

Graduate School of Asian Area Studies, Daito Bunka University
International Symposium

Asia Navigating Troubled Waters:

Regional Actors' Engagement with Japan's 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' (FOIP) Approach

With Asian state and non-state actors facing multiple pressures arising from the US-China strategic and economic competition, what opportunities exist for sustainable regional cooperation? Japan's 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' (FOIP) based approaches from 2016 have attempted to combine liberal free trade engagement together with adherence to norms and values enshrined in international law. The 'Japanese' aspect has been downplayed in order to encourage other regional actors to engage with FOIP as an open platform for diverse and supportive cooperation in the broadest sense, the strategic aspects of the original concept having been gradually diluted to encourage engagement without fear of being coopted into a US-oriented anti-China bloc.

The aim of this symposium is to assess 1 whether regional actors may desire such engagement, 2 how they might engage with Japan and each other, and 3 if FOIP is the most appropriate platform amid US-China confrontation and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War increasingly appearing to challenge the concept of international norms and a rules-based global order. A range of scholars are invited to provide analysis and commentary on a diverse range of regional actors and how they might address the three issues (above), as well as any further insights or questions they may wish to raise. The aim is not merely to have a series of presentation statements, but to progress to an open engagement of all participants in a conversation regarding the future peace and prosperity of Asia.

Date: 25th October 2025 (Saturday) 1:00pm~5:30pm

Venue: Convention Hall, 3F, Administration Bldg., Higashi Matsuyama campus,
Daito Bunka University, 560 Iwadono, Higashimatsuyama-shi, Saitama, 355-8501

※Conference Languages: Main-English; Sub-Japanese (no translation service provided).

Questions and comments possible in Japanese following presentations-discussions in English.

Schedule of Symposium

Opening address 13:00-13:05

Toshihiko Suda (Dean, Graduate School of Asian Area Studies, Daito Bunka University)

Convener address 13:05-13:10

Garren Mulloy (Professor, Faculty of International Relations/Graduate School of Asian Area Studies, DBU)

Session I 13:10~14:30

Regional Actors and FOIP Engagement

Ambassador H.E. Kurai Takashi, Seikei University.

Prof. Marie Lall, University College London

Dr Benjamin Ascione, Waseda University

Discussant/commentator, Prof. Yu Minhao, DBU.

Chair: Prof. Garren Mulloy, DBU

Break 14:30~14:50

Session II 14:50~16:20

FOIP Efficacy in Transforming Regional and Global Order

Prof. Aigul Kulnazarova, Tama University

Dr Misato Matsuoka, Teikyo University

Mr Paul Chamberlain, ANU/ DND, Canada

Discussant/commentator, Prof. Hiroshi Matsumoto

Chair: Prof. Garren Mulloy, DBU

Break 16:20~16:40

Session III 16:40~17:25

General Discussion Session: conversation of all participants and audience

Closing Remarks 17:25~17:30 Dean Suda, Garren Mulloy.

Dinner: We hope to invite speakers to a dinner after the symposium, possibly at a local Italian restaurant. Please let me know if you would like to attend, and if you have any dietary requirements.

Participants

Speakers:

Ambassador H.E. Kurai Takashi, former Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan and Ukraine, Special Visiting Professor, Seikei University.

Prof. Marie Lall, Institute of Education, University College London

Prof. Aigul Kulnazarova, Faculty of Global Studies, Tama University

Dr Benjamin Ascione, Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University

Dr Misato Matsuoka, Department of Language Studies, Teikyo University

Mr Paul Chamberlain, Australian National University/ Department of National Defence, Canada

Discussant/Commentators:

Prof. Yu Minhao, Faculty of International Relations, Daito Bunka University

Prof. Hiroshi Matsumoto, Faculty of International Relations/Graduate School of Asian Area Studies, Daito Bunka University

Prof. Garren Mulloy, Faculty of International Relations/Graduate School of Asian Area Studies, Daito Bunka University

Prof. Toshihiko Suda, Dean, Graduate School of Asian Area Studies, Daito Bunka University