

# Exploring the Roles of Japan in Promoting International Peace



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## Abstract

*If the existence of human civilization is to be sustained, the most essential thing is to avoid war and establish peace. As an emerging state in East Asia, Japan is constitutionally (1946) committed to establishing peace in the world. During the Second World War, Japan's situation became very shocking and horrific. At the end of the Second World War, Japan decided to avoid war and promote international peace and security. Japan (1946) has declared that the Japanese people are peace-loving and always respect the sovereignty of all the nation-states. Simultaneously, the Japanese people realized that war is always evil for the existence of human civilization, and Japan announced that every person in the world has the right to live in peace. Simultaneously, Japan became a UN member in 1956 and regularly supported the UN in maintaining and sustaining peace around the globe. For the establishment and restoration of peace in the world, Japan has provided financial and humanitarian support to the United Nations. At the same time, Japan ranks second among more than 190 countries in terms of financial support to the United Nations in maintaining international peace. The study will explore the roles and contributions of Japan in promoting peace in the world, and the study has followed the exploratory and content analysis method.*

**Keywords:** *Japanese Constitution, Renunciation of War, International Peace, Self-Defense Force*

## Introduction

The Constitution of Japan's Preamble has mentioned that the Japanese people shall not be involved in any war or conflicts. According to Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, the Japanese people have declared the renunciation of war. The Japanese people do not agree with war as a sovereign right of the nation-states. According to the Japanese constitution, global justice and order are the significant pillars of international peace, and the Japanese people always cooperate with all the nation-states to ensure global justice and order for the establishment of international

peace and security. Also, the Japanese people believed that it is a moral right of the people of the world to live in a society free from violence, conflict, war, free from poverty, and environmental threats. Japan has provided the Self-Defense Force (SDF), Official Development Assistance, and Humanitarian support to the United Nations for the maintenance of peace in the world. Japan has become the second-largest contributor to the UN for the establishment of peace. Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Europe, and many regions supported by the UN, through Japan, for the sustaining and restoring peace (Song, 1996 & Al-Badawi, 2023).

### Objectives of the Study

The Researcher has identified a few research questions, such as—

- (a) To identify the role of Japan in promoting international peace.
- (b) To examine Japan's contribution and Humanitarian assistance in the world for the promotion of peace.

### Review of Literature

The researcher has read many books, book chapters, and Journal articles for the completion of the study, such as the Routledge book on Eisaku Sato, *Japanese Prime Minister, 1964 - 72: Okinawa, Foreign Relations, Domestic Politics and the Nobel Prize*, written by Ryuji Hattori and translated by Graham B. Leonard. This book was published in 2021 and this book is a biography of Japanese former Prime Minister Eisaku Satō (1901-75). This book emphasized the management capacity of Prime Minister Sato and his contribution to promoting peace in Japan and the world. Sato was the Prime Minister of Japan from 1964 - 1972; he was also a representative of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan. This book also highlighted how Eisaku Sato wanted to ensure the non-nuclear principles for the sustaining peace in the world. The book author also mentioned, Eisaku Sato was the only Japanese person and the Prime Minister in Japan, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974 (Hattori, 2021). The researcher has studied the book chapter on War Responsibility and Nonpartisan Diplomacy for Peace in the book *Japan at War and Peace*, written by Ryuji Hattori. He mentioned how Japan avoids war and promotes peace and security inside and outside of Japan (Hattori, 2021). Also, the researcher reviewed the journal article on *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Relic of a Bygone Era?*, written by Michael Auslin. Auslin has highlighted how Japan and the United States formed an alliance for combating terrorism, ensuring national security, and promoting peace (Auslin, 2010).

### Conceptual Framework

As a grand theory of international relations, classical realism and neo-realism were not concerned about international peace. All the classical realist thinkers including Thucydides (460 BC - 400 BC),

Kautilya (350 BCE - 275 BCE), Machiavelli (1469 - 1527), Thomas Hobbes (1588 - 1679), EH Carr (1892 - 1982), Morgenthau (1904 - 1980), and neo realist thinker Kenneth Waltz (1924 - 2013) provided various strategy, principles for the security of state. But liberalism is more concerned about peace. Classical Liberal thinkers Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804), Woodrow Wilson (1856 - 1924); neo liberal thinkers Robert Keohane (1941- present), Joseph S. Nye (19<sup>th</sup> January - 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025) provided various ideas such as rule of law, republicanism, free trade system, league of nations, interdependency, mutual respect, collective responsibility, cooperation, etc. for the promotion of peace (Dunne & Schmidt, 2017). Simultaneously, Japan is a peace-loving country, and the Japanese people refuse war, conflict, and they also respect sovereignty for the promotion of universal peace. So, Japanese peace processes are extremely interconnected to liberalism and neo liberalism.

