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The US-China tug of war
over power and the ROC's
position

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Indigenous Submarine Program Shows the ROC's Commitment to Self-Defense



The 13th US-Taiwan Defense Industry Conference was held from October 5 to 7, 2014, at the Kingsmill Resort, as shown in the picture, in Williamsburg, Virginia. (Source: US-Taiwan Business Council)

At the 13th US-Taiwan Defense Industry Conference, which was held from October 5 to 7 in Williamsburg, Virginia, General Chiu Kuo-cheng, Vice Defense Minister (for armaments) of the Republic of China (ROC), explained the Ministry of National Defense's (MND) resolve to build new diesel-electric submarines. The indigenous submarine program was initially announced by the ROC Navy (ROCN) Headquarters in the *15-year Force Construction Vision* on January 9, 2014, and is an attempt to replace the country's aging submarine fleet. At present, the ROCN operates two *Jianlong*-class (modified Dutch *Zwaardvis*-class) submarines and two *Haishih*-class (US *Guppy II*-class) submarines, but only the former two possess combat capabilities, and the latter are 71-year-old relics that can barely be used even for training. Concerning about its desperate need for underwater capabilities and long delay in US submarine sales to Taiwan, the MND has decided to initiate a program to update the functions of the *Haishih*-class submarines and build new submarines.

In the *15-year Force Construction Vision*, ROCN Headquarters explains the two objectives of restoring its antiquated submarines. In addition to performing combat missions, submarines also play a vital role in training aimed at strengthening the ROCN's anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities. Furthermore, by renovating the submarines, local shipbuilders will have the chance to acquire the skills needed in the construction of new ones. Upgrading the *Haishih*-class submarines will therefore undoubtedly benefit both the ROCN and shipbuilders.

As for the construction of new submarines, Captain Shao Wei-yang, Director-general of the ROCN Shipbuilding and Development Center, stated at the conference that, while the US approved the sales of eight submarines to Taiwan in 2001, very little progress has been made on this issue during the subsequent 13 years. Since it is unable to wait any longer, Taiwan must initiate preparations for constructing new submarines on its own. Despite its determination to do so, the MND believes technical assistance from other countries, particularly from the US, in design, acquisition of key equipment and systems, and construction will still be

needed. Captain Shao articulated that progress would be made with help from the US through three possible modes of participation. First, the US could build the submarines in Taiwan, the US or another country, and transfer them to the ROCN upon completion. Second, the US could provide key equipment and systems required for the submarines. The US could also take part in the program by providing technical consultation. Captain Shao explained that the program would be carried out in design and construction phases. The first step is to design a contract to help the ROCN more accurately grasp the costs and systems involved in building the submarines. If the US agrees to sell at this point, Taiwan would have the ability to examine costs and system specifications proposed by the US. This approach aims to allow ROCN personnel to be able to supervise construction during the second phase.

The announcement of the program not only shows Taiwan's commitment to self-defense, but also highlights the importance of submarines in defending Taiwan. With Mainland China rapidly developing its ballistic missiles and air-based precision strike capabilities, air and naval bases in Taiwan all fall within the attack range of these threats. Should the bases be severely damaged or even destroyed during the first wave of a Mainland Chinese attack, the ROC Armed Forces' abilities to counterattack will be significantly compromised. Several measures can be used to offset these threats, and submarines serve as an irreplaceable defensive weapon. The stealth advantage of submarines and their ability to launch anti-ship missiles from below the surface will enable them to introduce an element of surprise in an enemy surface attack, and thereby delay the invasion of enemy forces. If the ROC Armed Forces can equip itself with a truly combat-ready submarine fleet, their "innovative/asymmetric" capabilities will be improved even further.

Submarines are multi-purpose platforms that can be put to both defensive and offensive use. Nevertheless, the ROC will always use its submarines exclusively for self-defense only. The acquisition of a robust submarine fleet will enhance the ROC's confidence and ability to ensure the security of Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait, thus contributing to the maintenance of long-term peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific. In this regard, the ROC's decision to obtain new submarines should be respected and supported by all countries concerned with the well-being of the regional security environment.



The MND has initiated the indigenous submarine program to replace its aged submarines. This picture shows a *Jianlong*-class submarine in operation by the ROCN. (Source: Shu Hsiao-huang, OSD staff)

The Invisible Battle for Sinophone Asia

Charles Horner & Eric Brown

Twenty-five years ago, the eminent scholar Tu Weiming encouraged us to think about “Cultural China,” that is, the Sinophone civilization that is larger and, in the end, more consequential than the massive state that is headquartered in Beijing and now led by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). So far as defining what it means to be “Chinese” in the modern world, it is Cultural China that has been and will continue to be the pacesetter—not the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Indeed, cultural production inside the PRC itself is no longer the servant of the CCP’s heroic image of its own activities alone. As a practical political matter, moreover, cultural production in the comparatively smaller Chinese-speaking polities of Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and elsewhere in the world has always been beyond the control of Beijing. While it is not yet fully a counterculture in open rebellion, Cultural China—both inside the PRC, and as it exists outside of it—is still enough to be an ongoing concern for the CCP regime, for it already complicates the monopoly on power that the Party wants for itself.

By every modern metric — political, financial, organizational, cultural — the polities on the periphery remind the larger PRC how far it must yet move in order to catch up with the rest of Cultural China and the rest of the modern world.

Most analyses of Sinophone Asia begin with the distinction between the “core,” that is, the socially and culturally diverse Asian Mainland that is now ruled by the CCP regime, and the “periphery,” which exists in the many Chinese-speaking societies and places beyond the Mainland. The interactions between the two are complex, and they have had important consequences across the centuries. Here, history is instructive. In the nineteenth century, self-strengtheners on the Mainland acquired ideas about nationalism and constitutionalism from the Sinophone periphery that ultimately led them to abandon the dynastic system. To free China Proper from the Qing/Manchu Empire that ruled it, Sun Yatsen’s republican movement relied in 1911 on the patriotism and ideas of the periphery. Chinese who lived outside the newly established Republic of China (ROC) also played a role in institution-building and reform post-1912. Later on, Chinese outside of the core contributed important political and financial support to the Republic of China’s resistance—when that government still controlled part of Mainland China—against Imperial Japan during what is known in Asia as the Great Pacific War.

Today, these relations between core and periphery have entered yet another phase, and they have begun to unsettle conventional wisdom about the future of Sinophone Asia as a whole. On the face of it, there should be no debate at all. After all, on one side is the PRC. The CCP regime rules over a population of 1.3 billion, has a gross national product in the trillions, the world’s largest hoard of foreign exchange, and a military that is getting

bigger by the day. Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and the larger Chinese-speaking Diaspora, even when taken together, would hardly seem much for a match for this behemoth. But this is not how it is now; indeed, it is not as it has been in modern times. In fact, although these other survivors in the century-long battle to define Chinese modernity may seem woefully mismatched vis-a-vis the PRC, their existence as conspicuous alternatives to the CCP's way of doing things was, and remains, very consequential.

In the modern era, Chinese who remained outside of the PRC have thrived and have kept ahead of their compatriots in the core. If, today, the Sinophone periphery has yet to convince proponents of the “Beijing Consensus” that, in politics, democracy is the true wave of the future, it has still made great strides in cultural and economic freedom that have placed it far in advance of what people on the Mainland enjoy. Thus, by every modern metric—

political, financial, organizational, cultural—the politics on the periphery remind the larger PRC how far it must yet move in order to catch up with the rest of Cultural China and the rest of the modern world.

