

# Geoeconomics Summit 2024

November 1st, 2024

TORANOMON HILLS FORUM

Improving Resilience through Rules-Based International Order



# Geoeconomics Summit 2024

## Keynote Speech

### Mr. Takeshi Niinami

President and CEO, Suntory Holdings;  
Chairperson, Keizai Doyukai  
(Japan Association of Corporate Executives)



At the inaugural Geoeconomics Summit 2024, Takeshi Niinami, Chairperson of the Japan Association of Corporate Executives and CEO of Suntory Holdings, delivered a keynote address focused on enhancing resilience through a rules-based international order. He emphasized the urgency of adapting to the geoeconomic era, driven by intensifying global conflicts and economic fragmentation, and highlighted Japan's critical role in shaping a stable order for the Indo-Pacific region.

He began by emphasizing the intensifying U.S.-China rivalry, conflicts in Ukraine, and the Middle East crisis as critical factors fragmenting the global economy and disrupting supply chains. He noted the need for businesses and nations to collaborate on costly supply chain reconstruction and to address the shifting priorities of economic security. Niinami cautioned against the growing trend of protectionism and asserted that the previous model of globalization under the peace dividend is obsolete. Instead, he advocated for a restructuring of the international order grounded in geopolitical awareness.

He pointed out that Japan has experienced the use of economics as a political weapon, referring to China's 2010 rare earth export restrictions. Since then, Japan has led in economic security, developing strategies that are now recognized globally. Despite economic fragmentation, Niinami argued for the continued necessity of cross-border trade, including economic engagement with China where security is not threatened.

Mr. Niinami highlighted the critical impact of the U.S. presidential election and the evolving Middle East situation on global economic security, particularly given Japan's reliance on Middle Eastern oil. With the United States increasingly turning inward, Mr. Niinami stressed the need for Japan to reduce its overdependence on the U.S. while maintaining essential ties. He advocated for stronger partnerships with like-minded countries to build a resilient economic security framework.

Technology emerged as a central theme in his address.

Mr. Niinami emphasized the need for strategic indispensability in areas like semiconductors, quantum computing, and biotechnology but acknowledged that achieving this alone is unrealistic. He called for deeper cooperation with South Korea, given the progress under the Kishida administration, and encouraged moving from competition to collaboration. Additionally, he underscored the importance of supporting Japan's SMEs, which are leaders in niche technologies.

Mr. Niinami underscored the urgency of joint hydrogen procurement and infrastructure sharing and highlighted the importance of engaging with resource-rich regions like Africa and Latin America through technology-driven partnerships. He referenced a survey showing a preference for China over the U.S. among ASEAN nations, attributing this to dissatisfaction with U.S. policies and reinforcing the need for Japan's proactive engagement in the Indo-Pacific.

Mr. Niinami also stressed that the global economic center is shifting from the Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific. He urged Japan to play a pivotal role in creating a resilient, rules-based order while engaging with China in cooperative areas. Historically, Western nations have dominated economic security discourse, but Mr. Niinami emphasized the importance of Indo-Pacific think tanks, including the Institute of Geoeconomics, in shaping a new international order.

Domestically, he warned of the risks posed by Japan's political instability and the transition from deflation to inflation, which could undermine international trust. Stability is crucial to Japan's role as a reliable global partner.

In closing, Mr. Niinami stressed the importance of prompt and cooperative efforts to rethink the international order. He praised the Geoeconomics Summit as a key forum for advancing meaningful discussions and concluded by emphasizing the essential leadership role of the Institute of Geoeconomics in tackling the intricate challenges posed by the geoeconomic era.

# Discussion with IOG Director Kazuto Suzuki



**Kazuto Suzuki**  
Director,  
Institute of Geoeconomics



In a thought-provoking discussion, Suzuki and Mr. Ninami explored the pressing challenges facing Japanese businesses in a rapidly shifting global landscape. The conversation emphasized the need for proactive strategies to address geopolitical risks, economic uncertainties, and the evolving role of corporations in shaping international dynamics.

