

"Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) " and "Free and Open International Order (FOIO) "

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Introduction

This paper describes the current international situation and its implications, including the fact that the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" foreign policy slogan that Japan has been leading the way in promoting appears to be in the process of being replaced by "a free and open international order based on the rule of law" (the author believes that this slogan should be called the "Free and Open International Order (FOIO)" (see below for details)).

Having been engaged in research and analysis on FOIP from a relatively early stage, the author has worked to disseminate information on it in various ways.¹ All of these were based on the method of interpreting information released by the Japanese government. Given my work as a "FOIP watcher," I was very surprised by Prime Minister Kishida's policy speech in the Diet in October 2023². In it, FOIP, a keyword that had been used continuously since Prime Minister Abe's policy speech in the Diet in January 2018³, was replaced with "a free and open international order based on the rule of law. The author provided this information to a researcher who shared the same interest, and Professor Kei Hakata of Seikei University promptly caught on to it and published an article titled "RIP FOIP?".⁴ After that, the three of us, including Assistant Professor Brendon J. Cannon of Khalifa University in the UAE, then conducted an analysis of the question of whether the "Free and Open International Order (FOIO)" could become a new core principle for Japanese diplomacy. The results of the analysis were published as an article on the website of an overseas think tank.⁵

¹ For the most comprehensive version, see Teruaki Aizawa, "Transition and Development of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)," (The text is in Japanese.) Institute for Ocean Policy Studies, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Ocean Policy Research, Vol. 15, March 2021, pp. 1-36.

https://www.spf.org/opri/global-data/opri/publications/jsop/ISSN1880-0017_vol15.pdf

² Prime Minister Kishida's Policy Speech in the 212th Diet Session," October 23, 2023, on the Prime Minister's official website.

https://japan.kantei.go.jp/101_kishida/statement/202310/23shoshinhyomei.html

³ Prime Minister's Office website, "Prime Minister Abe's Policy Speech in the 196th Diet Session," January 22, 2018. https://japan.kantei.go.jp/98_abe/statement/201801/00002.html

⁴ Kei Hakata, "RIP FOIP? Examining Japan's New Foreign Policy Mantra," *The Diplomat*, Nov. 3, 2023, <https://thediplomat.com/2023/11/rip-foip-examining-japans-new-foreign-policy-mantra/>.

⁵ Kei Hakata, Teruaki Aizawa, and Brendon J. Cannon, "Japan's Strategic Messaging for a 'Free and Open International Order (FOIO)': Can It Preserve its Indo-Pacific Achievements?" *Focus Asia Perspective & Analysis*, The Institute for Security and Development Policy (ISDP), Feb 14, 2024, <https://isdpeu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/ISDP-Focus-Asia-Hakata-Aizawa-Cannon-Feb-14-2024.pdf>

"Japan's evolving strategic messaging to the Indo-Pacific and beyond," *Expert Speak*, Observer Research Foundation, Jan. 2, 2024,

<https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/japans-evolving-strategic-messaging-to-the-indo-pacific->

During this period, former Councillor, Cabinet Secretariat Tomohiko Taniguchi, who worked as a speechwriter for former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, contributed a column titled "The Vanished 'Indo-Pacific'" to the Sankei Shimbun dated December 17, 2023, which triggered a debate on SNS about whether the "Free and Open International Order (FOIO)" is a denial of the FOIP or not.⁶ While the authors do not necessarily agree with Mr. Taniguchi's views, we are well aware that this point contains extremely important issues related to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, and I will provide commentary based on the aforementioned commentary by the authors, keeping these arguments in mind.

The recognition of basic issues related to the "Free and Open International Order (FOIO) "

The author's basic understanding of the issues involved in this case can be summarized as follows.