It didn't always seem it would turn out this way. After World War II, the Republic of China (ROC) in power on the Mainland was a founding member of the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and what is now the World Trade Organization. The ROC aspired to be, and was welcomed as, a key pillar of the then emerging international security and commercial order. However, the PRC, founded in 1949 after it drove the ROC from the Mainland, opted instead to join the so-called “socialist camp” led by Stalin's Soviet Union, which had duped many into believing that it was the future. This was a fateful decision and, within thirty years, the CCP-led regime had brought ruin to Mainland China and itself to the point of collapse. In a startling reversal, the Party



The ROC is the first and thus far the only democracy on the Sinophone periphery. This picture shows the celebration of the Double Ten Day, a national holiday, to commemorate the establishment of the ROC. (Source: Office of the President, ROC)



decided to join the world economy that it had once spurned and to reorganize the PRC economy in shameless emulation of the Sinophone periphery and Asian economies it had once mocked. Deng Xiaoping's reforms would never have gotten off the ground were it not for the presence nearby, and the support of, the real "Chinese" successes in Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong as well as the other parts of "Confucian Asia," including South Korea and Japan.

For some, it has once again become fashionable to predict that the CCP is going to rule Asia but, at the moment, it does not appear to be much of an agenda-setter. Indeed, the people who should know best are betting against it. For example, many of the PRC's newly rich beneficiaries of the existing dispensation want out. Their patriotic sentiments or their feelings of gratitude to the Party seem less in evidence by the day. They are smuggling huge amounts of money out of the country; they buy safe houses in British Columbia and California; they also have other than PRC passports tucked away. There are also prominent, culturally creative, people on the Mainland who may not necessarily want to leave it, but who certainly do not want to see the PRC continue many of its politically and culturally repressive practices either. In particular, distinguished writers and artists do not want to be harassed by the PRC's Ministry of Public Security or be imprisoned like the Nobel Laureate Liu Xiaobo. And, as we are learning every day, there are millions living a more mundane life in burgeoning cities and rural villages who also may not want to leave Mainland China but who nonetheless take increasingly pronounced exception to its current mode of governance.

The CCP leadership knows that the Deng-era reforms have run their course. Already, the Party is spending enormous sums on "stability maintenance" and the systematic suppression of free cultural production at home, just as it is once again looking to overseas Chinese for new ideas about how to shore up its rule. But the Sinophone periphery's demonstrated power to make and un-make the political order on the Asian Mainland is also a source

of ongoing fear for the Party, something that helps explain Beijing's ongoing strategic obsession with it. Indeed, the CCP's efforts to control the periphery and bring it to heel are well-known. But as the Party is learning right now on the streets of Hong Kong, this is neither simple nor is it easy.

Each of the peoples and places on the Sinophone periphery has had their own historical connection to the core and their own experience with modernity. Singapore and Hong Kong, for instance, were British colonies for a long time; as such, they absorbed the British political and economic tradition. Both of these overseas polities, along with the ROC that came to be established on Taiwan, also emerged as the modern custodians of Cultural China and of the Chinese Confucian political tradition, at a time when the PRC regime was bent on destroying it. It was within these polities that an alternative Chinese modernity to the one implemented by the CCP on the Mainland was been worked out.

In Taiwan, the CCP regime faces an even deeper set of challenges. The ROC, after all, has been a multi-party, constitutional democracy since 1987, and thus represents a clear alternative to the PRC within the context of Cultural China.

Singapore is now independent and Hong Kong, since 1997, has been a unique part of the PRC. Nonetheless, a powerful pro-democracy movement, un-intimidated by Beijing's threats, has taken hold in Hong Kong, a powerful reminder of Beijing's inability, for all its wealth and power, to win over hearts and minds. The courage shown by Hong Kong citizens in resisting the police state and standing for their basic rights to govern themselves is remarkable, especially given memories of the June 4 Massacre. These protests are reverberating across Sinophone Asia, and through this, the periphery is giving inspiration to the other peaceful, citizen-



The Liberty Square at the Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall in the ROC is where many citizen movements take place. (Source: Tourism Bureau, ROC)

based movements on the Mainland initiated by people who also want free culture and the Rule of Law for themselves.

Some in the CCP would prefer to take Singapore's one-party system as a model for the reform of the PRC, but this, too, presents problems for the Party. The particular governing arrangement that accounts for the success of the city-state is not readily implementable by the CCP on the much larger Asian Mainland. The problem is not simply one of scalability—a Singapore-style blend of modern openness and genuine Confucian accountability and service to others would, to be sure, bring vast improvements to the lives of those inside PRC, but such changes would also threaten the CCP's pursuit of a monopoly on power. The Singapore government has little to fear from its citizenry's cosmopolitan outlook and free commerce and cultural exchange with the wider world, whereas the CCP regime, because of its retrograde nature, is going to extraordinary lengths to try to control and restrict the cultural and economic relations between the Chinese core and the wider world.

In Taiwan, the CCP regime faces an even deeper set of challenges. The ROC, after all, has been a multi-party, constitutional democracy since 1987, and thus represents a clear alternative to the PRC within the context of Cultural China. Indeed, Hong Kong's democracy movement has clearly learned from Taiwan's own citizen movements. Moreover,

large numbers of people on Taiwan have long disputed the very idea that they are "Chinese" at all, and the democratic polity has allowed that once-repressed sentiment to become a wholly legitimate and very potent political force. This is in part the result of the fact that, strictly speaking, Taiwan was a part of "China" for only five years, from 1945 until 1949. Before that, it was a colony of Japan for fifty years and, before that, it was part of the empire made by the Manchus, not part of "China." Today, the overwhelming majority of Taiwan's people is committed to their own democracy, and they want no part of "reunification"—especially with a regime in Beijing that is increasingly anti-democratic and brutal. More to the point, the deep structure of Cultural China is being reconfigured in Taiwan; the citizens of Taiwan want to be Taiwanese, not Chinese.

This, then, is the context of today's debates inside Sinophone Asia about the future of Greater China. In this, the experiences and aspirations of Chinese living on the periphery are likely to become increasingly relevant. Indeed, as the scholar Tu once predicted, "the transformative potential of the periphery is so great that it seems inevitable that it will significantly shape the intellectual discourse of Cultural China for years to come...The meaning of being Chinese is basically not a political question; it is human concern pregnant with ethical-religious implications".¹

The Beijing regime surely knows that Taiwan presents a different, far more robust, and sustainable, model for the modern Chinese-speaking world than does the PRC, and thus the CCP rightly fears that Taiwan could prove to be a source of ideas for politics and governance on the Mainland. However one assesses the prospects of this, we certainly know that, at critical times in modern Chinese history, the Sinophone periphery has intervened dramatically in Mainland affairs and exercised an influence well beyond what customary analyses would have predicted. This alone suggests that the balance of power in Sinophone Asia could well be on the verge of another great shift, and that those on the periphery

will once again intervene and dramatically transform the core.

As for how Taiwan should be seen in this new security arrangement, the alliance in Asia would do well to remember not only the strategic significance of the island nation but, moreover, its cultural and political significance in the context of Cultural China.

If we look at the future of Mainland China and of Asia from this perspective, the democracies of Asia, including Taiwan as well as its allies Japan and the US, have an opportunity to enrich our foreign policies and security strategies by drawing on the cultural, intellectual, and political resources of the periphery that have been too long neglected. For instance, at the moment, the Beijing regime, responding to the discrediting of Communist ideology around the world and inside Mainland China itself, is trying to appeal to Chinese traditions, especially Confucianism, as a way of legitimizing its one-party dictatorship and extending its control across Maritime Asia. To be sure, this is an outrageous claim. It needs to be challenged by vigorous and sustained public advocacy—not only, but especially from within Sinophone civilization itself. Confucian teachings are far more supportive of responsible governance than they are of arbitrary repression. In fact, in Confucian Asia, it is the democracies of Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea that are the real innovators and leading examples of how the “Confucian tradition” exists in the modern world.

