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Making Taiping Island an Island of Peace and Cooperation

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President Ma Ying-jeou Visits Taiping Island in the Spratly Islands

On January 28, President Ma Ying-jeou led government officials and scholars on a visit to Taiping Island (Itu Aba) in the Spratly Islands. The visit was made for the four purposes of visiting personnel stationed on the island, announcing the South China Sea Peace Initiative Roadmap, explaining the peaceful uses of Taiping Island, and clarifying the legal status of Taiping Island.

Appreciation for the Service of Coast Guard Personnel

During his remarks on Taiping Island, President Ma first expressed his appreciation of the hard work performed by Coast Guard personnel stationed on the island, and wished them a happy Lunar New Year. His visit to Coast Guard personnel on



President Ma visits Taiping Island and reveals the South China Sea Peace Initiative Roadmap, vowing to set an example of a peaceful use of the island. (Source: Military News Agency)

the most distant territory of the Republic of China (ROC) showed the great importance the government attaches to the personnel on this island and their mission.

Announcing the South China Sea Peace Initiative Roadmap

President Ma then reiterated that whether from the perspective of history, geography, or international law, the four island groups in the area—the Spratlys, Paracels, Macclesfield Bank, and Pratas—as well as their surrounding waters, are an integral part of ROC territory, and the ROC enjoys full right to these islands and their surrounding waters in accordance with international law. However, in light of the decades of dispute regarding sovereignty over these islands and maritime rights, President Ma also stressed the importance of a peaceful settlement. Last year, President Ma proposed the South China Sea Peace Initiative as a means of achieving a peaceful settlement. During this trip, President Ma proposed the South China Sea Peace Initiative Roadmap, which is based on a framework of three yes's and three no's.

1. “Yes” to cooperation, “no” to confrontation;
2. “Yes” to sharing, “no” to monopolizing; and
3. “Yes” to pragmatism, “no” to intransigence.

Furthermore, the content of the roadmap includes one viable path, two essential elaborations,



The best well on Taiping Island provides water with quality close to that of bottled water. (Source: Military News Agency)



During his remarks, President Ma expresses his appreciation of the hard work performed by the personnel stationed on the most distant territory of the ROC. (Source: Military News Agency)

and three phases of progress. The viable path consists of shelving disputes, integrated planning, and zonal development. The elaborations uphold that all parties involved in the region should be included in the consultation mechanisms under this initiative, and any mechanisms for reaching a solution should not undermine the position of any party or hamper the attainment of a final agreement concerning the South China Sea. The three phases include short-term, mid-term, and long-term planning stages. For the short term, all parties shall collectively shelve disputes. During the mid-term phase, all parties shall strive for integrated planning. In the long-term, all parties shall pursue the establishment of a mechanism for zonal development.

Advocating the Peaceful Use of Taiping Island

President Ma explained that to make Taiping Island the starting point for the implementation of the initiative, the ROC has advocated the peaceful use of the island, and is working to transform it into a showcase for peaceful use and rescue operations

and an ecologically-friendly and low-carbon island. Concrete actions include the renovation of the island's wharf and airstrip, the construction of a lighthouse, water quality and agricultural environment surveys, winter monsoon monitoring, and a planned project to expand solar power systems on the island and raise the percentage of solar power usage to 40%. With these actions, the ROC aims to demonstrate its commitment to fulfilling its international obligations and the expectation that all parties can establish coordination and cooperation mechanisms concerning nontraditional security issues.

Proving the Legal Status of Taiping Island

In 2013, the Philippines sought arbitration of its South China Sea sovereignty disputes with Mainland China by the Permanent Court of Arbitration. As a party involved in the region, the ROC has not been invited to participate, nor have its opinions concerning the matter been sought out. Moreover, the Philippines also questions the status of Taiping Island, arguing that it is not an island but a rock. However, there is sufficient economic, environmental, and cultural evidence to prove the opposite.

Taiping Island covers an area of 0.51 square kilometers and is the largest island in the region, as well as the only natural island with fresh water. Tested by experts, the groundwater from the best well on the island has been found to provide water with quality close to that of bottled water. Of the four wells on the island, three can provide a total of 65 tons of freshwater daily to support human life.

The soil has also been examined by experts. Packed with organic material, the fertile soil is amenable to the growth of both indigenous plants and agricultural crops. It has been confirmed that Taiping Island has as many as 106 indigenous plant species, and the personnel on the island have long utilized the environment to cultivate over a dozen of tropical vegetables and fruits to supplement their food supply. Personnel on the island also raise

poultry and livestock to diversify their diet.

In terms of facilities, there is a hospital staffed by two physicians, a dentist, and three nurses; a post office; and a temple. There are also other services to support the daily activities of the personnel on the island, including communications, administrative, and transportation services. These facts fully demonstrate that Taiping Island is able to sustain human habitation and an economic life. Taiping Island thus meets the criteria for an island as specified in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

There have been some concerns about the consequences of President Ma's visit to Taiping Island. However, as he stated clearly, President Ma's visit sought not to provoke conflict, but rather to bring the legitimate status of Taiping Island and the ROC's sovereignty and maritime rights to the attention of the international community, and seek opportunities for coordination and cooperation. Indeed, in contrast to the more controversial actions taken by other claimants, the ROC has shown admirable self-restraint. It continues to station Coast Guard personnel, instead of military personnel, on Taiping Island, and its renovation and construction of structures on the island aim only to solve problems of transportation and supply. With regard to this situation, President Ma's visit to Taiping Island should be recognized positively and not be considered counterproductive.



Fertile soil on Taiping Island allows stationed personnel to grow a variety of crops to supplement their food supply. (Source: Military News Agency)

Indo-Pacific: Evolving Understandings and Dynamics

Premesha Saha

Indo-Pacific is a relatively new and evolving subject, and its usage in foreign policy and strategic articulations has gained currency in the recent past. The rise of India and China* and the growing importance of the Indian Ocean and the Asia-Pacific have made the Indo-Pacific geo-strategically and economically crucial. For much of the 20th century, the concept of the Indo-Pacific, which was coined by German geo-politician Karl Haushofer in the 1920s, had attracted little attention. It was during the late 2000s that the Indo-Pacific began to appear majorly in scholarly debates as the term that describes most aptly the recent geopolitical realities. However, there is still speculation as to what constitutes the Indo-Pacific in terms of its geographical contours. An Indian analyst argued that the seas of the West Pacific and the Indian Ocean constitute a single integrated geopolitical theatre, which is the Indo-Pacific.¹

At the same time, some questions are raised as to how the Indo-Pacific is different from the already established term “Asia Pacific.” Why some countries, especially India, Japan, the United States, Indonesia, and Australia, are embracing the Indo-Pacific idea, whereas China is not so keen on adopting this idea?²

In the above context, this paper explores the meaning of the term “Indo-Pacific” and what has led to the resurgence of the term. It also analyzes how major powers like Australia, India, the US, Japan and Indonesia view the Indo-Pacific region.

