



China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress

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Summary

The question of how the United States should respond to China's military modernization effort, including its naval modernization effort, has emerged as a key issue in U.S. defense planning. Admiral Michael Mullen, the then-Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, stated in June 2010 that "I have moved from being curious to being genuinely concerned" about China's military programs. The question of how the United States should respond to China's military modernization effort is of particular importance to the U.S. Navy, because many U.S. military programs for countering improved Chinese military forces would fall within the Navy's budget.

Decisions that Congress and the executive branch make regarding U.S. Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military capabilities could affect the likelihood or possible outcome of a potential U.S.-Chinese military conflict in the Pacific over Taiwan or some other issue. Some observers consider such a conflict to be very unlikely, in part because of significant U.S.-Chinese economic linkages and the tremendous damage that such a conflict could cause on both sides. In the absence of such a conflict, however, the U.S.-Chinese military balance in the Pacific could nevertheless influence day-to-day choices made by other Pacific countries, including choices on whether to align their policies more closely with China or the United States. In this sense, decisions that Congress and the executive branch make regarding U.S. Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military forces could influence the political evolution of the Pacific, which in turn could affect the ability of the United States to pursue goals relating to various policy issues, both in the Pacific and elsewhere.

China's naval modernization effort, which began in the 1990s, encompasses a broad array of weapon acquisition programs, including anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs), submarines, and surface ships. China's naval modernization effort also includes reforms and improvements in maintenance and logistics, naval doctrine, personnel quality, education, training, and exercises.

Observers believe that the near-term focus of China's military modernization effort has been to develop military options for addressing the situation with Taiwan. Consistent with this goal, observers believe that China wants its military to be capable of acting as a so-called anti-access force—a force that can deter U.S. intervention in a conflict involving Taiwan, or failing that, delay the arrival or reduce the effectiveness of intervening U.S. naval and air forces. Observers believe that China's military modernization effort, including its naval modernization effort, is increasingly oriented toward pursuing additional goals, such as asserting or defending China's territorial claims in the South China Sea and East China Sea; enforcing China's view—a minority view among world nations—that it has the right to regulate foreign military activities in its 200-mile maritime exclusive economic zone (EEZ); protecting China's sea lines of communications; protecting and evacuating Chinese nationals living and working in foreign countries; displacing U.S. influence in the Pacific; and asserting China's status as a major world power.

Placing an increased emphasis on U.S. Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military capabilities in coming years could lead to one or more of the following: developing and procuring highly capable ships, aircraft, and weapons for defeating Chinese anti-access systems; assigning a larger percentage of the Navy to the Pacific Fleet; homeporting more of the Pacific Fleet's ships at forward locations such as Hawaii, Guam, and Japan; increasing training and exercises in operations relating to countering Chinese maritime anti-access forces; and increasing activities for monitoring and understanding developments in China's navy, as well as activities for measuring and better understanding operating conditions in the Western Pacific.

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Introduction

Issue for Congress

The question of how the United States should respond to China's military modernization effort, including its naval modernization effort, has emerged as a key issue in U.S. defense planning. The Department of Defense (DOD) states that "China's rise as a major international actor is likely to stand out as a defining feature of the strategic landscape of the early 21st Century," and that China's military "is now venturing into the global maritime domain, a sphere long dominated by the U.S. Navy."¹ A June 10, 2010, press report quoted Admiral Mike Mullen, then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as follows:

"A gap as wide as what seems to be forming between China's stated intent and its military programs leaves me more than curious about the end result," Mullen said. "Indeed, I have moved from being curious to being genuinely concerned."²

On October 11, 2011, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta stated that

we are adjusting our strategy and rebalancing our military to better confront the most pressing security needs. As a Department, we have to seize the moment as an opportunity to think long and hard about the future security environment and the kind of military we need in order to confront that challenge in the future. As we look ahead, our overriding priority must remain to succeed in current operations....

And then we must contend with rising powers, and rapidly modernizing militaries, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region—where the security and economic future of our nation will largely rest in the 21st century. The rise of China will continue to shape the international system, and we will have to stay competitive and reassure our allies in the region. That means continuing to project our power and maintaining forward-deployed forces in the Asia-Pacific region.³

The question of how the United States should respond to China's military modernization effort is of particular importance to the U.S. Navy, because many U.S. military programs for countering improved Chinese military forces would fall within the Navy's budget. An October 19, 2011, press report stated:

The US Navy views the Asia-Pacific region as a top strategic priority even as it faces possible budget cuts that could curtail other global missions, the naval chief said Wednesday [October 19].

¹ U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress [on] Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2011*. Washington, 2011. Executive summary and p. 1.

² Viola Gienger, "U.S. Concern Over China's Military Intent Growing, Mullen Says," *Bloomberg.com*, June 10, 2010. See also Daniel Ten Kate, "U.S. Criticism Of China's Military May Overshadow Asian Security Meeting," *Bloomberg.com*, July 15, 2010; and Jon Rabinoff, "Mullen Moves From 'Curious' To 'Concerned' Over China's Military," *Stripes.com*, July 21, 2010.

³ Lee H. Hamilton Lecture, As delivered by Secretary of Defense Leon F. Panetta, Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, DC, October 11, 2011, accessed online at <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1620>.

With China's clout rising and its military might expanding, President Barack Obama's deputies and military commanders increasingly portray Asia as a key to American national security.

The new chief of naval operations, Admiral Jonathan Greenert, echoed that view and suggested growing pressure on the US defense budget would not derail plans to focus on the Pacific region.

"Asia will be clearly a priority and we will adjust our operations accordingly," Greenert told reporters in a teleconference.⁴

Decisions that Congress and the executive branch make regarding U.S. Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military capabilities could affect the likelihood or possible outcome of a potential U.S.-Chinese military conflict in the Pacific over Taiwan or some other issue. Some observers consider such a conflict to be very unlikely, in part because of significant U.S.-Chinese economic linkages and the tremendous damage that such a conflict could cause on both sides. In the absence of such a conflict, however, the U.S.-Chinese military balance in the Pacific could nevertheless influence day-to-day choices made by other Pacific countries, including choices on whether to align their policies more closely with China or the United States. In this sense, decisions that Congress and the executive branch make regarding U.S. Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military forces could influence the political evolution of the Pacific, which in turn could affect the ability of the United States to pursue goals relating to various policy issues, both in the Pacific and elsewhere.

Scope, Sources, and Terminology

This report focuses on the potential implications of China's naval modernization for future required U.S. Navy capabilities. Other CRS reports address separate issues relating to China.

This report is based on unclassified open-source information, such as the annual DOD report to Congress on military and security developments involving China,⁵ an August 2009 report from the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI),⁶ and published reference sources such as *Jane's Fighting Ships*.

For convenience, this report uses the term China's naval modernization to refer to the modernization not only of China's navy, but also of Chinese military forces outside China's navy that can be used to counter U.S. naval forces operating in the Western Pacific, such as land-based anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs), land-based surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), land-based air force aircraft armed with anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCMs), and land-based long-range radars for detecting and tracking ships at sea.

⁴ Dan De Luce, "For US Navy, Asia is crucial priority: admiral," *Agence France-Presse*, October 19, 2011.

⁵ U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress [on] Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2011*. Washington, 2011. Hereafter *2011 DOD CMSD*. The 2009 and earlier editions of the report were known as the China military power report. The 2009 edition is cited as *2009 DOD CMP*, and earlier editions are cited similarly.

⁶ Office of Naval Intelligence, *The People's Liberation Army Navy, A Modern Navy with Chinese Characteristics*, Suitland (MD), Office of Naval Intelligence, August 2009. 46 pp. (Hereafter *2009 ONI Report*.)

China's military is formally called the People's Liberation Army, or PLA. Its navy is called the PLA Navy, or PLAN (also abbreviated as PLA[N]), and its air force is called the PLA Air Force, or PLAAF. The PLA Navy includes an air component that is called the PLA Naval Air Force, or PLANAF. China refers to its ballistic missile force as the Second Artillery Corps (SAC).

Background

Overview of China's Naval Modernization Effort⁷

Date of Inception

Observers date the beginning of China's naval modernization effort to various points in the 1990s.⁸ Design work on some of China's newer ship classes appears to have begun in the later 1980s.⁹ Some observers believe that China's naval modernization effort may have been reinforced or accelerated by a 1996 incident in which the United States deployed two aircraft carrier strike groups to waters near Taiwan in response to Chinese missile tests and naval exercises near Taiwan.¹⁰

Elements of Modernization Effort

China's naval modernization effort encompasses a broad array of weapon acquisition programs, including programs for anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs), anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCMs), land-attack cruise missiles (LACMs), surface-to-air missiles, mines, manned aircraft, unmanned aircraft, submarines, aircraft carriers, destroyers, frigates, patrol craft, amphibious ships, mine countermeasures (MCM) ships, hospital ships, and supporting C4ISR¹¹ systems. Some of these acquisition programs have attracted particular interest and are discussed in further detail below. China's naval modernization effort also includes reforms and improvements in maintenance and logistics, naval doctrine, personnel quality, education and training, and exercises.¹²

⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, shipbuilding program information in this section is taken from *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, and previous editions. Other sources of information on these shipbuilding programs may disagree regarding projected ship commissioning dates or other details, but sources present similar overall pictures regarding PLA Navy shipbuilding.

