

# Japan and Genocide Prevention

## —Aspiration, Contradiction, and Dilemmas

Mayumi Watabe

### Introduction

After the failures of many humanitarian missions around the world such as in Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina and others, the search for ‘coherence’ between political and humanitarian responses to complex emergencies has been urgently sought. Recalling my own experiences and lessons learnt while working in the fields as well as for several national and international organizations in the past, the same question always comes and goes. Is the world indeed serious about committing itself to prevent genocide and related human tragedies? In addition, such thoughts also make me re-examine my own identity as Japanese, on what sort of particular contribution Japan could do and, more to say, should do.

While thinking of my own country, it now faces some sort of turning point. The end of the World War II had a devastating impact on Japan—its people, land and the relations with the surrounding countries. But today Japan has become one of the biggest financial donors in terms of multilateral and bilateral assistances to conflict prevention as well as to peace-building initiatives. However, does it have any clear vision or diplomatic strategies as a whole to identify its role in the international society? Or will it only be standing still when the world gets together and seriously deals with difficult challenges to prevent human tragedies including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide? Some may say Japan could do as it does now through providing funds to wherever the world is necessary. Yet, the others may contest to the proposition and say that the country should make more operational contribution by exhibiting more physical presence in the fields.

Needless to say, there are many types and forms of international cooperation Japan may well be involved. The environment surrounding the world’s efforts to genocide prevention is changing. In this regard, this paper shall focus on the field of genocide prevention and examine which direction the country’s aspiration to play a more active role, if any, may proceed. Yet, the country today faces a number of challenges and dilemmas and requires going beyond ‘good intention’. Therefore, I shall conclude with some practical policy recommendations for Japan to do more for genocide prevention.

### 1. The Era of ‘Proactive’ Genocide Prevention—International Dimension

#### (1) New Environment Surrounding Genocide Prevention

The world’s endeavors to restore peace and stability through responding to humanitari-

an crises have reached a new stage: various factors such as processes of globalization, growing number of humanitarian players and emergence of new types of wars—for instance, war against terrorism, increasingly question the function of the existing aid system. While I believe any initiative related to stopping genocide and genocide prevention is part of humanitarian assistance as well as efforts for peacebuilding, the global environment surrounding such activities obviously affects the effectiveness of implementation and intervention, and therefore deserves close analysis and evaluation.

### Globalization

To begin with, one of the crucial factors that led to the reconsideration of humanitarian assistance is, unquestionably, globalization. It is generally assumed that a fundamental transformation by the further advancement of globalization results in the higher level of interpenetration and interdependence among nations and societies, raising the possibility of convergence in some social institutions, practices and values. This has been made possible by the advanced technologies such as the Internet, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, thereby changing the nature and practice not only of diplomacy and reforming the international system but also of every individual of the globe who has access to such technologies and services. It leads to a new phenomenon that genocidal events which may be happening in somewhere around the world now could be seen or heard on the Net or through accessing to social media, and might be collecting angry voices and calling up demonstrations around the world. In the past, traditional media such as professional journalists working for newspapers and TVs covers any humanitarian crises around the world. But now any real movies without editing could be broadcasted by individuals, through the internet, who witness humanitarian crises at the spot and the traditional media may then follow the movie posted by individuals. In this sense, advanced technologies could help us identify real-time genocidal crises instantly after happening, and may provide the public with early-warning to future genocide.

### Global Attention and Commitment to Genocide Prevention

The globalization and advanced new technologies also affected the growing concerns and attention of the world to genocide prevention. The lessons from the past human tragedies happened in Rwanda, Bosnia, and other parts of the world obviously raised huge awareness of genocide prevention. Concurrently, ‘who’s responsibility’ to protect populations has become the centre of discussion at the international arena. The Outcome Document of the 2005 United Nations World Summit clearly stipulates that while the duty to prevent and halt genocide and mass atrocities lies first and foremost with the State, however, the international community has a responsibility to encourage and assist States in fulfilling this responsibility, and to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means to protect populations from these crimes.<sup>1</sup>

Such trend has led to the establishment of a new institutional framework too. Prior to this historical commitment by the heads of state and government, the UN Secretary General

<sup>1</sup> From 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, Para 138-140 <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/487/60/PDF/N0548760.pdf?OpenElement>