The Meaning of the Indo-Pacific

“The Indo-Pacific is the new spatial definition and framework being used to define maritime convergence and competition of the three powers,

which are India, China and the United States.”³ Even though there is economic interdependence and maritime trade and commerce among these three powers, there is also contestation for dominance and influence in this region. The Indo-Pacific has also emerged as a highly volatile region for nuclear proliferation in several states, particularly the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.⁴

The meaning and implication of the Indo-Pacific can be examined from various prisms. For instance, in Constructivist terms, the “Indo-Pacific presents the idea and imagery of the two oceanic regions of the Indian and Pacific Oceans that comprise of the institutional framework and inter-state operations that mesh the two oceans together.”⁵ In terms of Regionalism, “the regions of the Indian and Pacific Oceans portray the dynamic evolution of interests and operations of the powers are shaped up.”⁶ In geo-political essence, the origin of the concept was elucidated by Karl Haushofer, who coined the term “Indopazifischen Raum.”⁷ Haushofer elucidated that, “dense Indo-Pacific concentration of humanity and cultural empire of India and China, which are... geographically sheltered behind the protective veil of the offshore island arcs.”⁸

In his classic book on sea power, Alfred T. Mahan emphasized the primacy of sea power in the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. He viewed “the two oceans hedging the continental world island and decisive of the impact that it created in terms of security and strategy.”⁹ Nicholas Spykman termed the Indo-Pacific as the “circumferential maritime highway which links the whole area together in terms of sea power.”¹⁰ In the 1980s and 1990s, the term “Asia-Pacific” was used to analyse the situation in the Pacific Rim; by 2010, the term “Indo-

* For clarity, this article uses “China” when referring to Mainland China and “Taiwan” when referring to the Republic of China.



Japanese Prime Minister Abe includes India as one of the four players in his “security diamond.” (Source: Prime Minister of Japan & His Cabinet)

Pacific” was created to describe the Indian and the US perspectives of the maritime and strategic convergence of the Indian and Pacific Oceans.¹¹

The Rise of the Indo-Pacific

There is nothing new in the term “Indo-Pacific,” if one takes a look at the history of Asia. Till the advent of colonialism, and before the Atlantic Ocean gained prominence after the Industrial Revolution, the Indian Ocean was the prime conduit of global activities. Its influence stretched as far as China, especially the region comprising the eastern Indian Ocean and the West Pacific Ocean—from India to Northeast Asia—was the hub for much of the global activities and interactions, with implications reaching far and wide beyond this region. Indianised kingdoms like Champa in South Vietnam and Khmers in Cambodia, Sri Vijaya and Sailendras in Indonesia, and numerous kingdoms in Thailand and Myanmar, are proofs of the impact of the Indian influence and also the exchanges that took place in the Indo-Pacific region during that time.¹²

The resurgence of the Indo-Pacific in the 21st century can be attributed to the advent of globaliz-

ation and the advancements made in transportation and communication. Rapidly growing interdependence is changing the way nations view and interact with each other. The economic and military rise of Asia, has led to the revival of

the Indo-Pacific. The growing interdependence among nations in terms of trade has also led to the breaking down of the barriers that were created by the European colonial powers. Therefore, the Indo-Pacific is fast emerging as one large geographic entity comprising the Indian Ocean and the West Pacific. The fact that the boundaries or sub-regions created by the colonizers for their convenience is also viewed in the way that the countries are forging both bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation agreements like the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). In this scenario, it is implausible to imagine the dawn of an Asian Century without the Indian Ocean. Its huge natural resources (energy in particular) are crucial for the economic development of East Asia and the sea lines of communication (SLOCs) that traverse through this ocean and also the growing market along its rim.¹³

Two other developments also account for the rise of the Indo-Pacific. First is the rise of India as a great power and its growing engagements with countries in East Asia, besides its dominant intent in the Indian Ocean. As an emerging great power, India aspires to play a bigger role in the Indo-Pacific beyond its immediate neighbourhood. With its growing military capability, a fast evolving blue-water navy, and an economy that is already the fourth largest in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms with huge untapped potential, India will be a major player in the Indo-Pacific dynamics.¹⁴ Nearly 50% of India’s trade is with East Asia, and has witnessed high growth compared to any other region. Significantly, some of the top investments in India are from East Asia, particularly Japan. India has signed the largest number of comprehensive economic partnership agreements with East Asian countries, and will be a part of the region’s mega trading bloc once the RCEP becomes functional. Likewise, India has also entered into a large number of defense and strategic agreements with countries ranging from the Indian Ocean rim to East Asia.¹⁵

The rise of the Indian Ocean is another factor. The growing dependence of countries on imported

energy and natural resources, and their increasing links with the rim countries, are adding to the significance of the Indian Ocean. Comprising some 2.6 billion people, this region is home to almost 40% of the world's population, and accounts for 10% of global GDP (about USD 6.5 trillion). Further, 40% of global trade passes through the Indian Ocean, including 70% of the total traffic of petroleum products.¹⁶ These demographic and economic indicators have added to the strategic significance of the Indian Ocean.

Australia's Perceptions of the Indo-Pacific

Australia has long embraced the term and recognised its importance. The idea emerged in the 1950s, and the term "Indo-Pacific" has been featured regularly in Australian academic discourse and government discussions since 2005. While some government documents published in late 2012 and early 2013 referred to the Indo-Pacific, its full adoption as defining Australia's region came about only in May 2013 with the release of the Defense White Paper, in which it says "the Indo-Pacific was officially listed as one of the four strategic interests of Australian defence policy."¹⁷ While there are competing definitions of the geographic extent of the Indo-Pacific based on different visions of the Indian Ocean, the Australian concept of the region is

centered on "the maritime Indian and Pacific Oceans and their convergence in Southeast Asia."¹⁸ The Defense White Paper defines the Indo-Pacific as the "strategic arc ... connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans through Southeast Asia."¹⁹ The rationale for using the term "Indo-Pacific" is to take into account the current strategic realities like the rise of India, China, and Indonesia in Australia's neighbourhood, and the US pivot to Asia in which Australia will play an important role as was reflected with President Obama's announcement of the stationing of 2,500 US Marines at a military base in Darwin. On the domestic front, enormous quantity of exports from western Australia has made the Indian Ocean and its SLOCs critical for its own economic development.²⁰

Indian Perceptions of the Indo-Pacific

India also comes in the list of the few countries that welcome the idea of the Indo-Pacific and includes it in its official discourse. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh first used it while addressing the Plenary Session of the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in New Delhi in November 2012, remarking that "a stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region is crucial for our own progress and prosperity."²¹ He used the term on two other occasions, once while addressing the Japan-India Association in Tokyo in May 2013 and the other at an event marking the fourth anniversary of the UPA-II government.²² India's embrace of the Indo-Pacific construct denotes two things: (a) desiring to play a more active role in its extended neighbourhood by reforming its "Look East" policy and making it more proactive; and (b) recognising the changing realities of the region which demand India's attention. Not surprisingly, there are many views on the Indo-Pacific in India.

India has been deepening bilateral defense and maritime security cooperation with the US, Australia, Japan and Vietnam. At the same time, free trade agreements with Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea and Japan and multilateral agreements with the Association of Southeast Asian



India is striving to increase its regional influence by building closer ties with countries like the US. (Source: US White House)



Nations (ASEAN) under the RCEP initiative indicate the economic rationale behind India's embrace of the Indo-Pacific construct.²³ In a speech in Tokyo in May 2013, Prime Minister Singh evoked Prime Minister Abe's 2007 articulation of "the confluence of the two seas," defining it as the "framework for our bilateral relationship" and referring to Japan as "a natural and indispensable partner in our quest for stability and peace in the vast region in Asia that is washed by the Pacific and Indian Oceans."²⁴ At the same time, India has been active in its engagement of ASEAN through bilateral and multilateral channels, such as the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting Plus (ADMM+). By drawing up close bilateral and defence ties with the US and its regional allies—Japan and Australia—the Indian government in recent time has transformed its "Look East" policy to an "Act East" policy. The Joint Strategic Vision to ensure maritime security and freedom of navigation especially in the South China Sea issued during President Obama's visit to India in January 2015 reflects the Indo-Pacific outlook of the Modi government.²⁵ Furthermore, Modi's attempt to revive the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or the Asian Arc of Democracy, is another indication of the growing recognition of India's security interest in the Indo-Pacific.

