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IN EAST ASIA

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PROCEEDINGS

RICHARD BUSH: My name is Richard Bush. I am the director of the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, which is the sponsor of today's event, and this is one of the wrap-up events of the program here for our Center's visiting fellows from Northeast Asia. We will be having, over the course of the next few weeks, the individual presentations of some of the visiting fellows. But this is a panel discussion where we talk to the fellows collectively and hear their views on how their countries and places view the United States and U.S. policy, and we thank you all for coming.

I would like to start the questions with Dr. Pang. Dr. Pang, we have seen several expressions of nationalism in China this year having to do with Tibet, the Olympic torch and so on, and then there seems to have been a shift after the Sichuan earthquake of May 12. Would you agree that popular nationalism in China has shifted since the earthquake, the popular view throughout the outside world? What do you think?

PANG ZHONGYING: Thank you very much. I would like to respond to the first question about Chinese nationalism. Before I respond, let me extend my deep gratitude to the American government and American firms, and other non-governmental organizations for giving condolences, aid and other disaster relief to China in the aftermath of the earthquake. This is the worst earthquake in Chinese history.

Nationalism is my research topic and I always pay attention to nationalism in other countries, not just in China. In my mind, nationalism is a neutral, scholarly concept – a complex collective feeling. For me, on some occasions, I favor to use the term “patriotism” in describing the same sentiment in the context of China. Today, I will try to explain the long evolution of Chinese nationalism.

People can identify some continuities and changes in this evolution. Chinese nationalism is reactive and defensive. Because certain countries and organizations have committed to boycotting the Olympic Games, and also because of the Tibet issue, Chinese nationalism has once again erupted. This is very similar to the May 4th movement almost 90 years ago. The earthquake provides a good, positive opportunity for interaction between China and the outside world because the outside world responded positively to China's quick disaster responses and disaster relief efforts. I would like to say this earthquake is China's September 11, which happened in the United States in 2001. September 11 changed the U.S.; I believe the quake and its aftermath is changing China – including Chinese nationalism. It may serve as a turning point for new interaction between China and the outside world, particularly between China and the United States.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Thank you. Akihiro, what kind of general image of the U.S. foreign policy does Japan hold, and did your image of U.S. foreign policy change during your time at Brookings?

AKIHIRO IWASHITA: Yeah. The general view of the United States's foreign policy in Japan is that the United States is always stronger and always the super power who controls everything in the world. From this perception, we feel two reactions: for us to be repulsed; and second, for us to be supportive. The repulsive reactions mainly come from only the regional Japanese people and some right-wing media. The United States is a little selfish and a little one-sided. The U.S. rarely considers others' interests and feelings, and prefers unilateral activities in the world. So, on the other hand, supportive reactions are coming from Japan, particularly aides close to the administration and the so-called realists or strategic thinkers. They think that as long as the United States dominates the world, Japan should more aggressively support United States' hegemony over the world to enhance Japan's interests to the world; Japan should bandwagon with the United States to make the United States more trustable to Japan. I think these two kinds of reactions came from the same perception of the strengths of the United States' foreign policy. Thanks to the Brookings arrangement, now I have a slightly different idea. The United States' foreign policy is not so strong, particularly in terms of the policy making process. There's a lack of cohesion, and fluctuation, particularly for Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, North Korea and the others. In this sense, after coming back to Japan, I should try characterize Japan's image of American foreign policy as mildly incorrect.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Thank you. Haeran, the image of the United States and South Korea was doing pretty well, and then all of a sudden there was the issue of beef. We were having massive demonstrations in Seoul and other places. What's happening, and are we seeing a new rise of anti-American sentiment in South Korea?

LIM HAERAN: Thank you for raising that issue.

DR. BUSH: We can have steak afterwards.

DR. LIM: The favorable image of the United States has declined in most parts of the world, according to the Pew Global Attitudes Project in 2007. For instance, even in Asia, the favorability rating of the United States in Japan has decreased by 11 percent, and it decreased by 8 percent in China from 2002 to 2007. But in Korea, the favorable sentiment towards the United States has improved from 52 percent in 2002 to 58 percent in 2007. So, everybody was actually optimistic about the Korea-United States alliance relations in the 21st century, especially since the new right-wing Lee Myung-bak took office. However, all of a sudden, the decision to resume U.S. beef imports in Korea gave rise to massive opposition and resistance among the Korean public. So some may say that this public uproar reflects anti-Americanism in Korea, or how deep-seated anti-Americanism is in Korea; however, if we look closely at the criticism, it is targeted at the Lee Myung-bak regime, the arrogance of the political leadership and the lack of communication between government and people rather than the United States itself.

Korean people were really disappointed by his appointment of cabinet members and members of presidential senior secretaries. People felt a kind of relative deprivation from that selection process, which also raised a huge, insurmountable wall between the government and the people. So, this recent opposition might be a cumulative result of the discontent among the people rather than the rise of anti-Americanism. But it is true that there is a political temptation for certain progressive groups to politicize this issue and even translate this opposition or criticism to the rise of anti-Americanism in Korea. Actually, anti-Americanism in Korea has deep historical roots in Korea, which can be politically manipulated by any sensitive issues. So, at this moment, I think the government should really solve this problem and appease the anger of the discontented people right away. Otherwise it could be translated into anti-Americanism because the 13th of June is the day when the two middle school girls had died six years ago, so there will be a memorial demonstration soon. I hope that the government will understand the urgency of the situation and find ways to solve this problem.

DR. BUSH: Thank you, very much. American politicians would never use a foreign policy issue for domestic political gain.

[Laughter.]

Ching-Lung, how does the Taiwan public view the United States right now?