Kofi Annan created the post of Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and appointed the first Adviser as Juan Méndez in 2004, having later been succeeded by Francis M. Deng on a full-time basis at the level of Under-Secretary General in 2007<sup>2</sup>. As another action by the UN in the same year, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon also appointed Edward Luck as the Special Adviser who focuses on the responsibility to protect, on a part-time basis at the level of Assistant Secretary-General. While the evaluation of their roles and impact of their works are still not fully assessed and will be a critical step even for further advancement of UN Reform, however, such initiatives are needless to say inevitable for integrated approach to global attention for genocide prevention. In addition, several countries, including Canada and USA, formed their policy groups of genocide prevention at higher levels of the governments, and publish reports focus on how to stop genocide as well as to prevent it.<sup>3</sup>

### Diverse Range of Involved Actors for Genocide Prevention

Another crucial factor that has an effect on the complex nature of future genocide prevention is the existence of ‘global civil society’,<sup>4</sup> as evidenced by the growth of Inter-governmental Organizations and International NGOs. While statistics about global numbers of NGOs are notoriously incomplete, it is currently estimated that there may be hundreds of thousands of NGOs in developing countries. The growing number reflects, indeed, the growing consciousness of a set of duties towards human being, and they have recently engaged more in the processes of peace-building and conflict resolution, expanding their roles and responsibilities. It has become more apparent that expectations of humanitarian activities have been expanded not only to reducing suffering but also in promoting peace and stability in long run.

However, the rapid increase in the number of humanitarian organizations means that there is now a greater variety of agencies working in conflict than ever before, and a corresponding variety of mission statements and operational framework. In addition, the growth of humanitarian organizations has led to an intense competition—an emerging marketplace of ideas, donors, and supporters. To financially sustain themselves, NGOs need to identify their market position and expertise in order to distinguish the NGOs’ brand name from others (Kaldor, 2003:94). In relation to this criticism, such market-driven behavior brings into question their crucial role of advocacy, since in some cases NGOs may be becoming government subcontractors, fearful of losing their sources of income. Another critical problem has emerged from their involvement in humanitarian work. Also, humanitarian assistance may destroy local capacity and causes ‘dependency syndrome’: flooding the destructed area with excess external recourses can reduce the incentives for capacity-building and can encourage

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2 On 17 July 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Mr. Adama Dieng of Senegal as his Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide.

3 For example: Canada’s All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Prevention of Genocide and Other Crimes against Humanity, with the report entitled “The Will to Intervene Report (W2I Report—2009) and USA’s Genocide Prevention Task Force with the report of Preventing Genocide—A Blueprint for US Policy-makers (2008).

4 Mary Kaldor asserts that global civil society is about civilizing or democratising globalisation, about the process through which groups, movements and individuals can demand a global rule and justice of laws and empowerment (“*Global Civil Society: An Answer to War*”, Polity Press, 2003:12).

local population to become dependent on external supplies.<sup>5</sup>

These criticisms therefore exhibit that the humanitarian system may sometimes become part of the problem and not the solution. Having said so, however, genocide happens in the fields where most of these actors work. Therefore, successful genocide prevention obviously needs their professional commitment and involvement by reaffirming their real goal of missions. In this regard, the only way to improve this new situation of increased actors in humanitarian fields is to continue search for a coherent and well-coordinated 'order' among them, being analyzed at field-levels.

## (2) New Discussion Tools - "Human Security" and "Responsibility to Protect"

The new environment characterized as above has given another important implication to higher-level discussion. Near the end of the 1990's there was a recognized need to focus on the debate about crisis prevention and response: the security of the community and the individual, not only the state, must be priorities for national and international policies. It as a result challenged the competence of the state, reinforcing the emerging shift from government to 'global' governance. In other words this meant the weakening of sovereignty, opened up a door for the search for new international security more broadly. During this time, two distinct concepts were born to use for discussing the roles and responsibility of international society: concepts of human security (HS) and responsibility to protect (R2P).

In the case of human security, a distinctive element of human security is its focus on early prevention to minimize the impacts of insecurity, to engender long-term solutions, and to build human capacities for undertaking prevention.<sup>6</sup> In this regard, human security can be a critical discussion tool for genocide prevention, by addressing root causes of human insecurities and encourage strategies for how to develop early warning system and also for how to mitigate harmful effects when such tragedies unfortunately happen.