China's build-up of ports and refuelling stations all around India, including Pakistan (Gwadar), Sri Lanka (Hambantota), Bangladesh (Chittagong) and Myanmar (Sittwe and Kyaukpyu) has created a deep anxiety within Indian strategic circles. The suspicion of Chinese encroachment is more prominent in the Indian naval establishment.²⁶

Moreover, as India grows economically and increases its reliance on the SLOCs for trade and resources, maintaining a firm hold in the Indian Ocean has become a core priority. Already, Chinese presence in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea is creating a Hormuz dilemma in the Indian strategic imagination, similar to the Malacca dilemma of the Chinese vis-à-vis Indian manoeuvres in the Strait of Malacca. The increases in Chinese defense spending and rapid naval modernisation since the 2000s has

led policy-makers around the world to speculate Chinese intentions in the region. Indian strategists and policy-makers follow China's stance in the East and South China Sea disputes carefully and share regional concerns about China's assertive posture. Since the 2000s, India has been heavily engaged in modernising its own armed forces. Especially since the terrorist attack in Mumbai in 2008, strengthening the navy and the coast guard has been the focus of the strategic establishment.²⁷

India has been proactively engaging small island states to ensure peace and stability within them and offering help to them, as it did in 2009 when it offered to monitor elections in the Maldives. Additionally, India has also started its own outreach towards Pacific island states with Modi's visit to Fiji in November 2014. The Indian government aims to promote maritime multilateralism in the Indian Ocean, moving away from isolationist tendencies of the Cold War, like in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).²⁸

Japan and the Indo-Pacific

The Indo-Pacific construct gained immense momentum after Prime Minister Abe's historic speech at the Indian Parliament in 2007, where he contended that "the Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now bringing about a 'dynamic coupling as seas' of freedom and of prosperity. A 'broader Asia' that breaks away geographical boundaries is now beginning to take on a distinct form."²⁹

In December 2012, Abe put forth another construct that he called "Asia's Democratic Security Diamond."³⁰ The central idea of this is that peace, stability, and freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean are inseparable from the peace, stability, and freedom of navigation in the Pacific Ocean.³¹ Abe's "security diamond" includes five key players in the Indo-Pacific: Australia, India, Japan and the US state of Hawaii. Each is seen to play a significant role in securing the maritime interests especially amid China's increasing assertiveness

in the South China and the East China Seas. As far as China is concerned, Abe admitted that a good bilateral relationship with China is important, but he concluded that “it is more important for Japanese diplomacy to be rooted in democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights.”³²

The United States and the Indo-Pacific

The US Navy’s maritime strategy unveiled in October 2007 seeks a “sustained, forward presence in the Indian Ocean and adjacent West Pacific, and less in the Atlantic.” In a speech at Honolulu in October 2010, then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton mentioned Indo-Pacific to describe an emerged and integrated theatre, and further mentioned that “the US was expanding our work with the Indian Navy in the Pacific because we understand how important the Indo-Pacific basin is to global trade and commerce.”³³

The US has been intricately linked with the Asia-Pacific region. President Obama projects a larger role for the US in this region over the coming decades, not as a distant power, but as one that works closely with Asia-Pacific powers. In 2010, Clinton outlined the US refocus on the Asia Pacific, emphasizing diplomacy, trade and development as the key areas of their engagement. The US Asia-Pacific strategy denotes that even while the US military remains responsible for the maintenance of global peace and security, it will nonetheless tilt towards the Asia Pacific region. By 2020, the US Navy will shift its forces from a balance of 50/50 to 60/40 between the Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans.

Indonesia and the Indo-Pacific

In the Vision Mission statement (Visi-Misi) in 2014, President Widodo aims to project Indonesia as an “Indo-Pacific power”. He sees the closely interconnected Pacific and Indian Oceans (PACINDO) as the primary theatre of Indonesian foreign policy engagement, given Indonesia’s location at the crossroads of the Indian and the Pacific Oceans and its

upcoming role as the chair of the IORA by the end of 2015. Indonesia’s Indo-Pacific vision is also not new and was seen in the former Foreign Minister, Natalegawa’s statement at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington in May 2013. He stated that,

“A triangular (space) spanning two oceans, the Pacific and Indian Oceans, bounded by Japan in the north, Australia in the South-east and India in the south-west, notably with Indonesia at its center.”³⁴

In the 2012 Shangrila Dialogue, President Yudhoyono declared,

“There is every likelihood that in the twenty-first century, the Indian Ocean will grow in geostrategic importance. We must make sure that the Indian Ocean does not become an area of new strategic contest and rivalry. Indeed, now is the time to cultivate the seeds for long-term cooperation, based on common interests in that part of the world.”³⁵

Conclusion

It is generally believed that the idea of the Indo-Pacific has been created to contain or constrain China. This assumption is not true as for a peaceful Indo-Pacific, and involvement of China is equally necessary. Since great power interests converge most profoundly in this region, they are invariably bound to give rise to competition and a clash of interests. The good thing about the Indo-Pacific is that it offers a lot more scope to great powers to accommodate each other’s interests rather than remain concerned about furthering their own interests, which seems to be the case in the Asia-Pacific. The Indo-Pacific also offers enormous scope for regionalism and multilateralism to play a more important role than it has so far. Once it is recognised that economic cooperation, shared prosperity, and security challenges span the entire region, the Indo-Pacific will be better appreciated. Thus, the Indo-Pacific needs to be viewed in the larger perspective of offering more opportunities for cooperation than



competition. Moreover, it is a reflection of the rapidly changing geopolitical reference points. Thus, instead of looking at the Indo-Pacific idea with scepticism, it should be welcomed and promoted.

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A New Version of Chinese Nationalism in Cyberspace in the Digital Age

Hwang Ji-jen

The Nature of Cyberspace

Although the term “cyberspace” originally came from science fiction, for many of us, cyberspace now forms part of our everyday routine. Since 1990, rather than considering cyberspace to be a manifestation of a video game, academia has begun to take cyberspace more seriously. This development is certainly closely related to the rapid commercialisation of the Internet in the 1990s. Along with the technical development of computers and the Internet, cyberspace seems to be becoming more concrete, and the concept of cyberspace is continuously expanding. Cyberspace is not only a physical body of machines or computer networks which store and exchange data via computer media, but is also a conceptualised space.

As mentioned above, it can be argued that cyberspace is created upon a physical platform and forms a conceptual space via the spatial flows of information transmitted. Put another way, cyberspace is a space comprising telecommunication networks which use either electronics or electromagnetic transmission and the Internet to form a conceptualised space, in which, people are able to communicate with one another, share ideas, as well as present the political feelings. In the meantime, for an area ruled by authoritarian regime such as China,* cyberspace offers an attractive space for the massive populace to unleash their nationalism complex due to the nature of cyberspace itself. As a result, this article aims to examine an implication of how a new form of Chinese nationalism has been generated in cyberspace in the digital age.