1. The Japanese government has used FOIP, which has been its main foreign policy slogan. It appears as if they are trying to replace it with "Free and Open International Order Based on Rule of law." Though the abbreviation for this is "FOIOBRL," this is clumsy as a slogan, and the authors proposed the expression (abbreviation) "Free and Open International Order (FOIO)," fully understanding the importance of the conventional epithet "based on the rule of law," as described below. (In this paper, the abbreviation FOIO is basically used below to that effect.).⁷
2. On the other hand, FOIP originally included the concept of FOIO as its core philosophy, and this has been clearly stated in the information it has disseminated to date. In light of the current situation, in which the international community's interest is broadly oriented toward regions other than the Indo-Pacific, particularly with regard to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the conflict between Israel and Hamas in October 2023, and relations with the global South outside the region, it is natural that FOIP, with its regional boundaries, is being replaced by FOIO, a higher level concept, so to speak.
3. However, it would not be wise to simply replace FOIP with FOIO, which has already

[and-beyond.](#)

In addition, Kei Hakata published a Japanese version of the same meaning commentary. "Jiyuu de hirakareta Kokusai chitsujo ha jitsugen suruka? (Will the 'Free and Open International Order' be Realized?)" (in Japanese), Voice, Mar. 2024, pp. 110-117. A web version was later released. <https://voice.php.co.jp/detail/10880>

⁶ Tomohiko Taniguchi, "Kieta 'Indo Taiheiyou' ('Indo-Pacific' Gone,)" (in Japanese), Sankei Shimbun, December 17, 2023. The article pointed out that erasing the term "free and open Indo-Pacific" would only please China, and that it would be a shame if it was done with the intention of erasing Abe's color(Distinctive Achievements), which led to discussions such as the one described in above text on the Sankei Shimbun's official X post.

⁷ Hakata, Aizawa, Cannon, "Japan's Strategic Messaging ", pp5-6

become an important "asset" in Japan's foreign policy. It should be noted that the term FOIP itself has a very important significance in terms of keeping the international community's interest in the Indo-Pacific region, especially in relation with China. Therefore, it is essential to use these terms appropriately on a case-by-case basis, including the use of the key phrase "based on the rule of law" from the perspective of "strategic information dissemination."

FOIO and the formation process of FOIP

As a prerequisite to the explanation based on the recognition of the above-mentioned issues, I would like to reiterate my viewpoint on the question, "What is FOIP?"

Although the Japanese government's explanation of FOIP, which was initially said to be "incomprehensible," has gradually taken a more organized form, and the general understanding of FOIP has advanced considerably through various discussions at home and abroad, the Japanese government has not to date issued a policy document explaining FOIP in detail (this is due to the fact that, as described below, the nature of FOIP, which has two aspects in relation to China, makes it difficult to create a detailed document). So there is the problem that no clear "definition" of FOIP has been provided. Therefore, there is no other way but to draw analogies from the fragmentary descriptions in various government documents such as the "Diplomatic Blue Book" and speeches and talks, etc. This is also the reason why the author had no choice but to adopt the method of "reading and understanding the information transmission of the Japanese government" in this research. In fact, it is quite difficult to explain FOIP in simple terms, and this is precisely the reason why FOIP is difficult to understand. The author has therefore explained this issue so far as follows.

In other words, while the FOIP is "a philosophy for international cooperation with a view to maintaining a liberal international order,"⁸ it has an inherent duality in its relationship with China, and Japan and other countries concerned are forced to respond based on the dual structure of "'Cooperative Strategy' to Realize 'Competitive Strategy'".⁹ Also, the international community's view of this concept has been changing, and while the Japan, U.S., Australia, India, Quadripartite Framework (Quad) was initially regarded as the core of this concept, it is now shifting toward a broader multilateral cooperation that covers all actors who agree with this concept, including ASEAN, Pacific island

⁸ This understanding is the author's view based on, for example, Akihiko Tanaka, "Jiyuu de hirakareta Indo Taiheiyoku Senryaku no syatei" ("The Range of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy,") (in Japanese), *Gaikou*, Vol. 47 Jan/Feb 2018; Shinichi Kitaoka, "Indo Taiheiyoku Kousou Jiyuu to hou no shiai ga honshitsu" ("Indo-Pacific Vision: Freedom and Rule of Law are Essential,") (in Japanese), *Yomiuri Shimbun*, "Chikyuu wo yomu[Reading the Earth], December 17, 2018.

⁹ Mataka Kamiya, "'Cooperative Strategy' to Realize 'Competitive Strategy' :The composite structure of Japan's 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' strategy (vision) ", *Security Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 SSDP Security and Foreign Policy Studies Association, February 2019.