While the concept of human security emphasizes on empowering people so that removing people's insecurities can contribute to early prevention of any worst scenario including the outbreak of, let us say, conflicts or even genocide, however, the concept of responsibility to

5 The case of Kosovo in 1999 was a good example of this: the arrival of NGOs on the scene was described by some as a 'feeding frenzy' of crisis junkies (Independent International Commission on Kosovo, 2000:202-205). After the conflict ended, several hundred of NGOs became involved, and provided aid like 'rain from the sky'. Even after many NGOs left for other crisis regions such as East Timor or Afghanistan, local population still hope that 'some would come to provide food, shelter and medical'—the dependency syndrome has been completely formalised.

6 The term was first publicly introduced as a distinctive concept in the 1994 Human Development Report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In that report, UNDP broadly defined human security as "freedom from fear and freedom from want". Four basic characteristics (universal, people-centred, interdependent and early prevention) and seven key components (economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security) were presented as the main elements of human security. While various definitions have been presented since that time and still not a single definition is universally agreed, however, the independent Commission on Human Security, led by Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen, in its 2003 report entitled *Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People*, has defined human security as "to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment", and the definition is often referred as a working definition by some groups including UN Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) and high-level working group of 'Friends of Human Security'.

protect rather focuses on how to intervene when genocide itself is likely to happen or is actually happening. With strong support and commitment by both the former and current UNSG of Kofi Annan and Ban Ki-moon, the concept has been widely referred in several important high level documents<sup>7</sup> including the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document and the SG report entitled ‘Implementing Responsibility to Protect’ in 2009. Although responsibility to protect, in particular, receives resistance from some particular UN member states with the fear of proactive military intervention to their internal affairs, the UN still commits to turn into action the concept of responsibility to protect by continued dialogues and debates at high-level sessions as reflected in resolutions by the General Assembly and the Security Council.<sup>8</sup>

The emergence of these concepts, as well as the heated discussion around them are indeed becoming a driving force of accelerated debates on how to prevent genocide by the international society—letting genocide prevention re-recognized as one of the world’s major interests. Of course, while witnessing the ineffectiveness of the Security Council in terms of the current situation in Syria, these concepts still have some contests in terms of its ‘real’ power as a practical tool to halt genocide in the fields. But, if thinking of a possibility for not having such concepts now, the emergence of such discussion could be said a step forward not backward, for future genocide prevention, no matter how small the step is.

## 2. Japan and Genocide Prevention—Domestic Dimension

### (1) Japan’s Aspiration for Proactive Approach to Genocide Prevention

Having analyzed the situation surrounding the global genocide prevention initiative, now let us move to look into what actually Japan, as a country with potential both financially and operationally, can contribute to genocide prevention initiatives in the international arena.

As well known, after the ignominious failure in 1945 of its bid for expanded military and political power, Japan turned inward and endeavored to rebuild the war-devastated lives of its people. In order to overcome both physical and psychological damage from the war, throughout the post-war decade, the Japanese worked hard, saved hard, and studied hard, but shying away from active involvement in most of the complications and problems of the outside world. However, the more Japan having been recognized as a major economic power in the world, the more the country has become facing the agenda of how to identify roles and responsibilities at the international society.

For example, the 1991 Gulf War was a critical event for Japan with such a problem. While it was impossible to offer military ‘contributions’ due to constraints emanating from Article IX of the Japanese Constitution, Japan was more than willing to provide financial support for the multinational forces, led by the US. As a result, Japan became the largest financial supporter of the Gulf War effort by offering a total of US\$ 13 billion in aid. It was a

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7 To name a few, the High-level Panel’s report, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility* (2004); the Secretary-General’s report entitled *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* (2005).

8 UN Security Council Press Statement on Libya (2011 Feb)  
<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/sc10180.doc.htm>

consensus among the Japanese that as a result of outside pressure (*gaiatsu*) from the US,<sup>9</sup> the Japanese government had paid an inordinate amount of financial aid for nothing in return. In the country's history, it can be said that this was a turning point for Japan changing their attitude of 'cash dispenser diplomacy' to actual aid-implementing country with 'human contribution'. In this regard, however, on what basis Japan wish to play a more proactive role?

To answer the above question, it is first significant to look at how the Japanese people see their role in the world—which is described in the Preamble of the Japanese Constitution. It reads that:

*"...We, the Japanese people, desire peace for all time and are deeply conscious of the high ideals controlling human relationship and we have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world. We desire to occupy an honoured place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time from the earth..."*

The above passage asserts that the Japanese aspire to be peaceful, and are proud to be a pacifist nation in the international scene. However, the traditional Japanese conception of peace is a narrow-minded "one-country pacifism", meaning that Japan is preoccupied with peace at home but not with peace elsewhere. However, there occurred an increasing debate on Japan's passive attitude to international problems after the lessons learned in the Gulf War. At the same time, another factor was also contributing to the change of Japan's passive to proactive approach to the world—globalization, again.