Cyber Nationalism in China

On January 26, 2015, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) released the seventh annual China Press Freedom Report, titled *CHINA'S MEDIA WAR: Censorship, Corruption & Control*. According to the report, Internet censorship has been more restricted than ever in the past year. The report states that “online restrictions have been declining rapidly since the China Internet Security and Information Leading Group was established under the directive of President Xi Jinping.” In the group’s first meeting, Xi stated that “efforts should be made to build our country into a cyber-power.” As the report notes, several measures of Internet control have been implemented by the government. For example, 2,200 websites were forced to shut down, and at least 20 million messages were deleted on social media platforms, such as WeChat, without reasonable explanation to the public. In fact, on January 13, 2015, China’s State Internet Information Office officially announced that the Chinese



In China, Internet censorship has been more restricted, leaving thousands of websites being shut down without reasonable explanation. (Source: US Department of Defense)



government has been enforcing the regulation of Internet Content Provider (ICP) licence, permitting China-based websites to operate in China since the start of 2015.

In order to reach Xi's goal of building China into a cyber-power, the approach of Internet censorship is seen as a monumental step towards his goal. It can also be argued that such Internet control may be a means to eliminate any possible "cyber nationalism" against the government.

In order to reach Xi's goal of building China into a cyber-power, the approach of Internet censorship mentioned above is seen as a monumental step towards his goal. It can also be argued that such Internet control may be a means to eliminate any possible "cyber nationalism" against the government.¹ In the meantime, it is valuable to understand the new cyber nationalism in relation to the old school "People's War" in the traditional Chinese strategic guideline.²

According to the latest report of China's Internet Network Information Center (CINIC) published on February 3, 2015,³ in the end of 2014, Chinese netizens numbered 649 million in total, up nearly 100 million from just two years before.⁴ However, the Chinese Internet user population is still only about 47.9% of China's total population. Aside from users, the scale of cyberspace itself has also expanded exponentially. For example, the number of distributed TCP/IP addresses in China reached 332 million in 2014 as stated in the report.⁵ With the present growth rate in Internet access and scale, it is believed that China will become the world's most networked nation.

Like other countries, cyberspace has been

utilized in various purposes of national development as a whole national information infrastructure, which covers banking system, public transportation, resources supply chain, telecommunication, government administration, and so on. There is no exception for China indeed. However, such online platforms can also be easily used to mount populist pressure in real life,⁶ especially when a nationalism complex has been indoctrinated in the massive Chinese populace from one generation to another. In other words, the indoctrinated nationalism of the masses, coupled with the ease and speed of circulating political information due to the features of cyberspace, namely permeability, anonymity, and transcendence of territory, may allow for a new formation of nationalism in the case of certain political triggers. Such triggers can be set off not only by the Chinese government but also by the people themselves.

Additionally, it can be argued that China's cyber nationalism is likely to be manifested in two types: internal and external. The Deng Yujiao incident on May 10, 2009,⁷ is an example of internal online nationalism. Discussion of this incident spread nationwide via cyberspace, and netizens decried the government, some even setting up websites to support Deng. Incidents such as these make the Chinese government truly aware of the concentrated power of netizens.

An example of the external type of cyber nationalism is the response to an attack on a Chinese ship in the Mekong River in Southeast Asia on October 5, 2011, which resulted in the murder of twelve Chinese crew members.⁸ This incident set into motion a wave of online nationalism as the news spread rapidly in cyberspace. Chinese netizens strongly urged the government to get involved in the international investigation of the incident. In addition, one online comment stated "this incident may represent contempt and derision of China due to her weakness for a long time." This shows that cyberspace offers a perfect medium for

* For clarity, this article uses "China" when referring to Mainland China and "Taiwan" when referring to the Republic of China.

Chinese nationalism to be unleashed, creating the phenomenon of online nationalism.

In determining answers to these two questions, certain measures employed by China, such as "patriotic education," "ideological cultivation," and "Internet control and monitoring" should be taken into account.

However, no matter whether it is seen as a negative or positive phenomenon, China's nationalism is likely to be the most impressive in the world due to China's huge populace and the patriotic education delivered through various systems. Two questions should be raised when exploring the factors driving nationalism in the modern Chinese era. The first is how the Chinese government can mobilise the Chinese people to develop a certain power in order to defeat or oppose external enemies. The second is how, in the meantime, the government can discipline the massive populace in order to guarantee that the influence of the nationalism is under control and consistent with its initial political purpose. In determining answers to these two questions, certain measures employed by China, such as "patriotic education," "ideological cultivation," and "Internet control and monitoring" should be taken into account. These patriotic/ideological education, also known as *sixiang jiaoyu* in China, have been delivered through various systems. It can be a compulsory element in China's education system used to formulate a unique political ideology, which is distinct from general citizenship education. For instance, evidence suggests that, the Chinese State Council has officially proclaimed the guideline of patriotic education, which should be assimilated into university curricula in order to progressively "educate" the students' ideology.⁹ On the other hand, there are "Internet commentators," also known as the 50 Cent Party (*wumao dang*), hired and instructed by Chinese governmental sector in various unites

and levels.¹⁰ Their duty is to post comments in an attempt to "manipulate" public opinions in favour of the Party's policies and political claims.

Moreover, in the process of Chinese economic reform, on the one hand, China is enjoying the fruits of Western capitalism; on the other hand, China is unable to eliminate the nationalism formed by the historical humiliation from Western imperialists. Thus, one of the fundamental ideas of the "People's War" is to mobilise the populace against Western imperialism from one generation to another. It is also possible to harness this nationalism to drive the people to support ideological resistance in the entire Chinese nation for a political purpose. That is to say that the idea can be shifted from a solely government revolution of the Chinese Civil War in the geographical campaign to an all-out battle in a national level. This may also include not only military aspects but also political, economic, and cultural struggles.¹¹

In the meantime, "People's War" could also be driven by the "Chinese national character,"¹² which can be regarded as one of the major reasons behind the long persistence of the concept of "People's War." It is likely that "the century of humiliation" and "a long period of poverty and weakness" oppressed the Chinese in the past, and this oppression became a feature of the national character. Therefore, despite the fact that China claims to be rising peacefully, the Chinese national character determines that China will inevitably compete tooth and nail with US hegemony, in order to symbolically wipe out past humiliations.

Meanwhile, as the "century of humiliation" has become an unforgettable part of history for the Chinese people, this collective memory is one of the best tools to cement nationalism. The mobilisation of "People's War" places emphasis is driven by enthusiasm for this nationalism. It can therefore be argued that the "century of humiliation" is one of the motivations behind the launch and development of "People's War." Based on the theory of "People's War," the anti-government movements during the late Qing Dynasty and the ten revolutions led by Dr.



Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of the Republic of China, are categorised into armed uprisings in the early stages of “People’s War.” At the time, the armed masses fought alone without cooperating with armed forces, and it was this lack of armed forces that led to their failure. Though the concept of “People’s War” is a conventional strategy, cyberspace offers a perfect arena for the strategic concept to mobilize populace without the limit of geographic boundaries.

Conclusion

The idea of “People’s War” has been transformed from the principle of fighting in the conventional battlefield to a new strategic thinking behind the mobilisation in cyberspace in the information age. As a result, Internet control and monitoring in China is not necessarily solely employed for political purposes to prevent the Chinese people from accessing sensitive political information and to suppress opposition, but could also offer a platform far superior to any other medium for the rapid dissemination of information, conducive to the mobilisation of the Chinese people into cyber nationalism. Meanwhile, cyber nationalism can be employed not only by the Chinese government for external political purposes, but also by the Chinese people themselves for internal purposes.

