terms (million US $) was from 18,200 in 1991 to 29,400 in 1999. The military expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 2.4 in 1991 and remained at 1.7 in 1999 (China's Military Expenditure 2009). Whilst Japan's military expenditure increased marginally from 4,329 (billion yen) in 1991 to 4,934 (billion yen) in 1999. In constant terms (million US $) the increase was from 43,818 in 1991 to 47,150 in 1999 (Japan's Military Expenditure 2009). Notwithstanding the security guarantees that US-Japan Security Pact provided, the emergence of China as a threat increased the vulnerability of Japan's security. Because, the disappearance of Soviet threat diluted the purpose of the extension of US security umbrella to Japan that served Cold War calculations. The emerging post-Cold War structure in East Asia was fluid and Japan became apprehensive about US security guarantees in the face of growing China's influence.

Apart from China's rapid economic and military development, Japan was also threatened by China's provocative actions. China on 15 May 1995 conducted its forty-second underground nuclear explosion in Lop Nur, a remote desert area south of Mongolia despite Japanese Prime Minister Murayama Tomichi's call for a moratorium during his visit in the same month. Japan responded with a suspension of yen loans to China, though it was symbolic $75 million with the exception of medical equipment and flood relief. Undeterred, China had gone ahead with its last nuclear tests at Lop Nur on 30 July 1996 (Green 2003). Although China had been the largest recipient of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA), China's nuclear tests has shaken Japan's reliance on economic assistance as a negotiating tool.

In addition to these economic and military concerns, Japan also had to deal territorial dispute with China over Senkaku islands. China passed a territorial seas law in 1992. Accordingly, Chinese oil explorers were given the right to explore and force would
be used to protect China's interest. Chinese oil exploratory vessels made trips to the islands and in February 1996 a Chinese rig was reported to be drilling for oil near one of the islands (Green 2003). However, Japan and China agreed to jointly develop the resources in the disputed islands in the spirit of Japan-China Friendship Treaty. China's assertion of rights over the islands confirmed Japan's apprehension about China's belligerence following the nuclear tests.

As Japan was negotiating with the Senkaku dispute, another crisis broke out in Taiwan Straits. To intimidate pro-independence party from winning the elections, China conducted a series of missile tests across the Taiwan Straits in March 1996. China also signalled its intention of using force to prevent Taiwan declaring independence from People's Republic of China. Japan protested against the tests and one of the carrier battle groups that the US deployed in the area was the Yokosuka-based USS Independence (Green 2003). Nonetheless the possibility of Japan getting entrapped if the hostilities escalate into a conflict with China as per US-Japan security arrangement was high. Therefore, China's growing economic clout, rapid military modernisation and certain acts of belligerence increased the vulnerability of Japan's security despite guarantees of the US-Japan Security Treaty.

Besides China asserting its role as a major player in East Asian region, developments in North Korea raised serious concerns for Japan's security. During the Cold War, Japan's relation with North Korea was conciliatory and non-confrontational and operated within the US-Republic of Korea framework of maintaining peace and stability in the region. Japan focused on economy and promotion of private exchange (Takashi and Jain 2000). But the collapse of the Soviet Union deprived North Korea of its main economic and military support provider. As the post-Cold War security structure was unfolding in East Asia, Japan attempted to engage North Korea through informal networks (Green 2003).

In a dramatic turn of events, North Korea withdrew from Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in March 1993 and tested Nodong -1 SCUD type missile with a range to strike Japan in May that year. Further, North Korea disallowed the inspection by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (Kawashima 2003) and began processing the spent nuclear fuel rods at the Yongbyon nuclear facility in 1994. The US intervened to diffuse
the precarious situation and signed the Agreed Framework with North Korea and South Korea as well as Japan as participatory states. Oil and Light-Water Reactors (LWR) were promised to discontinue and dismantle North Korean nuclear programme.