In Japan cosmopolitan norms such as environmental protection, humanitarian assistance, human rights and democracy have become more widely accepted, with the advent of satellite dishes, fax machines, and the Internet. And inevitably, the norms are reinforced by globalization which has been mentioned in the previous section. The public has simply had more opportunities to learn about opinions outside their country. Media messages have a strong impact on individuals, and those who learn about suffering in other parts of the world can be spurred to act, challenging their consciousness as human beings. Their consciousness was so evident in the national 2011 public opinion survey organized by the Cabinet Office of the government, which exhibits that the Japanese people see their country's roles and responsibilities primarily in contributing to peacekeeping humanitarian activities, including conflict prevention and resolution.<sup>10</sup> Needless to say, genocide prevention initiative could well be among their prime interests too. But, of course wishes can end up with only wishes without

9 There were tremendous criticisms around the world regarding Japan's performance in the Gulf War. The US criticised slow Japanese decision making, the lack of a physical presence in the Gulf, and the indecisive attitude regarding Japan's roles in restoring peace to the region (Okawara, 1993:56). That is, the Japanese government simply paid large checks for the forces involved and several countries bordering the conflict region (e.g. Egypt, Jordan or Syria), but sent neither its Self-Defence Force nor large-scale official humanitarian rescue teams to the Gulf region.

10 The Cabinet Office of Japan—Public Survey 2011 <http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/h23/h23-gaiko/zh/z43.html>



realities, if not moved into action. In this sense, Japan has not only had vague aspiration in people's mind but there has been developed an official policy to be engaged more into the implementation of such aspiration.

## (2) 'Human Security' as Diplomatic Pillar

As earlier stated, the concept of human security, similar to the discussion over 'responsibility to protect', could be one of the most important tools to further contribute to the world's genocide prevention. In this regard, it was Japan who has widely used the language of human security in its official discourse since the late 1990s. After the Gulf War, Japan faces a dilemma regarding how to deal with the current standoff between the option of becoming a normal military power and the option of pursuing the path of a unique civilian humanitarian power.

Historically speaking Japan's foreign policy was originally very functional and blunt and openly promoted Japan's economic interests abroad during the Cold War. But after its end, the world witnesses a paradigm shift from the emphasis of international security from traditional security (securing sovereignty) to development and peace building (more focus on individuals beyond 'borders'). Since Japan is not able to become a military power due to the constitutional restriction, the discourse of human security gives Japan one tool for promoting the so-called 'middle power' ambition of reaching a 'unique and great' position among nations. So this paradigm perfectly fits Japan's *de facto* foreign policy and the country is since then very committed to promote and disseminate the concept through various diplomatic channels. One of them is, for example, the Trust Fund for Human Security in the United Nations—a biggest UN Trust Fund among all, where Japan has so far contributed around 400 million USD since its establishment in 1999.

While the concept is too comprehensive and could include anything related to development and peace-building, however, I truly believe from my personal experiences over human security that there are two fields where Japan can utilize the value added of the concept for more proactive genocide prevention. First, as pointed out earlier, human security emphasizes on 'prevention'. This implies that ensuring human security requires identifying risks, threats and hazards and addressing their root causes so that preventive responses through a protection and empowerment framework can be implemented. Successful genocide prevention too needs such procedures, and in this sense, if the country set the concept of human security as a diplomatic pillar, they could do more if they become committed to genocide prevention.

Another distinctive approach of human security is their role in bridging between emergency and development phases. So-called 'post-conflict' aid gap refers to sudden shortage of funds, human resources, proper institutional framework with long-term strategies. Even the fall of the world's interests and attention after the emergency period also caused uncertainty and restless atmosphere in the society. Since emergency aid only is not easy to get rid of root causes of genocide or mass violence, the gap might causes some sort of insecurity within the society and might brings back violence again. In order not to let genocidal phenomena happen again as well as to ensure security for all during this critical stage of post-conflict societies, the approach of human security is so much needed and this is actually what Mrs. Sadako Ogata—the former head of UNHCR and the co-chair of Commission for Human Security indeed recog-

nizes its value so openly in public. Therefore, if Japan is indeed committed to promote the concept of human security, there is so much to do for genocide prevention by utilizing this approach.