HUANG CHING-LUNG: Thank you. Actually, Taiwanese people do enjoy American beef; very good indeed. But, compared with Korea, I don't know which is good and which is bad. Okay, back to your question. In general, I think Taiwan is still a friendly ally with the U.S. as usual. But some incidents that have happened over the past four years have hurt the relationship. There were different aspects of the parties. For the pan-blue side, the turning point was in 2004 when the United States failed to help investigate the controversial outcome of the presidential election in Taiwan, and they felt that the U.S. betrayed an old friend and lost its reputation of justice. They viewed the U.S. as not as reliable as before. And for the pan-green side, I think the turning point was in 2007 when the U.S. opposed the join-the-United Nations referendum. The pan-green people felt that having a referendum to join the United Nations was part of the basic rights for the Taiwanese people, and that the United States should not sacrifice Taiwan's interests because of concerns about China. So they became disappointed with the U.S.

Another reason is that following the rise of China, trade relations between Taiwan and China have become increasingly closer. I heard one theory that, in the past, Taiwan's security depended 100 percent on the U.S., as did its economy. Hence, the Taiwanese people had 100 percent trust in and reliance on the U.S. But today, Taiwan's major investments and market are in China. While Taiwan's security still depends on the U.S., generally speaking, trust and the reliance has been lowered from 100 percent to maybe 70 or 75 percent. And some day when relations between Taiwan and China are even closer economically and tension from the military standoff has reduced, whether the relationship between Taiwan and the U.S. will be further reduced should be of concern.

DR BUSH: Okay. Thank you, very much. Georgy Toloraya, the main point of engagement between the United States and Russia in East Asia is the Korean peninsula and Six-Party Talks. What do Russian experts think of U.S. policy towards the Korean peninsula?

GEORGY TOLORAYA: Well, I would say that really during the last two years, the Korean peninsula has attracted a lot of attention in Russia, and the U.S. policy towards Korea is maybe the single most important aspect of U.S. Asia policy which is closely monitored in Russia.

But there is no unanimous opinion. We still have in Russia old-time leftists who support Pyongyang. Although even they do not approve of North Korea's internal policies, they tend to view Pyongyang's confrontation with the U.S. as sort of justified. There are also liberals who view the North Korean regime with animosity and would join or support actions to actually bring it down. But the mainstream approach is very pragmatic. The mainstream approach is that peace and stability in this neighboring area are most important, and that any policies of the United States, China, and Russia, should have this stability as the ultimate priority. Therefore, denuclearization is, of course, very important for Russia, but it should be pursued only in the frame of increasing security and encouraging peaceful development.

Obviously, since the early years of the Bush administration, Russia and the U.S. didn't see exactly eye-to-eye on this situation because Moscow was actually afraid that the U.S.'s efforts to isolate Pyongyang wouldn't bring denuclearization, but would rather destabilize the situation and make it more dangerous. The majority of experts and policymakers have supported a more pragmatic policy since early 2007, and I would say that the efforts of the State Department are quite positively evaluated in Russia. Especially Chris Hill, who went to Moscow just last weekend, is a very popular figure in political circles. I saw a couple of interviews with him in leading Russian papers, which are normally not in the habit of treating visiting American diplomats that way.

So, this day we really wish success to the U.S. efforts to normalize relations with North Korea and to solve these problems in a very positive way. I should say that Russians are not against U.S.-North Korea normalization or rapprochement because we think it would bring more stability and possibilities for development in this area, in which Russia can also be a part.

However, during my stay here in Washington, one of the important things I noted is that still, for many people, the desire to change the North Korean regime is overwhelming. There is a threat that this current normalization effort is only a tactical method to make the regime more susceptible in order to weaken and eventually undermine it – if not by military force, then by another kind of subversion or support for internal dissent. I would say that many Russian experts find that a dangerous game because the results might not be as were expected; they might be dangerous for the

international situation; they might be dangerous for Korea, the Korean peninsula and the Korean people. So, I think it is very important that the efforts which have been undertaken in the last few years and months should be continued, even beyond the term of this administration. Most Russian experts do not believe that North Korea will easily discard its nuclear weapons unless it is guaranteed security and able to settle its relations with the outside world – and that will definitely take more than just the several months left in the Bush presidency. So, it's very important that the next president, the next administration, whether Democratic or Republican, continue this effort, and Russia would certainly support this kind of policy.

DR. BUSH: Well thank you. Richard Hu, you've done a lot of work on the other past hot spot in East Asia, cross-strait relations. Now, Beijing and Taipei are resuming their dialogue. What do you think is Beijing's view of Washington's future role on this issue?

RICHARD WEIXING HU: Well, that's a very good question. I can answer this question in present tense and future tense. Present tense, I think the U.S. role is generally perceived as very positive in cross-strait relations. Over the last few years under Chen Shui-bian's government, China and the United States have co-managed cross-strait relations. After Ma Ying-jeou was elected two months ago, President Bush initiated a telephone conversation with President Hu Jintao and also sent a congratulatory message to Ma Ying-jeou. Also, from the Democratic Party, Senator Obama sent a letter to Ma Ying-jeou on his inauguration. These messages were well-received in Taipei and Beijing because they generally encouraged the two sides to take the strategic and historic opportunity to transform the relationship. Secondly, Washington advised Taiwan to face the reality of a rising China and to change the mentality that has developed over the past eight years toward the mainland. And to Beijing, the message was that you need to move quickly to take this strategic opportunity. I think these gestures were very positively viewed in China, and the mainland is now really moving quickly to start a dialogue with Ma Ying-jeou government.