<http://ssdpaki.la.coocan.jp/en/proposals/26.html>

countries, and European countries outside the region. And a key incentive for this is precisely universal "ocean governance" such as the "rule of law at sea."¹⁰

In addition, regarding the issue of the inherent duality of the relationship with China in FOIP, former Prime Minister Abe later stated, "From the idea of the 'Asia Pacific,' I presented a new geopolitical concept of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean as one 'free ocean,'" and "With China, which is on its way to becoming a military superpower, in mind, I was seeking cooperation among countries that share fundamental values in Asia, as well as between Japan, the United States, Australia, and India." He made it clear that relations with China were still his most important concern.¹¹

The details of the formation process of FOIP within the government department have not yet been clarified, although the basic composition of FOIP and its background at the level of who and how have become known to some extent through the descriptions in related books and testimonies of people involved at the time¹². However, it is now widely agreed that FOIP was created under the leadership of former Prime Minister Abe¹³, and at this point it is appropriate to understand FOIP as a "joint effort" of many government officials under his leadership. The following is a description of the relationship between FOIO and FOIP in the process of its formation based on such a viewpoint.

FOIP has been described as a part of "value-oriented diplomacy,"¹⁴ which originated from the first Abe administration's diplomatic concept, "The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity"¹⁵ and

¹⁰ Teruaki Aizawa, "Indo Taiheiyō ni okeru Kaiyō Gabanansu:FOIP no shiten kara"("Ocean Governance in the Indo-Pacific: A FOIP Perspective,") (in Japanese),The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Ocean Policy Research Institute, Kaiyō anzen hōshō jōhō tokuhō(Maritime Security Information Special Report), March 31, 2022, pp. 1-2, etc.

<https://www.spf.org/oceans/global-data/commentary-20220413.pdf>

¹¹ Shinzo Abe, "Jiyū de hirakareta Indo Taiheiyō kōsō nitsuite-Nihonban dokusya eno messeiji" ("On the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Concept: A Message to Japanese Readers,") (in Japanese), In Brendon J. Cannon/Kei Hkaka(editors), "Indo Taiheiyō senryaku-Taikōkan kyōsō no chiseigaku"("Indo-Pacific Strategy: The Geopolitics of Inter-Great Power Competition,") Chuō kōron Shinsha, September 2022, p. iv. The same statement can also be found in "Abe Shinzo kaikoroku,("Shinzo Abe Memoirs,") (in Japanese),Chuōkōron Shinsha, February 2023, pp. 313-318, which was published later.

¹² For example, Yoshikatsu Suzuki, Nihon no Senryaku Gaiko (Japan's Strategic Diplomacy), (in Japanese), Chikuma Shinsho, 2017, pp. 136-138. NHK website, "Jiyū de hirakareta Indo taiheiyō tanjō hiwa," ("The story behind the creation of Free and Open Indo-Pacific,") (in Japanese), NHK Politics Magazine, June 30, 2021.<https://www.nhk.or.jp/politics/articles/feature/62725.html>

¹³ Today, the view that the FOIP is a legacy of the Abe administration is well established both domestically and internationally. For example, Yomiuri Shimbun Online, "Abe seiken no 'Legacy' to kōgō/ Gaikō Ruuru ni motozuku kokusai chitsujō wo syūdō" ("The Abe Administration's Legacy and Future / Diplomacy: Leading the Rules-Based International Order") (in Japanese), research institute, Yomiuri quarterly autumn 2020, October 31, 2020.

<https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/choken/kijironko/ckworld/20210201-OYT8T50097/>

¹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Japan's Expanding Diplomatic Horizons -New Pillar for Japan's Foreign Policy-" December 2006. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/pillar/horizons.pdf>

¹⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan's Expanding Diplomatic Horizons" November 30, 2006.

