



澳門大學  
UNIVERSIDADE DE MACAU  
UNIVERSITY OF MACAU

Department of Government and Public Administration, FSH

## How to establish stabilized trilateral relationships among the US, China and Japan: A Japanese perspective

### Speaker: Mr. Fumio Matsuo

Fumio Matsuo was born in Tokyo on August 12th, 1933, and graduated from Gakushuin University with a major in Political Science. Mr. Matsuo has also lectured at the University of Tokyo's Institute of Journalism and Communication Studies. Most recently, Mr. Matsuo oversaw the Japanese translation of Henry Kissinger's monumental work, *On China* (published in March 2012 by Iwanami Shoten) in which he contributed a chapter of commentary at the conclusion of Volume 2.



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Abstract:

About grand reconciliation between East Asian countries, Japan still has a lot of catching up to do before the Japanese are ready for a grand round of reconciliation such as what took place in Dresden, Germany, in 1995. It is likely that President Obama is well disposed to this initiative, and those in charge of Japan's diplomatic policy must be ready to do everything appropriate when the time comes. First, at a time when the last three Japanese prime ministers have refrained from official visits to Yasukuni Shrine (Japan's war memorial, associated by many with celebration of war crimes), some in Japan may object if a Japanese prime minister pays his respects only to the fallen on the other side (in this case, Americans laid to rest at the USS Arizona Memorial). This must be seen by the Japanese in the context of protecting Japan's national interests in the framework of its protection under the US nuclear umbrella and maintenance of a strong bilateral alliance. Second, to avoid giving rise to suspicions that Japan is only concerned about relations with the United States, Japan must take steps to extend a similar opportunity for reconciliation to China, South and North Korea, and eventually all countries that were involved in the war in the Pacific, to make everyone understand that this is a chance for all to put these "historical issues" and distrust behind us once and for all. Third, this is a chance to remake Japan's public image, no longer as an economic giant past its prime, a country only interested in the United States, or a country that's always bickering with China and Korea. It is time for Japan to present itself to the world as a New Japan, eager to be friendly with everyone.