

## Study Group on Diplomatic Power of Small States

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**Subject** This research group studies the diplomacy of small states in Europe, Asia, and other regions in order to obtain insights for Japanese diplomacy going forward. Japan is not a “small state.” Japanese diplomacy after the war was based on the conception of itself as a nation of peace and as a major power. Diplomacy for Japan, which relinquished military power as a means for resolving international conflict, involves a focus on conflict prevention and multinational cooperation; some experts have suggested that this be called “middle power” diplomacy. However, considering Japan going forward, aging and depopulation will become serious problems, and Japan is situated between the two major powers of the 21st century, the U.S. and China, so that relative stagnation in Japan’s economic and technological power must be expected. In light of these circumstances, small state diplomacy, which secures a certain degree of voice and influence in the international community despite inferior trade, investment, aid, and military power, could serve as a reference point when thinking about the future of Japanese diplomacy. In addition, small state diplomacy is still understudied even in the field of international political science. Over half of the member states of the United Nations are small countries with populations of 10 million or less. Research on small state diplomacy, however, peaked in the 1960s with a number of articles, but there has been no marked development since then. In Japan, a number of books on small state diplomacy were published up to about 10 years

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Subject           ago. But, in terms of research that would provide hints for Japan's future diplomacy, these prior efforts have not been followed up on. This study group conducts research on small state diplomacy against this backdrop and for such purposes. The study group is sorting out the issues to be addressed and gathering information primarily through the existing literature and lectures by guest speakers. The group will conclude the discussion to write a final report with a view to publishing it as a book.

Period            April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2025

Date held        ( 1 ) March 30, 2021  
( 2 ) May 31, 2021  
( 3 ) July 15, 2021  
( 4 ) August 25, 2021  
( 5 ) September 27, 2021  
( 6 ) November 15, 2021  
( 7 ) February 1, 2022  
( 8 ) March 22, 2022  
( 9 ) June 2, 2022  
(10) June 23, 2022  
(11) September 8, 2022  
(12) February 16, 2023  
(13) April 3, 2023  
(14) April 17, 2023  
(15) June 15, 2023  
(16) September 8, 2023  
(17) January 12, 2024  
(18) February 28, 2024

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