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0611.html>

continues to this day, namely as "diplomacy that takes a panoramic perspective of the world map" and "'Proactive Contribution to Peace' based on the principle of international cooperation"¹⁶. "Value-oriented diplomacy" is described as a "diplomacy emphasis on "universal values" such as freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and the market economy " and "The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity" is described under that concept as needed to "form a prosperous and stable region based on universal values around the outer rim of the Eurasian continent;" but these ideas can be regarded as originally based on the FOIO concept. Furthermore, FOIP was initially often described in the context of development cooperation, but even in its first publication, the 2017 White Paper on Development Cooperation, in the chapter "Maintaining a Free and Open International Order Based on the Rule of Law," it is stated that the "'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy' is based on the concept that a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law is a foundation of the stability and prosperity of the international community." ¹⁷

In addition, speaking of the practical aspects of FOIP, on the occasion of U.S. President Trump's visit to Japan in November 2017, the so-called "Three Pillars" were announced as the agreement of the U.S.-Japan Summit, where the first item was the "dissemination and consolidation of universal values such as the rule of law and freedom of navigation."¹⁸ After that, in a special article in the Diplomatic Blue Book 2018, it was explained that "Maintaining and strengthening the Indo-Pacific region's free and open maritime order as 'international public goods' will bring stability and prosperity."¹⁹ Since then, the FOIP commentary has explicitly added the phrase "ensuring a rule-based international order, including the rule of law. In other words, FOIO is a concept that was included in FOIP as a core principle from the beginning and is theoretically above FOIP, and FOIP is a part of FOIO, i.e., FOIO is "embodied" in the Indo-Pacific region (see **[Figure 1]** for an image related to this correlation). ²⁰). In addition, based on this understanding, the author has argued that the "free and open" philosophy of FOIP should not be regionally limited, but should aim for a "free and open global ocean (FOGO)" with a broader region

¹⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," April 28, 2024.

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000430632.pdf>

¹⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "White Paper on Development Cooperation 2017" October 9, 2018, p. 6. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000406632.pdf>

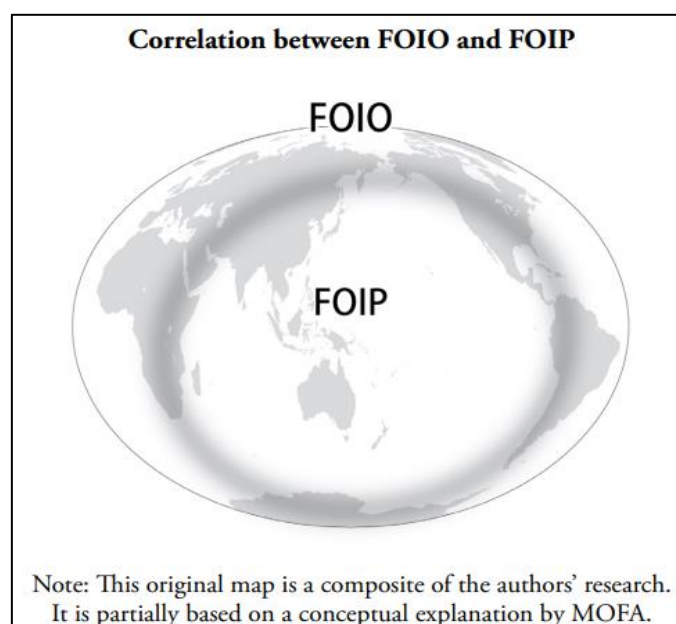
¹⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan website, "U.S.-Japan Leaders Working Lunch and Summit Meeting," November 6, 2017. https://www.mofa.go.jp/na/na1/us/page4e_000699.html This "three pillars" were later restructured, but "universal values such as the rule of law and freedom of navigation" were retained in this wording.

¹⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan website, Diplomatic Blue Paper 2018, "Chapter 1: International Situation in 2017 and Development of Japanese Diplomacy," "Special Feature: Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," April 2018, p. 13.

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bluebook/2018/pdf/pdfs/1.pdf#page=4>

²⁰ Hakata, Aizawa, Cannon, "Japan's Strategic Messaging," pp. 5-6, and Hakata, "Will 'Free and Open International Order' Be Realized?" p. 116.

in mind.²¹



[Figure 1] Image of the correlation between FOIO and FOIP (prepared by Kei Hakata based on a conceptual explanation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (cited from Hakata, Aizawa, Cannon, "Japan's Strategic Messaging," (Adapted from ISDP, Feb 14, 2024, p6.)