Now, in my view, if we look at the question in future tense, as the cross-strait dialogue continues and the dialogue agenda expands, even expanding beyond economic issues, there will be problems, and then Beijing's wariness of the U.S. role will appear. Now, let me explain. The current issues on the agenda in the cross-strait dialogue are mainly economic normalization, direct charter flights, and mainland tourists to Taiwan. In the future, there will be financial corporations; there will be other trade initiatives. Now, the U.S. is not unaware of these dialogue issues. It is not an independent variable at all in the dialogue. But if we go beyond this agenda and move to the next level to, say, the international space issues, I think problems probably will appear because U.S. policy is to ask Beijing to give Taipei more meaningful participation in the international community. So, after WHO and WHA, what else? Taipei is interested in the World Bank, the IMF, and other U.N.-affiliated agencies. So, which organization should Beijing let Taiwan get in, and what would be the U.S. attitude? These are two issues which Washington and Beijing must handle very carefully.

Now another issue is Taiwan's so-called "*modus vivendi*" foreign policy and a call for a truce between the two sides on the diplomatic battlefield. Now, what would the U.S. policy be? And also, what would the U.S. policy be if Ma Ying-jeou applied for a transit visit or a visit to the U.S. itself? Would the U.S. grant a visa? Second, what would be the level of official contact between Taipei and Washington? And also, would the U.S. start negotiating with Taipei on an FTA? There are a lot of issues, all of which are related to the future of Taiwan's international space. The development of these issues will depend on how Washington moves. Beijing will get concerned if Washington makes the wrong move.

Now, to go further beyond on security issues, Taiwan needs security, and obviously Taiwan will continue with arms purchases to some level, so it's up to Washington to decide what kind of arms it will sell to Taiwan. And, if this issue is not carefully handled, I think it will be a big problem between the U.S. and China.

Now, to go a bit further, I think the fundamental issue is: What is the long-term U.S. national interest in terms of cross-strait relations? The U.S. wants stability and peace in cross-strait relations and wants to see democratic government developed in Taiwan. But there are a lot of substantive issues that need to be dealt with, and when you handle these issues, sometimes you have to choose sides between China and Taiwan. I think the fundamental issue down the road is: If cross-strait relations develop too fast, would the U.S. have any control or way of limiting this? Does the U.S. have the capacity to control it? Now, that reminds me of an article written by Professor Nancy Tucker in 2002 entitled, "If Taiwan Chooses Unification, Should the U.S. Care?" I think we've not reached that state yet, but down the road, if cross-strait relations and their current momentum go smoothly, it could be a possible future scenario. So, if we get there, we need to read Nancy Tucker's article. Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Okay. While we are on the subject, Ching-Lung, what do you think the Taiwan public thinks about the U.S. role in the current state of cross-strait relations?

MR. HUANG: Yes. You pointed out many influential points, but I will express some different ones based on Taiwan's side.

Generally speaking, I think Taiwan has two schools of thought on this issue. One believes that the U.S. does not want Taiwan and China to become too close, and will attempt to slow down the process to avoid having unification occur too soon. The other school is concerned that the U.S. will turn its eyes away from the contact between the CCP and the KMT, which will eventually "sell out" Taiwan. Both schools of thought have some basis, but both also have a blind spot. In reality, the Ma administration is seeking peaceful development with China, and they hope to establish a very close economic relationship in order to bolster Taiwan's economy. And also by improving the relationship between the two sides, they hope to open a new road for Taiwan in the international environment. We can recall that in Ma's May 20 speech, he emphasized a new "three noes" policy—no unification, no independence, no use of

force—and a policy based on one China with a different interpretation, the so-called 1992 consensus. This is a very balanced policy from their point of view.

However, I think in order for Taiwan's policy to be stable, the U.S. needs to pursue certain policy initiatives. For example, first, to continue to support Taiwan's defense efforts, which will help strengthen its confidence in reaching a peace agreement with China. And second deals with international organizations, like the WHO and the World Bank. The U.S. can do something for Taiwan by supporting Taiwan's bid to become a member of those organizations, which would lead to a positive Taiwan-China relationship. And the third, it is my thinking that, while Taiwan and China have developed a closer economic relationship, like Hong Kong and China, this closer relationship could cause an imbalance in the Taiwan-U.S. relationship. So, the U.S. should consider signing a free trade agreement with Taiwan, which would attract mutual investment and trades between Taiwan and the United States and help Taiwan avoid becoming overly dependent on China.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. Pang Zhongying, I wonder if you could talk a little bit about your thinking, from a conceptual point of view, about the interaction between the United States and China?

DR. PANG: Okay. In the past four years, or the past eight years, official relations between my country and the United States, in my view, have been maintained very well, and there are several key mechanisms that helped the relations. The first example is the "Senior—or, as the China side called it, "Strategic"—Dialogue" between the State Department and the Chinese Foreign Ministry. Another is the "Strategic Economic Dialogue," the SED. This month, the fourth SED will be held in DC. On other common issues, there are channels and mechanisms to conduct dialogues between the two governments. This month in Beijing, the bilateral human rights dialogue resumed. There's also the energy security dialogue. Along with these official dialogues, some policy conceptual interactions between the two countries have occurred. For example, China's officials and scholars coined the idea of "China's peaceful rise," and the U.S. offered the policy term "a responsible stakeholder." But in my view, the interaction between the two is not about America's role in the world, but about China's role in the world. Americans worried that China would rise neither peacefully nor responsibly. Americans required China to be responsible, but China responded little about America's role in the world. So, in the next round of dialogue between China and the United States, if the mechanism continues in the future, maybe China should address the issue of America's role in the world. America should also be a responsible stakeholder – maybe even more responsible than China.

I remember last year in Singapore at the East Asia Summit, the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao, mentioned the issue of the weak U.S. dollar. Other countries also felt pressures from the shrinking dollar. Currently, there are some interrelated issues: high energy and food prices, energy insecurity, environmental insecurity, and financial crisis. The world requests a more responsible United States. The U.S. needs to cooperate with

other countries to deal with these challenges. China and the U.S. should continue to cooperate as two responsible stakeholders in the globe.

DR. BUSH: Well, that's a revolutionary thought.

DR. PANG: Yes.

DR. BUSH: Akihiro Iwashita, how do you evaluate U.S.-Japan relations? What challenges do you see for the future?

