

## *JAPAN NOW Lecture Series*



# Japan's New Position and Its Role in East Asia

## **Yukio Okamoto**

President, Okamoto Associates, and  
Robert E. Wilhelm Fellow, MIT

### *Chair*

**Stephen Toope**, Director  
Munk School of Global Affairs,  
University of Toronto

**Wednesday, March 2, 2016**

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

**Vivian and David Campbell  
Conference Facility**

Munk School of Global Affairs  
1 Devonshire Place

Situated in East Asia where the power relationship is undergoing a substantial transformation, Japan must adapt itself to the new realities of the security environment of the region. China, with its aggressive expansion both politically and militarily, is posing to seize hegemony in the South and East China Sea, further advancing into the Pacific Ocean.

North Korea will continue its nuclear testing and missile launches as much as needed until the country becomes capable of covering the North American continent with its nuclear missiles.

Prime Minister Abe of Japan last year enacted a new set of security laws enabling Japan to exercise the collective right of defense. While Japan's Peace Constitution remains intact, the new legislation will widen the scope of Japan's contribution to international peace building activities. For Japan to lead regional security cooperation, it has to come to terms with its neighbouring countries about "the issue of history," without which the basis on which Japan stands to engage with the neighbours will remain vulnerable. How can Japan come to a reconciliation with its neighbours?



**Yukio OKAMOTO**, a former Special Advisor to two Prime Ministers of Japan, is the President of Okamoto Associates and a Robert E. Wilhelm Fellow at MIT. From 1968 to 1991 Mr. Okamoto was a career diplomat in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with overseas postings at Paris, Cairo, and Washington. He retired from the Ministry in 1991 and established Okamoto Associates Inc., a political and economic consultancy.

Post-retirement, Mr. Okamoto has served in a number of advisory positions. From 1996 to 1998, he was a Special Advisor to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. From 2001 to 2004, he was again a Special Advisor to Prime Minister Jun-ichiro Koizumi, also serving as the Chairman of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Foreign Relations.

Mr. Okamoto is a visiting professor of international relations at Ritsumeikan University. He sits on the Board of several Japanese multinational companies. Mr. Okamoto is the Director of the Signal of Hope Fund, an initiative he established to assist the Tohoku fisheries industry recover from the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

» **Registration:** <http://uoft.me/YukioOkamoto>

*The JAPAN NOW Lecture Series is presented jointly by the Asian Institute and the Consulate General of Japan*