Suzuki opened the dialogue by highlighting the historical transition from an Atlantic-centric world order to one increasingly focused on the Indo-Pacific. He underscored the region's importance not only for its dynamic economic growth but also as a focal point of international security. Against this backdrop, he posed a critical question to Mr. Ninami about the risks companies face and how they can prepare for them.

Mr. Ninami identified supply chain risks as the foremost concern for Japanese corporations, citing the unpredictable nature of global events such as the war in Ukraine, Middle Eastern instability, and U.S.-China tensions. He emphasized the necessity of having multiple contingency planning—Plans B, C, and beyond—despite the traditional reluctance of Japanese companies to invest in such measures due to cost concerns. He also noted the increasing pressure on corporations to improve gross margins and adapt their strategies to remain resilient.

Suzuki acknowledged this shift in corporate thinking, pointing out that the era of relying solely on cost-effective “Plan A” solutions is over. Companies must now prioritize risk assessment and scenario planning, even if it entails higher costs. He inquired how executives like Mr. Ninami justify these expenses to stakeholders.

He shared, for example, how Suntory has established intelligence divisions in key global locations, such as

London, Singapore, and Washington, D.C. to provide critical insights for decision-making. He stressed that think tanks and partnerships with organizations like the Institute of Geoeconomics play a vital role in helping businesses navigate uncertainties.

The discussion also touched on government-industry collaboration. Suzuki pointed out that while companies can prepare internally, addressing larger geopolitical risks requires cooperation with the government. Mr. Ninami agreed, emphasizing the role of business associations like Keizai Doyukai in advocating for policies and fostering dialogue with policymakers. A significant portion of the conversation focused on fostering collaboration with South Korea. While acknowledging historical tensions, Mr. Ninami expressed optimism about improving relations under President Yoon’s leadership. He proposed creating mutual showcases of trust, such as collaborative projects, to strengthen economic security and bilateral ties.

The speakers also addressed Japan’s engagement with ASEAN countries. It was suggested that Japanese companies need to engage promptly and proactively to enhance their competitiveness in the region and should focus on developing industries that create added value locally, rather than relying on resource imports.

The conversation concluded with reflections on Japan’s political challenges, particularly the need for structural reforms to enable leaders to respond more effectively to global developments. It was emphasized the importance of industry, government, and academia to proactively engage with each other to navigate the complexities of today’s geopolitical and geoeconomic environment.

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o Panel Session 1

## Semiconductors (In-Person & Livestreamed)

What are the strategies of different countries in the semiconductor industry? This panel will discuss areas of cooperation and competition among countries, considering the possibility of stricter regulations following the U.S. presidential election, China's aggressive push in legacy semiconductors, and the future supply and demand trends in anticipation of the spread of AI and autonomous driving.

### Moderator



**Kazuto Suzuki**

Director, Institute of Geoeconomics

### Panelists



**Dr. June Park**

Visiting Fellow, Middle East Council on Global Affairs, ROK

### Panelists



**Dr. Jeremy Chih-Cheng Chang**

Chief Executive Officer, Research Institute for Democracy, Society and Emerging Technology (DSET), National Science and Technology Council (NSTC), Taiwan

### Panelists



**Dr. Peter Van Der Hoest**

Counsellor, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Japan

### Panelists



**Mr. Kazumi Nishikawa**

Principal Director, Trade and Economic Security Bureau, Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan

The video is available here.



Panel Session 1 explored the strategic importance of semiconductors and their role in shaping geopolitical and economic dynamics. Moderator Kazuto Suzuki opened the session by emphasizing the global significance of semiconductors amid the escalating China-US rivalry. In 2022, the United States imposed export controls on high-end semiconductor, prompting China to retaliate with restrictions on key minerals. These developments underscore the centrality of semiconductors to economic and national security as demand soars, driven by advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and electric vehicles (EVs).