DR. IWASHITA: Yes, I think, it's pretty good. If I find some problems, problems are in the U.S. and Japan's understanding of each other's foreign policies. Most Japanese that I have talked to have accepted the image of U.S. strengths. They want Japan to be more embraced, more appreciated in U.S. foreign policy. Practically speaking, they fear that the United States would pass Japan and cooperate directly with China for co-dominance over East Asia. They only want more of a Japanese presence here, in Washington, D.C. The Brookings Institution is notorious for passing Japan. I have been the only Japanese researcher for the last several months, and there has not been an event related to Japan. They love the CSIS much more. Michael Green and many Japanese researchers are working there. A U.S.-Japan strategic dialogue seminar, supported by our embassy, is there.

Some discourses are popular: a Republican will be better for Japan; foreign policy brains for Democratic candidates do not take care of Japan; if Democrats win this fall, Japan's presence must be decreased, and so on and so on. They seriously worry about it. At the first period of my stay in DC, I partly leaned toward accepting this opinion, but now I have a different view on it. The point is that the U.S. does not have a strong incentive to discuss an alliance now and is inclined to concentrate much more attention on risks, challenges, and invisible competitors. I met many colleagues who do not talk about Japan at all in public but show respect and trust toward Japan and the alliance here at Brookings. They truly value the alliance. If some Japanese worry about the phenomenon of Japan's small presence in DC, they may not believe the U.S. is an ally. I think this is the problem for Japan in the context of the alliance.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Thank you. Well, thank you for your candor. And, Haeran, I wonder if we can turn to a little bit more regional matters? How do you perceive the U.S. role in East Asia?

DR. LIM: Thank you. Some scholars may argue the relative decline of the United States as a hegemon in comparison to the rise of China. In other words, while the U.S. is bogged down in the Iraq war, China continues the rapid economic growth. What is the implication of this phenomenon, in terms of the changing shift of structure in international relations? Most people in Washington to whom I have talked seem to believe that the U.S. should pay more attention to Asia. However, in reality, the United States – especially American foreign policy – has been distracted by the Middle East and the War on Terror, so the progress is really slow in terms of its effective role in East Asia.

So, I think it's time for the United States to put its belief into effect in real world. For instance, the United States should really redefine its role and interest in the process of unification in the Korean peninsula. How will the United States play a role in that process after all? Yes, it is inconceivable at this moment and it is too far away. The U.S. really has to think about how to pursue a more prudent and balanced foreign policy in such areas where strengthening trilateral alliances among the United States, Korea, and Japan is against the interest of China. In the Asian community building process, what could be an important role for the United States? I think that the United States hasn't provided enough attention to Asia. So it's time to move on.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Well, picking up on your last point, I'd like to turn to Richard Hu, and ask how the U.S. policy towards East Asian community-building is being perceived in the region?

DR. HU: Okay. Well, that's a very good question, and also a big one. I share some of the views of my colleagues' about U.S. policies on specific issues – country-specific issues – and how they are perceived in the region. But the U.S. policy towards the regional community building, I think, is region-wide issues, and different countries may have different perceptions. However, the general trend in the region on the U.S. role towards East Asian community-building is not that positive. Now let me just make a few points here on why I say this.

First, we all know after the Asian financial crisis, “Asianized” community-building processes started in East Asia without Washington. The U.S. attitude towards that was not very positive. If we look back in the early 80s and 90s, the Bush Sr. administration's policy towards the East Asian region was not very positive, and basically supported bilateralism over multilateralism. The Clinton administration was a little bit more multilateral, but all projects of community building were supposed to be anchored by APEC. The George W. Bush administration has a different policy towards regional community building, mainly due to the war in Iraq. So the U.S. policy is perceived as being “benign neglect” plus “selective engagement.” Because of the war in Iraq, the U.S. only selectively engages in certain security-oriented issues and does not pay sufficient attention to regional economic issues and to regional governance issues. This is the general perception in East Asia.

Second, East Asian community building has a lot of projects now, and a lot of these regional projects have created a very complex structure and institutional framework, overlapping with the current bilateral arrangement the U.S. has in the region. So, this is a problem for the United States. Is the U.S. going to continue, based on its national interest, to base its East Asian policies on those hub-and-spokes structures, or will also get involved in the regional multilateral institution building? And the philosophy here is, or at least my impression is, that if the bilateral structure does not break down, don't fix it, and the philosophy is to let it continue. Now, if you let this course continue, that will of course hinder your effort to get involved in the multilateral

process. So there is a policy debate about whether the bilateral-based policy should be continued or replaced with more multilateralism.

Now, another point – and my impression in this town – is that the U.S. has a “wait-and-see” attitude towards East Asia dialogues, towards other regional building processes, because these kinds of dialogues and forums do not generate much utility. So, it’s kind of a utilitarian view of looking at East Asian community building. Logistically, it is very difficult for the U.S. president to schedule two trips in less than three months to Asia: the APEC meeting and then the East Asia summit in the following month. I think that’s just a logistical issue. These are tactical issues, and these issues should not be given priority over strategic issues; that puts the cart before the horse. So, that’s another perception in East Asia. It’s especially a problem in Southeast Asian countries, which now have very strong feelings because Secretary Rice chose to skip the ASEAN Regional Forum and a lot of other Asian activities.

Now, the last question we have to ask is: What is the U.S.’s preference towards and level of commitment to Asia? In East Asia, you can see the force already gathering in the region to build a regional community to deal with those regional governance issues, such as disaster relief, regional economic problems, and free trade networks. The U.S. seems less interested in regional governance issues and more interested in security issues. So, what is its future policy preference? If continued down the current road, I think the U.S. probably will continue to distance itself from regional multilateral activities.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Thank you, very much. I’m going to do one more question to the panel and then open it up. And I’d like to ask Georgy. What’s Russia’s attitude towards institutionalization of a regional East Asian security structure?