Temporary cessation of hostilities failed to prevent the North Korean military activities, nuclear and missile programmes becoming a source of threat to Japan’s security and the region although Japan disagreed with the US on exact type of threat it posed (Hughes 1996). Nonetheless the Agreed Framework, Japan doubted the efficacy of US security system due to the complications and difficulties of the US involvement during the crisis. This led Japan to create a base for a ‘supplementary security system’ (Hughes 1996). Moreover, the new National Defence Programme Outline (NDPO) of 1995 not only recognised the indispensability of US-Japan security arrangement but also addressed the questions of facing low-intensity terrorist threats, weapons of mass destruction and a proactive approach to the improvement of the international security environment as well as playing a greater role in United Nations Peace Keeping Operations (UNPKOs) (National Defense Programme Outline 1996). NDPO also influenced the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security 1996 to introduce the concept ‘situations in areas surrounding Japan’. It was a clear departure from the earlier position of ‘limited and small scale aggression’ held according to the 1978 Guidelines for Japan-US Defence Co-operation (Government of Japan 1996).

On 31 August 1998 North Korea launched long range Taepodong missiles over Japan’s air space. The missile has a range of 1,500-2,000 kilometres, and Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong were within the striking distance. Although the US and South Korea condemned the launch, Japan’s reaction was harsh. The normalisation talks with North Korea were suspended; flight services were called off and food aid was cancelled (Singh 2001). This incident clearly demonstrated that Japan had to independently review its security situation from the US security umbrella. The proximity of threat increased the vulnerability of Japan.

Therefore, advancement in missile technology and missile test launchings over Japan’s territory raised serious concerns for Japan’s security. In addition, North Korea’s development and enrichment of uranium and its weaponisation programme intensified the threat situation for Japan. As Japan was calibrating its response to the emerging security
situations, attack on World Trade Centre and Pentagon in the US took place on 11 September 2001. Subsequently, the changes that had taken place in the global order offered a unique opportunity for Japan to respond to existing and emerging security threats in the region.

A Brief Account of Japan’s Response

Japan’s response was multi-pronged. Japan’s initial reaction was to enact legislations to ease constitutional constraints on the use of force and the deployment of Self-Defence Forces (SDF) abroad for military operations. The Japanese Diet passed three bills including the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law on 29 October 2001. In addition other laws were also promulgated in June 2003: (a) Law Concerning Measure to Ensure National Independence and Security in a Situation of Armed Attack, (b) Law to Amend the Security Council Establishment Law, (c) Law to Amend the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) Law. The Special Measures Law on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance of Iraq was also enacted in July 2003. The Diet also passed seven Contingency Laws in June 2004, besides revising the US-Japan Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA) on 27 February 2004.

Moreover, Japan also had become a member of Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), a US led counter-proliferation initiative to interdict clandestine transportation of nuclear and missile materials and components. Further, Japan had revived its participation in Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) programme, which was part of the US centred Missile Defence (MD) programme. Apart from developing these defensive capabilities, Japan also enhanced its offensive strength by augmenting the power projection capabilities of its Self-Defence Forces (SDF).

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Although Japan had been under the security umbrella of the US, the extremist attack of 11 September 2001 had brought about new possibilities for its security policy. On 19 September 2001 Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi announced Japan’s basic policy: (a) Japan’s future participation in the combat against terrorism would be considered as Japan’s own security issue (b) Japan would support the US and would act in concert with other countries around the world and (c) Japan would take concrete and effective measures to demonstrate its firm determination (Statement by Japanese Prime
Minister Junichiro Koizumi (2001). Koizumi’s announcement dispelled the US disappointment over Japan’s behaviour during the first Gulf War in 1991 and also drew Japan closer to the US. Further the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law that was passed in October 2001 purported to support the armed forces of the United States and other countries to fight terrorism and thus contribute to the achievement of the purpose of the UN Charter (Government of Japan 2001).

Japan’s willingness to assist the US military was not only aimed at assuring the United States of its support as an alliance partner but also strengthened its relationship with the US. Japan’s strengthening of its relationship with the US addressed an important concern Japan had i.e. abandonment by the US following the fluidity prevailed in post-Cold War security structure of East Asia. Simultaneously, Japan also legitimised the deployment of SDF in a war zone in the pretext of its commitment to fight terrorism and to fulfil the UN charter. Even though the SDF were adequately trained and equipped, they lacked the exposure and experience of real life war situations. Japan’s participation in ‘war on terror’ provided an opportunity to for its armed forces for the first time since the end of the World War Two to rectify its disadvantages.