Dr. June Park outlined the geopolitical and regulatory landscape of semiconductors. She highlighted the critical role of companies like NVIDIA and South Korea's Samsung and SK Hynix in producing high-bandwidth memory (HBM) chips for AI applications. She explained that U.S. export controls have already hindered developments in China's Semiconductor Sector and will intensify with new investment screening measures. However, she warned that such policies might inadvertently encourage China to accelerate domestic innovation, fostering a self-sufficient ecosystem. Dr. Park also addressed Gulf state investments, which are shifting under restrictions, and emphasized the broader implications for global supply chains.

Dr. Jeremy Chih-Cheng Chang shared insights from Taiwan, home to TSMC, the world's leading semiconductor foundry. He traced Taiwan's rise from an OEM model in the 1970s to a global powerhouse. TSMC, founded by Morris Chang, dominates advanced production. Despite this leadership, Taiwan faces challenges from China's economic coercion and attempts to replace its role in the global supply chain. Dr. Chang stressed the need for strategic cooperation with democracies to sustain Taiwan's technological and economic security. He also raised concerns about allied nations' industrial policies potentially undermining Taiwan's market share.

Dr. Peter Van Der Hoest provided the perspective of the Netherlands, emphasizing his country's robust semiconductor ecosystem, anchored by leaders like ASML. The Dutch semiconductor sector employs over 50,000 people and is supported by a network of innovative small and medium-sized enterprises. Dr. Van Der Hoest detailed the Netherlands' National Technology Strategy, which prioritizes semiconductors and related technologies. He

highlighted collaborations with Belgium's IMEC, the European Chips Act, and joint initiatives with Japan, stressing the importance of international alignment to foster innovation and manage risks.

Mr. Kazumi Nishikawa outlined Japan's semiconductor strategy, rooted in national security concerns. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in Japan's supply chains, as semiconductor shortages disrupted the production of critical equipment. In response, Japan launched a semiconductor strategy in 2021, focusing on rebuilding design and manufacturing capabilities, developing next-generation technologies, and preparing for advancements like quantum computing. Nishikawa emphasized global partnerships, particularly with foreign companies, and the need for targeted export controls and investment transparency.

The session concluded with a discussion on U.S. export controls and their impact. Suzuki asked how these measures, especially those targeting China, might reshape the market. Dr. Park expressed concern that strict controls could deepen global divisions and drive China toward self-reliance. Dr. Chang noted Taiwan's support for maintaining technological leadership among democracies but emphasized multilateral cooperation over unilateral policies. Dr. Van Der Hoest advocated precise export controls to minimize supply chain disruptions, while Mr. Nishikawa stressed balancing economic stability with security through a "small yard, high fence" approach. The panel also addressed risks from China's focus on legacy semiconductor.

In summary, the panel reaffirmed the semiconductor industry's pivotal role in national security, economic growth, and innovation. The need for fostering international cooperation with transparency in policies was emphasized as crucial to addressing the complex challenges faced by each country.

# Geoeconomics Summit 2024

○ Panel Session 2A

## Decarbonization and Technology

This panel will discuss the state of transition to decarbonization and investment in the Asian energy market, the role of policy backing in accelerating this transition, and corporate strategies. It will also touch on successful cases of technological innovation, challenges in social implementation, and scaling up, and will broadly discuss the optimal technological and economic approaches for Asia.

The video is available here.



Moderator



**Mr. Takaaki Umada**

Visiting Senior Fellow, International House of Japan

Panel Session 2A focused on the critical intersection of decarbonization and technology in the Asia-Pacific region. Moderated by Takaaki Umada, Visiting Senior Fellow at the International House of Japan, the session featured insights from leading experts: Ms. Sachie Ii, Sustainability Chief Strategist at Mizuho Financial Group; Mr. Eytan Lenko, CEO of Boundless Earth; and Ms. Miho Kurosaki, Vice President of Energy Impact Partners.