### (3) Integrated Framework of Cross-Sector Partnership—"Japan Platform"

Now, let us closely look at actual "means" of translating the country's aspiration into action instead of continuing the analysis over the policy for realizing the country's aspiration. In this regard, the most fundamental question is who will be practicing such aspiration? Apart from the government or JICA themselves, people would first say that civil society organizations such as NGOs could be one of the crucial players for this purpose, and it is also the case for Japan. Today, NGOs' activities abroad are greatly welcomed and received more attention than ever in Japan. With the changing attitude of government officials towards NGOs especially after Kosovo Crisis in 1999, the nature of the relations between the state and NGOs has been gradually shifting from confrontation to cooperation. It also means that Japanese NGOs enjoy more latitude and influence in ODA policy making than ever before.

#### Strength of NGOs' Activities

While examining the potential of the country's contribution to genocide prevention, its several strengths of using NGOs should first be mentioned. As it is so for NGOs in other countries, unlike governmental organizations or most of international organizations such as the UN, flexible administration allows them to avoid the complex procedures and politics that slow down government decisions. While the state bureaucracy and international organizations such as the UN takes several years to launch a new programme, NGOs can initiate an operation with greater speed and ease. Genocide may be accelerated with unexpected speed once it happens. So it requires prompt actions right after genocide happens or when it is likely to happen. Their impartiality and neutrality too is another asset while receiving trust from the people and countries that they are working for.

There is also some particular strength of Japanese NGOs, which is their good reputation. Most NGO members are highly dedicated to their work, despite low salaries. The public has a dramatically different attitude toward NGO members, who are seen as selfless and sincere, than they do toward politicians and bureaucrats. This positive reputation often extends abroad as well. Due to their independence from government, Japanese NGOs can even work in countries that lack diplomatic relations with Tokyo. And almost all NGOs in Japan are either nonreligious or, in a few cases, are affiliated to Buddhist groups or non-missionary Christian groups. The fact that virtually no NGOs in Japan are affiliated to proselytizing religious groups also eases people's fears in recipient countries. As my experiences shows in Africa and the Balkans, assistance from Japan is welcomed by recipient countries partly due to their respect towards the country which was fully recovered from the post-conflict difficulties and built to a society of strong economy.

However, the most notable development in Japan's humanitarian aid is seen in its operational collaboration. Unlike the case of USAID, which heavily relies on NGOs for aid project implementation, the Japanese government did not previously have a regular system of



subcontracting projects to NGOs. In the late 1990s, however, both Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) began developing a contracting system, in which NGOs could participate more in implementing grassroots projects. Especially after the 1999 Kosovo Crisis where many Japanese NGOs started their proactive operations outside Asia, the government, which focus more on donor visibility, began realizing the strengths described as above, and they started to think of methods to utilize their existence.

#### Cross-sector Partnership of ‘Japan Platform’

This development has eventually evolved further into the establishment of the ‘Japan Platform’ in 2000—the mechanism of cross-sector collaboration among MoFA, NGOs, and the corporate sector. Cumbersome and inefficient bureaucratic procedures in Japan have often been criticized by NGOs.<sup>11</sup> For example, MoFA’s disbursement of funds usually takes months, which often hampers Japanese NGOs with relatively weak financial resources and their efforts to timely delivery of aid. This criticism led to the establishment of the Japan Platform as a system for providing efficient emergency relief in natural disasters and refugee situations (see Chart 1).<sup>12</sup> Assistance funding donated by government and private sector companies and groups is pooled within the Japan Platform and used for initial NGO operations (field surveys and local preparatory arrangements such as establishing local offices, finding local staff, arranging transport and setting up security measures, conducted prior to aid activities). NGOs can also receive the necessary technologies (computers or radios) and human resources from the private sector.

The system recognizes the equal partnership of NGOs, businesses and government, with each partner making full use of its resources and skills under the theory of ‘comparative advantages’. Up until now, the Japan Platform has 37 member NGOs which could receive financial assistance from the Platform’s pooled fund provided by government, corporations and private donors. They have performed their humanitarian assistance in more than 30 countries and regions so far—all of them are not development, but emergency assistance with quick response right after the crisis happens.

