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Introduction

There are a lot of natural disasters in Japan such as earthquakes and typhoons. Since its foundation, the JMSDF has engaged in many HADR missions. As a result, HADR is our most recognized mission for the general public of Japan. This year, in July there was a torrential rain taking away over 200 people's lives, and in September we responded to the Magnitude 6.7 earthquake. Speaking of earthquakes, we will not forget the kind support provided by many nations, of course including your nations here today, when the Magnitude 9 earthquake and great Tsunami hit the Eastern part of Japan in 2011. I'm not a specialist in HADR, but I'd like to talk about my thoughts on the theme "developing a new regional role in HADR" based on my experience in the JMSDF.

1. Outline of the natural disaster situation in the Indo-Pacific region

Now, I'd like to outline the natural disaster situation in the Indo-Pacific region. According to the ESCAP natural disaster report last year, since 1970 natural disasters in Asia and the Pacific have killed 2 million people-contributing 57 per cent of the global death toll, while economic loss during the period amounts

to 1.3 trillion dollars. It is also reported that since 1970 a person living in this region has been approximately five times more likely to be affected by natural disasters than a person living outside the region.

While the Indo-Pacific region is very important for the development and prosperity of the entire world, natural disaster frequently takes place and its damage is extremely serious. In addition, recent large-scale disasters are hard to be dealt with by one nation alone, since they are beyond the capacity of each nation and take place across the border. In this situation, what is the regional role in HADR? How should "developing" be? And what can navies do for that?

2. Regional roles in HADR

I'd like to discuss the regional roles in HADR, I think there are two regional roles.

The first one is, to secure people's safe and stable lives such as life-saving activities from a humanitarian point of view as well as life-and-property protection through livelihood assistance and reconstruction support. These activities will be conducted basically in a nation or within the region.

The second one is related to security. Prolonged chaos in the region leads to an instability, and it can be a security risk and deteriorate into crime and terrorism. In this respect, it is important to understand that the recovery of society by an immediate response will contribute to a stable international community. In other words, regional stability achieved by HADR plays a vital role in stabilizing, developing and sustaining international prosperity.

3. Developing a new regional role (multilateral cooperation)

Next, I'd like to move on to the "Development" of those regional roles. The key word is "synchronization". In other words, the important thing is to align many actors' efforts in HADR. On the scene of disasters, the success of our mission depends on whether we can respond to the needs of the affected people without fail and delay. In a recent large-scale HADR cooperating with other nations, coordination is needed with the supported government and civil entities such as international organizations, regional cooperation organizations and NGOs, not only with the military.

Today we have a variety of HADR regional cooperation frameworks at multiple levels in the Indo-Pacific region. For example, there are a lot of international agreements in the region. Furthermore, the frameworks in ASEAN serve as an important coordination mechanism, thereby achieving significant outcomes, such as AHA, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management and SDMC, Disaster Management Centre of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

On the other hand, there are still challenges affecting nation's ability to receive support from foreign countries, such as dysfunction of the government, an excessive time consumption caused by complicated bureaucratic procedures, and language barriers I might add. In fact, we witnessed and experienced such limitations in the 2011 Eastern Japan Great Earthquake.

The framework for HADR differs by nation and the military of each nation operates under its chain of command. Therefore, the important thing for us is to deepen our mutual understanding, remove a variety of restraints on us, promote a coordination mechanism at any level, further strengthen our cooperation, and synchronize many actors' efforts.

4. What can we do?

Then, what can we do to realize this synchronization?

The distinct characteristics of the military are very effective in a first response, such as self-sufficiency, agility, a clear chain of command and the ability to mobilize force in a prompt and voluminous manner. In particular, a navy can approach to the affected area from the sea. As a result of this characteristic, a navy can play an important role as a platform at sea despite the situation ashore. In addition, navy can freely move in the sea and provide personnel and necessary items to the affected area in a prompt and voluminous manner. These kinds of naval features are functional in the phase of livelihood assistance and reconstruction support.

