PREFACE

This study seeks to identify and examine the many factors influencing Japan's approach to the issue of ballistic missile defense (BMD), including the perceptions, motives, and interests of key Japanese players; the role of the United States; the Japanese decisionmaking process regarding BMD issues; and the dynamics of critical considerations such as alliance maintenance, cost, feasibility, commercial and legal factors, political or bureaucratic competition, and the behavior of the People's Republic of China. The purpose of this examination is to assess the pros and cons of various options available to Japan, to identify the most likely courses of Japan's future BMD development, and to discern the possible implications of such development for the U.S.-Japan alliance and Asian stability.

This report should be of interest to scholars, journalists, students, and other members of the public who seek a better understanding of the Japanese political process concerning ballistic missile defense and its impact on the likelihood for continued cooperation in the development of a theater missile defense system in Northeast Asia. The authors hope it will be of particular use to policymakers on both sides of the Pacific as they work toward building a more durable U.S.-Japan security partnership that continues to contribute to peace and stability in the region.

The study's third author, Takashi Kawakami, currently a member of the Japanese National Institute for Defense Studies and former aide to Diet member Toshiki Kaifu, was a major contributor to Chapter Three. However, he was neither involved with nor responsible for the reporting on the Japanese Defense Force and the Japanese Defense Agency found in that chapter.