In addition, as mentioned above, "rule of law" is an extremely important keyword in FOIO/FOIP, and the Japanese government cites Prime Minister Abe's keynote speech at the Asian Security Conference (Shangri-La Dialogue) in May 2014²² for its specific content, explaining it with three basic principles: (i) making and clarifying claims based on international law, (ii) not using force or coercion in trying to drive their claims, and (iii) seeking to settle disputes by peaceful means.

Recent trends surrounding FOIO

Although this preface has been rather lengthy, the following is a recap of the Japanese government's

²¹ Teruaki Aizawa, "Sonogo no 'jiyuu de hirakareta Indo Taiheiyou(FOIP)' no hensen to tenkai" ("Subsequent Changes and Developments in the 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific(FOIP)'" (in Japanese), The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Ocean Policy Research Institute, Kaiyou anzen hoshou jouhou tokuhou, (Maritime Security Information Special Report,) June 15, 2019. p. 23. <https://www.spf.org/oceans/global-data/user33/20190627163005471.pdf> Note that this argument is based on the recognition that it is impossible to discuss the issue of the Arctic Ocean, which will become an important focus of international maritime security in the future, within the framework of the FOIP.

²² Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Keynote Address by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan at the 13th IISS Asian Security Summit 'Shangri-La Dialogue'" May 30, 2014. https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/nsp/page18e_000087.html

information dissemination regarding FOIO/FOIP in light of the recent international situation as described in the section of "The recognition of basic issues related to FOIO" item 3., particularly since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, after the G7 Hiroshima Summit in June 2023, before and after Prime Minister Kishida's October 2023 policy speech as mentioned earlier, and up to Prime Minister Kishida's January 2024 policy speech.

As mentioned in the previous section, the FOIO concept has been a core principle of the FOIP from the beginning, and since 2018 it has been clearly stated in the Diplomatic Blue Book and other government documents. Based on that, after the invasion of Ukraine, Prime Minister Kishida in his policy speech to the Diet in January 2023 stated that "Attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force must not be tolerated, no matter in which region of the world they occur. Taking the occasion of the G7 Hiroshima Summit, we will convey once more to the international community our strong political will to uphold the free and open international order based on the rule of law, which adheres to this principle."²³ After that, in the Hiroshima Summit Leaders' Communiqué, the leaders said "We will champion international principles and shared values" through "Upholding and reinforcing the free and open international order based on the rule of law."²⁴ In addition, in both of these cases, reference is also made to FOIP in a separate section.

However, as mentioned at the beginning in PM Kishida's October 2023 policy speech, "Free and Open international order based on the rule of law" was used twice in the context that FOIP was used before then, while "Indo-Pacific" was mentioned only as a "growth center" in a separate paragraph.

On the other hand, at the "Special Summit Meeting for the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation," held in Tokyo in December 2023, the FOIO was mentioned in Prime Minister Kishida's dinner speech, but the description in the outcome document was the same as before, with a particular emphasis on the relationship between FOIP and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).²⁵ In addition, in the "Japan's Nordic Diplomacy Initiative" announced on the occasion of the Japan-Finland Foreign Minister's Meeting during Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa's visit to Europe in January 2024, in the section "The Arctic and Oceans" of the "Four Areas of Action" the description "Free and open maritime order based on the rule of law, with the legal framework based on UNCLOS, is indispensable in the Arctic" was included. Furthermore, in the "Security and Defense

²³ Policy Speech by Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio to the 211th Session of the Diet," January 23, 2023, on the Prime Minister's official website.

https://japan.kantei.go.jp/101_kishida/statement/202301/_00012.html

²⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "G7 Hiroshima Leaders' Communiqué (May 20, 2023)", Section2.

https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/summit/hiroshima23/documents/pdf/Leaders_Communique_01_en.pdf?v20231006

²⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "The Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation," "JOINT VISION STATEMENT ON ASEAN-JAPAN FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION Trusted Partners" December 17, 2023.