The Special Measures Law proscribed the SDF from using force exempting the circumstances of imminent danger to the personnel’s life or body. It stipulated the high seas, including the exclusive economic zone stipulated in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and airspace above and territory of foreign countries as areas of operation (Government of Japan 2001) for the Self Defense Forces (SDF). Despite Japan’s preparedness to dispatch its SDF to the Indian Ocean with the purpose of providing rear-area support for the US forces for the first time into a combat zone and outside its homeland did not invite any official condemnation from China (East Asia Strategic Review 2002). China seized the opportunity to bridge the differences with the United States by offering assistance, even if it is symbolic. China had domestic compulsions in the form of Xinjiang separatist movement as the reason for supporting the US move (Watanabe 2004).

As Japan was trying to unshackle the constitutional restraints on deployment of SDF in combat zones and use of force on the one hand, on the other hand, the Koizumi administration also attempted to resume normalisation of the relationship with North
Korea. Earlier Japan had dissociated itself from the trilateral – Japan, the US and South Korea – co-operative attempt to engage North Korea through Korea Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) over North Korea’s Taepodong missile launch in 1998. The limited intelligence that the US shared and concern shown dissatisfied Japan over the missile launch. Besides, categorising the missile test as satellite launch echoing North Korea’s assertion further disappointed Japan although the missile was capable of carrying warheads in the long run (Green 2003). This underestimation of the North Korean missile threat by the US prompted it to develop its own intelligence gathering capabilities and surveillance satellite systems. Further, Japan’s cabinet authorised the SDF to fire upon intruding North Korean spy vessels in 1999 signify a proactive and autonomous policy (Fouse 2004).

In spite of these developments, Japan resumed talks with North Korea due to the apprehension that the Clinton administration might restart negotiations with North Korea abruptly which would compromise Japan’s core issues: long-range missiles and missing Japanese nationals (Fouse 2004). But the negotiations failed to resolve the core issues despite having had eleven rounds. On September 17, 2002, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and North Korean leader Kim Jong-il held a one-day summit in Pyongyang that momentarily restarted normalisation talks between the two countries, which had been stalled since November 2000. This was a significant step for Japan as the Bush administration refused engage bilaterally with North Korea. Japan apologised for its colonial subjugation and suppression and North Korea admitted to kidnapping of Japanese citizens and death of five (Mochizuki 2004-5). Subsequent public outrage in Japan over kidnappings had undone the accrued benefits of the negotiations. The North Korean admission to US officials of its clandestine uranium based nuclear weapons programme in October 2002 further vitiated the security situation in the region.

The second nuclear crisis forced the US to end its support for the Agreed Framework, the North Koreans disconnected IAEA surveillance cameras from the nuclear facilities and restarted their 5 MWe reactor. An IAEA resolution adopted on 6 January 2003 condemned North Korea’s violations of the NPT, and North Korea announced its immediate withdrawal from the treaty on 10 January 2003. Soon, North Korea began reprocessing the 8,000 spent fuel rods that had been placed in storage
pursuant to the Agreed Framework (Oh and Hassig 2004). Besides, North Korea increased the number of Nodong missiles – with a strike range of 1000 kilometres – fielded from December 2002 to December 2003 (Kliman 2006).

This spiralling situation and the stand-off with North Korea convinced Japan that its security requirements were being compromised as the Nodong missiles could not reach the US and was also engaged in preparing for the invasion of Iraq. The US also made security commitments and confirmed its deterrence to guarantee Japan’s security. As a result of the US failure to intervene, Japan’s conviction about having a strong independent military force to meet contingencies without the US assistance has got strengthened. The pronouncements of US administrative officials which called for a greater global role for Japan (Twining 2007: 80-81) increased the likelihood of the US acquiescing for such a change.