This innovative way of mobilizing resources across all sectors of humanitarian players in Japan provides us with several observations. First of all, the development enabled NGOs very effectively to respond to crises and the post-war reconstruction in Afghanistan, because of the pooled funds at the Japan Platform which could be disbursed more quickly than ever before. This has had a tremendous effect on not only Japan’s aid effectiveness of alleviating

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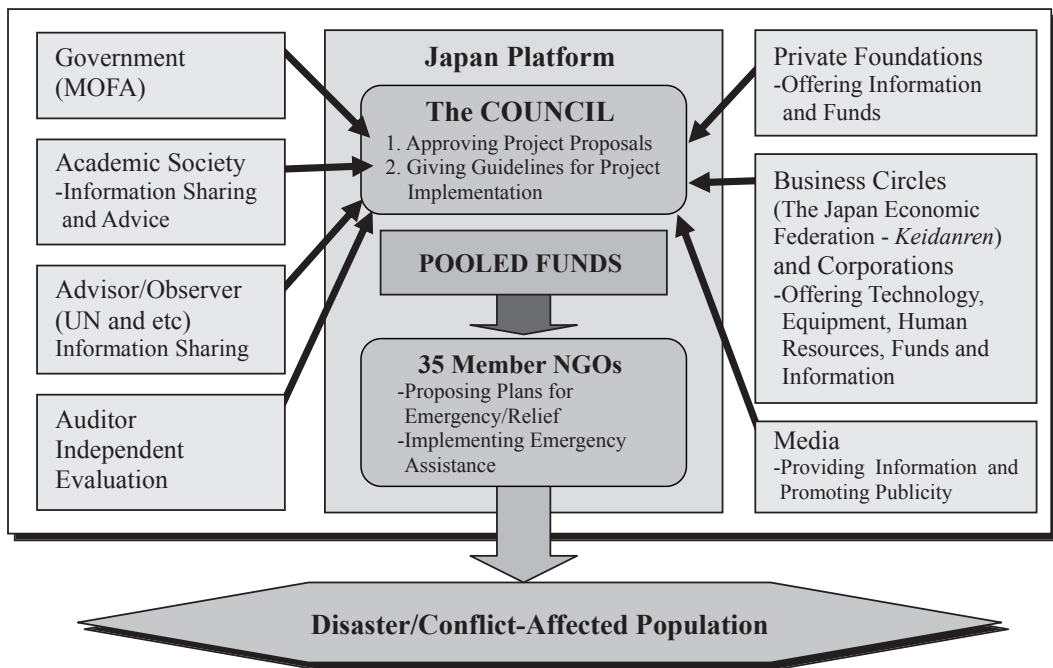
**11** As the Japanese government provided an enormous amount of funds to the Kosovo crisis, it was expected Japanese NGOs could have a significant involvement. However, the absence of initial set-up funds in the first phase of their operations hampered them from being recognised as major players of humanitarian assistance in Kosovo 1999. The Kosovo crisis was, therefore, another turning point for both MoFA and NGOs in realising that they need to compete with other western NGOs that possess competence and close partnership with governments in terms of securing funds, and contributing effectively on the ground.

**12** The idea of the Japan Platform was brought from the British NGO networking organisation of ‘Disasters Emergencies Committee’ (DEC). The differences between the two organisations are (1) the active and official support from the corporate sector and that (2) Japan’s version places greater emphasis on the sense of solidarity and partnership across the sector—it might be a form of new nationalism as they always call for ‘All Japan’.

people's suffering but also Japan's civil society development. The more swiftly Japanese NGOs become involved in humanitarian operations abroad, the more the media coverage of their activities on the ground is enhanced. Consequently, civil society activities are being more recognized in Japanese society as a means by which individual citizens contribute to international peace and security. The Platform becomes a real 'platform' for those individuals who seek their goals of life, supporting morally and financially the humanitarian activities of Japanese NGOs. In this regard, the recent collaborative approaches to humanitarian efforts have arguably captured the development of a post-materialist culture shift in Japan.