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100596782.pdf>

Cooperation" section, there was the statement that "The security of the Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific are inseparable."²⁶

And then, in January 2024, Prime Minister Kishida's policy speech to which the author had paid particular attention, referred to FOIP in the section "Diplomacy and Security" (deepening relations with other countries), mentioning the relationship between ASEAN and FOIO in the section (Cooperation with the Global South).²⁷

In this way, how should we understand the current situation in which, at first glance, there seems to be a fluctuation in the dissemination of information on FOIO/FOIP within the Japanese government? At least since Prime Minister Kishida's policy speech in the 212th Diet session, FOIP has actually been used as a term, which does not mean that FOIP has "disappeared from the lexicon of Japanese diplomacy," as Taniguchi pointed out. Moreover, if the FOIP originally included the concept of FOIO as its core philosophy, as we have discussed in detail, it is difficult to imagine that PM Kishida was motivated to "erase Abe's color (distinctive achievements)" after understanding this concept. If this is the case, the reference to FOIO in the form of excluding FOIP as a term in the policy speech on October 2023 can be understood as an attempt to replace FOIP, which has regional boundaries, with FOIO, which is a higher level concept, as the international community's interest, including the Ukraine issue, has expanded far beyond the Indo-Pacific region. However, this is truly a double-edged sword: if FOIP disappears, Taniguchi's view is right on target when he says that "the sharp focus on India and the maritime space will disappear," "It should have been Abe's motivation to check China," and "Kishida got soft without even asking for it," and that this would amuse Beijing.²⁸ That being the case, as mentioned above, it is important to keep in mind that the term FOIP itself has important significance in terms of keeping the international community's interest in the Indo-Pacific region, especially in relation to China, and to use the key phrase "based on the rule of law" in a case-by-case manner, including its use as a conventional epithet. This point will be discussed in detail in the next section, after the explanation of the origin of FOIOs found through the research.

Significance of the term "free and open" and the origin of FOIO

In the process of conducting a survey of related literature based on the aforementioned problem recognition, the interesting fact was discovered that the term "free and open international order" of FOIO has been used in Japan since much earlier than initially assumed.²⁹ This is very suggestive for

²⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, "Japan's Nordic Diplomacy Initiative," January 9, 2024. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100604976.pdf>

²⁷ Policy Speech by Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio to the 213th Session of the Diet," January 30, 2024, on the Prime Minister's official website. https://japan.kantei.go.jp/101_kishida/statement/202401/30shiseihoshin.html

²⁸ Hakata, "'Free and Open International Order' will be realized?" p. 117.

²⁹ Hakata, Aizawa, Cannon, "Japan's Strategic Messaging," pp2-3. This part is based on the literature survey by Kei Hakata. Hakata, "Will the 'Free and Open International Order' be Realized?"

us to reexamine the significance of the key phrases "free and open" and "open international order" in the absence of an official definition, for the aforementioned reasons.

In addition, it is not desirable that the key phrase "free and open," which should be the signature of FOIO/FOIP, is not defined properly, but the reason why this issue has not been sufficiently discussed is because, as mentioned in the section of "FOIO and the formation process of FOIP," FOIP is described as part of "Value Oriented Diplomacy" and is generally understood to be synonymous with "universal values" such as freedom, democracy, basic human rights, the rule of law, and the market economy. Nevertheless, this was not defined in the early stages of the FOIP, which is why a story that's no laughing matter was posted in a Japanese newspaper. On the occasion of the 8th Pacific Islands Summit (PALM 8) in May 2018, Pacific island nations who prematurely assumed that their fishing waters would be threatened by the "free and open" of the FOIP were repulsed, thinking, "Are you trying to come and catch our fish?".³⁰

In this sense, it is unclear how much influence the term "free and open international order" had on the spread of general understanding, but it is possible that it had some influence on the government officials involved in the formation process of the concept of FOIP. The origin of this term is as follows.

The term "free and open international order" first appeared in July 1980 in the "Comprehensive Security Research Group Report," a report by Prime Minister Ohira's Policy Research Council.³¹ In the report, a discussion of Japan-U.S. relations is described as "Japan's orientation toward a free and open international order together with the United States." Although there is no specific commentary on this, the following sentence states that it is "extremely important for Japan to strive to defend a free political, economic, and social system," and it can be seen that this was the intent of the report.

