



TALKING POINTS

Asan Plenum 2013: “New World Disorder”
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Panel: Stability and Change in Post-Crisis Party Systems (Grand Ballroom I)

Date/Time: Wednesday, May 1, 2013 / 09:00-10:15

Talking Points for: Kohno Masaru, Waseda University

After the 3/11 (2011) earthquake, three noticeable trends have emerged that have affected the structure of party system in Japan; the disintegration of the Democratic Party of Japan, the rise of local political parties, and the wide-spread distrust among Japanese voters. All these trends influenced significantly the results of the December 2012 general election, in which the Liberal Democratic Party (with its coalition partner Komei Party) regained its power. This recent development, however, has to be placed properly within a more long-term, institution-driven direction of Japanese party politics since the 1993-94 electoral reform. From such a macroscopic view, I make three points in my presentation. First, the current situation in which a number of small parties are not well coordinated, including the DPJ and the newly emerged Ishin no Kai (Restoration Party), in the opposition camp, is not likely to be a stable equilibrium. Second, the future of Japan’s party system will depend, partly, on the outcome of the electoral reform (of the lower house) now under discussion. Third, the inherent instability Japan’s party system cannot be solved, unless Japan’s electoral systems for different levels of government and assemblies are streamlined into a coherent set.

* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.