⁸ China ordered its first four Russian-made Kilo-class submarines in 1993, and its four Russian-made Sovremenny-class destroyers in 1996. China laid the keel on its first Song (Type 039) class submarine in 1991, its first Luhui (Type 052) class destroyer in 1990, its Luhai (Type 051B) class destroyer in 1996, and its first Jiangwei I (Type 053 H2G) class frigate in 1990.

⁹ First-in-class ships whose keels were laid down in 1990 or 1991 (see previous footnote) likely reflect design work done in the latter 1980s.

¹⁰ DOD, for example, states that "The U.S. response in the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crisis underscored to Beijing the potential challenge of U.S. military intervention and highlighted the importance of developing a modern navy, capable of conducting A2AD [anti-access/area-denial] operations, or 'counter-intervention operations' in the PLA's lexicon." (2011 DOD CMSD, p. 57.)

¹¹ C4ISR stands for command and control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

¹² For a discussion of improvements in personnel, training, and exercises, see *2009 ONI Report*, pp. 31-40.

Limitations and Weaknesses

Although China's naval modernization effort has substantially improved China's naval capabilities in recent years, observers believe China's navy continues to exhibit limitations or weaknesses in several areas, including capabilities for sustained operations by larger formations in distant waters,¹³ joint operations with other parts of China's military,¹⁴ C4ISR systems, anti-air warfare (AAW), antisubmarine warfare (ASW), MCM, a dependence on foreign suppliers for certain key ship components,¹⁵ and a lack of operational experience in combat situations.¹⁶

The sufficiency of Chinese naval capabilities is best assessed against its intended missions. Although China's navy has limitations and weaknesses, it may nevertheless be sufficient for performing certain missions of interest to Chinese leaders. As China's navy reduces its weaknesses and limitations, it may become sufficient to perform a wider array of potential missions.

Goals of Naval Modernization Effort

Capabilities for Taiwan Scenarios, Including Acting as Anti-Access Force

DOD and other observers believe that the near-term focus of China's military modernization effort, including its naval modernization effort, has been to develop military options for addressing the situation with Taiwan. Consistent with this goal, observers believe that China wants its military to be capable of acting as a so-called anti-access force—a force that can deter U.S. intervention in a conflict involving Taiwan, or failing that, delay the arrival or reduce the effectiveness of intervening U.S. naval and air forces.

ASBMs, attack submarines, and supporting C4ISR systems are viewed as key elements of China's emerging anti-access force, though other force elements—such as ASCMs, LACMs (for attacking U.S. air bases and other facilities in the Western Pacific), and mines—are also of significance.

China's emerging maritime anti-access force can be viewed as broadly analogous to the sea-denial force that the Soviet Union developed during the Cold War to deny U.S. use of the sea or counter U.S. forces participating in a NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict. One potential difference between the Soviet sea-denial force and China's emerging maritime anti-access force is that China's force includes ASBMs capable of hitting moving ships at sea.

¹³ DOD states that “By the latter half of the current decade, China will likely be able to project and sustain a modest-sized force, perhaps several battalions of ground forces or a naval flotilla of up to a dozen ships, in low-intensity operations far from China. This evolution will lay the foundation for a force able to accomplish a broader set of regional and global objectives. However, it is unlikely that China will be able to project and sustain large forces in high-intensity combat operations far from China prior to 2020.” (2011 DOD CMSD, p. 27.)

¹⁴ DOD states that “Despite significant improvements, the PLA continues to face deficiencies in inter-service cooperation and actual experience in joint exercises and combat operations.” (2011 DOD CMSD, p. 27.)

¹⁵ DOD states, with regard to shipbuilding, that “China continues relying on foreign suppliers for some propulsion units and to a much lesser degree, fire control systems, cruise missiles, surface-to-air missiles, torpedo systems, sensors, and other advanced electronics.” (2011 DOD CMSD, p. 43.) For an additional discussion, see John Pomfret, “Military Strength Is Eluding China,” *Washington Post*, December 25, 2010: 1.

¹⁶ DOD states that “the PLA remains untested in modern combat. This lack of operational experience continues to complicate outside assessment of the progress of China's military transformation.” (2010 DOD CMSD, p. 22)

DOD states that

China's acute focus on Taiwan has served for two decades as the dominant force shaping PLA modernization. Although China's other emerging interests increasingly compete for attention and resources, defense planners continue to regard Taiwan as the PLA's primary mission. Beijing seeks the military capability to deter Taiwan moves toward independence. This mission has catalyzed efforts to deter, delay, or deny the possible intervention of U.S. forces in a cross-Strait conflict. Although cross-Strait ties have improved steadily since 2008 and the prospect of a near-term crisis appears low, the PRC remains focused on developing the prerequisite military capabilities to eventually settle the dispute on Beijing's terms....

The PLA is capable of increasingly sophisticated military action against Taiwan. Should Beijing resolve to employ military force against Taiwan, some analysts assert the PLA would mobilize forces in a manner that optimizes speed of engagement over strategic deception. Others contend that Beijing would sacrifice preparations in favor of tactical surprise, with the goal of forcing rapid military and/or political resolution before other countries could respond. If a quick resolution is not possible, Beijing would seek to:

- deter potential U.S. intervention by highlighting the potential cost to the U.S. and targeting the resolve of the U.S. public and leadership;
- failing that, delay intervention and seek victory in an asymmetric, limited, quick war; or,
- fight to a standstill and pursue a political settlement after a protracted conflict.¹⁷

DOD further states that

As part of its planning for a regional contingency, China is developing measures to deter or counter third-party intervention, including by the United States. Although many of these capabilities were developed with a focus on Taiwan, they have broad applications and implications extending beyond a Taiwan scenario. China's approach to this challenge, which it refers to as "counter-intervention," is manifested in a sustained effort to develop the capability to attack, at long ranges, military forces that might deploy or operate within the western Pacific. The U.S. Department of Defense characterizes these as "anti-access" and "area denial" [A2AD] capabilities. China is pursuing a variety of air, sea, undersea, space, counterspace, information warfare systems, and operational concepts to achieve this capability, moving toward an array of overlapping, multilayered offensive capabilities extending from China's coast into the western Pacific.¹⁸

DOD states that in addition to efforts in information warfare,

China's A2AD [anti-access/area-denial] focus appears oriented toward restricting or controlling access to the land, sea, and air spaces along China's periphery, including the western Pacific. For example, China's current and projected force structure improvements will provide the PLA with systems that can engage adversary surface ships up to 1,850 km [i.e., about 1,000 nautical miles] from the PRC coast. These include:

¹⁷ 2011 DOD CMSD, pp. 47 and 49.

¹⁸ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 15.

- Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles: Medium Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBMs) designed to target forces at sea, combined with overhead and over-the-horizon targeting systems to locate and track moving ships.
- Conventional and nuclear-powered attack submarines: KILO, SONG, YUAN, and SHANG-class attack submarines capable of firing advanced ASCMs.
- Surface combatants: LUZHOU, LUYANG I/II, SOVREMENNY-II-class guided missile destroyers with advanced long-range anti-air and anti-ship missiles.
- Maritime Strike Aircraft: FB-7 and FB-7A, B-6G, and the SU-30 MK2, armed with ASCMs to engage surface combatants.

Similarly, current and projected systems such as the J-20 stealth fighter and longer-range conventional ballistic missiles could improve the PLA's ability to strike regional air bases, logistical facilities, and other ground-based infrastructure. PRC military analysts have concluded that logistics and power projection are potential vulnerabilities in modern warfare, given the requirements for precision in coordinating transportation, communications, and logistics networks. China is fielding an array of conventionally armed ballistic missiles, modern aircraft, UAVs, ground- and air-launched land-attack cruise missiles, special operations forces, and cyber-warfare capabilities to hold targets at risk throughout the region.¹⁹

Additional Goals Not Directly Related to Taiwan

DOD and other observers also believe that China's military modernization effort, including its naval modernization effort, is increasingly oriented toward pursuing additional goals not directly related to Taiwan, including the following:

- asserting or defending China's territorial claims in the South China Sea and East China Sea—claims that overlap with those of other countries and, in the case of the South China Sea, are somewhat ambiguous but potentially expansive enough to go well beyond what would normally be supported by international legal norms relating to territorial waters;
- enforcing China's view—a minority view among world nations—that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its 200-mile maritime exclusive economic zone (EEZ);
- protecting China's sea lines of communications, including those running through the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf, on which China relies for much of its energy imports;
- protecting and evacuating Chinese nationals living and working in foreign countries;
- displacing U.S. influence in the Pacific; and
- asserting China's status as a major world power.

DOD states that

¹⁹ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 29.

- “China’s leaders have given the PLA a new and more externally focused direction, as evidenced by China’s growing naval presence on the global maritime domain;”²⁰
- “... a diminished sense of urgency over Taiwan has enabled the PLA to devote attention to an expanding set of regional and global missions,”²¹
- “In addition to preparing for a Taiwan contingency, the PLA has been developing new platforms and capabilities that will extend its operational reach to address other concerns within the East and South China Seas, and possibly to the Indian Ocean and beyond the second island chain in the western Pacific;”²² and
- “The PLA Navy is at the forefront of efforts to extend operational reach beyond China’s regional waters.”²³

DOD further states that

China continues to invest in military programs designed to improve extended-range operations. Current trends in China’s military capabilities could provide China with a force capable of conducting a range of military operations in Asia well beyond Taiwan.

