

## Study Group on Geostrategic Hotspots

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### Subject & Overview

This study group started in April 2021 as a collaborative project between the Kajima Institute of International Peace and PHP Research Institute, a policy think tank, based on a shared understanding of the issues in the field.

With competition increasing among major powers, there is growing interest in the field of geopolitics. In many cases, however, “geopolitics” is used merely as another term for political risk, and at present discussions in Japan often fail adequately to reflect the military perspective. This study group invites prominent speakers in the field to give presentations, which provide a basis for case studies of important aspects of geopolitical hotspots from a diverse range of viewpoints, particularly military and geographical perspectives.

The results of our meetings are widely disseminated to the general public through publication in the monthly journal *Voice* (published by PHP Institute) and other outlets. Our aim is to improve the quality of the assessments of current situations on which the country’s foreign policy and the global strategies of Japanese companies are based, and to help to build the intellectual foundations indispensable for public discussions on peace and prosperity.

In fiscal 2021, the study group’s case studies focused on geopolitical strategy in the region surrounding Japan.

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Period	April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2023
Meetings held (FY2021)	<p>A total of six case study meetings were held, at which guest speakers were invited to give presentations.</p> <p>In addition, two core group meetings were held with core members only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First core group meeting Date and time: April 14, 2021 (Wed.), 10:00 to 12:00</li><li>• Second core group meeting Date and time: May 13, 2021 (Wed.), 15:00 to 17:00</li><li>• First case study meeting Date and time: July 7, 2021 (Wed.), 14:00-16:00 Topic: The Nansei Islands Guest speaker: Kazuaki Sumida (the 2nd Commanding General of Ground Component Command, and retired lieutenant general, GSDF) * Published in <i>Voice</i>, December 2021 “The Strategic Value of the Nansei Islands and the US-China Rivalry”</li></ul>

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- Meetings held
- Second case study group meeting  
Date and time: September 16, 2021 (Thurs.), 15:30 to 17:30  
Topic: The South China Sea  
Guest speaker: Tomohisa Takei (the 32nd Chief of Staff, Maritime Self-Defense Force and retired admiral, MSDF)  
\* Published in *Voice*, January 2022  
“Geography Repeats History: Southeast Asia and the South China Sea”
  - Third case study group meeting  
Date and time: October 11, 2021 (Mon.), 16:00 to 18:00  
Topic: Taiwan  
Guest speaker: Osamu Onoda (Senior Research Fellow, Security Strategy Research Institute of Japan and retired lieutenant general, ASDF)  
\* Published in *Voice*, February 2022  
“Will China Launch a Military Invasion of Taiwan?”
  - Fourth case study group meeting  
Date and time: December 16, 2021 (Thurs.), 16:00 to 18:00  
Topic: Russia’s Maritime Territory (Primorsky Krai)  
Guest speaker: Takahiro Sasaki (former defense attaché to Russia and retired rear admiral, MSDF)  
\* Published in *Voice*, April 2022  
“Why Russia Fears the Threat of the West”

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- Meetings held
- Fifth case study group meeting  
Date and time: February 1, 2022 (Tues.), 16:00 to 18:00  
Topic: The Korean Peninsula  
Guest speaker: Koichi Isobe (retired lieutenant general, GSDF and former Senior Fellow at Harvard University) & Hiroshi Suzuki (Kaikosha National Security Research Committee Member, former defense attaché to South Korea and major general, GSDF)  
\* Published in *Voice*, May 2022  
“Korean Peninsula: An Emergency Situation that Interlocks with Other Regions”
  - Sixth case study group meeting  
Date and time: March 18, 2022 (Fri.) 16:00 to 18:00  
Topic: Space  
Guest speaker: Haruhiko Kataoka (32nd Chief of Staff, Air Self-Defense Force and retired general, ASDF)  
\*To be published in *Voice*, July 2022.  
Title to be confirmed

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Members

**Masafumi Kaneko (Leader)**

Chief Research Officer, PHP Research Institute  
Director, Member of the Board, PHP Institute, Inc.

**Nobuyuki Hiraizumi**

President, Kajima Institute of International Peace  
Director, Kajima Corporation  
Advisor, Avant Associates, Inc.  
Director, The Board Director Training Institute of Japan

**Jun Osawa**

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Senior Research Fellow, Nakasone Peace Institute  
Adjunct Senior Fellow, Sasakawa Peace Foundation

**Ryoichi Oriki**

Former Chief of Staff, Joint Staff, Ministry of Defense

**Izuru Sugawara**

Specially-appointed Fellow, PHP Research Institute  
President, Overseas Security and Crisis Management  
Association  
CEO, Global Risk Advisory LLC

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