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Robin H. “Sak” Sakoda is a Partner with Armitage International, L.C. since the company was established in March 2005 and is an Adjunct at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School at its Center for Civil-Military Relations and the National Security Affairs Department. He served as Senior Policy Advisor to the Deputy Secretary of State from December 2002 through January 2005. After U.S. Government service at the Pentagon in 1999, he was a Senior Associate with Armitage Associates. During the last five years of his U.S. Army career, he served as Senior Country Director for Japan, Asian and Pacific Affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) from 1994. He was a member of the panel headed by Richard Armitage that produced reports in 2000, 2007 and 2012: US-Japan Alliance: “Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership”; “US-Japan Alliance: Getting Asia Right through 2020”; and “US-Japan Alliance: Anchoring Stability in Asia.”

Mr. Sakoda’s work with civil-military relations includes supporting defense reform in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Comoros, Croatia, Madagascar, Montenegro, Moldova, Mongolia, Nigeria, Slovenia, Slovakia, South Africa, and Ukraine. He is currently leading a project in Taiwan.

Mr. Sakoda served as the Senior Japan Director in OSD from 1995 as the U.S. and Japan reviewed and revised the Guidelines for US-Japan defense cooperation, incorporating areas of peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, and regional security. The Secretaries of State and Defense, with their Government of Japan counterparts, issued the results of this work in the revised “Defense Guidelines” in 1997. While serving in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, he also worked to improve the relationship between US forces and communities in Okinawa through land returns, noise abatement initiatives, and adjustments to US operational and administrative procedures culminating in the Final Report issued by the Special Action Committee on Okinawa.

Mr. Sakoda graduated from The Citadel and was commissioned Infantry in 1978. His operational assignments include duty with the 2d Infantry Division in the Korea; 9th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Washington; and 25th Infantry Division.

In addition to his service as an Infantryman, he also served as a foreign area officer and studied Japanese language at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California and the Foreign Service Institute in Yokohama, Japan. He received his M.A. in National Security Affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School in June 1988. Upon completing language studies in Yokohama, he served as aide-de-camp to the Commanding General, U.S. Army Japan/IX Corps in 1989. Mr. Sakoda completed Airborne and Ranger schools; the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Command and Staff College in Ichigaya, Tokyo; and the US Army Command and Staff College.

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