DR. TOLORAYA: Well, before answering that, I would try to explain that Russia is trying to increase its attention in Asia. Russia has a double-headed eagle; one head looking east and the other one looking west, but the western head has always been more important simply because Russia is a part of the European Christian civilization and not a part of Asian civilization. But the attitude is changing. The new generation of leaders, the new generation in Russia is much more interested in Asia than before. The number of sushi restaurants in Moscow is probably greater than in Tokyo, and this is just one example that the world is changing. Russia also sees Asia, especially East Asia, as a major untapped market for its energy and resources. And so Russia would like to have more influence, not to undermine other countries’ influence, but to have more say in regional affairs.

Our basic interest in multilateral arrangements is obvious, because this makes our positions more solid and our voice heard. That’s always been the position of Russia, even in Soviet times, the first ideas about security arrangements in Asia dates back to Gorbachev, in a speech he gave in 1986. So, the Six-Party Talks, which can evolve into a regional security and cooperation structure, are very important to Russia, and therefore they are seen in Russia as a very good opportunity to promote these ideas.

Although I would say that there are divided opinions on how serious this opportunity is. Many experts in Moscow doubt the U.S.'s commitment to promoting the multilateral structure, arguing that the U.S. is mostly based in the region by bilateral alliances, and Washington is certainly not going to undermine the bilateral alliances by paying more attention to the multi-party structure. People in Moscow are a bit perplexed about the intentions of the U.S. with regard to this multi-party arrangement. At the same time, some people just cannot really formulate what this multilateral peace and security mechanism is going to do, given the divisions between the countries in the area and historical contradictions, which were absent in Europe, for example.

I don't think this is right, and I am a strong supporter of the institutionalization of a peace and security mechanism because it will create momentum to promote multilateral cooperation. But, I do think that it probably shouldn't start with hard security issues, because it's still quite premature to think that, for example, Northeast Asian countries are prepared to talk about their military capabilities, reduction of military forces or military budgets, and things like that. And I believe that the first task of such a multilateral mechanism is to address first the non-traditional security challenges. For example, disaster relief – take the earthquake in Sichuan. How much more effective would it have been to have a system in place that could have coordinated the countries' response? A multi-party structure could also tackle other non-traditional challenges, like trans-border crime, ecology problems, sea lane security, etc. These issues and security challenges sometimes cannot effectively be resolved either bilaterally or singularly, and so this multi-party structure would also be useful for that.

The second area of multilateral cooperation is obviously economics. Economic issues tend to be multilateral – like immigration and new energy and infrastructure projects which can be undertaken in East Asia, they are multinational by nature.

Russia is also a little bit wary about the appearance of free trade areas in Asia, which do not include Russia. So, we obviously would like to have a forum to discuss all these issues.

A third area of attention for the multi-party structure is matters of inter-civilizational cooperation. Because the nations in East Asia have so many historical contradictions, it's difficult for them to come to terms in purely bilateral format. In a multilateral format, it's the exchanges – for example, youth exchanges and cultural events – that really can help foster mutual understanding in this part of the world. Based on such exchanges, the six parties or the six-plus parties including, for example, Mongolia and other countries, could then move into discussing confidence-building measures and other security issues, but this process would be long and multi-staged. I don't think it would be right to throw away the mechanism we now have, which is a six-party mechanism dedicated to the nuclear problem, but it has much more potential than just in regard to this problem.

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much. We are now going to open up the discussion and let you ask the questions. If you have a question, raise your hand and wait for the mic and identify yourself. If you have a specific person you want to ask a question to, identify that person. Does Gary Mitchell have a question? Over here.

QUESTION: Thank you. Excellent, as always. The question I would like to pose to the panel is to ask you to project into the future a little bit, and I don't mean to predict, but sometime this fall when you are back home and you are visiting with colleagues and friends, who ask you, after this year back being nose-to-nose with America, what new insight, what negative or positive about our politics or our culture did you come home with? You are all experts. Many of you have studied here. You are not strangers here. But, you have been away and you have come back. And so, I would be very interested to know what you have learned about the country, some insight that you take home with you that you didn't have when you started the program at Brookings.

DR. BUSH: Why don't we start with Richard and work down the line?

DR. HU: That's a good question, sir. I haven't thought about that, but this year for me was a return to Washington DC. I studied here 20 years ago, across the street at SAIS. Of course, I obviously noticed a lot of changes in this town. And, I have a lot of views about what's going on in this country, but I don't want to give you the long version, like Alexis de Tocqueville's book about "Democracy in America." One particular new insight I gained on this trip is that the number of think tanks, advocacy groups, and research projects in this town has grown tremendously. Just look at this room. This is very representative of different people interested in policy ideas and engaged in policy debates. So, I would say that I have a very positive impression of the think-tank industry in this town, and that the industry is booming. I can go across the street and attend many seminars, forums, and conferences every day. You can exhaust yourself at these conferences. There is also a great deal of papers and policy produced everyday. I sometimes wonder whether the administration people have time to read them. The debates here are very fascinating. There are more debates here in DC than in New York, and I hope other countries, in their policy debates, can learn from the U.S. experience. The downside, however, is whether we are spending too much on this; whether our policies have been hijacked by different advocacies. Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. Ching-Lung?

MR. HUANG: First, I would like to share thoughts as a first-time visitor to Washington DC. This is a place full of politics, policies, information, and, at times, rumors. My life over the past ten months has been dominated by thinking politics, discussing policies and processing information. Fortunately, I am interested in talking and thinking about politics, so I enjoy it most of the time – but sometimes, I would rather escape from it. Also, during the past ten months here, I was able to witness the very fierce competition – the primary campaign, which has been a wonderful experience, especially because this is the first time in history that there is a female and an African American candidate in the final round of the primaries. A great impression for me is how a

candidate can insist on continuing her campaign so much and ignore all advice from the media and experts. I have also learned many things from the media. The major media of the U.S. has their own positions on the parties and the candidates. However, from following the campaign, the separation of reporting and editorials is clearer than in Taiwan's media. Those experiences will be useful in the future when I go back Taiwan to continue my work in the media.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. Haeran?