**Chart 1: System of Japan Platform**

(Source: Organizational Chart of Japan Platform from <http://www.japanplatform.org/>)



The second implication drawn from the launch of the Japan Platform is the growth of 'corporate philanthropy' in Japan. The Japan Economic Federation (*Nippon Keidanren*),<sup>13</sup> being a member of the Council of the Japan Platform—its decision making body, emphasizes the responsibility of the private sector in civil society, admitting officially that Japanese corporations are now expected to "overcome the obstructive nature of Japanese society by participating as one member of society through philanthropic means and through support given to non-profit organizations". Since Japanese corporations such as Sony, Toyota and other large multi-national companies could have adequate human capital, management and resource

<sup>13</sup> The Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren) is a comprehensive economic organisation born in May 2002 by amalgamation of Keidanren (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) and Nikkeiren (Japan Federation of Employers' Associations). It has a membership of 1,584 and is comprised of 1,632 companies including 79 foreign ownership, 128 industrial associations, and 47 regional employers' associations (as of Feb 24, 2012). The Federation is the core network of Japan's economic power base.

mobilization skills, and technological know-how, the private sector's official participation in the Japan Platform is viewed as an innovative form of achieving more effective and efficient soft aid implementation, thereby generating 'enthusiasm', 'expectation' and 'solidarity' among all the players in the Japanese aid circle.

Apart from the above observations, the most important trend to emerge with the establishment of Japan Platform is the very real search for 'coherent' aid. It is a recent phenomenon, but its search has been accelerated not only by the government's willingness to attain 'international recognition', but also by the Japanese civil society's desire to join the global community, delivering 'what they can deliver' in order to alleviate people's suffering. With this approach, I would argue that Japan's foreign aid policy has been 're-born', as its policy formulation and implementation is no longer only in the hands of bureaucrats and politicians but also in the hands of the citizens who take global issues as a duty of citizenship.

### 3. Challenges and Dilemma faced by Japan's Genocide Prevention Approaches

While Japan wishes to be recognized as a leading country in promoting peace and security, however, there are some obstacles that hinder its proactive approaches and ideas. Personally, I truly think that the country could do more for genocide prevention, provided that they have operational policy that could contribute to the prevention, as well as a mechanism such as the Japan Platform to let NGOs swiftly take actions to the affected areas. But, somehow it has certain missing links that cannot bring concrete actions on the ground.

#### (1) Limited Capacity and underdeveloped civil society—NGOs

While basic aspiration and policies are there to contribute more to genocide prevention, Japan in fact faces critical dilemmas. I believe that a most serious problem faced by the country actually stems from the implementing actors themselves. That is NGOs' lack of experiences. The history of NGOs in Japan is so short as compared to the one in Europe. Prior to the Kosovo Crisis in 1999, they were mostly operated in Asia-Pacific regions with development-oriented activities in small size. Genocide prevention as well as peacebuilding would need particular knowledge and true competence to handle them right, with ability to identify root causes and take appropriate actions to prevent, stop or recover from the event of violence. The Japanese NGOs might be good at providing meticulous assistances and attention to the affected areas and also now be able to have fast initial movement through the Japan Platform. However, they are still not adequately experienced in terms of having real tough operations particularly outside Asia. In addition, when disasters happen so far away from Japan, the distance unfortunately becomes their excuse not to begin operations, sometimes. What are the reasons for it if they are so willing to do something for peace and security for the world? To this answer, there are critical challenges of NGOs to point out.

Also, there is a lack of funds. While the MoFA has increased the amount of funds that NGOs could have access to, the majority of NGO income necessarily depends on individual donations, membership fees, and sales of publications and other goods. Unfortunately, as many people say, the country does not have a culture of donations. It might sound contradiction that

while during the public survey they wish to do more for peace and security in the world and admire the activities of NGOs, however, they are not willing to provide donations or time for volunteering.<sup>14</sup> In addition, for NGOs, maintaining an office in Tokyo is difficult on a small budget. The fact that most Japanese NGOs are relatively poor and young consequently means that they have not had time to build up their operations, staff, and assets, consequently hampering aid effectiveness and efficiency.

Another problem confronting Japanese NGOs, probably the most acute one, is a lack of qualified personnel. Although the situation is slowly improving, Japanese NGOs have had difficulty in recruiting qualified individuals with managerial and technical skills, as well as with knowledge of crucial aspects of humanitarian principles. The average salary of NGO staff is around JPY2,500,000 per year, even if you have a post-graduate degree. But the difficulty in recruiting such personnel stems not only from the low salaries that NGOs provide, but also from the lack of prestige in working for NGOs. Many Japanese people admire the activities of NGOs, particularly those NGOs that are at the frontline of relief operations, but they would not want their own relatives to work for them. Consequently, the so-called 'brain drain' occurs in Japan: qualified personnel tend to seek employment in the more prestigious, better paid corporate or government sectors, or international organizations such as the United Nations. Usually, those Japanese who graduate from universities abroad would regard NGO activities as a temporary 'shelter' that provides experiences but would not see them as their place for lifetime employment. This is partly due to Japanese NGOs' weak financial position. That is, while well-established NGOs in Europe and the US can offer competitive salaries to highly qualified personnel, Japanese NGOs cannot do so because they cannot 'afford' people who are well educated abroad, seeking certain return from their investment in education. This has a serious consequence: the inability of Japanese NGOs to attract and hire qualified personnel hinders their professional development and expansion. For example, most NGOs hire only a handful of paid staff, usually fewer than ten people (Japan NGO Centre for International Cooperation, 2010). My experiences also show that they do not even hire professional accountants but rely on untrained staff to manage finances.