By extension, the success of Asia’s democracies should be the basis for a broad coalition of countries co-operating on behalf of securing the regional

peace. The alliance that is forming is impressive for its diversity—Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, India, Australia, New Zealand, perhaps others, and of course Taiwan. As for how Taiwan should be seen in this new security arrangement, the alliance in Asia would do well to remember not only the strategic significance of the island nation but, moreover, its cultural and political significance in the context of Cultural China. In the twentieth century, bogus arguments about linguistic compatibility and shared cultural history were exploited by European and Asian tyrannies for the purposes of imperial aggrandizement, just as they are exploited by Vladimir Putin today. And yet, deference is afforded to comparable bogus claims made by Beijing when those claims should be vigorously contested instead. In his teachings on how to make a peaceful order out of insecurity, Confucius is famous for advocating the “rectification of names,” that is, calling things by their right name; today, Beijing’s imperialistic ambitions should be called by their right names, just as the Asian alliance should look to support the Sinophone periphery, Taiwan included, in enlightening a peaceful and more humane way forward for the diverse peoples on the Mainland.

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1 Tu Weiming, “Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center,” in Tu Weiming, ed., *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, 1991, p.14

US Defense Cuts May Undermine Security in Western Pacific

Charles Morrison

In its January 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG), the Obama Administration stated that the United States “will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region.”¹ Yet one month later, the administration released its 2013 defense budget request, including \$487 billion in cuts mandated under the 2011 *Budget Control Act (BCA)*, which provided a framework for medium-term deficit reduction—primarily through large cuts in defense and domestic discretionary spending. While the new strategic guidance garnered headlines for its renewed emphasis on the Asia-Pacific, the 2013 budget request turned out to be the far more important document.

The 2013 request was the first in a succession of *BCA*-driven budgets and strategic reviews that slowly-but-surely lifted the veil on America’s military decline. As the *BCA*’s original cut of \$487 billion—contained in the 2013 request—combined with an additional reduction of close to \$500 billion triggered by sequestration, ongoing crises in modernization, force structure, and readiness were laid bare.

The Congressionally-chartered, bipartisan National Defense Panel (NDP) recently issued a stark warning about the implications of mounting defense shortfalls. The NDP found that “Not only have [the cuts] caused significant investment shortfalls in U.S. military readiness and both present and future capabilities, they have prompted our current and potential allies and adversaries to question our commitment and resolve.”²

Eroding US military power is especially disconcerting because America’s military underwrites the other components of its national

power. In the words of the NDP, “The effectiveness of America’s other tools for global influence, such as diplomacy and economic engagement, are critically intertwined with and dependent upon the perceived strength, presence and commitment of US armed forces.”³ Consequently, as America’s military power declines, so too will its global influence.

Nowhere is this trend more apparent than in the Western Pacific today. While the US has traditionally relied upon a qualitative edge to prevail against numerically superior forces, this technological edge may be rapidly shrinking.⁴ Indeed, the NDP warned, “The balance of power in the Western Pacific is changing in a way unfavorable to the United States, and we believe that China’s rapid military modernization is creating a challenging context for US military posture, planning, and modernization.”⁵

Left unsaid by the panel is the disturbing reality that as the military gap between the US and the People’s Republic of China (PRC) narrows, the likelihood of conflict increases. If an overwhelming American conventional military advantage minimizes the chances for miscalculation or conflict, a lessened American military edge brings with it higher odds of conflict.

Moreover, despite the relative priority placed by senior officials on America’s military presence in the Asia-Pacific, current plans are wholly inadequate to properly support the US military presence in the region. A rapidly shrinking US military is increasingly stressed by commitments worldwide, especially as instability grows in the Middle East, and Russia continues its assault on its neighbors. At the same time, much-needed modernization plans



are too expensive for existing resources. The end result is a US military that is too small and too old to meet its many regional commitments.

In the absence of higher defense budgets, this would lead to a rapid erosion of American conventional deterrence in the Western Pacific. In the face of this challenge, the Republic of China (ROC) and other regional allies and partners can take several steps in order to minimize the danger of conflict. For one, the ROC is suggested to increase its defense spending—by as much as its finance allows. With additional defense resources, the ROC should continue and expand investments in anti-access/area-denial capabilities that seek to impose asymmetrical costs against PRC forces and the Mainland.

Fortunately, momentum seems to be building in the US to at least partially overturn defense cuts and their consequences. Driven by international crises from Ukraine to Iraq and Syria, a clear shift seems to be taking hold both in terms of policymakers and public opinion. For instance, the NDP called for an emergency readiness supplemental to address immediate funding shortfalls, as well as a return to former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates' 2012 budget plan over the longer-term.⁶

At the same time, senior military leaders are also expressing rising discontent with the current state of affairs. General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently testified that ongoing operations against the Islamic State (IS) would expose base budget funding deficiencies, while Army Chief of Staff Ray Odierno has argued that current global crises should prompt a re-evaluation of cuts to ground forces.⁷ Moreover, members of the Republican establishment, such as former presidential candidate Mitt Romney and Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL), have recently issued high-profile calls for increased defense spending.⁸

Hopefully, this momentum will continue and policymakers will reverse self-inflicted US military decline. Yet responsible statecraft demands that governments prepare for the worst while hoping for the best. America's allies and partners, including the ROC, must expand their defense spending

and capabilities in case of the eventuality that US defense spending remains stagnant at best. With conventional deterrence in the Western Pacific and beyond at stake, there is no margin for miscalculation.

However good the intentions behind the "pivot" and America's ostensible emphasis on the Asia-Pacific are, the math does not support the administration's policy. Increasingly, America's global commitments are taxing its shrinking military.

Mounting Defense Reductions Are Leaving a Painful Bill

Given the considerable media and congressional attention accompanying the sequestration cuts to the US military, it can be easy to forget that declining defense spending did not begin on March 1, 2013 when sequestration went into effect. Rather, defense cuts began four years prior, when the Obama Administration in 2009 and 2010 cut or redirected roughly \$400 billion in planned Pentagon spending—about three quarters of which directly impacted vital modernization programs.⁹

While the Pentagon tried to downplay the national security impacts of these reductions, the reality is that the outright cancellation, early termination, or delay of programs such as the CG (X) next generation cruiser, F-22, and next-generation bomber significantly delayed the fielding of new military technologies in an effort to concentrate on programs more directly relevant in Iraq and Afghanistan. Five years later, as high-end technological competition becomes increasingly vital in the Western Pacific, it is hard not to view the budgetary decisions of 2009 and 2010 as short-sighted—as many argued at the time.¹⁰

Of course, the Pentagon bill did not stop there. Still prior to the 2011 *BCA*, the budget path laid forth

by Gates for fiscal year 2012 reduced an additional \$78 billion—bringing the pre-*BCA* total of cut and redirected planned spending to \$478 billion. The first tranche of cuts under the *BCA* more than doubled this total, cutting Gates' baseline spending plan for fiscal years 2012-2021 by \$487 billion. And because the Super Committee failed to reach an agreement on deficit reduction, sequestration was triggered beginning in fiscal year 2013, cutting an additional \$450 billion as currently modified through fiscal year 2021.

Taken collectively, these numbers are staggering. However good the intentions behind the “pivot” and America's ostensible emphasis on the Asia-Pacific are, the math does not support the administration's policy. Increasingly, America's global commitments are taxing its shrinking military—to the point where not even theaters of priority, such as the Asia-Pacific, will escape the consequences.

Crucially, as the NDP argued, the problem is not just sequestration or automatic budget cuts. The limited relief brought by last-minute budget deals in Washington has been welcome, but it has addressed only a fraction of the problem. In the words of the NDP, “the increases above sequester levels proposed thus far, while desirable, are nowhere near enough to remedy the damage which the Department has suffered.”¹¹

As the NDP recommended, the entire *BCA* should be discarded and US defense planners should start afresh to build a ground-up appraisal of the armed forces the US requires and what they would cost. In the absence of such action, the American military posture will only continue to deteriorate in Asia—with potentially catastrophic results.

Shrinking Fleet Size May Undermine US Conventional Deterrence Overseas

On a daily basis, the most important US contribution to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific is the regular presence of the US military. In the words of the 1993 *Bottom-Up Review*, “The presence of U.S. forces deters adventurism and coercion by

potentially hostile states, reassures friends, enhances regional stability, and underwrites our larger strategy of international engagement, prevention, and partnership. It also gives us a stronger influence, both political as well as military, in the affairs of key regions.”¹²

To take the *Bottom-Up Review*'s conclusions a step further, the stronger the American military presence in a given region, the greater America's diplomatic influence will be. Unfortunately, as we are seeing today, the inverse is just as true.

Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jonathan Greenert has made an increased presence in the Asia-Pacific a major keystone of the Navy's near-term plans, calling for an increased presence from 50 ships in the region in 2014 to about 65 ships in 2019.¹³ This is part of a broader initiative to increase the Navy's forward presence from an average of 97 ships in 2014 to 120 by 2020.¹⁴

While this increased emphasis on forward presence is a worthy goal, questions remain about how the Navy will be able to afford its plan given current budget constraints. Options available to increase ship presence overseas include extending the length of deployments, swapping crews mid-deployment, and forward-stationing more ships.¹⁵ Yet many of these options present their own problems. For instance, as Bryan McGrath



An increased US presence in the Asia-Pacific is a major keystone of the US Navy's near-term plans. This picture shows three Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers steaming in formation (Source: U.S. Navy.)



has outlined, the Navy has in some cases already resorted to scheduled ten-month deployments—well over past standards of six months.¹⁶ Stressing crews and families beyond their breaking point is not a sustainable assumption upon which to base force structure.

Most problematically, the increased presence figures are predicated upon the Navy's aggressive 2015 thirty-year shipbuilding plan. At first glance, the 2015 shipbuilding plan is a marked improvement over recent iterations.¹⁷ While the Navy's September 2011 plan for a 313 ship fleet averaged just under 306 ships each year over the duration of the plan, the 2013 and 2014 plans each averaged just about 298 ships per year. Surprisingly, the 2015 plan averages nearly 308 ships per year.

If this remarkable jump seems too good to be true, it is. After all, given shrinking budgets and another year of near-sequestration levels of spending, it seems hard to imagine how the Navy could suddenly afford to average a larger fleet over the course of the plan than in previous years—let alone buy three more ships over the first five years of plan than it could last year, as the 2015 plan calls for.

As it turns out, the Navy inflated its ship counts in the 2015 plan through a number of technical changes. For one, the Navy changed its fleet counting rules to include more types of ships, including patrol craft, mine countermeasure ships, and hospital ships as part of its total battle force.¹⁸ With these ships excluded from the count, average fleet size over the course of the plan drops from about 308 to 305. Additionally, this fleet of 305 ships also includes 11 cruisers that the Navy has proposed to “layup” for repairs and return to service in the future.¹⁹ Seven of these cruisers had been proposed for retirement in the 2014 plan, meaning they were not part of last year's projected fleet ship count. Yet they are included over the entire duration of the 2015 plan—even for the years during which they will be inactive.

These creative accounting practices serve only to mask the real and ongoing damage to the fleet. That being said, while the Navy could be doing a better job of showcasing the devastating

impact of defense reductions, most of the blame for suspect ship counts lies with the policymakers who mandated cuts in the first place. The Navy is doing what it can to do under difficult circumstances, but even with the best of intentions, declining ship levels are beginning to take a toll.

The Navy is especially candid, for instance, that its 2015 plan is unaffordable under sequestration-level budgets. By its own projections, the service will require, at the very least, defense budgets at the President's 2015 request level of \$115 billion over the next five years above the sequestration-imposed caps. Yet even if the Pentagon ultimately receives funding at the requested level, the Navy raises serious concerns about how it will afford its own plan. The Navy forecasts that its plan, from fiscal year 2020 through fiscal year 2044, will require an annual average of about \$17.2 billion in 2014 dollars.²⁰ The Navy notes that this is about \$4 billion more per year than its shipbuilding plan has historically averaged.

The funding problem is most acute during the period of fiscal years 2025-2034, when the Navy will be purchasing the bulk of its *Ohio*-class replacement ballistic missile submarine fleet. Over this period, the Navy expects to spend an average of \$19.7 billion per year—close to \$7 billion above the historical average of \$13 billion per year. Yet the Navy's funding problems extend well beyond the *Ohio*-class replacement. As the service notes, even if it completely removes the *Ohio*-class replacement SSBN from its shipbuilding costs, its plans will still demand between \$14-15 billion per year from 2020 onwards.²¹

Moreover, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has found that the Navy frequently understates the true costs of its shipbuilding plans. In its assessment of the 2014 shipbuilding plan, CBO found that the Navy underestimated projected costs by six percent over the first ten years of the plan, 14 percent over the second ten years of the plan, and by a staggering 26 percent over the final ten years of the plan.²²

Taken collectively, this paints an alarming

picture. Under the best circumstances, the Navy's shipbuilding plan—upon which it is relying to increase its presence in the Asia-Pacific (and along with it, America's strategic and diplomatic influence)—is counting on an additional \$4-7 billion per year above what it has received historically. In the absence of additional resources, it is extremely difficult to see how the Navy will be able to meet its goals for overseas presence—even in the Pacific—in the coming decades.

Declining US Military Power May Reverberate through Pacific

In the absence of higher budgets, the Department's shrinking plans and force structure will only become more acute in the near future, with devastating consequences around the globe. The NDP made clear that current budget plans would prevent DoD from generating and sustaining the forces necessary to conduct its strategy.²³ In the words of the NDP, "the existing baseline will fully support neither the capability nor the capacity that the Department needs."²⁴ This is especially troubling given the warning of General Dempsey in the 2014 defense strategy:

The smaller and less capable military outlined in the QDR makes meeting [strategic] obligations more difficult. Most of our platforms and equipment will be older, and our advantages in some domains will have eroded. Our loss of depth across the force could reduce our ability to intimidate opponents from escalating conflict. Nations and non-state actors who have become accustomed to our presence could begin to act differently, often in harmful ways. Moreover, many of our most capable allies will lose key capabilities. The situation will be exacerbated given our current readiness concerns, which will worsen over the next 3 to 4 years.²⁵

Increasingly, there are signs that the grim future outlined by General Dempsey is already

becoming manifest. The NDP notes that Combatant Commanders consistently called for a larger force in order to "meet the requirements of contingency plans, regional presence, and theater cooperation and engagement."²⁶ Critically, these missions are among the most important not just for fighting and winning wars, but for preventing them in the first place. As a shrinking US military increasingly leads to zero-sum tradeoffs between regions, overseas American conventional deterrence will be weakened.

Even before the most recent round of defense cuts, the military was already stretched thin. In an interview with *Military.com*, Rep. Randy Forbes (R-VA) stated that while the Navy met about 90 percent of force requirements from Combatant Commanders in 2007, it was able to meet just 51 percent in 2012.²⁷ This growing gap between force supply and demand led Admiral Greenert to testify recently that in order to meet the demand for forward-deployed naval forces, he would need a fleet of 450 ships.²⁸

While administration officials have made clear that the Asia-Pacific is still a priority, the reality is that current global crises—driven in no small part by America's shrinking military—may lead the Pentagon to reconsider its global allocation of forces. As the NDP notes, "the Russian invasion of Crimea and ongoing threat to Ukraine call into question the 2014 QDR's conclusion...that Europe is a net producer of security."²⁹

For instance, earlier this year, General Philip Breedlove, Supreme Allied Commander Europe and chief of US European Command, disclosed plans to reduce America's F-15 fighter force in Europe.³⁰ While General Breedlove did not say where the F-15s might be moved, it stands to reason that reductions in Europe would likely have been planned as part of the broader goal to shift forces to the QDR's regions of emphasis, including the Asia-Pacific. However, given the crisis in Ukraine, General Breedlove recently announced that the Pentagon was reconsidering its plans to further shrink forces in Europe.³¹ While this move is understandable given the current security situation, it is indicative of the

fact that crises caused by a shrinking military in one part of the world are weakening US plans in other regions—reducing deterrence there as well.

This all leads to a sobering conclusion: while US defense budgets remain in freefall, its military will be increasingly hard-pressed to provide adequate conventional deterrence, even in key regions of the world. In order to prevent regional balances from tipping in unfavorable directions, US allies and partners must be prepared to step in and prevent a power vacuum.