Despite that Japan was also contemplating its nuclear option following the crisis. On 6 April 2002, Ozawa Ichiro, former Secretary-General of the Liberal-Democratic Party and then leader of the Liberal Party, criticized what he regarded as the arrogance of Chinese criticism of and opposition to Japan, and warned China "it's possible for us to produce 3,000 to 4,000 nuclear warheads (Ozawa Statement 2002). The Japanese government conducted a secret study about the possibility of going nuclear, which was leaked to the press in December 2002. The report was titled ‘On the Possibility of Developing nuclear Weapons Domestically’ which examined the technical feasibility of producing tactical nuclear weapons. The report estimated that a minimum period of three years and at a cost of between 20-30 billion yen to create a small stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons (Rublee 2009).

Although such attempts in the past not only invited public outrage in Japan but also officials and leaders were forced to resign for making pro-nuclear statements. Shingo Nishimura, vice-minister of defence in the cabinet of Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi said in an interview that ‘Japan’s failure to consider nuclear armament left it open to “rape” by China’ was forced to resign (French 2002). The muted public reaction to the recent development has underscored the changing public perception of nuclear weapons and taboo over the discussion of nuclear weapons in public has been broken. Besides, they also indicate Japan’s preoccupation over China’s emergence as a security threat along
with North Korea. Nonetheless, the fundamentals of Japan’s nuclear policy remained unchanged.

Japan’s growing military assertion also reflected in the launch of two satellites in March 2003. They could be used to spy on North Korea and also watch for suspicious activities by North Korean ships or any sign of work on North Korea’s nuclear weapons programme. It elicited a strong protest from North Korea though Japanese officials emphasised their use for monitoring major natural disasters (BBC News Online 2003 c). It was also a reaction to the US reluctance to share full intelligence with the Japanese during the North Korean Taepodong missile launch over Japan with regard to its trajectory and other details.

As Japan was negotiating with the North Korean nuclear and missile threats, the US launched its invasion of Iraq on 19 March 2003. The US and its coalition partners’ said objective for the invasion was to unearth Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), although they were never found. Japan’s Prime Minister Koizumi, both on the eve and after outbreak of the war, extended Japan’s support for military action against Iraq citing its failure to comply with the UN Security Council resolution 1441 (Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi 2003 a). He expressed Japan’s solidarity with the United States and other countries in their fight against terror and weapons of mass destruction although ruled out Japan’s participation in the military campaign (Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi 2003 b). Simultaneously, Koizumi besides stressing the importance of Japan-US alliance, he also emphasised on the significance of international collaboration and participation for Japan.

Japan’s such proactive diplomacy and willingness to support military action was in line with the new thinking: strengthening its relations with the US and augmenting its capacity for independent action. In addition to supporting military action in Iraq, Japan proceeded to enacted laws collectively known as the ‘Three Laws Regarding Response to Armed Attacks’ in June 2003. They are the Bill Concerning Measures to Ensure National Independence and Security in a Situation of Armed Attack, the Bill to Amend the Security Council Establishment Law, and the Bill to Amend the Self-Defence Forces Law and the Law Concerning Allowances, etc of Defence Agency Personnel.
The Bill Concerning Armed Attack was aimed at creating a posture to respond in case of an armed attack is predicted and prescribing fundamental principles and responsibilities of the national and local governments and co-operation from the people. It also purported to prescribe matters regarding legislation necessary for responses to an armed attack or an armed attack situation is predicted to maintain Japan’s security (East Asia Strategic Review 2004: 220). The Law to Amend the Security Council Establishment Law has expanded the list of matters subject to the council’s deliberation and recommendation, has changed provisions relating to its membership and has established a Situation Response Special Committee. This clearly defined and strengthened the Security Council of Japan in situations of armed attack or an armed attack is predicted (East Asia Strategic Review 2004: 221). The Self-Defence Forces and Defence Agency Law has empowered the armed forces to expropriate properties during defence operations and instituted new provisions relating to measures for the construction of defense facilities prior to issuance of a defense operations order. It allowed the emergency passage of SDF units during defense operations and provided penalty for those who run the business of production, cargo collection, sales, distribution, storage or transportation, of goods, and who have disobeyed an order to store goods they handle. The law instituted special-case provisions that exempt the SDF from application of relevant laws in case of defense operations (East Asia Strategic Review 2004).