DR. LIM: Thank you. As our two fellows already mentioned, the think tank community in Washington is growing so fast. However, this doesn't mean that the government is doing well. The ironic phenomenon is that the people became very concerned and more interested in politics when things are not working well, so I am not sure whether this may be the case. One of the interesting things I have experienced in Washington is the opportunity to watch the process of the Democratic primary election. It's already been nine months for me to be here in the U.S. and soon I will go back to Korea without watching the main game, the general election. Also, I found that the American people and society are very patient in waiting and understanding the long and complicated candidate nomination process, which is inconceivable in Korea. This reflects an institutional strength of a democratic system and mature citizenship in the U.S.

Another thing that I would like to mention is about negative aspects of American capitalist society. One of the negative aspects in this society must be slow progress in solving the problem of inequality and even we could see the widening gap between the rich and the poor and even tension among races. And so, the unity issue must be seriously considered as one of the biggest challenges of domestic political reform by the next administration of the United States. Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Zhongying?

DR. PANG: Thank you very much for your question. So far, what has most impressed me are the big challenges that the sole super power in the world, America, faces and how American think tanks such as Brookings and American scholars think about such challenges. The three presidential candidates have discussed many challenges that this country faces. I have been so impressed. So, I will tell my students, my friends, and those who read the newspapers I write for in China about the real challenges the United States faces and how Americans will respond to them.

Secondly, I feel the U.S. is so different from the rest of the world. There are many differences between the United States and other countries, including China. Thank you very much.

DR. BUSH: Thanks. Georgy?

DR. TOLORAYA: Well, I won't be original and say that what I will always remember is the presidential campaign, which I was lucky to watch every day.

It's really very useful and it gives a real taste of American democracy and food for thought, which I really didn't expect to have, and I am so lucky to have had.

The second thing is the extent to which here, in Washington, the think tank industry has developed. There are so many people around, and if you listen to conversation in a public place, on a bus or in a restaurant, you could overhear people discussing very specific issues, which in other countries is only limited to a very narrow circle of specialists. It was very interesting to participate in various kinds of functions and meetings, and to hear lots of opinions and lots of conflicting views. At the same time, another idea which came to my mind was: how much is civic society activity related to practical policies? This is interesting because I would expect more transparency in policy-making, especially in foreign policy-making. I was, for example, frankly surprised that in the case of North Korea and the Syria connection, serious incidents had been kept undercover for so long. I would have expected more transparency, and it makes me wonder how much the intellectual efforts of the expert community are in demand for the government. I think that this experience is useful for my country as well – to establish a system which could help to accommodate in the policies the opinions of experts and those who specialize in policy making.

DR. BUSH: Go ahead.

DR. IWASHITA: I research political relations, Russia, China, Central Asia, and others. Before coming to the United States, I imagined the United States to have a fantastic, wonderful, efficient civil society, but my expectations were totally betrayed. The first month I arrived, I struggled for two weeks to enroll my daughter in public school. Setting up cable and Verizon – I hate it so much; it's a long story. My bill for a doctor went back and forth with the insurance company and I have yet to pay my doctor – and it's been six months. I got my social security number just last February! In this sense, I can try to compare America's bureaucracy to those of China, India, or Russia. China basically considers two things important: money and human relations. They're easy to manage. India has an absolute society. It is beyond our imagination. Russian bureaucracy is like that of the United States. Russia has long lines – you just wait with patience. Americans never laugh like Russians, but Russians rarely smile. In the United States, they say, "May I help you?" with a smile even if they cannot help. I really love how Americans smile.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Let's see, Scott Harold had his hand up.

QUESTION: I want to ask the panelists if they can respond to something that Haeran mentioned, which is this notion that's out there very, very common, for those of us who study East Asia, that the United States has been strategically distracted by its focus on the Middle East and that somehow this attention has been misplaced. I guess I have a fundamentally different view, and part of it is that I think if we had been paying a larger amount of attention to East Asia during the last seven or eight years that might not necessarily have been a good thing for U.S. relations with China, because if you will remember where this administration started, it was looking to have a defined relationship

with China that was much more negative. And so I guess underlying the basic premise of that question or that idea that the U.S. is distracted by the Middle East is the notion that we have really been missing the boat; that we should have been focusing more on China, maybe trying to restrain China or trying to build our alliances with Japan even more closely. I want to push back on that and say, if any of you can tell me, what would the Middle East look like if the U.S. had not decided to pay any attention to it, or had paid almost no attention to it, or paid less attention to it, and what would East Asia policy have looked like? I would be interested, because frankly I can't imagine that any of you have an answer. I am very frustrated by this question. I hear it all the time and I don't have a good answer, so I hope you have a really good answer for me.

DR. BUSH: Who would like to?

DR. HU: I think it's a good question. Let's talk about the fundamental assumptions. To East Asia, the U.S. is strategically distracted by other problems in other parts of world. If not the Middle East, the U.S. can also be distracted by domestic issues, domestic agendas, and that can be seen currently. That's another perception East Asians have. Now the third issue about the basic assumption, as I said earlier, is about the policy preference towards East Asia. I think, in this country, you need fundamental thinking about the U.S.'s strategy in this region. For example, the Pentagon has its strategic report and a shopping list of relationships organized by strategic priority. And sometimes, China isn't treated as a top priority because it is not an ally.