The JMSDF has engaged in HADR in the region, such as the Great Sumatra Earthquake in 2004, the earthquake in Indonesia in 2009, the flood in Pakistan 2010, the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013. Based on these experiences, I'd like to show 3 ways that can enable us to develop a new regional role in HADR in the future, that is to say, "Enhancing search and rescue capability", "strengthen the cooperation among the militaries", and "reinforcing coordination with civil entities". With regards to first item "enhancing search and rescue capability", an affected nation primarily should be responsible for disaster response. Considering 72 hours after a disaster is critical for life-saving, it is indispensable for us to enhance the first response capability. The JMSDF has provided capacity building assistance for HADR mainly to ASEAN nations. In April and June, we provided search-and-rescue and medical capacity building assistance to Sri Lanka for the first time

in South-Asian nations. The JMSDF would like to share the know-how and lessons learned from our past operations with other nations.

The second one is “strengthen the cooperation among militaries”. As you know, in HADR, coordination among army, navy, air force is indispensable. Here, from the view point of enhancing our navies’ cooperation, I would like to talk about 2 items, “Sharing the rules and standardized procedures” and “Sustaining the operational level through exercises”

As for the “Sharing the rules and standardized procedures”, the JMSDF and the USN co-hosted a training course on USN NPP (Navy Planning Process) inviting naval officers from many countries. Since this NPP is a standardized planning process for military operations, NPP may be used to enhance interoperability not only in HADR.

Also, within the framework of WPNS, thanks to an active proposal by Royal Australian Navy, adoption of common guidebook on disaster response is now under consideration. I’ve heard that a similar discussion is being made in IONS. By sharing a common manual, we are able to do several things such as;

- 1) Know the HADR-related capabilities of each nation
- 2) Share up to date lessons learned
- 3) Know what we can be provided from supporting nations
- 4) Know what we should provide to an affected nation

I’d be very grateful if the interconnectivity of WPNS and IONS strengthen in the years to come.

Next item is “Sustaining the operational level through exercises”. By improving interoperability and mutual understanding through Joint EX and other cooperation in accordance with common rules and standardized procedures, we can better understand the potential needs of each nation more clearly. The JMSDF has tried to enhance our interoperability with other nations through

bilateral SAREX, multilateral exercises such as KOMODO, and serving as a commands of the HADR task force in RIMPAC. In this way, we’ll continue to strengthen the ties with other nations. The third one is “reinforcing coordination with civil entities”. Whether we can coordinate and cooperate smoothly with civil entities in information-sharing, planning, role division and other areas, largely depends on how we create frameworks for better coordination and our continual peacetime efforts in exercises. In Japan, there is a holistic disaster risk reduction exercise, in which the national government, each service of JSDF, JCG, Police, local government, NGO/ NPOs, and citizens participate in.

Currently, the Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction 2015-2030 is promoted in many nations. This framework was adopted at the third UN World Conference on disaster risk reduction in Sendai, Japan in March 2015. With regards to civil-military relations, the military will keep in line with this framework. Under the circumstances, a more active role may be called for, in the phase of disaster risk reduction, preparation, response and recovery.

Conclusion

Now, the time has come to conclude. Many nations in the Indo-Pacific region interconnect through the sea. Naval synchronized cooperation is vitally important in HADR, since we navy can rescue / support from the sea. The key to further cooperation is certainly the human network. The Galle Dialogue provides us a precious opportunity to build a wider and deeper human network based on trust with each other. I strongly believe that the network made in this dialogue will lead to the success of multinational framework in HADR, thereby developing regional roles.

Japan started to advocate a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy” in 2016. The keyword of this strategy is “connectivity”. Japan will engage in various activities from East Asia to Africa through South Asia and Middle East, and HADR is positioned as an important mission.

The synchronization among many actors, which I mentioned earlier, is completely in line with the “connectivity” advocated in this strategy. The JMSDF will continue to engage in Indo-Pacific region.

The stability in the region is our responsibility for the future generations. I do hope that we’ll work together for the regional and global peace and stability where less people’s lives are lost in natural disasters.