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- 1 This term refers to nationalism communicated via various electronic media, such as emails, websites, instant messages, SMS, and mobile devices, and is employed in China's cyberspace to mobilize people and disseminate information on certain political issues.
- 2 The term "People's War" (*renmin zhanzheng*) was coined by Mao in the 1920s. It is a strategic concept originally formulated to oppose the enemy during China's civil war, which then became a general doctrine of mobilizing the massive Chinese populace to achieve a political goal and to defeat a militarily superior opponent despite military inferiority.
- 3 China Internet Network Information Center (2015) *35th Annual Report of China Internet Network Information* [white paper] 3rd February. Beijing: CINIC Office, < <http://cnnic.cn/gywm/xwzx/rdxw/2015/201502/W020150203456823090968.pdf>>.
- 4 The term "netizen" is defined in the report as people who are able to access the Internet via broadband, including both cable and/or wireless, and mobile devices. (CINIC, 2015:25)
- 5 This acronym stands for Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol, which is a functional transmission to correctly deliver data on the Internet.
- 6 A significantly large critical mass of upset chat-room postings makes something an issue for everybody to take seriously.
- 7 This incident occurred on May 10, 2009, at a hotel located in Badong County, Hubei Province, China. Deng Yujiao, a 21-year-old female pedicure worker, tried to rebuff the advances of a local official, who had come to the hotel seeking sexual services. She allegedly stabbed her assailant several times trying to fight him off, resulting in his death. Badong County police subsequently arrested Deng Yujiao and charged her with homicide, refusing to grant bail.
- 8 This incident has been discussed extensively by Chinese "virtual netizens." According to online discussions, even though this Chinese ship was suspected of smuggling illegal drugs, some commenters still strongly urged that the Chinese government use its growing power to forcibly intervene in the case (BBC Chinese News, 2011).
- 9 People's Daily (2010) "China's Guideline of 'Ideology and Politics Education upon Undergraduate Students'" [online] 30th January, <<http://edu.people.com.cn/GB/8216/39572/index.html>>. This has been carried out from one generation to another until now.
- 10 For example, there is "the Management Rules of Internet Commentators." Published in Cenews. 21 January 2010, <<http://www.cenews.eu/?p=21320>>. In addition, in October 2014, Chinese President Xi also promoted two Internet commentators in public in order to encourage more people to join.
- 11 For example, on January 29 2015, Yuan Guiren, the Minister of Education in China, officially indicated that "the concepts containing Western values are not allowed to be incorporated in any instruction materials in the high education system in China." That is to say, the nationalism complex against Western is likely to be remained by indoctrinating people through the official education system.
- 12 The concept of the Chinese national character (*zhongguo minzu xing*) consists of various aspects (Zheng, 2009). However, it basically refers to the general characteristics of the various Chinese people, significantly influenced by Confucianism and Taoism. According to a definition by Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, the Chinese national character contains a particular mental tension, which is that, on the one hand, the character of the Chinese people tends to be negative and lacks the spirit of positive resistance to overcome Western invasion; on the other hand, it contains a deep-rooted ideology of empire and ancient civilisation. This means that the Chinese want to surpass other countries, not least in making up for the century of humiliation.



Continuous US Arms Sales to Taiwan for the Sake of Taiwan's Defense, US Benefits, and the Regional Security Order

Yang Ya-chi

In December, 2015, based on the *Taiwan Relations Act (TRA)*, the United States announced a USD 1.83 billion arms sales package to Taiwan.* This was the fourth time in President Ma Ying-jeou's term and the third time in the Barack Obama's administration that the US approved major arms sales to Taiwan. China, as usual, expressed its staunch opposition to the decision and summoned the US envoy in China to protest. In response, the US insisted that the arms sales package was in line with the *TRA* and did not violate the "one China"



Continuous US arms sales to Taiwan not only manifest solid US-Taiwan relations but also favors US benefits in the Asia-Pacific region and the regional security order. (Source: Central News Agency)

* For clarity, this article uses "China" when referring to Mainland China and "Taiwan" when referring to the Republic of China.

policy. Taiwan duly expressed its appreciation to the US for helping strengthen its defense capabilities. Over the decades, US arms sales to Taiwan has been a key issue in discussions of relations among the US, China and Taiwan. China and pro-China US scholars/retired officials have argued that the US should stop arms sales to Taiwan to achieve better US-China relations. Although this view is not accepted by mainstream American politics, there is still a repeated claim, at least in academic circles, that the US should "abandon" Taiwan. In light of this argument, it is necessary for Taiwan to emphasize the importance of US arms sales not only to Taiwan, but also to US interests in the Asia-Pacific region and the stability of the region. This article contrasts opposing and supporting views concerning US arms sales to Taiwan, stresses the necessity of US arms sales, and provides a couple of suggestions.

Basically, existing arguments over US arms sales to Taiwan can be examined from the perspective of the four levels of domestic law, regional strategy, US-China relations, and cross-Taiwan Strait relations.

Level of Domestic Law

This level concerns US obligations under the *TRA*, and is mainly consists of arguments in favor of US arms sales to Taiwan. The US government, when responding to Chinese opposition, has repeatedly stressed that the provision of defensive weapons to Taiwan is in compliance with the



AH-64E Apache attack helicopter is one of the important articles made available to Taiwan by the US. (Source: Military News Agency)

legally binding *TRA*, which of course reinforces the legitimacy of US arms sales to Taiwan. Several scholars have also expressed their support for continuous and “timely” US arms sales to Taiwan based on the *TRA*. Before the announcement of the latest arms sales package, Shirley Kan, an expert on cross-Strait issues, published an article criticizing the Obama administration’s inaction regarding notification of Congress of major foreign military sales (FMS) to Taiwan for almost four years.¹ When analyzing possible causes of the delay, Kan asserted that US inaction has violated the law and the stated policy that both the president and Congress shall determine the nature and quantity of defense articles and services to Taiwan based solely upon their judgment of the needs of Taiwan. She also quoted Chairman Ben Gilman of the House International

Relations Committee, who had stated that “I cannot accept undercutting Taiwan’s national security and its right under the 1979 *Taiwan Relations Act* to receive appropriate security assistance from our nation to meet its legitimate self-defense needs,” to highlight the necessity of US arms sales to Taiwan. Nevertheless, there are also scholars who call for the revision or abolishment of the *TRA*. However, in consideration of the complex procedures for amending or scrapping a domestic law, and the possible political and diplomatic consequences, the latter scholars’ suggestion has not been considered seriously thus far.

Level of Regional Strategy

At this level, those opposing US arms sales



to Taiwan believe that continuous arms sales will eventually result in conflict between the US and China, thus damaging US leadership in the world. Professor Hugh White of the Strategic Studies Department at the Australian National University, for example, argues that with its “anti-access, area-denial” (A2/AD) strategy, China is now capable of preventing US interference in regional affairs. As it is unlikely that US Asian allies will sacrifice their relations with China and help Taiwan maintain the status quo, the US should consider the impact of a conflict with China over Taiwan on its global leadership.²

However, views like this are based solely on US-China relations, and overlook the larger US strategy in the Asia-Pacific region. As a part of its effort to implement its “rebalancing toward Asia” strategy, the US has set out to strengthen relations with countries in the region, including Taiwan. Several US officials have confirmed the importance of Taiwan in this strategy. US Secretary of State John Kerry, for example, says that Taiwan is a fundamental element of the Obama administration’s “rebalancing” strategy.³ Stephen Bryen, a former US Deputy Undersecretary of Defense, also considers Taiwan a necessary part of the “rebalancing” strategy. Several scholars who support US arms sales to Taiwan also link the issue to the “rebalancing” strategy. Shirley Kan suggested in the aforementioned article that US leadership and credibility in connection with the “rebalancing” strategy require decisive and urgent action regarding Taiwan. Dean Cheng, a research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, states that given that the latest package does not address two of the most fundamental military imbalances, those concerning cross-Strait air and undersea warfare, the sale does little to demonstrate US credibility in the region.⁴