The Republic of China Must Expand Defense Capabilities

While “burden sharing” has long been a fashionable idea in US military circles as a way to encourage allied partners to contribute more to their own security, the situation today is such that increased allied defense investment is no longer a “nice to have”—it is increasingly vital to maintaining a favorable status quo in key regions, and particularly in Asia.

Simply put, America’s friends in the region must raise their defense spending in the near term to help deter aggression. This is especially important for the ROC, which as Michael Mazza has noted, must face arguments in Washington that the US “should not defend countries that do not defend themselves.”³² While the only long-term solution is a return to American military supremacy through restored budgets, modernization, force structure, and readiness, US partners have an important role to play to help stabilize the situation before the kind of aggression seen from Russia makes an appearance in the Pacific.

The first step is for the ROC to reverse its defense budget decline and invest in expanded military capabilities. As Mazza has chronicled, in 2012, the ROC spent 20 percent less on defense than it did, in real terms, in 1996.³³ This dramatic decline in defense spending—contrasted with the rapid development of PRC military capabilities over the past decade—sends the exact wrong message to



The ROC has developed the HF-2E and HF-3 as one of the measures to deter enemy invasion. This picture shows the indigenous HF-3 anti-ship missiles. (Source: Shu Hsiao-huang, OSD staff)

potential aggressors—and potential allies.

One promising area for increased ROC defense investment, according to a recent RAND report, could be to “employ inexpensive anti-access technologies similar to those used by the PLA to significantly raise the cost of a conflict for China and, should deterrence fail, to drastically limit China’s ability to inflict damage off the Asian Mainland.”³⁴ Notably, this strategy would turn anti-access and area-denial capabilities against the PRC. Depending on how it was executed, this kind of approach not only could complicate invasion plans and raise the barriers to conflict, but it could also promise to hold targets on the Mainland at risk and thereby deter aggressive actions short of all-out invasion.³⁵

Fortunately, the ROC has realized the potential of these kinds of technologies and has developed the Hsiung Feng IIE (HF-2E) and Hsiung Feng III (HF-3) cruise missiles for just this purpose. The ROC should continue to develop large amounts of both of these weapons as a relatively low-cost way to threaten enemy forces and in the case of the HF-2E, hold targets on the Mainland at risk.³⁶ The ROC, however, must learn from the experience of NATO, which almost exhausted its supply of precision-guided munitions in less than a month in Libya in 2011.³⁷ While investing in the HF-2E and HF-3

missiles is a good start, the ROC must maintain a large and survivable supply of these and similar weapons.

In the best case, if the ROC develops a capable anti-access/area-denial network, and the US reverses its current spending trends, the situation in the Asia-Pacific will become all the more stable. If US defense reinvestment does not come soon, new ROC defense capabilities may play an indispensable role in upholding the regional balance.

Another critical area for increased defense investment is modernizing and expanding ROC capabilities in the undersea domain, and its submarine fleet in particular. Given the PRC missile threat to land and surface-based assets, a sizeable submarine fleet would likely play a major role in contesting any attempted amphibious landing.³⁸

Nearly a decade and a half after President George W. Bush offered to sell eight diesel submarines to the ROC with little subsequent progress, it is time to move on from this potential deal. While American production of diesel submarines for the ROC would be a welcome development, at this point, it is unlikely to materialize. Instead, the ROC and the US should continue their announced cooperation on a domestic ROC submarine program.³⁹ Over the long-term, an indigenous ROC submarine production capability would serve as a vital deterrent and an indispensable component of the ROC's defense strategy.⁴⁰ Yet this ambitious goal would still leave unaddressed ROC submarine modernization in the near-term. As a short-term fix, the ROC should pursue acquiring diesel submarines from a third party such as Germany, Japan, or Australia, requesting US assistance throughout the negotiation process as

necessary.⁴¹

Complementing this fleet could be an array of undersea sensors. Given its prime location, the ROC could provide a wealth of sustained maritime surveillance that would be indispensable in monitoring the movements of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) inside the Straits and beyond.⁴² As Mazza argues, expanded ROC surveillance capabilities would help complicate PLA plans relying on strategic, operational, or tactical surprise.⁴³

Over the long-term, the ROC should invest in next-generation systems that could dramatically impact control of its airspace, including emerging technologies such as directed energy weapons.⁴⁴ While the US military continues its development of these "game changing" technologies, the same attributes that makes these systems so alluring to US defense planners should make them doubly relevant to the ROC. Most importantly, these weapons would help address the most glaring problem facing an island defense: limited magazines against overwhelming numerical superiority. Emerging technologies like directed energy weapons could play a vital role in eliminating missile threats and maintaining control of ROC airspace. These weapons will not arrive overnight, but the sooner they come online, the sooner that ROC defense planners can begin to address the large PLA missile inventory.

Critically, investing in key military capabilities is important for both war and peacetime. While capabilities such as advanced cruise missiles, submarines, and directed energy weapons might be vital for wartime operations in the coming years, their most important contribution would likely be at the strategic level. A capable and survivable ROC anti-access/area-denial network would cause key PRC leaders to think twice before attempted coercion. As Daniel Blumenthal has argued, capabilities that can inflict both material and psychological costs upon the mainland would strengthen deterrence while enhancing the ROC's warfighting position.⁴⁵



While a robust ROC anti-access/area-denial network, supported by increased defense spending, is not enough to maintain peace and security by itself in the Asia-Pacific, it does present a promising route forward for the US and its friends in the face of ongoing American military decline. In the best case, if the ROC develops a capable anti-access/area-denial network and the US reverses its current spending trends, the situation in the Asia-Pacific will become all the more stable. If US defense reinvestment does not come soon, new ROC defense capabilities may play an indispensable role in upholding the regional balance.

America's Defense Investments May Have Enduring Consequences for the Asia-Pacific

In order for deterrence to be successful, it must first be credible. Unfortunately, the current decline in US defense capabilities is undermining its conventional deterrence in the Pacific and indeed, around the entire globe. If this trend continues, we

can expect to see increased aggression in Asia and elsewhere as potentially hostile actors find fewer restraints on their actions.

While rapidly deteriorating global events may be causing a major re-evaluation of US defense budgets, it behooves America's regional partners to bulk up their defenses as necessary in order to maintain conventional deterrence even as the American military shrinks in size and capability.

For the ROC, increased defense spending, along with increased and expanded investment in asymmetrical weapons would be a good start to bolster allied defense capabilities in the Asia Pacific. As the world has seen in Ukraine, military vacuums do not last for long. The United States and its partners around the world must seek to act before competitors take the initiative.

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Xi Jinping's Foreign Policy: When a "New Type of Great Power Relations" Meets the "New Asian Security Concept" and the "One Belt One Road" Initiative

Yang Ya-chi

Upon taking the helm as Mainland China's fifth-generation leader, Xi Jinping has focused considerable attention on managing relations with the United States in line with the proposal of building a "New Type of Great Power Relations." Mainland China's focus has recently expanded to central, west and south Asian regions, and Xi has actively advocated the "New Asian Security Concept" and the so-called "One Belt One Road" economic integration initiative at various regional meetings and state visits. These two major foreign policies appeal to different audiences, with the former targeting the US located to the east and the latter aimed at countries located to the west. On the surface, these foreign policies depict a diplomatic landscape in which Xi pays balanced attention to both East and West. Taking a deeper look, however, one may find contrasting, if not contradictory, messages between these policies. This article first explores the definitions, backgrounds and implications of the two policies, and it then examines the two policies in order to analyze possible Chinese intentions and how the messages behind them contrast each other.