China’s political leaders have also charged the PLA with developing capabilities for military operations other than war such as peacekeeping, disaster relief, and counter-terrorism operations. These capabilities hold the potential to make positive contributions in the delivery of international public goods, but also increase Beijing’s options for military coercion to gain diplomatic advantage, advance interests, or resolve disputes in its favor.

Analysis of China’s weapons development and deployment patterns suggests Beijing is already looking at contingencies beyond Taiwan as it builds its force....

China’s increasing focus on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) missions will require a unique set of technological developments, including large ships and strategic airlift, to support these missions. Of course, many of these HA/DR capabilities would also enhance the PLA ability to support military operations along and beyond China’s borders.²⁴

DOD also states that

The so-called “near seas,” which remain a primary focus for the Navy, include the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea. Increasingly, the PLA is taking on missions that reflect China’s expanding commercial and diplomatic interests beyond the near seas, into the “far seas” which include the Philippine Sea and beyond....

Senior civilian officials and PLA officers have argued that China’s economic and political power is contingent upon access to, and use of the sea, and that a strong Navy is required to safeguard such access. Despite an increasingly public discussion concerning missions farther from China, the Navy appears primarily focused on contingencies within the “first and

²⁰ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 27

²¹ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 27.

²² 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 32. For a DOD map of the first and second island chains, see 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 23.

²³ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 32.

²⁴ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 38.

second island chains” ... with emphasis on a potential conflict with U.S. forces over Taiwan or a territorial dispute.²⁵

Another observer states:

China’s active defense strategy has a maritime component that aligns with the PRC’s 1982 naval maritime plan outlined by then-Vice Chairman of the Military Commission, Liu Huaqing. This naval strategy delineated three stages. In the first stage, from 2000 to 2010, China was to establish control of waters within the first island chain that links Okinawa Prefecture, Taiwan and the Philippines. In the second stage, from 2010 to 2020, China would seek to establish control of waters within the second island chain that links the Ogasawara island chain, Guam and Indonesia. The final stage, from 2020 until 2040, China would put an end to U.S. military dominance in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, using aircraft carriers as a key component of their military force.

Recent Chinese military developments, rhetoric, and actions reflect implementation of this maritime strategy, on pace with the projections to seek control of the first island chain.²⁶

Potential Significance of Goals Not Directly Related to Taiwan

The above goals not directly related to Taiwan are potentially significant for at least five reasons:

- First, they imply that if the situation with Taiwan were somehow resolved, China could find continuing reasons to pursue its naval modernization effort.
- Second, they suggest that if China completes its planned buildup of Taiwan-related naval force elements, or if the situation with Taiwan were somehow resolved, the composition of China’s naval modernization effort could shift to include a greater emphasis on naval force elements that would be appropriate for supporting additional goals not directly related to Taiwan, such as aircraft carriers, a larger number of nuclear-powered attack submarines, serial production of destroyers, larger amphibious ships, underway replenishment ships, hospital ships, and overseas bases or support facilities. Some observers believe a shift to a greater emphasis on naval force elements of this kind has already occurred.
- Third, they suggest that China’s maritime territorial claims have the potential for acting as a continuing cause of friction or tension in U.S.-Chinese relations.
- Fourth, they suggest that China’s view that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its EEZ has the potential for acting as an ongoing source of potential incidents between U.S. and Chinese ships and aircraft in international waters and airspace close to China.
- Fifth, they suggest that in the absence of conflict, China’s military forces, including in particular its naval forces, will be used on a day-to-day basis to promote China’s political position in the Pacific. This would create an essentially political (as opposed to combat-related) reason for the United States or other countries to maintain a competitive presence in the region with naval and other

²⁵ 2011 DOD CMSD, pp. 22-23. For a DOD map of the first and second island chains, see 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 23.

²⁶ Prepared statement by Stacy A. Pedrozo, Capt, JAGC, USN, U.S. Navy Military Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, Before the U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission, January 27, 2011, p. 2.

forces that are viewed by observers in the Pacific as capable of effectively countering China's forces. Even if a U.S.-Chinese military conflict in the Pacific over Taiwan or some other issue were never to occur, the U.S.-Chinese military balance in the Pacific could nevertheless influence day-to-day choices made by other Pacific countries, including choices on whether to align their policies more closely with China or the United States. In this sense, decisions that Congress and the executive branch make regarding U.S. Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military forces could influence the political evolution of the Pacific, which in turn could affect the ability of the United States to pursue goals relating to various policy issues, both in the Pacific and elsewhere.

China's view that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its EEZ appears to be at the crux of multiple incidents between Chinese and U.S. ships and aircraft in international waters and airspace in the South China Sea, including incidents in March 2001, March 2009, and May 2009 in which Chinese ships and aircraft confronted and harassed the U.S. naval ships *Bowditch* (TAGS-62), *Impeccable* (TAGOS-23), and *Victorious* (TAGOS-19), as they were conducting survey and ocean surveillance operations in China's EEZ, and an incident on April 1, 2001, in which a U.S. Navy EP-3 electronic surveillance aircraft flying in international airspace about 65 miles southeast of China's Hainan Island in the South China Sea was intercepted by Chinese fighters. One of the fighters accidentally collided with and damaged the EP-3, which then made an emergency landing on Hainan Island.²⁷

It is important to note, particularly from a U.S. perspective, that China's view that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its EEZ is related to, but separate from, the issue of disputes between China and neighboring countries over maritime territorial claims in the South China Sea and East China Sea. Even if all territorial disputes in those areas were resolved, China's view that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its EEZ would continue to act as an ongoing source of potential incidents at sea between Chinese and U.S. ships and aircraft.

DOD's 2011 report to Congress on military and security developments involving China includes a "special topic" section on China's evolving maritime strategy. This section is reprinted in **Appendix A**.

For additional discussion of China's maritime territorial claims and China's position regarding foreign military operations in China's EEZ, see **Appendix B**.

Selected Elements of China's Naval Modernization Effort

Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles (ASBMs)

China for several years has been developing and testing an anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM), which is a theater-range ballistic missile²⁸ equipped with a maneuverable reentry vehicle (MaRV)

²⁷ For more on this incident, see CRS Report RL30946, *China-U.S. Aircraft Collision Incident of April 2001: Assessments and Policy Implications*, by Shirley A. Kan et al..

²⁸ Depending on their ranges, these theater-range ballistic missiles can be divided into short-, medium-, and intermediate-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs, MRBMs, and IRBMs, respectively).

designed to hit moving ships at sea. The ASBM is referred to as the DF-21D, and is believed to be a new variant of China's existing DF-21 (aka CSS-5) road-mobile medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM). DOD states that:

China is developing an anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM) based on a variant of the CSS-5 medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM). Known as the DF-21D, this missile is intended to provide the PLA the capability to attack large ships, including aircraft carriers, in the western Pacific Ocean. The DF-21D has a range exceeding 1,500 km [i.e., about 810 nautical miles] and is armed with a maneuverable warhead.²⁹

DOD also states that “During 2010, China made strides toward fielding an operational anti-ship ballistic missile....”³⁰ In December 2010 and January 2011, it was reported that DOD believes the missile has achieved the equivalent of what for a U.S. weapon would be called Initial Operational Capability (IOC) (see **Appendix C**). An August 25, 2011, press report states:

China has developed a “workable design” of the world’s first anti-ship ballistic missile, potentially capable of hitting and disabling a U.S. aircraft carrier, according to Pentagon officials.

China also has satellites in place “that could provide some targeting data on large surface ships in the region, and this expanding infrastructure is augmented by non-space-based sensors and surveillance assets,” said Navy Commander Leslie Hull-Ryde, a Pentagon spokeswoman on China, in an e-mail.

“Over the next few years, we expect China will work to refine and integrate many emerging systems, including the DF- 21D” missile, she said....

China at this time “has provided no indication of whether they consider this an operational system,” Hull-Ryde said. She declined to say if the Pentagon believes the missile currently poses a threat to U.S. carriers.

Taiwan, which relies on the U.S. military presence, says in its new 2011 National Defense Report that China already has “produced and fielded” the missile “in small numbers,” said a translation provided by Andrew Erikson, an associate professor in the Naval War College’s Strategic Research Department.³¹

The August 2009 ONI report states that China

has been conducting advanced research into an anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM) program since the 1990s. This ASBM may be a variant of the DF-21 Medium Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM), with the capability to perform a mid-course ballistic correction maneuver to update the target’s location, and then guide a Maneuvering Reentry Vehicle (MaRV) to the

²⁹ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 3. See also 2009 ONI Report, pp. 26-27. A July 12, 2011, *China Daily* news report described the DF-21D as a missile with a range of 2,700 kilometers, or about 1,460 nautical miles. (Hu Yinan, Li Xiaokun, and Cui Haipei, “Official Confirms China Building Aircraft Carrier,” *China Daily* (www.chinadaily.com.cn), July 12, 2011, accessed online July 13, 2011, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2011-07/12/content_12880708.htm.) A subsequent news report, however, states: “Jane’s has learnt that the reference to 2,700 km was added by *China Daily* staff and is not corroborated by other Chinese reporting on the DF-21D.” (J. Michael Cole, “China Confirms ‘Carrier Killer,’” *Jane’s Defense Weekly*, July 20, 2011: 6.)

³⁰ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 13.