As a result of these weaknesses, Japanese NGOs do not possess the capacity to expand further their operations in the field of humanitarian assistance. Moreover, there could be severe competition for securing funds among NGOs. However, even if Japanese NGOs could compete with each other in the domestic context, it is obvious that they simply do not have the expertise and experience to compete with other Western humanitarian organizations. Even if the system of the Japan Platform is established and the capacity of state agencies' aid implementation is improved, Japanese NGOs, which are supposed to fill the gap between the expectation and reality, also suffer from another reality—their limited incapable organizational power. Although Japan has increased its financial contribution to humanitarian operations, the capacity-building of Japanese NGOs has not been coterminous. The problem of their organizational incapacity of Japanese NGOs has thus been seen as a key source of Japan's aid inefficiency,

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14 According to the survey by UK NGOs of Charities Aid Foundations:  
<https://www.cafonline.org/publications/2011-publications/world-giving-index-2011.aspx>

which consequently undermines the ultimate goal of humanitarian interventions—to alleviate people's suffering.

## (2) Policy Recommendations and Ways Forward

Under the current situation, suffice to say, Japan is probably suffering from some missing links within the society on how their aspiration for contributing to international peace and security could actually be translated into action. Due to the constitutional restriction, the country could only do non-military contribution to peacebuilding efforts. At higher level of interventions, like Scandinavian countries good at peace negotiations, the country should also identify their focus on what particular roles to play non-militarily in order to deal with violent conflicts. If successfully done, this reinforces the country's commitment to human security with the emphasis on early prevention and early warning. In terms of implementation on the ground, first and foremost, improving capacity of NGOs and other civil society organizations are the priority. This includes, providing training to NGOs on dealing with violent conflicts as well as improving working environment for the personnel.

More importantly, the country needs further efforts on how to increase public interests on the international peace and security in general. It needs, for example, cross-sector partnership among academics, government and NGOs, to promote further research and advocacy on genocide prevention and other war crimes. In addition, it is also necessary to think of some innovative ways on how to increase more public attention to genocide prevention and peacebuilding efforts within the society. Learning, witnessing, and hearing is the most crucial effect on increasing the interests. Media, which broadcasts the daily news of what happens throughout the world, may need to play a central role for this end. Also, providing learning opportunities on genocide and other war crimes at educational institutions might also help understand on the mechanism of genocide and mass atrocities that could happen at anywhere in the world. Organizing a public symposium or forum, for example to think of what happens in Syria, is something that can be done today. Ultimately, I believe that this could lead all together to the greater interests in the phenomena itself.

## Conclusion

As illustrated so far, Japan has tried hard to gain more international recognition as a nation with a serious commitment to ensuring international peace and security. There is a consensus among the Japanese, that the country should assume greater responsibility and play a more active role in the international system. I strongly believe and wish that Japan's aspiration to contribute to the world's genocide prevention initiative is also included in there. However, as pointed out throughout here, there are many challenges and dilemmas that Japan needs to confront in order to achieve this goal: its constitutional constraints to play more active roles in peacekeeping operations, and the reality of Japan's underdeveloped civil society.

Genocide-free world is what the international society looks for. Efforts for it continue but there are many tragedies happened even today at somewhere in the world. Preventing genocide and other war crimes shall require professional analysis and careful intervention by

all members of the international society. In this sense, Japan should not be excused to their endeavor even if they have some constitutional restriction on military intervention. Military involvement is not a decided condition prior to any intervention, but in some cases non-military means could have great effects for the purpose. Japan is now tested on whether the country is indeed serious for playing proactive roles for restoring international peace and security. I strongly believe that Japan first fights for the domestic problem of contradiction and dilemmas between the aspiration and the reality. Only by doing so, the effective tools for actual contribution in a very original fashion, not in someone's emulation, will be born, leading up to the country's confidence and dignity as a nation.