The Chinese-defined "New Type of Great Power Relations" and Its Implications

In February, 2012, the then Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping lauded the US-China relations as one of the most important bilateral relations in the world, expressing that the "Pacific is big enough

for both China and the US" and that the two should build a "New Type of Great Power Relations."¹ The importance of such relations was reiterated by the then President Hu Jintao during the fourth round of US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) in May of the same year.² In June of the next year (2013), Xi met US President Barack Obama for the first time as Mainland China's new leader at Sunnylands in California. Xi used the opportunity to elaborate the five foundation stones on which Mainland China and the US could build a "New Type of Great Power Relations."³ Since then, this term has been mentioned in almost every high-level official interaction between the two countries and has become an integral part of the Xi leadership's



President Obama and Chinese Leader Xi take a stroll during the Sunnylands Summit, where Xi reiterates the proposal of a New Type of Great Power Relations. (Source: The White House)

US policy.

Exactly what does it mean to build a “New Type of Great Power Relations”? Former Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai and Pang Hanzhao wrote an article explaining the essence of this type of relationship,⁴ and Foreign Minister Wang Yi also explained the concept to an American audience in a speech at the Brookings Institution.⁵ Xi’s definition at the Sunnylands meeting summarized the concept as the three aspects of “non-conflict and non-confrontation, mutual respect, and win-win cooperation.” These aspects reveal Chinese officials’ realization that to avoid repeating history in which great powers ended up in a zero-sum competition, and to maintain an external environment favorable to the nation’s development, Mainland China must find a non-confrontational way to interact with the US. Several experts have also established an interpretation of the proposal, and there are three main arguments: (1) A confrontational US-China relationship is not helpful to Mainland China’s national interests and the realization of Xi’s “China Dream.”⁶ (2) The policy is Mainland China’s response to US “Rebalancing toward Asia” policy to rebuild ties with the US.⁷ (3) Mainland China wants to be treated as a great power in a position equal to that of the US, instead of as a junior partner of the US.⁸ These aspects precisely correspond to the aspects “non-conflict and non-confrontation, mutual respect, and win-win cooperation.” Nevertheless, another layer of interpretation can be added through analysis of the statement that “the Pacific is big enough for both China and the US.”

The statement of “Pacific is big enough” can be considered one of the core elements in the proposal to build a “New Type of Great Power Relations,” as it requires a new approach through which the two great powers can coexist in the Pacific region. On the surface, the statement seems to exhibit the thinking that it is possible for the US and Mainland China to coexist in harmony in the Pacific. Nevertheless, on the one side, it shows that Mainland China, supported by its formidable military, economic and diplomatic strength, is confident that it can and

should stand in the same position as the US as a leader in regional and even international affairs. On the other hand, it suggests that Mainland China is aware that its national power as a whole still lags that of the US. Although its military, economic and diplomatic advantages have helped it to gradually carve out a considerable sphere of influence in the Asia-Pacific, Mainland China knows fairly well that for the time being, in the face of the dominant US-led alliance in the region, it would be wise to maintain a non-confrontational relationship with the US so as not to inflame the potentially volatile regional security environment. In keeping with this line of thinking, the “New Type of Great Power Relations” can be considered an ad-hoc strategy for Mainland China’s US policy.

While there is no doubt that both US and Mainland China realize the importance of maintaining their bilateral relations, their disagreement concerning something as fundamental as what such relations should be exposes the bumpy road ahead of the two countries.

US Response to the “New Type of Great Power Relations”

There has been no direct US response to Mainland China’s proposal to build a “New Type of Great Power Relations.” At Sunnylands, President Obama said that both countries should develop a “new model of cooperation,”⁹ and he repeated the statement of the “new model of relations” in an announcement prior to the sixth round of S&ED.¹⁰ It should be noted that he did not mention the term “great power,” which seems to imply an American reluctance to admit Mainland China’s status as such a power. US Secretary of State John Kerry once said that the US was still trying to define what a “New

Type of Great Power Relations” was.¹¹ Robert Wang, US senior official for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), also said that the term was proposed by Mainland China instead of the US, and the US was not sure if it entirely agreed with the Chinese interpretation.¹² One of the few US senior officials implying Mainland China as a great power was US National Security Advisor Susan Rice, who once said that “When it comes to China, we seek to operationalize a new model of major power relations.”¹³

However, a more specific response seems to have recently come from the US. During the sixth round of S&ED, Kerry, who led a delegation on Obama’s behalf, said in the joint opening ceremony that “...a new model is not defined in words. It is defined in actions.”¹⁴ In one of the press conferences for the gathering, he clarified this statement by saying that “a new model of relations” should be achieved by both the US and Mainland China through compliance with international norms, which implies that unilateral actions should not be taken to enhance particular sovereignty claims.¹⁵ Kerry seemed to refer to that what Mainland China was doing in the South China Sea was not consistent with how a great power should behave. While there is no doubt that both US and Mainland China realize the importance of maintaining their bilateral relations, their disagreement concerning something as fundamental as what such relations should be exposes the bumpy road ahead of the two countries.

A “New Asian Security Concept” Supported by “One Belt One Road” Initiative

A different situation prevails in central, west and south Asia. In his opening remarks in the Fourth Summit of the Conference on Interaction



Secretary of State John Kerry says a new model of relations should be defined by “actions” in the opening remarks at the Sixth Round of S&ED. (Source: US Department of State)

and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA), a regional security forum whose members largely consist of countries in central, west and south Asia and the Middle East, Xi proposed the “New Asian Security Concept” and identified four types of security, namely common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security.¹⁶ Under this concept, he asserted that, in view of developing regional situations in Asia and the changing times, zero-sum mentality of the Cold War Era should no longer apply, and the affairs, problems, and security of Asia need eventually to be handled by Asians themselves. Although not directly referring to the US, Xi pointed out that beefing up a military alliance targeting a third party was not conducive to regional security, and that no country should attempt to dominate regional security or infringe on the legitimate rights and interests of other countries. Xi’s proposal of a “New Asian Security Concept” was praised and supported by the participating leaders, including Russian President Vladimir Putin,¹⁷ Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Afghan President Hamid Karzai.¹⁸

The message here is clear enough. No matter how much the US argues that its “Rebalancing toward Asia” policy is not aimed at Mainland

China, at least in the eyes of Mainland China, the policy is yet another effort to contain China through strengthened military alliances with Japan and the Philippines. By criticizing “a military alliance targeting at a third party,” Xi revealed his disapproval of an US-led security order in the Asia-Pacific. Furthermore, by proposing that “the affairs, problems and security of Asia need eventually to be handled by Asians themselves,” Xi signaled his intention to build an Asian security framework without interference from the US and its alliance. This intention is highlighted by the fact that in his opening remarks, Xi suggested ways of enhancing the functions of the CICA, in which the US and its major ally, Japan, participate as observers instead of members. Shannon Tiezzi, an associate editor of *The Diplomat*, commented that the new security cooperative framework proposed by Xi would be led by Mainland China and Russia, thus lessening the importance of the US alliance in Asia and reducing US influence in the region.¹⁹

Mainland China’s efforts to develop and consolidate its influence in the central, west and south Asia are particularly apparent through the marketing of the so-called “One Belt One Road” initiative during Xi’s recent visits to central and south Asia as well as in the 2014 APEC Summit.²⁰ “One Belt One Road” refers to the “Silk Road Economic Belt” and the “21st Century Maritime Silk



Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs greets Chinese Leader Xi and prepares to hand over the chairmanship of CICA to Mainland China. (Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey)

Road.” It is an initiative aimed at integrating regional trade and economic cooperation by strengthening policy communication, improving road connectivity, promoting trade facilitation, enhancing monetary circulation, and strengthening people-to-people exchanges.²¹ The initiative is officially included in the report of *The Decision on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reforms* of the Third Plenary Session of the Communist Party, which it states “We will set up development-oriented financial institutions, accelerate the construction of the infrastructure connecting China and neighboring countries and regions, and work hard to build a Silk Road Economic Belt and a Maritime Silk Road, so as to form a new pattern of all-round opening.”²² In short, a comprehensive traffic connection with neighboring countries will be the key to the implementation of the “One Belt One Road.” It explains Mainland China’s active promotion of its cross-border high speed rail projects, including the Pan-Asian, Central Asian and Eurasian high speed railways.²³ The Pan-Asian railway will depart from Kunming in Mainland China and pass through Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, and Malaysia on its way to terminus in Singapore. The Central Asian railway will begin at Urumqi in Xinjiang and pass through Kyrgyz, Uzbekistan, Iran, and Turkey before ultimately arriving in Germany. The Eurasian railway will extend from London in England through France, Germany, Poland, and Ukraine, where it will split into two lines extending to Kazakhstan and Khabarovsk respectively. Other relevant plans concerning both logistics and traffic connections have also been formulated.²⁴

