

[Japan's Response to Trump's "America First": Long-term Implications](#)

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Japan's Response to Trump's "America First": Long-term Implications

by

Tsuneo Akaha, Prof. Emeritus, Middlebury Institute of International Studies

Wed. April 7, 2021

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm HST

Register in advance for this webinar: <http://go.hawaii.edu/uXJ>

Abstract: Donald Trump's "America First" presidency shook U.S. relations with Japan and other countries in the Indo-Pacific. Washington's unilateral and often inconsistent pronouncements and demands upon its international partners complicated the latter's strategic adjustments to the changing regional dynamics caused, most importantly, by China's spectacular rise. Professor Akaha will discuss Japan's responses to the Trump presidency in the economic-trade and political-security policy areas as well as to the changing regional dynamics. On the one hand, Tokyo under Abe steadfastly defended Japan's economic interests against threats of tariffs in bilateral trade talks with Washington and played a leading role in trade and investment development through multilateral regional processes, most prominently the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP, or TPP11), and also participated in the establishment of the China-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). On the other hand, Abe endorsed Trump's summit diplomacy toward North Korea and accommodated Washington's demands for greater defense burden sharing and defense buildup. Abe's Japan also launched a Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy, marshalling support and participation by likeminded countries, including the U.S. and Australia. These and other steps Japan took are designed to counter China's growing political influence and military power. Professor Akaha will draw on elements of realism, liberal institutionalism, and constructivism in explaining Japan's behavior during the Trump era and discussing longer-term implications for Japan's international position post-Trump/post-Abe.

This lecture is part of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Center for Japanese Studies Spring 2021

Seminar Series. Lecture webinar is co-sponsored with UHM Asian Studies Department.

The recording will be available after the webinar on the Center for Japanese Studies at UH Mānoa YouTube channel.

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