³¹ Tony Capaccio, “China Has ‘Workable’ Anti-Ship Missile Design, Pentagon Says,” *Bloomberg.com*, August 25, 2011.

target. As ASBM's long range, high-reentry speed (Mach 10-12), radical maneuvers, and munitions designed to attach aircraft carrier sub-systems combine to create a complex threat.³²

Another observer states that

To solve the very difficult challenge of hitting a moving ship at a distance of over 1,000km, the DF-21D makes use of the PLA's growing array of space, air and ground-based sensors: optical and radar satellites, AWACS and patrol aircraft and ground-based over-the-horizon (OTH) radar that can reach out to 1,000-2,000km. Once the target is cued, the DF-21D's warhead apparently uses a combination of radar and optical sensors to find the target and make final guidance updates, and uses a curved reentry path to reduce its speed to better enable target interception. Finally, it uses a high explosive, or a radio frequency or cluster warhead that at a minimum can achieve a mission kill. Internet-sourced pictures of missile target blocks the size of an aircraft carrier, located in Western China, offer a possible indication of the accuracy of these new PLA MRBMs. ASBMs will likely be employed in coordination with air, ship and submarine-launched cruise missiles strikes.³³

Observers have expressed strong concern about the DF-21D, because such missiles, in combination with broad-area maritime surveillance and targeting systems, would permit China to attack aircraft carriers, other U.S. Navy ships, or ships of allied or partner navies operating in the Western Pacific. The U.S. Navy has not previously faced a threat from highly accurate ballistic missiles capable of hitting moving ships at sea. Due to their ability to change course, the MaRVs on an ASBM would be more difficult to intercept than non-maneuvering ballistic missile reentry vehicles.³⁴

Anti-Ship Cruise Missiles (ASCMs)

Among the most capable of the new ASCMs that have been acquired by China's navy are the Russian-made SS-N-22 Sunburn (carried by China's four Russian-made Sovremenny-class destroyers) and the Russian-made SS-N-27 Sizzler (carried by 8 of China's 12 Russian-made Kilo-class submarines). China's large inventory of ASCMs also includes several indigenous designs. DOD states that "The PLA Navy has or is acquiring nearly a dozen ASCM variants, ranging from the 1950s-era CSS-N-2 to the modern Russian-made SS-N-22 and SS-N-27B. The

³² 2009 ONI Report, p. 26.

³³ Richard Fisher, Jr., "PLA and U.S. Arms Racing in the Western Pacific," available online at http://www.strategycenter.net/research/pubID.247/pub_detail.asp.

³⁴ For further discussion of China's ASBM-development effort and its potential implications for U.S. naval forces, see Craig Hooper and Christopher Albon, "Get Off the Fainting Couch," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2010: 42-47; Andrew S. Erickson, "Ballistic Trajectory—China Develops New Anti-Ship Missile," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, January 4, 2010; Michael S. Chase, Andrew S. Erickson and Christopher Yeaw, "Chinese Theater and Strategic Missile Force Modernization and its Implications for the United States," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, February 2009: 67-114; Andrew S. Erickson and David D. Yang, "On the Verge of a Game-Changer," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, May 2009: 26-32; Andrew Erickson, "Facing A New Missile Threat From China, How The U.S. Should Respond To China's Development Of Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile Systems," *CBSNews.com*, May 28, 2009; Andrew S. Erickson, "Chinese ASBM Development: Knowns and Unknowns," *China Brief*, June 24, 2009: 4-8; Andrew S. Erickson and David D. Yang, "Using the Land to Control the Sea? Chinese Analysts Consider the Antiship Ballistic Missile," *Naval War College Review*, Autumn 2009: 53-86; Eric Hagt and Matthew Durnin, "China's Antiship Ballistic Missile, Developments and Missing Links," *Naval War College Review*, Autumn 2009: 87-115; Mark Stokes, "China's Evolving Conventional Strategic Strike Capability, *The Anti-ship Ballistic Missile Challenge to U.S. Maritime Operations in the Western Pacific and Beyond*, Project 2049 Institute, September 14, 2009. 123 pp.

pace of ASCM research, development, and production within China has accelerated over the past decade.”³⁵

In August 2010, it was reported that China “is work[ing] on an antiship cruise missile the Pentagon has newly designated the CH-SS-NX-13. The missile is to be put on the Song- and Yuan-class diesel electric submarines, as well as the Shang nuclear-powered submarine.”³⁶ DOD states that “The SONG, YUAN, SHANG and the still-to-be-deployed Type 095 [class submarines] all will be capable of launching the long-range CH-SS-NX-13 ASCM, once the missile completes development and testing.”³⁷

Nuclear and Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) Weapons

A July 22, 2011, press report states:

China’s military is developing electromagnetic pulse weapons that Beijing plans to use against U.S. aircraft carriers in any future conflict over Taiwan, according to an intelligence report made public on Thursday [July 21].

Portions of a National Ground Intelligence Center study on the lethal effects of electromagnetic pulse (EMP) and high-powered microwave (HPM) weapons revealed that the arms are part of China’s so-called “assassin’s mace” arsenal - weapons that allow a technologically inferior China to defeat U.S. military forces.

EMP weapons mimic the gamma-ray pulse caused by a nuclear blast that knocks out all electronics, including computers and automobiles, over wide areas....

The declassified intelligence report, obtained by the private National Security Archive, provides details on China’s EMP weapons and plans for their use. Annual Pentagon reports on China’s military in the past made only passing references to the arms.

“For use against Taiwan, China could detonate at a much lower altitude (30 to 40 kilometers) ... to confine the EMP effects to Taiwan and its immediate vicinity and minimize damage to electronics on the mainland,” the report said.

The report, produced in 2005 and once labeled “secret,” stated that Chinese military writings have discussed building low-yield EMP warheads, but “it is not known whether [the Chinese] have actually done so.”

The report said that in addition to EMP weapons, “any low-yield strategic nuclear warhead (or tactical nuclear warheads) could be used with similar effects.”

“The DF-21 medium-range ballistic missile has been mentioned as a platform for the EMP attack against Taiwan,” the report said....

“China’s [high-altitude] EMP capability could be used in two different ways: as a surprise measure after China’s initial strike against Taiwan and other U.S. [aircraft carrier strike

³⁵ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 30.

³⁶ Robert Wall and Bettina H. Chavanne, “Reaching Out,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, August 23/30, 2010: 30.

³⁷ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 4.

group] assets have moved into a vulnerable position, and as a bluff intended to dissuade the United States from defending Taiwan with a CVBG,”³⁸ the Pentagon acronym for carrier strike groups.

The bluff scenario would include China’s announcement of a resumption of atmospheric nuclear testing and warn of tests during a specified period and then attacking Taiwan’s infrastructure with conventional forces.

China then would wait and see whether the U.S. carriers were deployed to defend Taiwan.

The report concluded that China could consider using EMP weapons against Taiwan’s electronic infrastructure or against U.S. carriers if a conflict breaks out in the Taiwan Strait.

“The minimization of military casualties on CVBG assets is calculated to lessen the likelihood of a U.S. nuclear response to a Taiwan strike employing nuclear EMP,” the report said. “The minimization of casualties on Taiwan is calculated to lessen the animosity among Taiwan’s population over forced reunification.”³⁹

For further discussion of this issue, see **Appendix D**.

Land-Based Aircraft

China has introduced modern land-based fighters and strike fighters into the PLA Air Force and PLA Naval Air Force. These include Russian-made Su-27s and Su-30s and indigenously produced J-10s and J-11s. At least some of the strike fighters are or will be armed with modern ASCMs. China’s land-based naval aircraft inventory includes, among other things, 24 Russian-made Su-30 MKK 2 Flanker land-based fighters, whose delivery was completed in 2004. The Su-30 is a derivative of the Su-27. Some of the Su-30s might eventually be fitted with the Russian-made AS-17A/B ASCM. (China’s air force operates at least 150 Su-27s; these aircraft could be used for fleet-defense operations.) China’s navy also operates 100 ASCM-armed JH-7 land-based fighter-bombers that were delivered between 1998 and 2004, and older ASCM-armed land-based maritime bombers. The effectiveness of China’s combat aircraft could be enhanced by new support aircraft, including tankers and airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft.

China in January 2011 reportedly began testing a stealthy, land-based, fighter-type aircraft, called the J-20. Some observers believe, based on the aircraft’s size and design, that it might be intended as a land-based strike aircraft for attacking ships at sea.⁴⁰

³⁸ CVBG is an acronym for aircraft carrier (CV) battle group. The Navy subsequently changed the term CVBG to CSG, meaning carrier strike group.

³⁹ Bill Gertz, “Beijing Develops Pulse Weapons,” *Washington Times*, July 22, 2011: 1. Except for “[July 21],” materials in brackets as in original.