In a newspaper column, the term can be found in a contribution by Naoki Tanaka in the Nihon Keizai Shimbun in January 1990, in which he discussed the conditions for Japan's leadership in the world.³² Here, Tanaka points out that Japan's postwar prosperity is "thanks to the free and open international order" prepared by the U.S. under the Bretton Woods system, which the U.S. prepared during World War II. Furthermore, in November 2010, Yoichi Funabashi published a column in the Asahi Shimbun newspaper with the headline "Build a Free and Open International Order. Here, Funabashi refers to the challenge of Chinese state capitalism in the context of urging Japan's active

³⁰ "'Oretachi no sakana wo tori ni kuru ki ka? Shima sammito de saitaku 'Jiyuu de Hirakareta Indo Taiheiyuu Senryaku' no shintou ni kuryo shita nihon" ("You're Coming to Catch Our Fish! Japan struggles to penetrate 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy' adopted at island summit") (in Japanese), Sankei Shimbun, May 28, 2018.

³¹ Sougou Anzenhosyuu Kenkyuu Guruu (Comprehensive Security Research Group), "Oohira souchi no seisaku kenkyuukai houkokusho-5 Sougou Anzenhosyuu Senryaku" ("Report of the Policy Research Group of Prime Minister Ohira - 5 Comprehensive Security Strategy,") (in Japanese), July 2, 1980. World and Japan" database, Japanese Politics and International Relations Database. <https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSC/19800702.O1J.html>

³² Naoki Tanaka, "Riidaa koku he, Jidai kousou mote" ("Toward a Leader Nation, Have a Vision for the Times,") (in Japanese), Nihon Keizai Shimbun, January 4, 1990.

participation in the TPP, and advocates "defending and fostering a 'free and open international order' based on the 'rule of law,' both in China and elsewhere."³³

The term is also used in the "National Defense Program Outline for Fiscal year 2011 and Beyond" (22 Defense Program Outline) , a government document, where it is clearly stated in the "Basic Principles of Japan's Security" that "so as to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order and ensure Japan's security and prosperity."³⁴

In 2012, Shotaro Yachi, who later became the first Director General of the National Security Bureau, published a commentary titled "Diplomatic Strategy of a Maritime State," in which he refers to the "22 Defense Program Outline" and states that "Free and Open International Order" means "in other words, Japan's contribution and participation in creating a 'free and open international trade order and maritime order.'"³⁵ And he stated too that "In order for Japan to counter China's hegemonic behavior, I think it would be a good idea to present a universal message that no one can deny and to express the intention to put it into practice," which suggests an idea that leads to FOIO/FOIP.

In light of the above-mentioned examples, although the details of the formation process of the FOIP within government departments have not been clarified as described in the section of "FOIO and the formation process of FOIP," it is possible that the ideas described here may have had some influence on the government officials involved in the FOIP, and it is quite plausible that the Abe administration "inherited the ideas passed down from generation to generation."³⁶

"Strategic Information Dissemination" for FOIO/FOIP

As the author has mentioned, given that the international community's interest in the Indo-Pacific region is expanding far beyond the region, the Japanese government's move to replace FOIP, which has regional boundaries, with FOIO, which is a higher-level concept, is in itself a basically appropriate approach. On the other hand, as mentioned above, it is not necessarily wise to uniformly replace FOIP, which has an established international reputation as an "asset" of Japanese diplomacy, with FOIO. The question is how to avoid or reduce the impression that FOIP is going into the background, and this point is discussed below.

In light of the series of discussions that began with Taniguchi's column, the term FOIP itself is extremely important in terms of keeping the international community's attention on the Indo-Pacific

³³ Yoichi Funabashi, "Tsuusyou kokka no genten ni kaere, 'Jiyuu de hirakareta kokusai chitsujo wo kizuke,'" ("Return to the Origin of the Trade Nation: Build a 'Free and Open International Order,'") (in Japanese), Asahi Shimbun, November 3, 2010.

