



CIGS and Stimson Joint Seminar
**Eurasia Strategy: American and
Japanese Perspectives**

EVENT SUMMARY

Date: June 16, 2017

Venue: 1211 Connecticut Ave NW, 8th FL, Washington, DC 20036

The event held on June 16, 2017 at the Stimson Center brought together American and Japanese perspectives to discuss strategy toward Eurasia. The discussion was moderated by Yuki Tatsumi and hosted four panelists: Ellen Laipson and Sameer Lalwani from the Stimson Center, Kuni Miyake from the Canon Institute for Global Studies (CIGS), and Ken Jimbo from Keio University and CIGS. The discussion focused on three main ideas: the broad concept of Eurasia as a result of globalization and common geopolitical interests, the ascension and descent of powers that may result in hegemonic and revisionist powers, and the potential for East Asian nations to engage in writing the new rules of international order.

The panel discussed the importance of recognizing the concept of Eurasia as a balance of a number of national interests. While not necessarily a guiding principle for individual bureaucracies, the concept of Eurasia can support understanding of international cooperation. Lalwani introduced the idea that the U.S. strategizes to work with other powers to balance against the rise of potential hegemonies. Miyake agreed with the idea that one of the major strategic goals is to prevent the rise of hegemonic powers in regions of the world. He also introduced the idea that revisionist powers play an important role in the theaters of Eurasia, striving to make changes to the international order. Japan's strategic interests have shifted over the past 20 years, according to both Miyake and Jimbo. They stated that Japan requires the international liberal order to sustain its position as a maritime nation and needs cooperation to maintain regional balance and prevent revisionist power.

Lalwani challenged the assertion that there are only a few specific revisionist states. He pointed out that any nation can be viewed as revisionist if it seeks to affect the status quo in some way; revision is thus in the eye of the beholder to some extent. Overall, the rise or decline of a power is inevitable, but its position as a status quo or revisionist power is determined by its own perceptions and goals of the externalities in the international environment. Laipson expounded that some countries like Japan and the United States may be maintaining the liberal international order, whereas countries like China and Russia may want to change the rules. Jimbo agreed and pointed out that nations are emerging without the political liberalization that seemed so important in 2006 and before.

The first few questions following the discussion regarded China's rising influence in East and Eurasia, particularly through investment. The panelists noted that while China's activities in the region may challenge the liberal international order, there is also opportunity for other nations to challenge China's influence if China overextends itself or creates further problems in countries that they choose to invest in. Several questions explored the impact of non-state actors, and the status of India as a balancing power. The panelists argued that non-state actors will not likely play a larger or more independent role but will continue to attract attention from states; panelists disagreed as to the extent of the definition of non-state actors and whether they are a cause or result of globalization. Finally, Jimbo asserted that India will not rise to fully balance against China but may play a role as an ally, and is an important partner for Japan.

Tatsumi concluded the conversation and thanked the panelists for their fascinating thoughts.