The discussion began with a question about how various countries are prioritizing their efforts and what they are working on to achieve decarbonization. Mr. Lenko highlighted Australia's dual position as a global leader in renewable energy and a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions through its fossil fuel exports. He explained how the Australian government is working to transform the country into a renewable energy superpower through initiatives like the "Future Made in Australia Act." Collaboration with trade partners, including Japan, was emphasized as a crucial element in this transformation. Ms. Ii shifted the focus to Japan, explaining its efforts to decarbonize key industrial sectors such as power, steel, and chemicals, with hydrogen and ammonia as pivotal resources. However, she identified the high costs and the challenge of fostering demand for green products as

significant barriers. Meanwhile, Ms. Kurosaki provided a broader view of the Asia-Pacific region, categorizing countries into energy suppliers, consumers, and mixed economies. She stressed the importance of cross-border cooperation to address the diverse challenges faced by these groups.

The discussion then deepened on how to overcome barriers to decarbonization. All panelists agreed that creating demand for green products is a shared challenge. Mr. Lenko introduced the concept of the Green Iron Pre-commitment Pool, a strategy to guarantee demand for green products, thereby incentivizing investments in clean exports. Ms. Ii emphasized the necessity of regulatory frameworks that provide predictability for investors, while Ms. Kurosaki underlined the importance of policy incentives and openness to innovation in driving progress. The speaker collectively called for a multi-stakeholder approach to address these obstacles, emphasizing collaboration among governments, corporations, and investors.

In addition, innovative technologies for a decarbonized society were highlighted. Mr. Lenko shared examples from Australia, such as startups developing drone-based solutions for more efficient energy transmission and modular solar panel systems designed. These innovations

## Panelists


**Ms. Sachie Ii**

Sustainability Chief Strategist,  
Sustainable Business Promotion  
Department, Mizuho Financial Group, Inc.

## Panelists


**Ms. Miho Kurosaki**

Vice President, Asia Pacific, Energy  
Impact Partners

## Panelists


**Mr. Eytan Lenko**

CEO, Boundless Earth

demonstrate the potential for scalable solutions to accelerate renewable energy adoption. Ms. Kurosaki pointed out opportunities for Japan to adopt technologies like carbon capture utilization (CCU) and steam decarbonization, which could deliver tangible results in the short term. However, she noted that corporate-startup collaboration in Asia lags behind other regions, highlighting the need for increased engagement to address unique regional challenges.

Philanthropy emerged as another key topic in the discussion. Mr. Lenko explained how philanthropy can act as a catalyst for decarbonization by funding policy advocacy, research, and pilot projects. He cited examples such as methane monitoring and initiatives to expand electric vehicle adoption, illustrating how targeted funding can reduce investment risks and drive systemic change.

The session concluded that the panelists underscored the importance of policies that stimulate innovation and

generate demand for green technologies, positioning the Asia-Pacific region as a global leader in decarbonization efforts.



# Geoeconomics Summit 2024

Panel Session 2B

## EVs and Regulations (Closed Session)

How do countries view the imposition of tariffs on Chinese-made EVs by the U.S. and the EU due to ‘overcapacity’? What are the differences and similarities with the “Voluntary Export Restraints” on Japanese cars in the 1980s? This panel will explore the fundamental reasons behind protecting domestic EV industries while promoting the green transformation, and examine the power balance between the U.S., China, and Europe.

Moderator



**Dr. Hitoshi Suzuki**

Senior Research Fellow, Europe & Americas Group, Institute of Geoeconomics

Panelists



**Dr. Naoise McDonagh**

Senior Lecturer (International Business), School of Business and Law, Edith Cowan University (ECU); Managing Editor, Law & Geoeconomics, Australia

Panelists



**Dr. Mathieu Duchâtel**

Director of International Studies, Institut Montaigne, France

Panelists



**Dr. Kenichi Doi**

Senior Research Fellow, China Group, Institute of Geoeconomics

Panel Session 2B provided a platform for a vital discussion on the intersection of economic security, electric vehicles (EVs), and critical minerals. Moderated by Hitoshi Suzuki, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Geoeconomics, the session welcomed three distinguished panelists: Dr. Mathieu Duchâtel, Dr. Naoise McDonagh, and Kenichi Doi.