These legislations aimed to co-ordinate different levels of governmental structure in armed conflict situations. They also created a centralised command structure under the control of the Prime Minister to make decisions in emergency situations wresting the power from the bureaucracy. This has significantly increased the authority of the Prime Minister in controlling the armed forces. Enhancing the emergency powers of SDF in conflict situations has limited the influence of Japanese Diet over it to some extent.

In addition, the Koizumi administration has also enacted the Law Concerning Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq in July 2003. This law was enacted to fulfil the Resolutions of 678, 687, 1441 of the UN Security Council (UNSC). Subsequently Japanese cabinet approved a Basic Plan Regarding Response Measures Based on the Law Concerning Special Measures on Humanitarian Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq (East Asia Strategic Review 2004: 226). Junichiro
Koizumi’s government cleared this bill in the lower house of the parliament in January 2004 despite wide spread public criticism and disapproval and Democratic Party of Japan’s (DPJ) opposition in the parliament. Japanese troops were to be deployed in the Southern Iraqi city of Samawah. This is the first time since the surrender of Japan its troops have been deployed in a combat zone. The deployment has not only weakened the constitutional constrains on troop deployment abroad but also successfully overcome the anti-militaristic sentiments of the populace.

Although Self-Defence Forces (SDF) participated in the UN led Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) in the past, the Iraqi mission lacked the UN sanction and the conflict was on going. This has violated the International Peace Co-operation Law of 1992, which stipulated that any peace keeping mission that SDF undertakes has to be UN sanctioned and in a non-combat zone. Nevertheless, Japan deployed Self-Defence Forces (SDF) in Iraq citing reconstruction and relief as the primary purpose. As a corollary to this, there was a significant change in the number and quality of the Ground Self-Defence Force’s equipments. The number of Main Battle Tanks (MBT) increased from 820 in 2002-2003 to 980 in 2006 (Military Balance 2002-03; 2006). The GSDF has acquired the highly sophisticated M-90 main battle tank; the AH-1S and anti-tank and ground attack helicopter; the UH-60JA multi-role helicopter and the upgraded Hawk surface-to-air missile (Hughes 2004).

Meanwhile, the US had proceeded to unveil its new counter-proliferation strategy as it found the existing non-proliferation measures ineffective against emerging threats from non-state actors and states that were in unfriendly terms with it such as North Korea and Iran. The Bush administration announced the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) on 31 May 2003. The objective of PSI was to interdict illegal transportation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), their delivery system and related materials on the high seas.

Japan responded swiftly to the changing non-proliferation regime as it became increasingly vulnerable to North Korean Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). In June 2003, nearly 2000 inspectors boarded North Korea vessel Man Gyong Bong-92 at the port of Niigata to verify customs and immigration violations. On 11 June Japan detained North Korea vessels Namsen 3 at Maizuru and Daehungrason -2 at Otaru port (Proliferation Security Initiative 2004). On 17 June 2003 Japan agreed to the Madrid
Initiative on PSI along with ten other countries although Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and Japan Defence Agency (JDA) had differences over it. North Korea reacted strongly to it, terming any interdiction of its vessels on the high seas would be considered as an infringement of its sovereignty and threatened with a military response (BBC Online 2009). But China was more measured in its response. It declined to join the initiative citing the legality of interdiction; still China joined Container Security Initiative in July 2003 (Proliferation Security Initiative 2006). Despite these external reactions and domestic differences, Japan went ahead with the Proliferation Security Initiative. On 26 October 2004, Japan hosted the ‘Team Samurai 2004’ PSI exercise involving its armed forces in cooperation with warships from the United States, Australia, and France. The simulated interdiction of a WMD shipment was carried out in the Pacific near Tokyo Bay (Hawkins 2005).

Japan’s participation in Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) has not only drawn it closer to the US but also served other strategic purposes as well. Japan Marine Self-Defence Forces (JMSDF) had participated in demining activities in the Persian Gulf following the first Gulf War. JMSDF had also increased its scope during the invasion of Afghanistan by engaging in refuelling, transportation and reconnaissance. Although Japan’s warships and maritime patrol aircraft put Japanese naval power among the top two or three countries in the world (Lind 2004: 99), they were devoid of battle experiences. Japan’s participation in PSI was to rectify that inexperience. It also offered an opportunity for Japan to enhance the power projection capabilities of the JMSDF.