Some supporters even link the issue to US strategies at a global level. Joseph Bosco, a former official at the US Department of Defense, believes that an uncertain policy toward Taiwan and US reluctance to promise defensive weapons to Taiwan may embolden China to further its “A2/AD” strategy

to push the US out of the region.⁵ J. Michael Cole, a fellow of the University of Nottingham’s China Policy Institute, states that once China takes control of Taiwan, it will use this island as a new frontline base against Japan and the Philippines, and may even pose a threat to US outposts in the region. Giving up on Taiwan will therefore make it a tool of Chinese expansionism and will subject the US to further risks in the future.⁶ French scholar Julien Canin also asserts that the Obama administration’s slow movement on arms exports to Taiwan poses a clear danger, given that China sees this as part of broader global strategic hesitation and uncertainty, and may miscalculate possible US action if Chinese uses aggression against Taiwan.⁷ Canin also applauds the development of Taiwan’s indigenous defense initiatives as a response to the threat posed by China, and holds that this may be advantageous for the US and Asian allies in connection with providing new technologies. Based on the foregoing analysis, US arms sales to Taiwan matter not only to Taiwan, but also to US strategy in the region and even worldwide.

Level of US-China Relations

This is the level at which arguments opposing US arms sales to Taiwan are the loudest. Professor Charles Glaser of George Washington University, one of the most prominent advocates of abandoning Taiwan, holds that it is time for the US to adopt a grand bargain to manage issues with China.⁸ Glaser suggests that the US drop its commitment to Taiwan in order to obtain three main benefits: reduction in the probability of war between the US and China over Taiwan, a dramatic improvement in US-China relations, and a major easing in the intensifying military competition between the US and China.

However, Professor Wang Yuan-kang identifies two major flaws in arguments in favor of abandoning US commitments to Taiwan.⁹ First, it is flawed to assume that Taiwan is the root cause of US-China tensions and inability to cooperate. Rather, it is the power transition between a dominant

hegemon and a rising state that has generated structural pressure and pushes the US and China toward an intensifying security competition. Second, it cannot be assumed that China's foreign policy has limited aims, and seeks nothing beyond unification with Taiwan. Professor Wang argues that whether or not China has limited aims is known only to itself, and not to outsiders. Given that China's foreign policy goals remain opaque, abandoning the US commitment to Taiwan is highly risky and dangerous, and it is unlikely to convince China that the US harbors benign intentions toward China.

Van Jackson, a former adviser of the US Office of the Secretary of Defense, also deems the idea of US accommodation with China unrealistic and irresponsible.¹⁰ Although such an idea perhaps made more sense before 2008, times have changed, and so have China's ambitions and foreign policy behavior. It is therefore dangerous to believe that abandoning US commitment to Taiwan will make China more willing to resolve other disputes with the US. Even more importantly, military competition between the US and China will not cease as a result of an accommodation policy, given that it involves more than present day concerns and has been playing out over decades. There is therefore no guarantee that a grand bargain will work.

If China seizes control of Taiwan, it can use the island to support its expansionist policies and threaten not only neighboring countries but also US military bases in the region.

Level of Cross-Strait Relations

There are also those who advocate suspending US arms sales to Taiwan in order to promote better cross-Strait relations. Professor Lyle Goldstein of US Naval War College has suggested the US stop selling arms to Taiwan in exchange for Chinese renunciation

of the use of force against Taiwan and negotiation between the two sides concerning settlement of cross-Strait status.¹¹ While insisting that his suggestions have nothing to do with abandoning Taiwan, Michael Swaine, a senior research fellow of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, believes that to reduce the risk of conflict over Taiwan, the US and China should first reach an understanding regarding restrictions on US arms sales to Taiwan.¹² China would also likely need to provide credible assurance that it would not use force against Taiwan, except for situations in which Taiwan declares *de jure* independence or the US deploys forces on the island. In return, the US should assure China that it will not deploy forces on the island or provide any new level of defense assistance to Taiwan. In so doing, the US and China can better manage the risk of mutual conflict.

Richard Bush, the director of the Center for East Asia Policy Studies of the Brookings Institution, reviews the 1982 US-China Communiqué on arms sales to Taiwan and discusses the different interpretations of the US and China concerning the precondition of the suspension of US arms sales to Taiwan.¹³ For the US, what makes arms sales to Taiwan less necessary is China's statement that it will "strive for a peaceful solution to the Taiwan question" in the Communiqué. According to China's logic, however, a reduction in US arms sales is a precondition for renouncing the use of force. In this regard, there is an obvious gap between American and Chinese understandings of this very fundamental point.

Bush also highlights the asymmetric character of the bargain prescribed in the Communiqué. Although China makes a commitment to strive for a peaceful solution, its intentions can be quickly reversed, while the creation or restoration of Taiwan's defensive capabilities can take a long time. Moreover, China has always reserved the right to determine whether changes in circumstances are significant enough to require changes in its intentions. At a time when China's acquisition and use of capabilities have made its peaceful intentions

questionable, this asymmetry between China's intentions and Taiwan's capabilities is a grave issue. Given that China reserves the right to use force, Bush believes that the stronger Taiwan's ability to deter attacks, the greater its confidence in negotiations with China.

Denny Roy, a senior fellow at the East-West Center, asserts that US arms sales to Taiwan are not an obstacle to cross-Strait unification, as is claimed by China. Rather, the Taiwanese people's reluctance to be ruled by the Chinese Communist Party is what stands in the way of unification. Terminating US arms sales to Taiwan will only weaken Taiwan's ability to deter Chinese aggression and may not be helpful to a peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues.

Continuing Arms Sales, but Ending Commitment to Taiwan?

Recently, there has been yet another view that while the US should continue to provide defensive weapons, it should end its security commitment to Taiwan. Eric Gomez, a research fellow of the Cato Institute, suggests that continuous arms sales to Taiwan reflect legitimate US interest in a peaceful resolution of the cross-Strait deadlock.¹⁴ However, unlike the treaties with Japan, South Korea, or the Philippines, given that the US security commitment to Taiwan is not defined in a formal treaty, and that the potential costs of US military intervention in a cross-Strait conflict may increase over time,



HF-III supersonic anti-ship missile is one of the prominent examples of Taiwan's improving indigenous defense capabilities. (Source: Chung Shan Institute of Science and Technology)

Gomez suggests the US end its pledge to defend Taiwan's quasi-independent status through military intervention. He also believes that future arms sales to Taiwan should depend on Taiwan's investments in indigenous defense and procurement of arms other than those supplied by the US.