But, every new administration comes to office and recognizes that China is the most important issue it has to deal with, which carries several substantive issues. If you don't deal with China-related issues well, you run into troubles, region-wide troubles. So you have to climb up the learning curve to do it. This is true for Clinton, for Bush, and for all others. In East Asia, if you just deal with China, it's not enough. If you want to contain China, it will make other East Asian nations even unhappier, because these days, East Asian nations do not want to have to choose between the U.S. and China. Two days ago Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien-loong said at the Shangri-la Dialogues that the U.S. needs to think about a right East Asian policy. We don't want to see East Asia be divided between the U.S. and China. So, I think that's the fundamental issue. In regard to policy, you need to think about the future of the bilateral structure and the U.S. role in multilateral community-building and regional architecture-building. You also need to think about regional governance issues, because the current driving force is based on regional governance issues.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. Anybody else want to?

MR. HUANG: Yes. You know, some experts say that the current development condition of Asia is very similar to Europe in the period of the end of the 19th century, and so there are two models for events to learn. The first model is like the United Kingdom, just to keep the same distance from each of the Asian countries. And the other, the second model is like the Germany, to build special relations with all of the big countries, and even the relations between Germany and those countries are closer

than each of those countries. So, I think there is some advances that maybe the United States can learn from this.

MR. BUSH: Okay. Ms. Chou?

QUESTION: Thank you, very much. I want to just comment from the Japan guests that you can donate a lot of money for Brookings that will set up a lot of Japanese relations sessions for you guys. Look at the template in Taiwan, you know, it donates a lot of money to the Brookings Institution, so maybe when you go back you can ask the Japanese government and maybe a company to donate money to the Brookings Institution so that more people would be interested in Japan?

Okay. The more serious issue is that I want to ask your own opinion also, what do you think the elite in the region prefer; of the three presidential candidates which one is the favorite choice, and what each would have—do you think that if Obama becomes the president there would be a major shift in foreign policy towards East Asia, and would the shift would be negative or positive? Because, I was talking to a businessman, not only here, because you know, here the train as broken, so I spent some time talking to this businessman from China, and he was worried. I said, okay, which one is your choice for the presidential candidate? And he said, McCain. I said, why? He said, because the Democrats with the [inaudible] would make transition a big deal, so they think that he doesn't care about politics. He said, okay, I will support McCain, but of course, everybody will vote for Obama. You know, I am just wondering what, what you think, you know, from this, your own opinion and also the elite in your own country, the perception, which is the preferred presidential candidate in this country? Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Okay. So, let's have quick answers with your own opinion and what you think the elites would prefer?

DR. IWASHITA: When I saw the presidential campaign during the first period, particularly on the Democratic side, I was upset about Obama. This is because, for me, I see a lack of foreign policy experience. But now, after meeting some of Obama's foreign policy advisers, including those on Russia and China, and hearing their talks, I have a slightly different impression. I think Obama would pay more attention to international affairs than previous presidents. The last thing that's important is that Obama may not have fixed opinions over the world, so we are a little worried that he could be influenced by others, but I think he has excellent advisers and would cautiously listen to them. I'd bet it.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Georgy?

DR. TOLORAYA: Well, I'm a little bit worried that should Obama be the president his agendas would change, and I actually do not see much of the things that should radically change in the U.S. East Asian policy, so his attention would be mostly concentrated on the Middle East, other parts of the world, which might lead to a little bit of negligence or a little bit of less attention to the East Asia. And, speaking about

Russian public, there were some quotes, and well, a majority of course prefer a Democratic president, because people I have read that McCain will be too hostile towards Russia and that would complicate things.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Pang?

DR. PANG: China's principle is no interference in internal affairs. I believe China fully respect the American people's choice.

DR. BUSH: People can still have opinions.

DR. PANG: Yeah. But, I think, if Obama is the next U.S. president, China would face trade and other American domestic-driven issues. If McCain is elected, he would address political and security issues. For example, the "China threat" perception will come up. Each has different emphases.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Haeran?

DR. LIM: We also respect the voice of the American people. In terms of the perception and approach to the North Korean issues and free trade agenda, probably McCain, the right-wing government might work better with Lee Myung-bak's government. However, the hard-line approach on the North Korean issues would not necessarily guarantee the best solution. If Obama becomes the next president, he will stand for fair trade and protectionism. Actually lately, Obama perceives the KORUS FTA as a flawed agreement and in particular, the automobile case as unfair. Obama will give us a harder time. But most people also expect that once he becomes president, he will tone down a little bit, so we'll wait and see. That's my opinion.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Ching-Lung?

MR. HUANG: I believe Barack Obama will win the presidential election. You know, I can smell the feeling, just so similar to Taiwan's campaign this year. So, actually I wrote an article in my blog predicting that Obama will be the president of the United States. And, after Obama becomes president, I guess he will have a good policy to improve relations between the United States and East Asia. Now the most important reason for my opinion is because Obama will invite many experts into his government from the Brookings Institution.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Weixing?

DR. HU: I think my impression of the Chinese elite is that they are expecting Obama to win, and if Obama becomes president, there is some uncertainty about his policy – more uncertainty than McCain. McCain will probably continue a lot of elements of the current Bush administration's policies, so there's less uncertainty. But people also think Obama is a very quick learner. He will be adaptive to foreign policy situations, like Bill Clinton. And also, when elite people look at him, they pay more

attention to his foreign policy team – what kind of people he will use to staff his foreign policy team. That’s more important than himself. And, if he has a good team, I think people will think there will be no big change. Of course, there will be problems on trade and human rights, and even on Taiwan, but these issues have occurred before, and the two countries can manage them in the future. Thank you.

DR. BUSH: The next question, over there.