⁴⁰ See, Bill Sweetman, “Chinese J-20 Stealth Fighter In Taxi Tests,” *AviationWeek.com*, January 3, 2011; Jeremy Page, “A Chinese Stealth Challenge,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 5, 2011: 1; Phil Stewart, “U.S. Downplays Chinese Stealth Fighter Status,” *Reuters.com*, January 5, 2011; Agence France-Presse, “US Downplays Concern Over Chinese Stealth Fighter,” *DefenseNews.com*, January 6, 2011; Tony Capaccio, “China’s J-20 Stealth Fighter Meant to Counter F-22, F-35, U.S. Navy Says,” *Bloomberg.com*, January 6, 2011; David A. Fulgham, et al, “Stealth Slayer?” *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, January 17, 2011: 20-21; Andrew S. Erickson and Gabriel B. Collins, “China’s New Project 718/J-20 Fighter: Development outlook and strategic implications,” *China SignPost*, January 17, 2011, 13 pp.; Dave Majumdar, “U.S. Opinions Vary Over China’s Stealthy J-20,” *Defense News*, January 24, 2011: 16; Stephen Trimble, “J-20: China’s Ultimate Aircraft Carrier-Killer?” *The DEW Line* (www.flightglobal.com), February 9, 2011; Carlo Kopp, “An Initial Assessment of China’s J-20 Stealth Fighter,” *China Brief*, May 6, 2011: 9-11; David Axe, (continued...)

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)

DOD states that “acquisition and development of longer-range UAVs and UCAVs [Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles, i.e., armed UAVs] will expand China’s options for long-range reconnaissance and strike.”⁴¹ The August 2009 ONI report states that

China is developing UAVs that have the potential to bring multimission capabilities to the maritime environment. In recent years, Chinese officials have openly touted the benefits of UAVs, such as low manufacturing costs, lack of personnel casualties, and inherent “stealth-like” characteristics. Of note are the CH-3 (which has reportedly been fielded with operational units) and China’s unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV) concepts. Not only can the CH-3 provide real time video for various intelligence purposes, it is being advertised with the ability to carry out strike missions with two on-board anti-tank missiles. The UCAV concepts reportedly being developed can not only perform intelligence gathering and strike missions, but an air-to-air capability is also noted as a primary mission. Overall, China is openly highlighting the importance of UAVs in modern warfare and is allocating resources to develop multimission candidates for this role.

China has reportedly purchased the Israeli-made Harpy UCAV. Harpys are “fire and forget” weapons designed to loiter in a patrol area, detect enemy radar and engage targets in any weather condition. After identifying a radar emitter, the Harpy executes an almost vertical dive and detonates just above the target. The small, relatively inexpensive and independently operated air vehicles have the ability to stay in the air for extended periods of time and can be launched from trucks or potentially from surface ships.⁴²

Submarines

China’s submarine modernization effort has attracted substantial attention and concern. The August 2009 ONI report states that “since the mid-1990s, the PRC has emphasized the submarine force as one of the primary thrusts of its military modernization effort.”⁴³

Types Acquired in Recent Years

China since the mid-1990s has acquired 12 Russian-made Kilo-class non-nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSs) and deployed four new classes of indigenously built submarines, including the following:

- a new nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) design called the Jin class or Type 094;
- a new nuclear-powered attack submarine (SSN) design called the Shang class or Type 093;⁴⁴

(...continued)

“Stealth Fighter or Bomber?” *The Diplomat* (<http://the-diplomat.com>), July 26, 2011.

⁴¹ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 32.

⁴² 2009 ONI Report, pp. 28-29. See also Wendell Minnick, “China’s Silver Hawk UAV Program Advances,” *DefenseNews.com*, July 14, 2011.

⁴³ 2009 ONI Report, p. 20.

⁴⁴ Some sources state that a successor to the Shang class SSN design, called the Type 095 SSN design, is in (continued...)

- a new SS design called the Yuan class or Type 041 (or Type 039A),⁴⁵ and
- another (and also fairly new) SS design called the Song class or Type 039/039G.

Figure 1. Jin (Type 094) Class Ballistic Missile Submarine



Source: Photograph provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 2010.

The Kilos and the four new classes of indigenously built submarines are regarded as much more modern and capable than China's aging older-generation submarines. At least some of the new indigenously built designs are believed to have benefitted from Russian submarine technology and design know-how.⁴⁶

DOD and other observers believe the Type 093 SSN design will be succeeded by a newer SSN design called the Type 095. The August 2009 ONI report includes a graph (see **Figure 3**) that shows the Type 095 SSN, along with the date 2015, suggesting that ONI projects that the first Type 095 will enter service that year. DOD states that:

Two second-generation SHANG-class (Type 093) SSNs are already in service and as many as five third-generation Type 095 SSNs will be added in the coming years. When complete, the Type 095 will incorporate better quieting technology, improving its capability to conduct a range of missions from surveillance to the interdiction of surface vessels with torpedoes and ASCMs.⁴⁷

In September 2010, it was reported that China launched the first of a new kind of SS, possibly as a successor to the Yuan class.⁴⁸ Photographs of the submarine published in press reports in June 2011 suggest the design is roughly one-third larger than the Yuan class. The design has a

(...continued)
development.

⁴⁵ Some observers believe the Yuan class to be a variant of the Song class and refer to the Yuan class as the Type 039A. The August 2009 ONI report states that the Yuan class may be equipped with an air-independent propulsion (AIP) system. (2009 ONI Report, p. 23.)

⁴⁶ The August 2009 ONI report states that the Yuan class may incorporate quieting technology from the Kilo class, and that it may be equipped with an air-independent propulsion (AIP) system. (2009 ONI Report, p. 23.)

⁴⁷ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 4.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Ted Parsons, "China Launches New SSK," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, September 22, 2010: 16. A similar article was published as Ted Parsons, "Launch of Mystery Chinese SSK Fuels Submarine Race in Asia," *Jane's Navy International*, October 2010: 4. See also the blog entry at <http://www.informationdissemination.net/2011/04/recent-photos-from-chinese-shipyards.html>.

relatively large sail (i.e., “conning tower”) that some observers have speculated might be intended, in part, for storing and launching missiles that are too large for the ship’s torpedo room and torpedo tubes.⁴⁹

Figure 2. Yuan (Type 041) Class Attack Submarine

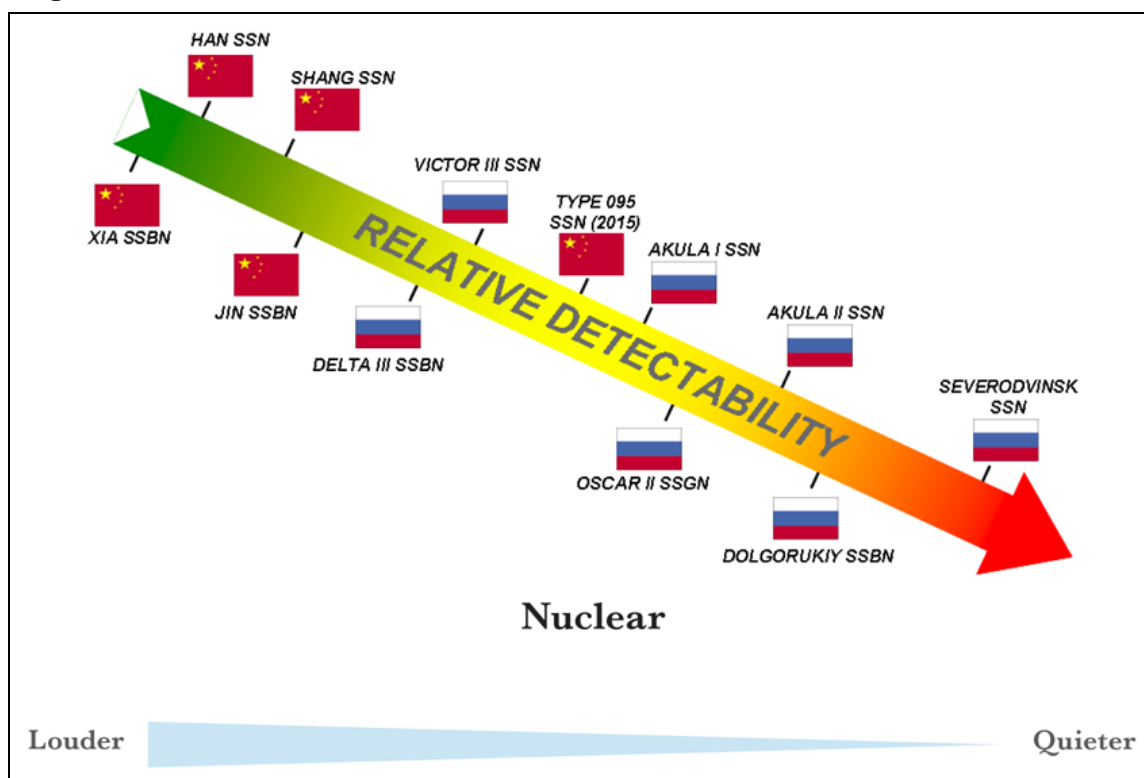


Source: Photograph provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 2010.

Figure 3 and **Figure 4**, which are taken from the August 2009 ONI report, show the acoustic quietness of Chinese nuclear- and non-nuclear-powered submarines, respectively, relative to that of Russian nuclear- and non-nuclear-powered submarines. The downward slope of the arrow in each figure indicates the increasingly lower noise levels (i.e., increasing quietness) of the submarine designs shown. In general, quieter submarines are more difficult for opposing forces to detect and counter. The green-yellow-red color spectrum on the arrow in each figure might be interpreted as a rough indication of the relative difficulty that a navy with capable antisubmarine warfare forces (such as the U.S. Navy) might have in detecting and countering these submarines: Green might indicate submarines that would be relatively easy for such a navy to detect and counter, yellow might indicate submarines that would be less easy for such a navy to detect and counter, and red might indicate submarines that would be more difficult for such a navy to detect and counter.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Ted Parsons, “Chinese Sub Images Offer Mission Clues,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, June 2011: 14.