The number of submarines increased from 16 in 2002-03 to 18 in 2006. In addition the number of harpoons fitted with the submarines has also increased significantly. The number of destroyers increased from 44 to 45 for the same period. Patrol and coastal combatants increased from 5 to 9 for the period 2002-2006 (Military Balance 2002-03; 2006). Besides, Japan also engaged in modernising and expanding its Coast Guard (JCG) following the revision of Japan Coast Guard Law in the Diet in October 2001. It was done not only to enhance its power projection capabilities but also its ability to project influence. Unlike the Japan Marine Self-Defence Force (JMSDF), the Coast Guard was allowed to fire upon any intrusion to safeguard Japanese homeland (Samuels 2008). Japan’s Coast Guard (JCG) also developed a fleet at 145, 000 aggregate
tonne in 2005. It was more than 60 per cent of the total tonnage of China’s surface fleet, which expanded to 237,000 aggregate tons in 2007 (Military Balance 2007). The attempts to enhance the capacity of the Coast Guard was done to circumvent the constitutional constrains on military expenditure. Although Japan’s military expenditure has in fact has marginally reduced in absolute terms from 4,950 billion Yen in 2001 to 4,814 billion Yen in 2006 (Japan’s Military Expenditure 2009), the Japan Coast Guard (JCG)’s equipment budget was increased with funds earmarked for modernisation to procure new boats and planes (Samuels 2008).

Apart from initiating the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), the Republican Bush administration formally withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) on 12 June 2002 so as to build an effective missile defence against incoming missile fired upon by unfriendly states. The scope of the missile defence not only included the US homeland and its troops stationed abroad but also its friends and allies. Japan’s need for a missile defence was pronounced due to recent missile crisis in the East Asian region. Although Japan’s participation in the Missile Defence (MD) programme dates back to Ronald Regan’s Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) or Star Wars programme, North Korea’s launching of Taepodong-1 missile over Japan’s territory in 1998 accelerated it. Besides Taepodong -1, Japan was also concerned about North Korea’s Nodong-1 MRBM (SCUD Model -D), which has range of 1,000-1,300 km that could reach most of Japan including many US bases (Swaine et al. 2001). North Korea’s reneged on the moratorium on further development of its long range missiles following the agreement reached after the 1998 missile crisis from developing Taepodong-2, which it test fired in 2006. These missiles were capable of carrying both conventional as well as non-conventional (WMD) weapons. In addition to ballistic missiles, North Korea was also developing cruise missiles and anti-ship cruise missiles (Swaine et al. 2001).

Even though Japan cites North Korea as the reason for its participation in Missile Defence programme (MD), the apprehensions about raising a domestic and international alarm prevented it from mentioning China as a threat (BBC News Online 2003 c). Because, the economic ascendance of China would inevitably lead to a confrontation with Japan as they vie for the limited resources and market in the region. Besides, China’s unofficial missile inventory attests Japan’s apprehension. China’s inventory
includes two types of Medium Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBM) and one type of Intermediate Ballistic Missile (IRBM), which is capable of reaching Japan. Their ranges vary from 2,850 km to 1,800 km. The IRCM CSS-3 has a range of 4,750 km and the long range Inter Continental Ballistic Missile ICBM CSS-4 has a range about 12,000-13,000 km (Swaine et al. 2001). The approximate estimation of the number of medium and long-range missiles possessed by China was between 100 and 185. The possibility of China deploying land-based mobile ballistic missile and submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) and also the missiles had the capability of carrying both conventional and unconventional warheads (Swaine et al. 2001) has prompted Japan to develop missile defence in collaboration with the US.

On 19 December 2003 Japan announced it purchase of a sophisticated anti-missile system from the United States. The missile system comprised a Standard Missile-3 (SM3) designed to intercept missiles in mid-course from the sea and the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) designed to shoot down missiles from land (BBC News Online 2003 c). Besides, Japan’s commitment to the seven billion dollars programme (BBC News Online 2003 c) reaffirmed its alliance with the US, while strengthening its security in the process. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of such a system was questioned and Japan’s collaboration with the US was attributed to politics than security (Japan’s Missile Defence System Far From Readiness 2006).