As for the purpose of the “One Belt One Road” initiative, according to Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui, the aims are, first, to solve the problem of Mainland China’s neglect of economic development in the central and western parts of the nation. Second, to deal with the lack of transportation connections between sub-regions of Asia. Third, to inherit and build on the spirit of the ancient Silk Road through the exchange of commodities, personnel, techniques and ideas.²⁵ Assistant to the



Foreign Minister Liu Jianchao further expressed that the “One Belt One Road” initiative would link the “China Dream” with the “Asian Dream” and “European Dream” by connecting the country’s development with that of other countries in Asia and other regions. In summary, it is now clear that the Xi leadership is striving to manage and strengthen the nation’s relations with the central, west and south Asia through security and economic cooperation and integration as laid out in the “New Asian Security Concept” and the “One Belt One Road” initiative. The extension of diplomatic attention from US-China relations to relations with Mainland China’s neighboring countries, particularly those in the central, west and south Asia, shows the adjustments in Mainland China’s foreign policies, and also its intention to create a Chinese-led Asia.

A comparison of the statement that the “Pacific is big enough” with the proposal that “the affairs, problems and security of Asia need eventually to be handled by Asians themselves” reveals a contrasting Chinese message to the US.

“New Type of Great Power Relations” versus the “New Asian Concept” and the “One Belt One Road” Initiative

In comparison with the Asia-Pacific region, where US-led alliance and security order still dominates, the central, west and south Asia provide a more favorable ground in which Mainland China could exert its strength. Diplomatically, with India as a notable exception, Mainland China has solved almost all border disputes with neighboring countries. Economically, a considerable number of those countries have expressed support of the “One Belt One Road” initiative. As for security matters, these countries face the same threats from the three

powers, namely the terrorism, separatism and extremism, as are faced by Mainland China. With almost no conflict hotspots and with many potential common benefits, it is only natural for Mainland China to stress its relations with the countries to the west as a means of enhancing security and economic stability, and this will also further Mainland China’s pursuit of regional leadership. By constructing an Asian order without interference from the US and its major allies and buttressing such an order with economic integration, Mainland China will be able to create a regional situation in its favor. Alexander Huang, an assistant professor at the Tamkang University in the Republic of China on Taiwan, has commented that Xi seeks to stabilize the nation’s relations with the US through the “New Type of Great Power Relations,” while also employing the “One Belt One Road” initiative to counter US “Rebalancing toward Asia” policy.²⁶ Huang termed this approach the “Xi Doctrine,” and noted that it comprised the strategic arrangement of “stabilizing the land to counter the sea [*wenlu zhihai*].” Indeed, a comparison of the statement that the “Pacific is big enough” with the proposal that “the affairs, problems and security of Asia need eventually to be handled by Asians themselves” reveals a contrasting Chinese message to the US. It is currently difficult to predict whether Mainland China will break with the seemingly harmonious coexistence conveyed by the “Pacific is big enough” statement and shift from “stabilizing the land to counter the sea” to “using the land to confront the sea [*Xielu Kanghai*].” However, as perceived by Professor John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago, by creating a new Asian order, Mainland China may try to exclude the US from Asian affairs through a Chinese version of the Monroe Doctrine.²⁷

In conclusion, the “New Type of Great Power Relations,” characterized by the statement that the “Pacific is big enough,” seems to demonstrate the attitude that big nations can coexist in peace. Nevertheless, given that the US and Mainland China have different understandings of the meaning of such relations, the prospects of their relations

remain uncertain. In addition, the “New Asian Security Concept” and the “One Belt One Road” initiative are not without challenges, since they will require coordination and consistency among all the countries involved. Be that as it may, however, the “New Type of Great Power Relations” and the “New Asian Security Concept” with the “One Belt One Road” initiative form the two major pillars of the Xi leadership’s foreign policy. It will be important to

see how they will unfold, and how Mainland China coordinates its apparently contrasting policies

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ROC Air Force Practices Emergency Highway Landing and Takeoff in HK-30 Exercise



A Mirage 2000 Fighter of the ROCAF successfully takes off from National Highway No.1.(Source: Shu Hsiao-huang, OSD staff)

The Han Kuang-30 Exercise, which is conducted on an annual basis to verify the ROC Armed Forces' (ROCAF) joint operation and homeland defense mechanism, was completed in September, 2014. This year, the Air Force practiced emergency landing by four types of aircraft: an F-16B fighter, an IDF fighter, a Mirage-2000 fighter, and an E-2K airborne early warning aircraft on the Minhsiung Section of National Highway No. 1 on September 16. Following the highway landing, a CH-47SD transport helicopter of the Army carried emergency aviation equipment and ammunition to perform supply mission under the cover of two AH-1W attack helicopters. An OH-58D reconnaissance helicopter was also dispatched for field reconnaissance. After refueled and rearmed, the aircraft took off from the highway, thus completing the highway landing and takeoff.

Given the lack of proper and accurate navigational aids and facilities and shorter runway length, conditions for landing and taking off on a highway are far less favorable and much more dangerous than those on a regular runway. Therefore,

pilots performing this mission must practice on a simulator in advance to master the complicated and difficult task.

Mainland China's missiles aiming at Taiwan remain a grave threat particularly to the ROCAF's bases on the western coast. Thus, ensuring air defense becomes the key to the defense of Taiwan and its offshore islands. In addition to having two underground air force bases (the Chiashan AFB and Chihhang AFB), the ROCAF practices dispersing fighter jets from vulnerable western coast bases to airfields on the eastern coast. Moreover, each of the airbases in Taiwan has engineering units and equipment for rapid runway repair. The ROCAF also trains its pilots to maintain the capabilities for emergency highway landing and takeoff. The exercise for emergency highway landing and takeoff on the Minhsiung Section was the fifth of its kind and marked the completion of such an exercise on all five sections of highways and paved roads. The exercise of this sort is indeed critical to the maintenance of the ROCAF's combat capabilities.

PLAN Starts the Assembly of Its First Indigenous Aircraft Carrier

After commissioning its first aircraft carrier, the *Liaoning*, in 2012, Mainland China has drawn a great deal of attention not only to the combat readiness of the carrier but also to the construction of its indigenous aircraft carriers. It is reported that the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is now building the first two of its indigenous carriers respectively in Dalian Shipbuilding Industry Corporation and Jiangnan Shipyard. The one in Dalian, which is preparing for hull assembly, is expected to be completed in four to six years. Although the design for the carrier to be built in Jiangnan Shipyard has not been finished yet, the PLAN is gearing up for its construction as well. According to Wang Min, the party secretary in the Liaoning Province, the PLAN will have at least four carriers.

Experts believe that the first indigenous carrier will resemble the *Liaoning* in appearance, but will have a larger displacement ranging from 70 to 90 thousand tons than the 67.5 thousand tons of the

Liaoning. The carrier will still be conventionally powered, and limited by schedule and techniques, it will still be equipped with a ski-jump ramp instead of a catapult on its flight deck. This, as a result, will constrain the maximum take-off weight of the fighters onboard, thus limiting their combat radius and the possibility to carry heavy weaponry for air-to-surface missions. The air surveillance and warning capabilities will also be affected, as the carrier will not be able to carry fixed-wing airborne warning and control systems (AWACS). Despite the constraints, the indigenous carrier will have more types of aircraft for a diversity of missions than the *Liaoning* does, which currently has 24 J-15 fighters and is expected to be outfitted with four Z-18 helicopters, six anti-submarine warfare helicopters and two search and rescue helicopters.