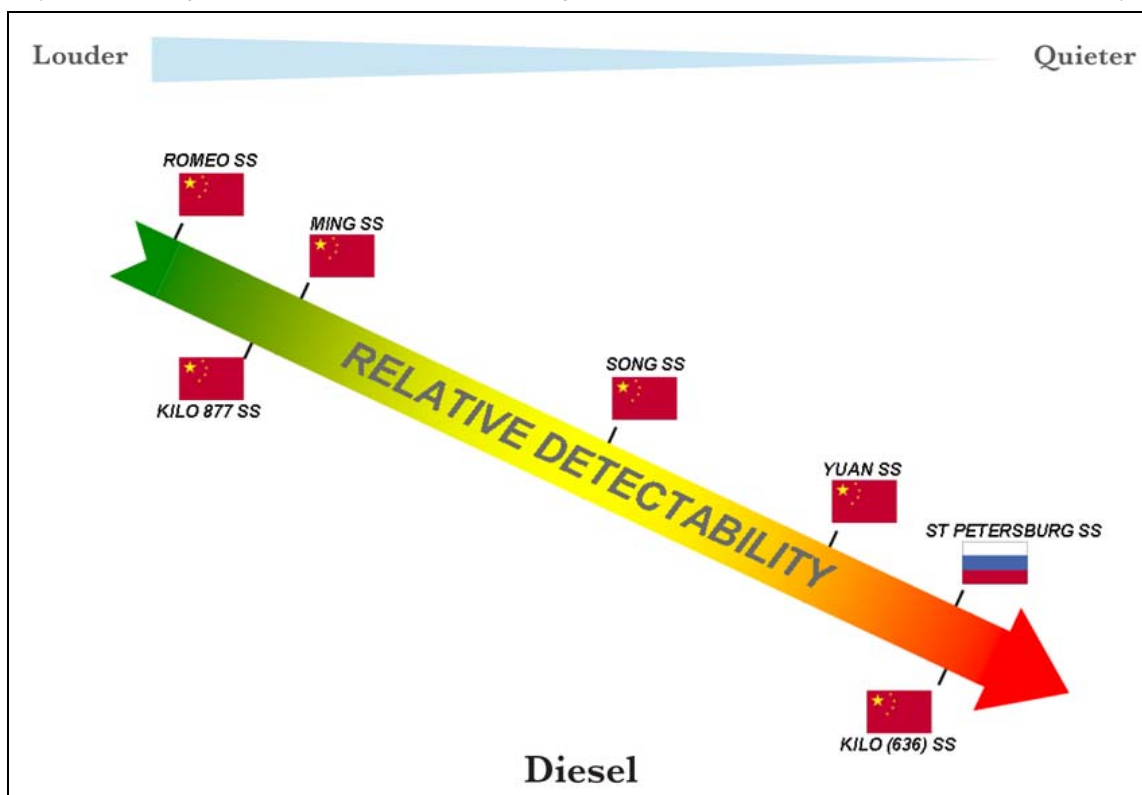
Figure 3. Acoustic Quietness of Chinese and Russian Nuclear-Powered Submarines



Source: 2009 ONI Report, p. 22.

Figure 4. Acoustic Quietness of Chinese and Russian Non-Nuclear-Powered Submarines

(Non-nuclear-powered submarines are commonly referred to as diesel or diesel-electric submarines)



Source: 2009 ONI Report, p. 22.

China's submarines are armed with one or more of the following: ASCMs, wire-guided and wake-homing torpedoes, and mines. The final eight Kilos purchased from Russia are reportedly armed with the highly capable Russian-made SS-N-27 Sizzler ASCM. In addition to other weapons, Shang-class SSNs may carry LACMs. Although ASCMs are often highlighted as sources of concern, wake-homing torpedoes are also a concern because they can be very difficult for surface ships to counter.

Although China's aging Ming-class (Type 035) submarines are based on old technology and are much less capable than China's newer-design submarines, China may decide that these older boats have continued value as minelayers or as bait or decoy submarines that can be used to draw out enemy submarines (such as U.S. SSNs) that can then be attacked by other Chinese naval forces.

In related areas of activity, China reportedly is developing new unmanned underwater vehicles,⁵⁰ and has modernized its substantial inventory of mines.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Lyle Goldstein and Shannon Knight, "Coming Without Shadows, Leaving Without Footprints," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2010: 30-35.

⁵¹ See, for example, 2009 ONI report, p. 29.

Submarine Acquisition Rate and Potential Submarine Force Size

Table 1 shows actual and projected commissionings of Chinese submarines by class since 1995, when China took delivery of its first two Kilo-class boats. The table includes the final nine boats in the Ming class, which is an older and less capable submarine design. As shown in **Table 1**, China by the end of 2010 had a total of 31 relatively modern attack submarines—meaning Shang, Kilo, Yuan, and Song class boats—in commission. As shown in the table, much of the growth in this figure occurred in 2004-2006, when 18 boats (including 8 Kilo-class boats and 8 Song-class boats) were added.

The figures in **Table 1** show that between 1995 and 2010, China placed into service a total of 42 submarines of all kinds, or an average of about 2.6 submarines per year. This average commissioning rate, if sustained indefinitely, would eventually result in a steady-state submarine force of about 53 to 79 boats of all kinds, assuming an average submarine life of 20 to 30 years.

Excluding the 12 Kilos purchased from Russia, the total number of domestically produced submarines placed into service between 1995 and 2007 is 30, or an average of about 1.9 per year. This average rate of domestic production, if sustained indefinitely, would eventually result in a steady-state force of domestically produced submarines of about 38 to 56 boats of all kinds, again assuming an average submarine life of 20 to 30 years.

As shown in **Table 1**, only four of the submarines placed into service between 1995 and 2010 are nuclear powered. If the mix of China's submarine-production effort shifts at some point to include a greater proportion of nuclear-powered boats, it is possible that the greater resources required to produce nuclear-powered boats might result in a reduction in the overall submarine production rate. If so, and if such a reduced overall rate were sustained indefinitely, it would eventually result in a smaller steady-state submarine force of all kinds than the figures calculated in the preceding two paragraphs.

The August 2009 ONI report states:

As PLA(N) strategy and capabilities have changed, Chinese submarine procurement has focused on smaller numbers of modern, high-capability boats. In keeping with the overarching PLA(N) strategy of the time, the 1980s submarine force featured a relatively high number of low-technology platforms. Now there are fewer submarines in the PLA(N) inventory than there were at any point in the 1980s. Currently, the submarine force consists of six nuclear[-powered] attack submarines [SSNs], three nuclear[-powered] ballistic missile submarines [SSBNs], and 53 diesel[-electric] attack submarines [SSs]. Over the next 10 to 15 years, primarily due to the introduction of new diesel-electric and [non-nuclear-powered] air independent power (AIP) submarines, the force is expected to increase incrementally in size to approximately 75 submarines.⁵²

⁵² 2009 ONI Report, p. 21. The report states on page 46 that “Because approximately three-quarters of the current submarine force will still be operational in 10-15 years, new submarine construction is expected to add approximately 10 platforms to the force.” See also the graph on page 45, which shows the submarine force leveling off in size around 2015.

Table I. PLA Navy Submarine Commissionings

Actual (1995-2010) and Projected (2011-2016)

	Jin (Type 094) SSBN	Shang (Type 093) SSN	Kilo SS (Russian- made)	Ming (Type 035) SS ^b	Song (Type 039) SS	Yuan (Type 041) SS ^a	Annual total for all types shown	Cumulative total for all types shown	Cumulative total for modern attack boats ^c
1995			2 ^d	1			3	3	2
1996				1			1	4	2
1997				2			2	6	2
1998			1 ^d	2			3	9	3
1999			1 ^d		1		2	11	5
2000				1			1	12	5
2001				1	2		3	15	7
2002				1			1	16	7
2003					2		2	18	9
2004			1		3		4	22	13
2005			4		3		7	29	20
2006		1	3		2 ^e	1	7	36	27
2007	1	1 ^f					2	38	28
2008							0	38	28
2009						2	2	40	30
2010	1					1	2	42	31
2011						2	2	44	33
2012	1					1	2	46	34
2013	1					n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2014	1					n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2015						n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2016	1 ^g					n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, and previous editions.**Note:** n/a = data not available.

- a. Some observers believe the Yuan class to be a variant of the Song class and refer to the Yuan class as the Type 039A.
- b. Figures for Ming-class boats are when the boats were launched (i.e., put into the water for final construction). Actual commissioning dates for these boats may have been later.
- c. This total excludes the Jin-class SSBNs and the Ming-class SSs.
- d. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012* lists the commissioning date of the Kilo as December 15, 1994. The first four Kilo-class boats are to be refitted in Russia; upgrades are likely to include installation of SS-N-27 ASCM. *Jane's* reports that the first of the two boats shown in the table as entering service in 1995 was commissioned into service on December 15, 1994, while it was still in Russia, and arrived in China by transporter ship in February 1995.
- e. No further units expected after the 12th and 13th shown for 2006.
- f. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012* states that production of the two Shang-class boats shown in the table may be followed by production of a new SSN design possibly known as the Type 095 class. A graph on page 22 of *2009 ONI Report* (reprinted in this CRS report as **Figure 3**) suggests that ONI expects the first Type 095 to enter service in 2015.
- g. A total of six Jin-class boats is expected by *Jane's*, with the sixth unit projected to be commissioned in 2016.