In a significant move, Japan and the US had amended the 1996 Agreement Concerning Reciprocal Provision of Logistical Support, Supplies, and Services on 27 February 2004. The amendment replaced the words ‘humanitarian international relief operations’ with ‘humanitarian international relief operations and other operations’ (US-Japan Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement 2004). As a result, the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) would be able to participate in international relief operations along with the US armed forces as well as in other operations such as a future confrontation with China arises over Taiwan Straits.

In conjunction with the Three Laws Regarding Armed Attacks, Japan enacted seven new laws in June 2004. the Law Concerning Measures to Protect Nationals in the Situations of Armed Attack (Nationals Protection Law); the Law Concerning Measures Taken by Japan During the United States Military Actions While Japan Is Under Armed
Attack (Law Concerning Measures Relating to US Military Actions); the Law Concerning Use of Designated Public Facilities, etc. under Armed Attack; the Law Concerning Punishment of Grave Violations Against International Humanitarian Law; the Law Concerning Regulations of Marine Transportation of Goods, etc. for Foreign Militaries under Armed Attack; the Law Concerning Dealing with Prisoners of War under Armed Attack; and the amendment to the SDF Law (The Law Library of Congress 2006).

The SDF Law amendment and the Law Concerning Measures Relating to US Military Actions were intended to facilitate U.S. military operations that will operate in accordance with the Japan-United States Security Agreement in the event of an attack or imminent attack on Japan (The Law Library of Congress 2006). The legislation enabled the SDF and US forces in Japan share goods and services. The laws also empowered the prime minister to allow the US military to use privately-owned land or buildings if Japan comes under or anticipates an attack. The implementation of these laws has drastically increased the scope of the SDF to use force. Previously the SDF were to act in the case of an armed attack on Japan, now SDF could launch an attack if an enemy threatened to attack Japan. This indicates a move from self-defence to pre-emption. Simultaneously, the SDF area of operation has expanded from ‘surrounding areas’ of Japan to further regions. These legislations signify that Japan deftly releasing the constitutional clutches on the use of force and troop deployment abroad.

Japan’s Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda announced on 10 December 2004 that components related to missile defence would be exempted from the ban when the joint research with the US moves to the development and production stage (Guoliang 2005). This is another systematic step in the direction of weakening Japan’s pacifist principles. The Three Principles on Arms Export of 1967 banned export of arms to communist countries, countries in or likely to be in conflict situations and countries under UN arms embargo. The 1976 revision of the Three Principles included all destinations. However, an exception was made in 1983 to transfer military technology to the US (Government of Japan 1983) to strengthen the alliance.

Further, the exemption granted to the export of missile defence components works in tandem with other initiatives that Japan had undertaken to militarise. The increase in
the number of Aegis equipped destroyers and the inclusion of Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC3) surface-to-air missiles in the Japan Marine Self-Defence Forces (JMSDF) is a case in point. Due to the difficulties of developing land-based and space based missile defence systems, Japan resorted to sea-based missile defence system. A sea-base missile defence system not only protects Japan from incoming missiles but also its collaboration with the US in command and control of missile defence had strengthened Japan Marine Self-Defense Forces (JMSDF) in the South China Sea.

The new National Defense Programme Outline (NDPO) and Mid-Term Defense Programme (MTDP) were released in December 2004. The NDPO identified international peace keeping and counter-terrorism as the primary components of Japan’s national defence strategy. It also identified for the first time China and North Korea as security concerns. Threats from ballistic missiles, guerrilla attacks, invasion of Japanese islands and intrusions into Japan’s airspace and territorial waters were also recognised as concerns and the NDPO called for appropriate measures to deal with such situations. In order to do so, the NDPO sought to create a ‘multifunctional’ military capability to streamline the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) through centralised command, upgrading intelligence and communications functions and creation of a rapid reaction force to respond terrorist threats (National Defence Programme Outline 2005).