Although he supports US arms sales to Taiwan, Gomez seems to devalue Taiwan's status as a US security partner with regional strategic value to an entity that happens to be situated in the Asia-Pacific region and purchase arms from the US. His view is therefore not different from those calling for abandoning Taiwan. It is true that Taiwan's security and defense is the responsibility of Taiwan alone, and Taiwan should not rely on external military intervention to ensure its well-being. Nevertheless, Taiwan's geostrategic importance in the region should not be taken lightly. Many experts in the military, political, and academic communities have described Taiwan as an unsinkable aircraft carrier and a submarine base off the coast of China. If China seizes control of Taiwan, it can use the island to support its expansionist policies and threaten not only neighboring countries but also US military bases in the region. With Taiwan at its disposal, China can easily cut off sea lines of communication critical to Japan and make the northern section of the South China Sea its territorial sea. In due course, smaller Southeast Asian countries pressured by China's ever-growing control of the region may turn to China for security. By that time, the security landscape in the region may become completely different. Despite its reiteration of its wish for a peaceful rise, China's recent behavior in the South China Sea and other areas has proved that its so-called core interests may expand contingent on its own assessment of regional security. No one knows for sure whether or not China has further strategic aims beyond Taiwan. In light of uncertain Chinese intentions and ambitions, the US should strengthen its security and military relations with Taiwan through all possible means to consolidate its strategic arrangement and long-term advantages in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the overall

security order in the region.

In summary, in order to maintain the integrity of the *TRA*, the credibility of US regional and even global strategies, American strategic arrangements and advantages in the region, and the security and stability of the region, continuing meaningful arms sales to Taiwan are crucially important not only to Taiwan's defense but also to the US and the Asia-Pacific region.

Suggestions

To enhance its strategic stance in the region, the US has been striving to improve security cooperation with its Asian allies and partners. In 2011, the US signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Advancing Bilateral Defense Cooperation with Vietnam in order to initiate bilateral defense talks. In 2012, it signed the AUSMIN 2012 Joint Communiqué with Australia to advance defense cooperation and rotation of US forces in Australia. In the same year, it signed the 2012 Joint Vision Statement for the Thai-US Defense Alliance with Thailand. In 2014, it signed the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement with the Philippines, who agrees to allow American use of its military bases. In 2015, the US and Japan revised guidelines

for their defense cooperation. As a part of this diplomatic effort, the US has also enhanced military exchanges and interactions with Taiwan. To further this campaign, it has been suggested that the US extend its security and military ties with Taiwan to such areas as intelligence cooperation and defense research and development.

In the case of Taiwan, in addition to procurement of arms from the US, it should also continue to develop its indigenous defense industry and seek transfer or commercial sales of military technology or key components from the US. In so doing, Taiwan can focus on the acquisition of truly critical and indispensable systems and equipment, as well as avoid overreliance on US arms. It should be noted that cooperation between the US and Taiwan in improving Taiwan's indigenous defense technology will be beneficial to Taiwan, the US, and other regional countries seeking a stable regional security environment.

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Japan Reinforces Defense of Nansei Islands



Japan plans to station a squadron of F-15J fighters on Okinawa. (Source: JASDF)

In August, 2015, Japan Defense Ministry announced a defense budget of 5.09 trillion yen. A part of the increased budget will be dedicated to the enhancement of the defense of Nansei (Southwest) Islands. Relevant efforts include:

1. Increasing the number of surveillance personnel on Yonaguni Island to 150 and equipping them with surface search radar, mobile air search radar, signal intelligence (SIGINT) systems, etc.
2. Stationing 700 to 800 Border Guard and missile force personnel on Miyako Island.
3. Stationing 550 Border Guard and missile force personnel on Amami-Oshima Island.

According to Japanese media, the aforementioned missile force will be equipped with shore-based anti-ship missiles with a longer range and surface-to-air missiles, so as to significantly increase the force's capabilities against approaching foreign military aircraft and vessels. Based on the news, it can be reasonably speculated that the said anti-ship missiles might be Type-88 (with a range of 150 kilometers) or Type-12 (with a range of 200 kilometers) anti-ship missiles, and the surface-to-air missiles might be Type-03 (with a range of over 50 kilometers) medium-range surface-to-air missiles.

According to Yomiuri News on November 25, 2015, the Japanese government also plans to dispatch

about 500 Border Guard and missile force personnel on Ishigaki Island to mainly respond to China's increasing military and right-maintenance activities in the East China Sea and around the Diaoyutai (Senkaku) Islands.

In this regard, if Japan completes the deployment of anti-ship missiles on the said islands, the Japan Self-Defense Force (JSDF) will be able to form a missile chain by connecting the missile force on its territory from Kyushu, Amami-Oshima, Okinawa, Miyako, to Ishigaki. In due time, the range of the shore-based anti-ship missiles of the JSDF will cover the area extending southwestward from Kyushu through the First Island Chain to waters near the eastern coast of Taiwan.

In *Employing Land-Based Anti-Ship Missiles in the Western Pacific* published by the American think tank, RAND Corporation, in 2013, it is suggested that the United State should team up with Asian-Pacific allies, such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines, to deploy shore-based anti-ship missiles at each of the critical points along the First Island Chain, so as to contain the Chinese Navy. Japan's plan to deploy missiles on the Nansei Islands is in line with the suggestion of RAND.

In addition to Border Guard and missile force personnel, Japan will establish an amphibious regiment of about 3,000 personnel and equip them with MV-22 tilt-rotor aircraft and AAV-7 amphibious assault vehicles to enhance their triphibious landing capabilities. An F-15J fighter squadron and an E-2C/D early-warning aircraft squadron will also be stationed on Okinawa and be equipped with three RQ-4 Global Hawks for maritime patrol.

To secure its control of the Diaoyutai Islands, Japan has stationed a garrison of about 600 personnel on Ishigaki and is equipping them with twelve patrol vessels with thousands of tonnage, so as to patrol waters around the Diaoyutai Islands and work in tandem with the JSDF.

Dilemma of Japan Air Self-Defense Forces

Due to the shortage of fund, the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) has to procure the 42 F-35 fighters required to replace the aging fourth-generation fighters in separate batches. Currently, F-15 fighters remain critical to the maintenance of the JASDF's air capabilities. Given the importance of F-15s and the inability to procure F-35s all together, retrofitting F-15s is the top priority for the JASDF, while acquiring F-35s is ranked No. 2 and upgrading F-2s is ranked No. 3 on the priority list.

According to Japanese experts, in addition to its fighters, China's thousands of ballistic missiles and cruise missiles also pose serious threats to Japan. Therefore, it is crucial for F-35s and retrofitted F-15s with active electronically scanned array (AESA) radars to have the ability to intercept small targets flying at a low altitude or having a low radar cross section.

Japan has recently revealed its indigenously designed X-2 concept fighters and is said to plan to procure F-35B short takeoff/vertical landing fighters to be deployed on its carrier-convertible DDH *Izumo*-class helicopter carrier. However, some experts believe that unless there is the need for JASDF to project force, Japan should not invest in large but impractical armament. Instead, Japan should focus on key defense programs, unless the situation calls for a major shift of strategy and resuscitation of the development of aircraft carriers. Experts also believe that unless Japan plans to export X-2s and gains cooperation of countries such as Australia and India to develop 4.5 to 5th-generation fighters, it will be a waste of resources to build experimental fighters like X-2s.



Japan is said to plan to procure F-35B STOVL fighters to increase its air capabilities, but some experts believe that it should not waste resources on large but impractical procurement. (Source: US Air Force)



The Strategy of Distributed Lethality of the US Navy



Some experts suggest the US Navy strike a balance between the missions of winning a war and preserving peace. LCS appears to be an ideal choice to that end. (Source: US Navy)

In January, 2016, the United States Navy issued *A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority*. According to the report, in spite of numerous challenges, the US Navy will continue to reinforce its capabilities through four lines of effort focusing on warfighting, learning faster, strengthening US Navy, and building partnership. Corresponding objectives listed under the effort include maintaining and modernizing the undersea strategic deterrence, cooperating with the US Marine Corps to develop concepts and capabilities from non-conflict competition to high-end combat at sea, expanding the electromagnetic maneuver warfare concept to encompass all of information warfare, exploring alternative fleet designs (including kinetic and non-kinetic payloads as well as manned and unmanned systems), and examining the organization of US Fleet Forces Command, Commander Pacific Fleet and their subordinate commands.