Another theory of international relations, such as constructivism, has emerged since 1980 by the constructivist thinkers Alexander Wendt (1958 - present), Nicholas Onuf (1941- present), etc. Both thinkers are concerned with the identity of states, and they argued that state identity is constructed through norms, ethics, values, culture, etc., and on the basis of these components, Japan has constructed its peace-loving identity. At the same time, Japanese peace-loving identities are very much connected to Constructivism rather than other theories of international relations (Barnett, 2017 & Reus-Smith, 2013).

### Research Methods

The study entitled "Explore the roles of Japan in promoting International Peace" followed on qualitative method. The Researcher has used the exploratory and content analysis as a qualitative method for the exploration of the study. Simultaneously, researchers have used the various tools of secondary sources, such as books, book chapters, journal articles, newspapers, and websites, for the study

### Research Questions

The Researcher has identified a few research questions for the study, such as

- (a) What roles does Japan play in promoting International Peace?
- (b) Is Japan a Humanitarian State, and how does Japan's humanitarian assistance promote peace in the world?

### International Peace Cooperation Law (1992)

In 1992, Japan enacted the International Peace Cooperation Law (also known as the PKO Law), which extends and promotes the UN Peacekeeping Operations. According to the act, Japan has

provided Self Defense Forces (SDF), financial and humanitarian support in many countries for the minimization of human rights violations and protection of Human rights, International election observation operations, and maintaining and restoring international peace (Japan, Song, 1996). Also, Japan amended the International Peace Cooperation Act in 2001 and revised it in 2004 and 2007 for smoothly to ensure the Peacekeeping Operation activities of the United Nations (Hoshino, 2017).

**Table I: Japan's International Humanitarian Relief Operations**

Name of the Operations	Personnel	Period
Humanitarian Relief Operations for Rwandan Refugees	Troops (Refugee Relief Unit) (including 23 troops dispatched in advance), Troops (Airlifting Unit)	Sep. - Dec. 1994, Sep. - Dec. 1994
Humanitarian Relief Operations for East Timorese Displaced Persons	Troops (Airlifting Unit)	Nov. 1999 - Feb. 2000
Humanitarian Relief Operations for Afghan Refugees	Troops (Airlifting Unit)	Oct. 2001

Source: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/ipc>

### Peace Education of Japan

The preamble of Japan's constitution is a representation of peace, prosperity, and social harmony, and declares that all people have to right to live in peace, free from fear (free from violence and exploitation), and free from want (free from poverty and environmental threats). Simultaneously, Article 25 of the Japanese Constitution states that "all people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of healthy and cultured living". Japan has provided peace education at the basic school levels. Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Okinawa, and many cities are conducting the exchange and practice of peace education at the school levels (Toshio, 2009).

Education is a positive tool for achieving knowledge, reducing negativity, learning to learn, avoiding war and conflict, teaching us respect for others, promoting peace education, fostering stability, social, political, and cultural harmony, etc. Peace is very much essential for the existence of human civilization, and Japan is trying to make a peaceful world through peace education at the basic level (Rashid, 2024).

### Financial Contribution to the UN Peacekeeping

UN Peacekeeping operations were started in the 1950s, and the United Nations Organization is financially and technically supported by the nation states, and the UN has no own funding for protecting human rights, and international peace and security. Constitutionally, Japan is a peace-loving country, and Japan is the third-largest (after the USA and China) financial contributor to the United Nations Organization for ensuring and restoring peace in the world. Simultaneously, Japan has provided extra budget to the UN for the medical ground during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease-19) pandemic and supported the Asia, Africa, and Latin American Countries. Also, Japan has dispatched the Japan Self-Defense Force (JSDF) for the proper training of UN peacekeepers from Asia and African countries. In 2023, Japan has decided to provide around 850 million dollars to the UN for conducting the training to increase the capacity, efficiency, and skills of the UN peacekeepers (Japan).