The identification of Chinese threat, invasion of Japanese islands and intrusions into Japan’s territorial waters and air space in the NDPO is significant. The growing tension between Japan and China over gas and oil fields in the East China Sea was also a catalyst. China had set up a drilling facility in the Chunxiao natural gas field on the Chinese side of the intermediate line and also three exploration gas fields in the East China Sea only five kilometres from the disputed demarcation line between Japan and China. Japan had found it out in the middle of 2004: In response, Japan authorised a Japanese oil company to begin operation in the disputed area and gave Japanese names to three disputed natural gas fields in the East China Sea despite China’s protests (Wan 2006).

Further a submerged Chinese nuclear-powered submarine infiltrated Japanese territorial waters in November 2004 (East Asian Strategic Review 2006). In addition to this intrusion, Japanese P3-C patrol planes observed five Chinese warships near the
Chunxiao gas field in the East Chain Sea in September 2005. Apart from incursions in Japanese territorial waters, Chinese military reconnaissance aircraft also intruded into Japan’s Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the same month (Mochizuki 2007). Japan responded besides procuring Aegis destroyers with BMD interceptors, two DDH Hyuga-class vessels, which are designed as destroyers and also function as light helicopter carriers. A new P-X replacement for its P-3C patrol and anti-submarine warfare aircraft with an 8,000 kilometre range that can reach South China Sea (Hughes 2009) was also inducted. Japan reinforced its air force with the induction of a new F-X interceptor, which included the US F-22 or F-35 and the Eurofighter (Hughes 2009). Thus, Japan was building its military capabilities not only in response to North Korean missile and nuclear threat but also due to the increase in China’s military assertion and military modernisation besides its growing economic prominence.

In the meanwhile, Japan was bracing another crisis with North Korea. The Six Party Talks – North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, Russia and the US – that was initiated following North Korea’s revelation about its clandestine nuclear programme in 2002 failed to persuade North Korea to discontinue its nuclear weapons programme. The continuing stalemate with North Korea was certainly detrimental to Japan’s interests, because North Korea persistently provoked Japan. On 1 May 2005 North Korea fires a short-range missile into the Sea of Japan. On 11 May 2005 North Korea announced that it has completed extraction of spent fuel rods from Yongbyon as part of plans to increase its nuclear arsenal (BBC News Online 2007). North Korea further vitiated the atmosphere as it test-fires at least six missiles including Taepodong-2 between 4-6 July 2006 despite repeated warnings from the international community. The final straw was that North Korea’s announcement on 9 October 2006 that it has carried out its first ever nuclear weapon test (BBC News Online 2009).

North Korea’s nuclear test created a security predicament for Japan. Although the US extended deterrence was in place, doubts over the credibility of the US deterrence have arisen. The logic being that the possibility of the US risking New York to protect Tokyo in case of a North Korean nuclear missile attack was questionable. This once again ignited another debate about Japan going nuclear among the Japanese. Japan’s foreign minister Taro Aso not only called for a discussion on Japan’s non-nuclear policy
but also insisted that possession of nuclear weapons for defensive purposes was well within the constitutional limits. Although he clarified that the government had no plans to breach the Three Nuclear Principles. On 25 October Japan’s Defence Agency chief Fumio Kyuma commented that Japan had the potential to go nuclear (Associated Press 2006). A Yomiuri poll conducted in November 2006 found that 80 per cent of respondents supported the three nonnuclear principles, while only 46 per cent favoured discussing the nuclear option. Another survey issued by Mainichi a week later also found that 80 per cent opposed nuclear armament, but 61 per cent did not object to a debate (Szechenyi 2006). Despite the pro-nuclear sentiments of the politicians Japan resisted the nuclear option.

Although structural realism predicted that Japan’s increasing vulnerability in the face of North Korean nuclear and missile threats and growing Chinese dominance would compel it to cross the nuclear threshold. But Japan’s response to following 11 September 2001 change in the global order was more nuanced and measured. The legislative changes, participation in PSI, collaboration in BMD and increasing power projection measures all point though in the direction of military assertion of Japan, they were still constrained. These measures were taken to support the US, on the other hand to augment its military capability. Therefore, Japan’s security policy changes in the post-11 September 2001 global order do not confirm structural realist predictions. There are other factors apart from vulnerability determined Japan security policy’s direction. Those factors will be dealt in the following chapter.