JL-2 SLBM on Jin-Class SSBN

Each Jin-class SSBN is expected to be armed with 12 JL-2 nuclear-armed submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). DOD estimates that these missiles will have a range of 7,200 kilometers to 7,400 kilometers (about 3,888 nautical miles to 3,996 nautical miles).⁵³ Such a range could permit Jin-class SSBNs to attack

- targets in Alaska (except the Alaskan panhandle) from protected bastions close to China;
- targets in Hawaii (as well as targets in Alaska, except the Alaskan panhandle) from locations south of Japan;
- targets in the western half of the 48 contiguous states (as well as Hawaii and Alaska) from mid-ocean locations west of Hawaii; and
- targets in all 50 states from mid-ocean locations east of Hawaii.

DOD states that “The first of the new JIN-class (Type 094) SSBN appears ready, but the associated JL-2 SLBM has faced a number of problems and will likely continue flight tests. The date when the JIN-class SSBN/JL-2 SLBM combination will be fully operational is uncertain.”⁵⁴

Aircraft Carriers

Chinese officials since 2006 have been talking talk openly about eventually operating aircraft carriers.⁵⁵ China is completing the ex-Ukrainian aircraft carrier *Varyag* (**Figure 5**), which China purchased as an unfinished ship in 1998, and reportedly has begun building its first indigenous aircraft carrier. DOD states that “During the next decade China is likely to fulfill its carrier ambitions, becoming the last permanent member of the UN Security Council to obtain a carrier capability.”⁵⁶ The August 2009 ONI report states that “China is undertaking a program to both operationalize [the *Varyag*] (likely as a training platform) and build an indigenous carrier to join the fleet between 2015 and 2020.”⁵⁷

Ex-Ukrainian Aircraft Carrier Varyag

The *Varyag* reportedly conducted initial sea trials, without aircraft, on August 10-14, 2011, and then returned to the shipyard for further work. At some later point, when work on the ship is completed, the ship will become fully operational. Some press reports in August 2011 speculated

⁵³ 2011 DOD CMSD lists figures of both 7,200+ kilometers (figure on page 35) and 7,400 kilometers (page 3). 2010 DOD CMSD listed only the 7,200+ kilometer figure.

⁵⁴ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 34. The report similarly states on pages 3-4 that “Although DoD initially forecast the JL-2 would reach IOC [initial operational capability] by 2010, the program has faced repeated delays.”

⁵⁵ The August 2009 ONI report states that “Beginning in early 2006, PRC-owned media has reported statements from high-level officials on China’s intent to build aircraft carriers.”

⁵⁶ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 46.

⁵⁷ 2009 ONI Report, p. 17. The report similarly states on page 1 that China “is refurbishing [the *Varyag*] and plans to build its own [aircraft carrier] within the next five to ten years,” and on page 19 that “the PRC will likely have an operational, domestically produced carrier sometime after 2015.” The report states on page 19 that the *Varyag* “is expected to become operational in the 2010 to 2012 timeframe, and will likely be used to develop basic proficiencies in carrier operations.”

that the ship might be commissioned into service by August 2012,⁵⁸ but a Chinese admiral reportedly downplayed this as “rumors.”⁵⁹ The ship’s air wing might not be added until some time after the ship becomes fully operational, and observers expect it will then take a substantial amount of time for the ship’s crew and air wing to become proficient in operating aircraft from the ship.

Figure 5. Ex-Ukrainian Carrier Varyag Being Completed at Shipyard in Dalian, China



Source: Photograph provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 2010.

DOD states that

Throughout 2010, the PRC continued refurbishing [the Varyag], which China purchased from Ukraine in 1998. This carrier will likely begin sea trials in 2011,⁶⁰ and the ship could become operationally available, although without aircraft, by the end of 2012. However, it will take several years for an operationally viable air group of fixed and rotary wing aircraft to achieve even a minimal level of combat capability. The PLA Navy has initiated a land-based program to begin training navy pilots to operate fixed-wing aircraft from an aircraft carrier. This program will probably be followed in about three years by full-scale ship-borne training aboard [the Varyag].⁶¹

At an August 24, 2011, DOD press briefing on the release that day of the 2011 DOD report on military security developments involving China, a DOD said official that “the aircraft carrier

⁵⁸ “China’s First Aircraft Carrier to Serve in South China Sea,” *People’s Daily*, August 16, 2011; “China’s Aircraft Carrier to Be Commissioned Next August,” *The Chosun Ilbo* (english.chosun.com), August 17, 2011.

⁵⁹ “Chinese Admiral Denies China Will Put Carrier Into Service Next Year,” *Mainichi Japan* (<http://mdn.mainichi.jp>), August 21, 2011.

⁶⁰ 2011 DOD CMSD was prepared prior to the Varyag’s initial sea trials on August 10-14, 2011.

⁶¹ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 46.

could become operationally available to China's navy by the end of 2012, we assess, but without aircraft. It will take a number of additional years for an air group to achieve the sort of minimal level of combat capability aboard the carrier that will be necessary for them to start to operate from the carrier itself."⁶² DOD states that the *Varyag* "will likely serve initially as a training and evaluation platform, and eventually offer a limited operational capability.... China currently has a land-based training program for carrier pilots; however, it will still take several additional years for China to achieve a minimal level of combat capability on an aircraft carrier."⁶³

The *Varyag* has an estimated full load displacement of about 65,000 tons, and might accommodate an air wing of 30 to 50 aircraft, including short-takeoff, vertical landing (STOVL) fixed-wing airplanes and some helicopters. By comparison, a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier has a full load displacement of about 100,000 tons and can accommodate an air wing of 70 or more aircraft, including conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL) airplanes (which tend to have a greater range/payload than STVOL airplanes) and some helicopters.

Indigenous Aircraft Carriers

DOD states that

In addition to [the *Varyag*], the PLA Navy will likely build several additional carriers in Chinese shipyards.... Construction of China's first indigenous carrier, which would likely have a similar displacement and design of [the *Varyag*], could begin as early as 2011. If China commences construction in 2011, the PLA Navy could have its first indigenous carrier achieving operational capability as early as 2015.⁶⁴

An August 2, 2011, press report stated:

China has begun work on its first aircraft carrier and probably will develop two or more, along with outfitting a former Russian carrier that is set to begin sea trials soon, Pentagon officials said.

"We expect China to build at least one indigenous carrier, probably two or more, but they have not revealed how many they intend to build, what the construction schedule will [be] or what their missions will be," said a defense official familiar with intelligence assessments.

A second defense official said China regards aircraft carriers as key symbols of global power projection and is unlikely to build just two.

Other defense officials said assessments about the indigenous carriers are based on intelligence showing construction of the first indigenous carrier at the Changxing Island Shipyard in Shanghai.

The carrier appears in satellite photos to be similar in design to the *Varyag*, a Soviet-era carrier purchased by China that uses a sky-jump style takeoff ramp at the front of the ship....

⁶² Transcript of DOD press briefing with Michael Schiffer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, accessed at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4868>.

⁶³ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 3.

⁶⁴ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 46. The report states similarly on page 3 that "China could begin construction of a fully indigenous carrier in 2011, which could achieve operational capability after 2015. China likely will build multiple aircraft carriers with support ships over the next decade."

“Two aircraft carriers are being built at the Jiangnan Shipyard in Shanghai,” a Chinese official with ties to China’s Communist Party leadership told Reuters last week.⁶⁵

A July 10, 2011, press report stated:

China has started construction of its first domestically made aircraft carrier, according to diplomatic and U.S. government sources....

Military sources close to developments in the Chinese Navy said the domestically made carrier is being constructed in a shipyard on Changxing Island in Shanghai.

The sources said the new carrier will likely be midsize, similar to the Varyag, and carry Jian-15 jet fighters, which China has just developed. The fighters will likely take off from a ski jump-style flight deck as is done on the Varyag....

Security around the shipyard on Changxing Island has increased significantly since the start of this year, which military sources attribute to the start of construction of the carrier.⁶⁶

A late-2010 article states that

photographic evidence [suggests] that China has finally laid the building blocks and keel for its first indigenously designed aircraft carrier (CV), at Changxing Island Shipyard, Shanghai..... The new carrier is estimated to likely be from 245 to 265m [i.e., about 804 feet to 869 feet] in length and 65 to 70m [i.e., about 213 feet to 229 feet] in beam (this would make it slightly smaller than the modernised, angled deck former USS “Coral Sea” (CVA-43, for comparative purposes). Construction is likely to take eight to nine years, meaning the ship becomes operational (IOC) [in] 2019-2020.⁶⁷

Potential Roles, Missions, and Strategic Significance

Although aircraft carriers might have some value for China in Taiwan-related conflict scenarios, they are not considered critical for Chinese operations in such scenarios, because Taiwan is within range of land-based Chinese aircraft. Consequently, most observers believe that China is acquiring carriers primarily because of their value in other kinds of operations that are more distant from China’s shores. DOD states that “Given the fact that Taiwan can be reached by land-based aviation, China’s aircraft carrier program would offer very limited value in a Taiwan scenario and would require additional naval resources for protection. However, it would enable China to extend its naval air capabilities elsewhere.”⁶⁸

Chinese aircraft carriers could be used for power-projection operations, particularly in scenarios that do not involve opposing U.S. forces. Chinese aircraft carriers could also be used for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) operations, maritime security operations (such as anti-piracy operations), and non-combatant evacuation operations (NEOs). Politically,

⁶⁵ Bill Gertz, “China Begins To BUild Its Own Aircraft Carrier,” *Washington Times*, August 2, 2011: 1. Material in brackets as in original.