³⁴ "National Defense Program Outline for Fiscal 2011 and Beyond" (Dec. 17, 2010, Security Council Decision, Cabinet Decision), pp. 1-2. https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/security/pdfs/h23_ndpg_en.pdf

³⁵ Shotaro Yachi, "Kaiyou kokka no gaikou senryaku-Taiheiyou doumei wo jiku to shite" ("Diplomatic Strategy of a Maritime Nation-Centering on the Pacific Alliance")(in Japanese), Sekai Heiwa Kenkyuu (World Peace Studies), Spring, 2012, pp.3-4

³⁶ Hakata, "'Free and Open International Order' will be realized?" p. 113.

region in its relations with China, and I have already mentioned the importance of "strategic information dissemination" for this purpose. What form of information dissemination should be conducted?

This means that, first of all, a careful explanation including the FOIO/FOIP relationship as described in the section of "FOIO and the formation process of FOIP," is essential. Even if it is reasonable to try to replace FOIP, which has regional boundaries, with FOIO, which is a higher-level concept, it will be necessary to emphasize repeatedly that FOIO has been the core principle of FOIP from the beginning and that FOIP is a part of FOIO, an "embodiment" of FOIO in the Indo-Pacific region. However, it is also important to avoid redundancy and to use simple and catchy terms when creating a diplomatic slogan, and this is precisely the reason why the author has dared to use the expression (abbreviation) "Free and Open International Order (FOIO)" instead of "free and open international order based on the rule of law." This is precisely the reason. Of course, this is based on the assumption that the key phrase "based on the rule of law" will be added according to the context in which it is used.

From this perspective, it would be desirable to publish a detailed policy document that comprehensively and systematically explains FOIO/FOIP, but if this is practically difficult for the aforementioned reasons, the next best solution would be to consider using different shades of gray depending on the medium in which the information is disseminated. In other words, the idea is to be as concise as possible in speeches and talks, while being as detailed as space permits in existing government documents such as the "National Security Strategy" and the "Diplomatic Blue Book.

Also, it may be an appropriate idea to use the concept, "Chain of Objectives,"³⁷ where FOIO is the "Purpose" to be ultimately achieved and FOIP is the "Objective" that is an indicator for achieving that objective. For example, in speeches and statements, FOIP could take the form of "We will work to ensure peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific and other regions in order to realize a 'free and open international order based on the rule of law'." This is intended to explain FOIO/FOIP as one and the same so that the emphasis on FOIP does not take the back seat to FOIO, but the actual wording should be used according to the context, i.e., whether it is intended for the Indo-Pacific region or for the rest of the region. In any case, the crucial thing is to ensure that FOIP is an idea that should not be "erased." And by promoting information dissemination in this way, FOIO/FOIP is expected to undergo new developments that can be applied to various regions, spaces, and themes, with a view to the Indo-Pacific and beyond (the Indo-Pacific and beyond).³⁸

³⁷ It was originally a term used in the decision-making process of military organization such as the U.S. Forces and the Japan Self-Defense Forces, and has come to be used in scenes of business somewhat. However, it is not commonly using today due to the changes of the decision-making process in military Forces.

³⁸ Hakata, "'Free and Open International Order' will be realized?" p. 116.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed the following issues related to the FOIO/FOIP relationship that arose in the wake of Prime Minister Kishida's October 2023 policy speech. In other words, First, FOIO has been the core principle of FOIP from the beginning, and FOIP is a part of FOIO, or in other words, a "realization" of FOIO in the Indo-Pacific region, and the recent issue was not originally intended to negate FOIP. Second, Furthermore, as the international community's concerns, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine, expand far beyond the Indo-Pacific region, the attempt to replace the regionally bounded FOIP with the higher-level concept of FOIO is fundamentally a valid idea. Third, however, it is not appropriate to take a uniform approach to replace FOIP, which has an established international reputation as an important "asset" of Japanese diplomacy, with FOIO, a higher level concept. It is also a way to avoid or reduce the impression that FOIP has taken a back seat, which inevitably arises from the emphasis on FOIO, and to attract the international community's attention to the Indo-Pacific region, keeping its relations with China in mind from the perspective of "strategic information transmission."

Finally, the author would like to emphasize again that FOIP is a concept that "should not be erased" from the perspective of above especially the third, and I would be happy if this paper can be of help in the future as FOIO/FOIO is widely disseminated and established based on such an understanding.

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