### Prime Minister (former) Eisaku Sato's Contribution to Peace

Japan has been a peaceful and peace-loving country since the Second World War. In 1964, the first Japanese Prime Minister and politician, Sato Eisaku, contributed to the United Nations Organization for the promotion of World Peace. He significantly tried to increase public awareness on peace and security among the Japanese people (Song, 1996, p. 54). Eisaku Sato was the Prime Minister of Japan from 1964 - 1972, and he was a representative of peace during his tenure. He was

the president of the International Peace Bureau (IPB) in Geneva, Switzerland, and he signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1970 for the prevention of nuclear arms. Eisaku Sato was the first Japanese person and the Prime Minister who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his dedication to peace in 1974. In that time, the Nobel Committee declared that the Nobel Peace Prize award to Sato would encourage those who are working to prohibit the spread of nuclear arms in the world (Okinawa & <https://www.nobelprize.org>).

**Table II: The List of the 10<sup>th</sup> Japanese Prime Ministers**

Name of the Prime Ministers	Phases	Name of the Political Party
Eisaku Sato	1964 -67, 1967 - 70, 1970 - 1972	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
Yasuhiro Nakasone	1982 - 83, 1983 - 1986, 1986 - 1987	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
Ryutaro Hashimoto	1996 - 1996, 1996 - 1998	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
Junichiro Koizumi	2001 - 2003, 2003 - 2005, 2005 - 2006	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
Shinzo Abe	2006 - 2007, 2012 - 2014, 2014 - 2017, 2017 - 2020	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
Taro Aso	2008 - 2009	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
Naoto Kan	2010 - 2011	Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (CDP)
Yoshihiko Noda	2011 - 2012	Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (CDP)
Yoshihide Suga	2020 -2021	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
Ishiba Shigeru	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2024 - 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)

Source: Barua, Kriti (2025). - List of Japan Prime Ministers, 1885-2025.

Simultaneously, those who survived (around 650000 people) from the atomic bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 are known as Hibakusha, and they founded of Nihon Hidankyo Organization in 1956 with the victims of nuclear weapons. The Nihon Hidankyo motto is - "No more Hibakusha" and the organization works on the prevention of nuclear weapons and to ensure the world is free of nuclear weapons. The organization awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2024 (<https://www.bbc.com> & <https://www.nobelprize.org>).

**Table III: The Fifteen Peaceful Countries in the world - according to the Global Peace Index - 2025**

Ranked	Countries	Score
1	Iceland	1.095
2	Ireland	1.260
3	New Zealand	1.282
4	Austria	1.294
5	Switzerland	1.294
6	Singapore	1.357
7	Portugal	1.371

Ranked	Countries	Score
8	Denmark	1.393
9	Slovenia	1.409
10	Finland	1.420
11	Czechia	1.435
12	Japan	1.440
13	Malaysia	1.469
14	Netherlands	1.491
15	Canada	1.491

Source: <https://www.visionofhumanity.org>

### Japan's Peacekeeping Operations

Japan has provided financial, technical, and humanitarian support to the UN for the peacekeeping operations from Japan became a member (1956) of the UN. Since the 1990s, Japan has actively participated in the UN and has enacted the International Peace Cooperation Act (1992) for peacekeeping operations. The United Nations has established various organizations for the protection of human rights, stability, prevention of war, conflict and the establishment of Peace and Japan has actively participated, such as the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), UN Angola Verification Mission-II (UNAVM-II), UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (UNSMH), UN Observer Mission In El Salvador (UNOMESAL), UN Mission in East Timor (UNMET), UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) etc. (Song, 1996). In 1992, Japan provided the Self-Defense Force (SDF) to the United Nations for the UN Angola Verification Mission - II. The Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held in September 1992 in Angola, and Japan sent the SDF to conduct fair elections in Angola. At the same time, Japan has sent the SDF battalion of engineers (around 600), military observers (about 8), civilian police (around 75), civilians (about 41), and provided medicines, televisions, recorders, etc. to the UNTAC in Cambodia in 1992 - 1993. Also, Japan has sent SDF and much humanitarian

assistance to the UN since the 1990s for the assistance of Mozambique, El Salvador, Zaire, Kenya, Rwanda, Nairobi, and Goma (Inoguchi, 1995). In 1994, Japan sent observers to El Salvador for the monitoring of the election and maintenance of peace. Simultaneously, Japan has sent more than 400 Self-Defense Force (SDF) to Zaire and Kenya to ensure the medical services, sanitation, water management, and other humanitarian services (Song, 1996 & Japan).