The rapid growth of Chinese EVs in the European market was described in detail. It was noted that the market share, which was 0.5% in 2019, had exceeded 20% by 2023, prompting the EU to introduce subsidy investigations and tariffs. The scale of China’s EV industry was emphasized as presenting a new challenge.

The importance of critical minerals such as lithium and rare earth elements, essential for EV production, was highlighted. It was explained that countries like the United

States and Australia are working to diversify supply chains to counter China. This shift was described as moving from a focus on economic efficiency to an emphasis on resilience.

China’s supporting its EV industry and its strategic expansion into the Global South, including Southeast Asia and Latin America, were explained. It was emphasized that China adopts a cooperative stance toward the EU while taking a more confrontational approach with the United States, taking a flexible approach as part of its trade strategy.

The session concluded with a lively Q&A, where participants exchanged views on the challenges of balancing economic security, decarbonization, and market competitiveness.



○ Panel Session 3A

# Multilateral Cooperation

Amid the growing trend of unilateral actions that do not follow the rules-based international order, can the Indo-Pacific region achieve centrality through multilateral frameworks, and to what extent is such strength desirable? This panel will explore the impact of elections held in various countries and the upcoming U.S. presidential election on the future of security and economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region and discuss future prospects from multiple perspectives.

### Moderator



**Dr. Yuichi Hosoya**

Group Head, Europe & Americas,  
Institute of Geoeconomics

### Panelists



**Dr. James Kim**

Director of Programs, Korea Economic  
Institute of America; Lecturer, School of  
International and Public Affairs (SIPA),  
Columbia University, ROK

### Panelists



**Dr. Joseph Liow**

Dean, College of Humanities, Arts,  
and Social Sciences, Nanyang  
Technological University, Singapore

### Panelists



**Dr. Mihir Sharma**

Director, Observer Research  
Foundation, India

### Panelists



**Dr. Osamu Nishiwaki**

Assistant Commissioner of Acquisition,  
Technology and Logistics Agency,  
Japan Ministry of Defense

The video is  
available here.



Panel Session 3A explored the evolving challenges and future prospects of multilateral cooperation amid shifting global power dynamics. The session was moderated by Yuichi Hosoya and featured Dr. James Kim, Dr. Joseph Liow, Dr. Mihir Sharma, and Dr. Osamu Nishiwaki as panelists.

Hosoya opened the discussion by recognizing the current

difficulties facing multilateralism and raised key questions about how these frameworks can adapt without strong American global leadership.

Dr. James Kim provided a historical overview, explaining how multilateralism has evolved from the 19th-century Concert of Europe to the post-World War II liberal

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## ◦ Panel Session 3A Multilateral Cooperation

international order led by the United States. He noted that the multilateralist system is now under significant strain as the U.S. adopts a more inward-focused approach. Dr. Kim highlighted South Korea's pragmatic strategy in response, which includes active participation in multilateral frameworks like the WTO and IPEF, alongside bilateral trade deals. He stressed the importance of continuing to hedge bets in a fragmented international environment and questioned whether the United States could be persuaded to engage with global multilateralism in the future.

Dr. Joseph Liow challenged common assumptions about the "rules-based international order," emphasizing that interpretations of these rules vary significantly. He pointed out that Southeast Asian nations support free trade but often resist Western narratives centered on democratic values. The U.S.-China rivalry impacts this landscape further, with conflicting visions for the Indo-Pacific. Dr. Liow advocated for adaptable, issue-based cooperation (minilateralism) as a practical response to the current instability. He stressed that small coalitions focused on specific goals, such as climate change and technological standards, are increasingly necessary.