QUESTION: Hi. My name is Jay. I’m from the Mansfield Foundation, just an intern, no one important. I had a question about some of you suggesting that the U.S. was not paying too much attention to East Asia, and precisely because the U.S. is not paying too much attention to East Asia the formation of regionalism of East Asia was slowing down. But, my question is, do you really have to assume that the U.S.’s role is needed within East Asian regionalism’s formation, mainly because Dr. Huang actually mentioned the EU as something of a prototype that East Asian nations could follow as a model, and from what I can tell EU really does not—I mean, America does not really have a role within the EU. The EU interacts with America, but that’s just about it. So, I just wanted to hear about your opinions regarding that.

DR. BUSH: Richard, do you want to –

DR. HU: Okay. This is a question about East Asia’s expectation of the U.S. role in future regional building. I think East Asian countries have some expectations, but they don’t expect too much. The U.S. involvement in this region, or its non-involvement, will both help East Asia to develop their own region and to build their community. Now why do I say this? The U.S. obviously has an indispensable role in this region, especially in regard to security. The U.S. will continue to be involved in the security mechanism on the Korean peninsula, that’s for sure, and in other region-wide security issues. We expect the U.S. to continue to have a role in the Taiwan Strait, and a lot of other issues. And, even in the disaster relief, the U.S. has the capacity and the willingness to render some help. But, as the last decade’s history tells us, the U.S. might be distracted by something else in other parts of the world, and also U.S. policy preferences sometime make the U.S. less likely, less willing to become involved in some region-specific governance issues. And I would argue this is the area the East Asians by themselves have to do their own job, to do the community-building themselves. So, this is the term I created; we are building a neighborly community without the United States.

DR. BUSH: Okay. One more question. Okay, right there.

QUESTION: My name is [inaudible], and I am doing an internship with the Center for Security Policy this summer. Now, I have two specific questions, not profound ones, like the first two. And the first question is to Dr. Iwashita. You told us that think tanks here in the Washington community does not really get action to Japan much, but how would you explain that Japan is a very important country to the U.S.?

DR. IWASHITA: Mmm-hmm.

QUESTION: And the other question is for Dr. Pang, and you explained that the earthquake in China is similar to 9/11 in the United States, and the nationalism in China might be changing, and I wonder if you could elaborate more about change of national, change of nationalism in China?

DR. BUSH: Thank you.

DR. IWASHITA: Thank you. This question, I have been waiting for it. So, this question relates to a problem of the U.S.A.'s conception of Japan's foreign policy, I think. In East Asia, particularly in East Asian specialist circle, U.S. colleagues, I think are always making more considerable efforts on China. I think they tend to overplay the Japan alliance only in context of a rising China. I think just putting Japan in the U.S.-Japan-China triangle is not necessarily in the right way of thinking, though China's presence will cause an increase in Japan's foreign policy. Japan's foreign policy I think has been not necessarily only being rated by China—of course, on the Korean peninsula we should listen to Korean opinion first, but also southeast Asia, Russia, and the Middle East for energy issues and in Europe—I think Japanese foreign policy is a bigger asset in the world than the U.S. imagines, and shouldn't just be considered in an East Asian context.

Therefore, the assessment of Japan foreign policy naturally and U.S.-Japan relations should be thought of more widely, and my research advocacy is to opt for this kind of orientation, namely how to develop the U.S.-Japan alliance beyond East Asia. If you are interested in this, come to Brookings next week for my talk.

DR. PANG: Alright, briefly. After the earthquake, China's society has showed unprecedented national unity, and one of the positive developments is China's nascent and developing civil society. Non-governmental organizations have been playing important roles in helping and leading disaster relief and reconstruction efforts.

QUESTION: Thank you very much.

DR. HU: Can I follow-up on that?

DR. BUSH: Please.

DR. HU: I'd like to follow-up on the earthquake-related issue and how that triggered a new Chinese nationalism. I think we need to compare it with the previous round of events, the Tibetan protest and then the Olympic torch relay, how it has triggered the rise of nationalism. Those events prompted a lot of Chinese to think in a way of "us versus them." It is "us" who are hurt. It is "us" doing the best job, the best showcase for the world to have the best Olympics, but we are not accepted by the western world for this. We are not getting the chance. So this is the mentality: it's "us versus them." And, especially among the young people whom we call P-80 generation, post-1980s generation, they have very strong feelings about that. They are called – there is a

new term in China – called the “April youth.” Those overseas Chinese students, they just went out themselves spontaneously to the streets to protect the torch, you know, and they considered that their job.

Now, the earthquake triggered a different type of Chinese nationalism, and I would say the logic behind that is to search “who we are.” You know, if you study political science literature about national identity building, this is a totally different mechanism of nationalism or nation-state building. I think the earthquake, you know, really shows that the Chinese government did the right thing. They moved very quickly to reduce the loss of life and mobilize disaster aid; there is complete openness on reporting the disaster; there was a three-day national mourning. This is very unprecedented. So the earthquake really represents a very defining moment in Chinese history. The nation is so united. And the national cohesion was so high, not just among the Chinese people in the PRC, but also in the greater Chinese community – we are a community of the same destiny. So, this is who we are. Everyone feels proud of the Chinese nation and that triggered a new type of nationalism. This is a completely different type of nationalism. But, the question is whether this nationalism, this current openness, will continue afterwards and even beyond the Olympic games. I hope so. And then we’ll see a different China.

DR. BUSH: One more comment from Zhongying?

DR. PANG: Thank you very much. Let me just add something. This earthquake showed not only the re-emergence of Chinese nationalism, but also other positive things as I have mentioned. For example, apparently, the open flow of information is unprecedented. I suggest that you would focus on the political, economic and foreign policy dimensions of the consequences from the earthquake, and that you go beyond the issue of Chinese nationalism.

There are a lot of discussions now in China about how to use this window of opportunity to further push forward better governance in China. Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank my six colleagues for the really tremendous contributions that they have made to Brookings over the last year. I have learned a lot from them. I think this program today is an example of what they have provided to the community for the last nine months, and I ask you to join me in congratulating them. And, thank you for coming.

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