Given that the first two to three carriers of the PLAN's carrier fleet all use conventional power systems, refueling will pose a major problem as the resupply routes can be easily interrupted for carriers on a far-sea operational mission. Therefore, it could be reasonably predicted that initially, the PLAN's carrier battle groups would operate in the South China Sea as the most favorable operational area closer to reliable resupply and air cover support from the Mainland. Furthermore, the large ports, long airstrips and ISR facilities, either completed or under construction on islets and reefs controlled by Mainland China in the South China Sea, will indirectly provide protection and support to PLAN carrier battle groups steaming in these waters.



PLAN's first indigenous aircraft carrier is expected to resemble the appearance of the *Kuznetsov*-class *Liaoning*. This picture shows the Russian Aircraft Carrier *Adm. Kuznetsov* in 1996.(Source: US DoD.)

Implications of Mainland China's Land Reclamation in the South China Sea

This year has seen Mainland China relentlessly expanding reefs under its control in the Spratly Islands and fortifying the airstrip and port on the Woody Island in the Paracel Islands. It is expected that these actions will enhance Mainland China's air force and naval power projection and sovereignty control in the South China Sea. It is also likely that after completing its island building project, Mainland China will establish and declare an air defense identification zone (ADIZ) in the South China Sea.

Mainland China is currently reclaiming lands on six reefs in the Spratly Islands: the Fiery Cross Reef, the Johnson South Reef, Cuarteron Reef, the Hughes Reef, the Gaven Reef and the Eldad Reef. In particular, the Fiery Cross Reef now covers an area of 0.96 square kilometers after the reclamation, thus replacing the Taiping Island (0.49 square kilometers) and becoming the biggest island in the Spratly Islands. As the reclamation continues, its area may be twice of its current size. The Johnson South Reef and the Cuarteron Reef will also grow to hundred times of their original sizes.

According to media, the expanded Fiery Cross Reef is expected to be built with infrastructures like an airstrip and a port. Weapons and platforms, such as the HQ-9 long-range air-defense missile, the YJ-62 anti-ship missile with a range of 260 kilometers, fighters, fast landing craft and armed craft, may also be deployed on the reef, allowing Mainland China to exert coercion against Vietnamese and Filipino troops stationed on nearby islands and to respond to contingency much faster. Some experts even reveal that the Fiery Cross Reef is in fact Mainland China's military command center in the Spratly Islands. After the completion of reclamation and airstrips,



The Taiping Island controlled by the ROC is no longer the biggest island in the Spratly Islands due to Mainland China's relentless island expansion. (Source: Coast Guard Administration, ROC)

these fortified reefs will provide favorable conditions for Mainland China to set up the "South China Sea ADIZ."

Among the six reefs, the Fiery Reef (9°35'N 112°58'E) and the Cuarteron Reef (8°53'N 112°51'E) are closest to the international waterway in the South China Sea. If an air force and naval base is built on the two reefs to accommodate fighters, craft and missile troops, it will consolidate Mainland China's ability to control sea and air lines of communication in the South China Sea. In addition, the 2,000-meter long airstrip on the Woody Island will be able to accommodate heavy fighters like the Su-30, and the 5,000-ton port will also improve Mainland China's air force and naval power projection.

In general, Mainland China's reclamation and construction on the reefs will change the security situation and strategic balance in the South China Sea. With a considerable amount of US attention being drawn to the Ukraine Crisis and the new threat from the Islamic State (IS), Mainland China may see it as a window of opportunity to tighten its grip on the South China Sea.

2014 SLOC Academic Conference Highlights the Role of Military in Regional HA/DR Missions as well as the ROC's HA/DR Efforts and Contribution

The 2014 International Sea Lines of Communication Academic Conference was held on October 15 and 16 in Taipei, the Republic of China (ROC). The conference was organized by the ROC Navy Headquarters and co-organized by the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The theme this year was “A Paradigm Shift in Maritime Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific: HA/DR.” The focus of such a paradigm shift was on the role and mission of the military, particularly the navy, in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR). Dr. York W. Chen, one of the paper presenters and an assistant professor of Graduate Institute of International Affairs and Strategic Studies, Tamkang University, said that different from the military's traditional role and mission of protecting the country from external attack or invasion, FHA/FDR (foreign HA/DR) provided assistance to foreign people in disaster-affected nations. In such a case, the threat faced by the military is not from humans but from natural or manmade disasters themselves, which are commonly known as non-traditional security threats. Non-traditional security threats require the collective efforts from militaries, especially the navies, of countries involved to cope with, and such cooperation among navies is known as a part of the naval diplomacy.

Dr. Chang Ching, a research fellow of the Society for Strategic Studies of the ROC, recognized the positive contributions the navies could make to cope with non-traditional security threats. Dr. Alessio Patalano from the Department of War Studies,

King's College London, echoed Dr. Chang's point of view by saying that Japan's HA/DR experience in the Philippines suggested that the current maritime build-up in the Asia Pacific could actually be helpful to foster diplomatic interactions to address disasters. Rear Admiral Yuan Chih-chung and Captain Yu Ruei-lin from the ROC Navy also acknowledged that the military, as a well-organized unit, would be the best option for a short-term response to HA/DR situations. They noted that a few joint military exercises had been carried out in the Asia Pacific, including the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC), the Cobra Gold Military Exercise, the Komodo Exercise, the Exercise Malabar and the Cope North Exercise.

Nevertheless, Yuan and Yu noted the absence of the ROC from the aforementioned regional joint exercises. They argued that given its geographic location prone to natural disasters, the ROC had learned numerous lessons to response to these disasters and developed reliable HA/DR capabilities regarding search and rescue, medical service as well as material distribution and transportation. The ROC Armed Forces have proven such capabilities through their participation in not only domestic disaster relief missions but also overseas HA/DR. Unfortunately, the ROC has been excluded from most of the regional joint exercises. Yuan and Yu argued that the exclusion not only reduced the overall HA/DR capabilities in the Asia Pacific but also went against the universal values of humanitarian relief and peaceful development. Their concern was



Admiral Chen Yeong-Kang, Chief of the ROC Navy, delivers an opening remarks in the 2014 International Sea Lines of Communication Academic Conference. (Source: ROC Naval Academy)

echoed by Rear Admiral (ret.) Tan Chih-lung, who particularly focused on the ROC's inability to take part in cooperation against non-traditional security threats in the South China Sea, a result of Mainland China's interference. He praised that even so, guided by the spirit of President Ma Ying-jeou's *East China Sea Peace Initiative*, the ROC continued to encourage regional countries to shelf their territorial disputes in the South China Sea and seek mutual development and cooperation, which was a stark contrast to Mainland China's hard approach in the South China Sea. With regard to the ROC's predicament of not involved in regional HA/DR efforts, Dr. Chen believed that the US could help the ROC by encouraging members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to participate in ROC-hosted HA/DR events and inviting the ROC's military and non-military sectors to join US FHA/FDR related exercises.

In terms of the South China Sea, Mr. Nazery Khalid, a senior fellow at the Center for Maritime Economics and Industries, stressed that if not addressed, the numerous sources of non-traditional security threats in the South China Sea such as natural and manmade disasters, piracy and maritime pollution, could impede shipping traffic and economic activities, pose risk to the environment

and threaten human safety and security. Fairly aware of the territorial disputes in the South China Sea as a hurdle to closer cooperation in the field of non-traditional security threats, Khalid believed that such cooperation was possible. He argued that as a first step, countries in the region should overcome several challenges to cooperation, including overcoming divisive issues such as territorial and sovereignty claims, settling difference in institutional framework, agreeing on the right modalities for cooperation, sharing data and information, establishing common platform and interoperability for cooperation, dealing with bureaucracy, and ensuring strict enforcement.

The agenda and full papers of the 2014 International Sea Lines of Communication Academic Conference are available on the official website at http://2014sloc.cna.edu.tw/conference_01.html and http://2014sloc.cna.edu.tw/conference_03.php respectively.



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