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On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the revised Japan-US security treaty, I would like to see both countries confirm and “deepen” the purpose of the Japan-US alliance.

Fifty years ago, Japan and the United States agreed to conclude the treaty, since, as is stated in the preface of the treaty, they “have a common concern in the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East.” The purpose of the alliance has since been to maintain the international peace and security of the Far East (East Asia). The alliance is a security arrangement for East Asia, not solely for Japan.

Obscuring this point may mislead Japanese or Americans to believe that once Japan becomes self-reliant for its defense, there will be no need for the alliance. Such will not be the case. Japan, as an East Asian power, will still need to be concerned with East Asian security as a whole, even if she can single-handedly ensure her own security. Likewise the United States, as a world and increasingly Pacific power, will have to be concerned with the security of the rest of East Asia. For both countries, the Japan-US alliance will continue to be the best tool for that purpose.

Confirming that purpose is a prerequisite for keeping the alliance strong for the next half a century. Once it is done, we should “deepen” it in order to energize the alliance. By “deepen,” I mean we should make it clear what the alliance seeks in maintaining the peace and security of East Asia.

It is time to think about an image of East Asia that both Japan and the United States would like to see in the future, while mutually cooperating to maintain the peace and security of the region. The image should coincide with the common interests and values of both countries. Among them are freedom and prosperity. I believe these are what a great many people in the region do want and with which no government dares to disagree.

If both governments issue a declaration to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the revised security treaty, I would like them to declare that the Japan-US alliance is an alliance to maintain the peace and security of East Asia, and it will be so managed as to facilitate freedom and prosperity in the region.