The US Navy often mentions the concept of “distributed lethality,” which means holding more adversaries at risk across a wider geography. However, the concept poses a challenge to the organization and planning of US naval fleets, calls for the acquisition of more weapons and ammunition, and depends on more detailed analysis and planning in the future. Currently, the US Navy does not have sufficient vessels to perform increasingly complicated missions. A report published by the American think tank, Center for a New American Security (CNAS), suggests leaders of the US Navy strike a balance between having a larger number of smaller vessels and a smaller number of more sophisticated vessels. It also points out that the US Navy must find a balance between winning a war and preserving peace, as the former requires large combat ships and the latter calls for lightweight ships. In this regard, it is believed that littoral combat ships (LCS) are an ideal choice.

ODS Seminar of the Month: Asia Security in 2015 and the Way Forward



Dr. Song Yan-hui hosts the ODS seminar aiming to review Asia security in 2015 and the way forward. (Source: ODS)

In 2015, Asia witnessed numerous significant events in many parts of the region. Although the area remains relatively stable, several security developments will continue into 2016 and affect every party in the region. To review major security issues in Asia and grasp their implications for the defense of Taiwan, the Office of Defense Studies held a seminar and invited Dr. Song Yan-hui of Academia Sinica, Dr. Ho Szu-shen of Fu Jen Catholic University, Dr. Ou Si-fu of Tamkang University, Dr. Chang Xin-yi of Nanhua University, and Dr. Chen Liang-chih of TransWorld University to share their insights on this topic.

Power Competition between the US and China Continues

Over the past few years, Asia has been a major arena for the competition between the United States as an established power and China as a rising power. With the US striving to maintain its leadership in the region and China attempting to challenge it, this power competition will only grow intensive. Such competition can be seen in the fields of economics, diplomacy, and security. With regard to economics, the US-led Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) was signed by the twelve member

states of the trade bloc in 2015. This regional free trade agreement, considered an economic element of the US “rebalancing toward Asia” strategy, is designed to compete with the Chinese-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). While there are still political obstacles before the TPP is ratified by the national legislatures of the twelve member states, the signing of the agreement represents a major milestone for American plans to shape the regional economic architecture.

Although the RCEP has made limited progress, China has scored preliminary economic success with its ambitious “One Belt, One Road” (OBOR) initiative. Moreover, China has linked this economic initiative to its greater regional strategy. Since the proposal of the OBOR, President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang have made countless trips to other parts of Asia, Europe, Latin America and Africa to seek stronger diplomatic ties and also promote the OBOR. Their efforts have attracted over fifty countries, many of whom are US allies, to apply for initial membership and made “OBOR” a resonant term in 2015. Although the prospects of the

OBOR remain uncertain, China’s ambition to shape regional economics with this initiative must be taken seriously.

North Korea Remains the Greatest Threat in Northeast Asia

In keeping with its “military first” policy, North Korea continues to develop nuclear weapons and test launch ballistic missiles in order to propagandize its military capabilities. Given that North Korea refuses to employ diplomatic methods to settle differences with neighboring countries, and the situation in North Korea is extremely opaque to the outside world, North Korea appears to be a ticking bomb that no one knows when will explode. Recently, North Korea completed its fourth nuclear test and claimed success in detonating the country’s first hydrogen bomb. Although it was widely suspected that North Korea exaggerated its claims, the blast has revived the question about how to effectively and credibly curb the isolated country’s outrageous and repeated violation of United Nations resolutions.



Dr. Ho Szu-shen expresses his view about the prospect of US-China relations and the implication to Taiwan. (Source: ODS)



Dr. Ou Si-fu believes the prospect of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue remains dim in 2016. (Source: ODS)

Like many other security issues, it will take collective effort and unified action to manage the security threat posed by North Korea. However, with the US and China—both permanent UN security council members—in discord with each other over how to deal with North Korea, prospects of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue remain dim in 2016.

Intensification of South China Sea Disputes

Territorial and sovereignty disputes in the South China Sea continue to make headlines. With claimants taking more and more unilateral actions to consolidate their claims, particularly China's land reclamation efforts, several trends concerning the South China Sea issue have been observed. The first is the militarization of the South China Sea. In addition to reclaiming land, China is also locating military personnel and facilities on these artificial islands. Recently, China has completed several test flights to its airfield on Fiery Cross Reef, which has triggered concerns that China will soon deploy military aircraft on the reef. As a response, claimants such as Vietnam and the Philippines have purchased

submarines, patrol vessels and radar to enhance their maritime capabilities, thus highlighting the military aspect of the South China Sea issue.

The second trend is that the South China Sea issue has officially become subject to international legal processes. Last year, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) decided that it had jurisdiction over seven out of the fifteen claims put forward by the Philippines against China and would leave the remaining eight claims to be decided in 2016. The PCA's ruling implies that at least part of the South China Sea issue should be settled in accordance with the judgment of the PCA. While PCA's decision concerning the merit of the case will have to wait until around June this year, and a ruling in favor of the Philippines does not guarantee that China will comply, China will face tremendous pressure when dealing with the legal aspects of the South China Sea issue, and this is especially true for its nine-dash line claim encircling a large part of the South China Sea. Taiwan, which sees the status of its Taiping Island (Itu Aba) being challenged by the Philippines in this case, will also face similar pressure.

The third trend is the internationalization of the South China Sea issue. Despite China's reiteration that the South China Sea issue should be settled through bilateral negotiation, smaller claimants in the Southeast Asia has been trying to garner more support from non-claimants such as the US, Japan, Australia and India in order to check the growing power of China. Last year, the US sent the USS Lassen guided missile destroyer to sail within 12 nautical miles of the Chinese-occupied Subi Reef in the Spratly Islands as a means of challenging China's claim to the waters and defending freedom of navigation. As the most supportive US ally in Asia, Japan is considering adjusting the flight path of its P3-C patrol aircraft to airspace near the South China Sea. Australia is also planning to do the same and have its military aircraft fly near the South China Sea when on routine patrols. These activities have internationalized the South China Sea issue and may deepen the conflict between the US and China.

Cross-Strait Relations Remain Relatively Stable

Compared with the aforementioned issues, the situation across the Taiwan Strait seems to be relatively stable. Thanks to the efforts of President Ma Ying-jeou's administration over the past eight years, cross-Strait exchanges and interactions in many areas have become closer and more frequent. In the current atmosphere, it appears that the possibility of cross-Strait conflict has been reduced. However, some of the several military exercises conducted by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in 2015 were still aimed at Taiwan. In the "Stride

2015—Zhurihe" exercise, PLA troops simulated attacking a mockup building resembling Taiwan's Presidential Office. This is yet another proof that China, despite warming cross-Strait relations, still considers the use of force an option for handling the cross-Strait issue. With regard to this state of affairs, participants at the seminar suggested that as a response, Taiwan should continue to reinforce its defense capabilities and deepen security cooperation with the US and neighboring countries, while the new government should also work out a way to maintain the peaceful foundation laid out by the Ma administration and ensure the stability of the cross-Strait situation as much as possible.



Dr. Song analyzes three major trends of the South China Sea issue, saying that the issue will continue to intensify in 2016. (Source: ODS)



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