Dr. Mihir Sharma offered insights into India's complex stance on multilateralism, describing with regards to three contradictory yet correct principles: the value of multilateralism itself is important both as a principle and in practice, skepticism toward existing international institutions

that protect rule-breakers, and the need for greater representation for emerging powers. He explained India's strategy of engaging in as many forums as possible, including both BRICS and the Quad, to influence outcomes and protect national interests. Dr. Sharma emphasized the interconnectedness of today's global economy, where regional threats have global repercussions. He criticized unilateral measures by Western nations and called for a more inclusive economic order that involves both the Global South and private sector actors.

Dr. Osamu Nishiwaki discussed Japan's perspective, focusing on the importance of the balance of power in maintaining multilateral frameworks. He explained that rapid changes, such as China's rise and Russia's aggression, have weakened traditional mechanisms like the WTO and UN Security Council. However, Japan is actively working to shape new frameworks, including the CPTPP and Quad, and is strengthening security ties with the United States and other partners. Dr. Nishiwaki emphasized Japan's responsibility as a democracy to lead in building a rebalanced, rules-based order. He stressed the importance of cooperation in both economic and security realms, highlighting initiatives like the DICAS agreement.

Hosoya concluded the session by emphasizing the interdependence of balance of power and multilateralism. He noted that adaptability is crucial as global dynamics continue to shift.



o Panel Session 3B

# Critical Minerals (Closed Session)

Is it possible to diversify supply chains to ensure a stable supply of critical minerals? Can countries like Australia and Canada become alternatives to China in sourcing these minerals? This panel will discuss realistic options considering the investment costs of mining and refining, as well as responses to ethical issues such as environmental impact and human rights.

Moderator



**Mr. Satoshi Yamada**

Visiting Senior Research Fellow,  
Economic Security Group, Institute of  
Geoeconomics

Panelists



**Dr. Ian Satchwell**

Adjunct Professor, Sustainable  
Minerals Institute, The University of  
Queensland; Senior Fellow, Australian  
Strategic Policy Institute, Australia

Panelists



**Mr. Duane Robson**

Counsellor (Natural Resources),  
Embassy of Canada in Japan, Canada

Panelists



**Mr. Takeshi Harada**

Deputy Director General, Metal  
Strategy Department, Japan  
Organization for Metals and Energy  
Security (JOGMEC)

Panel Session 3B focused on strategies for securing critical minerals essential to economic security and innovation. Moderated by Satoshi Yamada, Visiting Senior Research Fellow at IOG, the session featured experts from Mr. Takeshi Harada, Mr. Duane Robson, and Dr. Ian Satchwell discussing supply chain vulnerabilities, demand, and international cooperation.

The reliance of Japan on imported critical minerals was discussed, and it was emphasized that JOGMEC is working to mitigate supply risks through financing, exploration, and partnerships in regions such as Africa and South America. The diversification of supply sources and the expansion of domestic processing capabilities were noted as essential for enhancing supply chain resilience.

Sustainable mining practices in Canada were highlighted, including partnerships with indigenous communities and investments in battery supply chains. The importance of

global cooperation through agreements with Japan and other countries, as well as adherence to ESG standards, was emphasized.

The longstanding partnership between Australia and Japan was noted, with references made to challenges such as supply chain concentration and vulnerabilities in processing capabilities. Policy coordination, investing in refining infrastructure, and sharing technology were proposed as key measures.

The panelists emphasized the importance of diversifying sources of mineral resources, strengthening governance in resource-rich regions, and promoting sustainable mining practices. It was concluded that collaboration among countries like Japan, Canada, and Australia is vital to building transparent and resilient supply chains that can meet surging global demand.



## Message



The International House of Japan established the “Institute of Geoeconomics” in 2022 to commemorate its 70th anniversary. By focusing on the emerging interdisciplinary field of geoeconomics, which integrates geopolitics and economics, the institute aims to serve as a hub for fostering dialogue and collaboration not only within Japan but also across the Asia-Pacific region, thereby enhancing its global outreach.

The International House of Japan remains committed to its mission: “to foster intellectual dialogue, policy research, and cultural exchange with diverse global communities, contributing to the creation of a free, open, and sustainable future.”

Chairman, Board of Directors  
International House of Japan  
James Kondo

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