

As long as it is pursued within the framework of US-Japan military cooperation headed by the US, however, the larger Japanese role will contribute directly and indirectly to the balance of military power, war deterrence and the protection of SLOCs in the region.

- The enhanced UN function of safeguarding regional security including the US forces are expected to promote the possibility that the DPRK will change its military strategy toward the ROK and its attitude South-North political dialogue.

## 2. Negative Impacts

- On the contrary, there are some factors that could induce the DPRK provocation toward the South. The ongoing neo-detente mood between East and West could, potentially, weaken the Western collective security system and the security cooperation between the ROK and the Western countries. Also, the rapid improvement of relations and expansion of exchanges between South Korea and the socialist countries including China and Russia might bring about negative psychological repercussions in the DPRK.

- Despite their improvement of diplomatic relations and economic cooperation with the ROK, Russia and China still confirm their policy of providing the DPRK with political and military support. The maintenance of their Treaties for Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the DPRK and Russia, and the DPRK and China continue to serve as a prop for the DPRK's military position.

- A trend toward recess in US military capability can be seen in the large-scale adjustments and cuts in the US military structure and the reduction of US troops stationed abroad, which are due to budget restraints and progress in arms control with Russia. Accordingly, the power balance around the Korean peninsula between the US, Japan, Russia and China is in a process of readjustment and involves some uncertainty. If this uncertainty were to evolve into a power vacuum - that is, absence of that power balance necessary to deter war - then the possibility of a new military threat cannot be excluded.

- If the US role were to shrink drastically, it is very possible that Japan would have no choice but to try to complement that role in order to fill the void in the region. Such a Japanese move would have a new impact on the security relations among the ROK, the US and Japan and the military relations among the DPRK, Russia and China. The military policies of the nations in the region would also be affected.