Since 2011, Japan has provided personnel Self-Defence Force (SDF) in South Sudan as a part of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). In 2011, South Sudan was independent and the people of the South Sudan was facing the problem of underdevelopment and humanitarian crisis, and Japan has provided SDF to the UN for the development of infrastructure and minimizations of humanitarian crisis, such as construction of roads, improvement of drainage systems, sanitations, supplies of drinking water, proper management of the medical services, etc. After the Independence, South Sudan faced not only the problem of Underdevelopment, many humanitarian crises raised in the country, such as massive human rights violations, human trafficking, killing of civilians, extreme corruption, physical and mental torture, use of child soldiers, sexual assault, violations of the freedom of expression, etc. These humanitarian crises were reported by the International Human Rights Organizations of Human Rights Watch in 2016. In these circumstances, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (Liberal Democratic Government) expanded and sent the SDF to UNMISS the resolve the humanitarian crisis and the establishment of Peace in the Republic of South Sudan (Akimoto, 2016 & Japan). Similarly, Japan has sent SDF, Official Development Assistance (ODA), Financial, technical, and humanitarian support to the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) for conducting free and fair elections and maintaining peace in 2007-2011(Management).

**Table IV: Japan's Contributions to UN Peacekeeping Operations**

Name of the Peacekeeping Operations	Name of the Personnel	Year
United Nations Angola Verification Mission - II (UNAVEM - II)	Electoral Observers	1992
United Nations Observer Mission In El Salvador (UNOMESAL)	Electoral Observers	1994
United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET)	Civilian Police	1999
United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS)	Staff Officers	2011
United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN)	Military Observers	2007-2011

Source: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/ipc>

### **Financial and Humanitarian Assistance to Sri Lanka**

Japan has provided SDF, ODA, huge financial and humanitarian support to the UN for the restoration of peace in Sri Lanka. Since 2011, Japan has become the second international humanitarian supporter of Sri Lanka. Japan has initiated numerous projects to resolve the financial and humanitarian crisis and restore peace in Sri Lanka, including water management, minimization of corruption, increase of transparency, protection of human security, etc. In 2022, Japan provided US\$1.5 million to Sri Lanka's school children and rural women for securing food through the World Food Programme (WFP). Also in 2022, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided US\$ 200 million emergency fund to Sri Lanka for the reduction of poverty and was supported by Japan. Similarly, Japan played as a humanitarian state to Sri Lanka during the COVID-19 pandemic, and Japan supported US\$5.5 million in medical equipment to Sri Lanka (Fazil, 2010 & Nandy, Al-Mamun, and Akon, 2023). Also, Japan has provided US\$300 million in February, US\$2.5 billion in March 2025, and US\$2.5 million in July for the preservation of human security, promoting anti-corruption mechanisms for a clean Sri Lanka (UNDP).

### **Japan's Peace Process in the Middle East Countries**

In 1992, Japan enacted the International Peace Cooperation Law and after the law Japan has founded the Self-Defense Force, Official Development Assistance and many funds for providing financial, technical and humanitarian support to

the UN for the protection of child and women security, human rights, prevention of human trafficking, promote to transparent government, clean environment and the establishment of peace in the world. In 1993, Japan provided US\$1.7 billion to Palestine for the resolution of the humanitarian crisis, job creation, health-care, and agricultural development. Japan has initiated and assisted the UN in ensuring peace in the Middle East Countries. The UN Security Council has taken resolutions 242, 338, 425 (Madrid Conference, Oslo Agreement) for the restoration of peace in the Middle East, and Japanese Foreign Minister Koumura's visit to the Middle East in 1999. Japan has continuously provided financial, technical, and humanitarian support to Palestine for the preservation of human security, minimizing human rights violations, protecting children and women from the inhumane attack of Israel, and the threats of big powers. Also, Japan has taken the Gaza clean-up project, road pavement project for the development of social infrastructures in Gaza, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 1996 and 2013 (Japan, PCPSR, 2022).

Simultaneously, Japan has provided financial and technical support to Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, and Japan has taken on the projects of power plants, water supply projects, and infrastructure development of hospitals and universities. Japan also assigned SDF personnel to the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Middle East. Japan also initiated the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity," assisting Palestine with establish-

ing a self-sustained economy, and initiated the “Conference on Cooperation among East Asian countries for Palestinian Development” (CEA-PAD) to mobilize the knowledge and experience of economic development in East Asian countries. In 2015, Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met with Israel’s Prime Minister Netanyahu in Israel and Palestinian President Abbas, the resolve conflicts between Israel and Palestine. In 2018, Prime Minister Abe visited Palestine and met with Abbas for the minimization of conflict with Israel and an increase in the peace process in the Middle East (PCPSR, 2022 & Japan).

### Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh

In 2001, Japan provided US\$36.85 million to Afghanistan through the UN to ensure peace and human security in Afghanistan. In January 2002, Japan hosted the International Conference in Tokyo on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan for reconstruction and state-building, and increased the security capacity enhancement. In 2003, Japan sent ODA US\$134.42 million to Afghanistan for the infrastructure development and the protection of human security. In 2012, the Government of Japan co-hosted the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan with the Government of Afghanistan. After the conference, Japan founded the “Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF)” for regular checks and review of the progress of Afghanistan. In 2014, a democratic change of government took place for the first time in Afghanistan, and Japan supported Afghanistan with the United Nations Development Programme for stability, development, and Peace (Japan, 2001 & UNHCR, 2025).

**Table V: Recipients of Japanese Official Development Assistance, 2003**

Number of Countries	Countries Name	Amount (US\$ Millions)
1.	Afghanistan	134.42
2.	Bangladesh	115.27
3.	India	325.79
4.	Angola	33.10

Number of Countries	Countries Name	Amount (US\$ Millions)
5.	Mozambique	35.27
6.	Brazil	92.21
7.	Zambia	28.28
8.	Pakistan	266.22

Source: Japan’s ODA White Paper in 2003.

In 2020, Japan provided US\$14.5 million to Pakistan for improving education, livelihood security, and infrastructure development. In April 2025, Japan decided to provide US\$3 million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support the humanitarian assistance of Afghanistan and Pakistan refugees (UNHCR, 2025).

Simultaneously, Japan has provided SDF, ODA, and humanitarian support to Bangladesh. Since the 1970s, Bangladesh head of state/ head of the government visited Japan, such as in 1973, 1978, 1980, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1994, 1997, 2005, 2010, 2014, 2016, 2019, and 2023, and the Japanese Prime Ministers visited Bangladesh in 1990, 2000, and 2014. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan provided US\$681 million to Bangladesh and provided AstraZeneca Vaccines (under the COVAX in 2021) to Bangladesh for protecting human security and sustaining peace in Bangladesh (Bangladesh).

### Recommendations

As a researcher, I recommend “Explore the roles of Japan in promoting International Peace” as a research article for the new researcher. We have studied many books, book chapters, and articles about bilateral and multilateral relations with Japan, but what is the contribution of Japan as a humanitarian state in promoting International Peace, which is not sufficient for future research? So, it will assist those who are interested in exploring the research on the role of Japan in promoting international peace.

The Japanese constitution is an ideal pattern to promote peace, have no doubt, yet Japan should implement peace education as a curriculum in the schools, colleges, and Universities levels (not

only the school level), providing grants for studying peace education at all levels. Japan should implement free education (such as free education in Finland) in Japan for the inner peace of Japan and should provide more grants to the United Nations for the restoration of international peace. We want positive and sustainable peace for the existence of human civilization, and Japan is continuously trying to ensure peace in the world through financial, technical, and humanitarian assistance to the United Nations. As a researcher, expecting the new researcher they explore how Japan is contributing and promoting International Peace after the resignation of the Japanese Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru (on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2025).

### Conclusion

The study concludes that Japan's transformation from a war-devastated nation in 1945 to a leading global advocate of peace is a remarkable example of post-war reconstruction and moral evolution. Following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan constitutionally renounced war in 1946, committing itself to pacifism and global harmony. This peace-oriented philosophy was institutionalized through education, fostering a culture of peace and empathy among future generations. Since becoming a member of the United Nations, Japan has consistently demonstrated its dedication to global peace through the enactment of the International Peace Cooperation Law (1992), the establishment of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF), and the provision of Official Development Assistance (ODA). The non-nuclear principles introduced by former Prime Minister Eisaku Satō, for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974, further highlight Japan's moral leadership. As the second-largest financial contributor to the UN, Japan has extended humanitarian, technical, and developmental support to numerous countries, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. While no single nation can ensure global peace, Japan's unwavering commitment to pacifism and international cooperation sets a powerful example. In an era of rising global tensions, Japan's role remains vital in promoting peace, diplomacy, and shared human values worldwide. Currently, Sanae Takaichi took office

as Prime Minister of Japan on 21 October 2025, and her contribution and role in promoting international peace will be known more in the future.

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