⁶⁶ Yomiuri Shimibun, “China Starts Constructing Own Flattop; ‘2 Carriers Operational Within 10 Yrs’,” *Daily Yomiuri Online* (www.yomiuri.co.jp), July 10, 2011, accessed online July 11, 2011 at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/world/T110709003274.htm>.

⁶⁷ Keith Jacobs, “The Chinese and Japanese Navies Compared,” *Naval Forces*, No. VI, 2010: 80-85.

⁶⁸ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 38.

aircraft carriers could be particularly valuable to China for projecting an image of China as a major world power, because aircraft carriers are viewed by many as symbols of major world power status. In a combat situation involving opposing U.S. naval and air forces, Chinese aircraft carriers would be highly vulnerable to attack by U.S. ships and aircraft, but conducting such attacks could divert U.S. ships and aircraft from performing other missions in a conflict situation with China.⁶⁹

At an April 12, 2011, hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the following exchange occurred:

SENATOR MCCAIN: Admiral Willard, how would the successful deployment of a Chinese aircraft carrier change the perception of balance of power in the Pacific?

ADMIRAL ROBERT WILLARD, COMMANDER, U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND: Based on the feedback that we received from our partners and allies in the Pacific, I think the change in perception by the region will be significant. We recognize that when their – their rebuilt aircraft carrier begins its sea trial period and test and evaluation period, perhaps as early as this summer, that there will be a long period of training and development and eventual exercising preceding any operational capability that it could demonstrate.

But I think as a symbol, the feedback that we receive in our dialogue throughout the region is that the regional partners regard this step by the Chinese in the midst of what has otherwise been a remarkable growth in their military capability as significant.⁷⁰

A June 27, 2011, online article states:

At 65,000 tons, the ex-Varyag is smaller than the 100,000-ton American Nimitz-class carriers. Instead of the catapult used by American carriers to launch planes into the air, China's new carrier features a "ski-jump" ramp to help aircraft take off.

These two data points generally indicate that China's first aircraft carrier will not be nearly as capable as its American cousins. Varyag's smaller size, and especially its ski-jump ramp, mean that it will not be able to deploy heavier planes that require the assistance of a catapult to take off. As heavier planes are required to collect information, coordinate operations, fly for long periods of time, or drop heavy ordnance, it seems that Varyag will primarily be used to extend the umbrella of Chinese air cover from its shores (as opposed to more general power projection, such as striking ground or naval targets, as conducted by American aircraft carriers).

In addition to its technical shortcomings, a single aircraft carrier is of very limited military utility. Even once testing is completed, the carrier will have to be in maintenance for several months out of the year. Additionally, China currently lacks the experienced naval aviators and sailors needed to operate a carrier successfully and safely.

Yet focusing on the military deficiencies of China's new aircraft carrier completely misses the point of its development. Above all, Varyag is a symbol of China's rising power. Many Chinese officials and academics interviewed by the authors portrayed the aircraft carrier as a

⁶⁹ For further discussion, see Andrew Erickson and Gabe Collins, "The 'Flying Shark' Prepares to Roam the Seas: pros and cons [for China] of China's aircraft carrier program," *China SignPost*, May 18, 2011, 5 pp.; and Aaron Shraberg, "Near-Term Missions for China's Maiden Aircraft Carrier," *China Brief*, June 17, 2011: 4-6.

⁷⁰ Source: Transcript of hearing.

symbol of China's great-power status. As one former PLAN official emphasized, "An aircraft carrier is a very complex weapons system and demonstrates overall national strength. China is the only permanent member of the U.N. Security Council without an aircraft carrier." Entering the aircraft-carrier club sends a message to the Chinese people, and to the rest of the world, that China has stood up at sea and is beginning to build expeditionary military capabilities commensurate with its economic and political power.

Moreover, testing an aircraft carrier and sending it on missions of naval diplomacy throughout the Asia-Pacific region will have the important effect of training a first generation of sailors and aviators experienced in aircraft-carrier operations. China has not had the decades of carrier experience that the U.S. Navy uses to such great effect—it too must master complex carrier operations. With that in mind, every year of peaceful port calls and exercises by China's new carrier will be another year of operational experience for Chinese personnel.

Finally, Varyag is clearly China's "starter" carrier. China is already building a second generation of aircraft carriers, the first of which the U.S. Defense Department projects may be ready as early as 2015. China will undoubtedly learn many lessons from its experiences with Varyag and adapt subsequent carriers accordingly.

For the United States, the direct military implications of a Chinese aircraft carrier are fairly limited. The U.S. Navy is rather adept at striking large targets, and a Chinese aircraft carrier would be unlikely to survive beyond the opening hours of a general conflict with the United States. An aircraft carrier would also be of very limited utility in a war between the United States and China over Taiwan, given the mainland's ability to project air power over Taiwan from land bases.

Yet the strategic implications of a Chinese aircraft carrier for the Asia-Pacific region, and especially for the ever-more-tense South China Sea, are potentially significant. China has been increasingly assertive in its disputes with Vietnam and the Philippines in these busy, resource-rich waters, and carrier-borne air cover from Varyag could significantly complicate either country's ability to defend itself from Chinese aggression in these waters.

It is also in Southeast Asia that the political implications of a Chinese aircraft carrier are starkest. The Asia-Pacific region can expect Varyag to make periodic port calls in coming years. While the rhetoric surrounding such visits will undoubtedly focus on China's peaceful intentions and the promise of cooperation with Beijing, the not-subtle subtext of the message will be that China is powerful and has arrived. These countries will likely look to the United States as a balancer to the implied military challenge, and Washington must be prepared to answer the call as its interests dictate.

It would be a mistake to overstate the strategic consequences of China's starter carrier. It will not fundamentally alter military balances in the Asia-Pacific region, nor does it threaten U.S. military dominance. Yet it is an important harbinger of things to come. As China's naval power continues to expand and as Chinese aircraft carriers and escort vessels ply the waters of the Western Pacific, the South China Sea, and the Indian Ocean with increasing frequency, Washington will be forced to examine the underlying assumption of continued military dominance that lies at the foundation of its grand strategy. Given today's budgetary pressures, clear thinking about America's long-term interests and challenges is especially essential. The future begins now.⁷¹

⁷¹ Abraham M. Denmark, Andrew S. Erickson, and Gabriel Collins, "Should We Be Afraid of China's New Aircraft Carrier?" *Foreign Policy* (www.foreignpolicy.com), June 27, 2011.

A June 1, 2011, blog entry states:

Her new guns are installed. Her light-gray paint job has dried. Her airplanes are flying and her engines are turning. Thirteen years after she was purchased from Ukraine half-complete and lacking engines, the Chinese navy's very first aircraft carrier is ready to set sail from Dalian shipyard in northeast China. The former Soviet carrier Varyag, renamed Shi Lang in Chinese service, could begin sea trials this summer.

Just how worried should the world be?

The answer depends on who you ask. To China's closest neighbors, the prospect of a carrier speeding heavily-armed Chinese jet fighters across the world's oceans is an alarming one. But the U.S. Navy, the world's leading carrier power and arguably the Chinese navy's biggest rival, seems oddly unaffected.

There are good reasons for the Pentagon's calm. For starters, Shi Lang... could be strictly a training carrier, meant to pave the way for bigger, more capable carriers years or decades in the future.

But even if she is meant for combat, there's probably little reason to fear Shi Lang. A close study of the 990-foot-long vessel—plus the warships and airplanes she'll sail with—reveals a modestly-sized carrier lacking many of the elements that make U.S. flattops so powerful.

When Shi Lang finally gets underway in coming months, she will boost the ability of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) to patrol airspace over contested sea zones, provided they're not too far from the Chinese mainland. And more to the point, she'll look good doing it. "I think the change in perception by the region will be significant," Adm. Robert Willard, commander of U.S. Pacific forces, told the Senate in April.

Willard said he is "not concerned" about the ship's military impact.⁷²

Carrier-Based Aircraft

China reportedly was engaged in lengthy negotiations with Russia to purchase up to 50 Russian-made carrier-capable Su-33 fighter aircraft. Although the negotiations with Russia reportedly did not lead to a purchase of Su-33s, China reportedly is now developing its own carrier-capable fighter, called the J-15, or Flying Shark, which reportedly is based on the Su-33.⁷³ Some press reports suggest that China may be developing a short takeoff, vertical landing (STOVL) jet called

⁷² David Axe, "Relax: China's First Aircraft Carrier is a Piece of Junk," *Danger Room* (www.wired.com), June 1, 2011, accessed online June 2, 2011, at <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2011/06/relax-chinas-first-aircraft-carrier-is-a-piece-of-junk>.

⁷³ See David Axe, "The Limits Of China's Fighter," *The Diplomat* (the-diplomat.com), July 15, 2011; Michael Wines, "Chinese State Media, In A Show Of Openness, Print Jet Photos," *New York Times*, April 26, 2011: 4; David A. Fulghum, "New Chinese Ship-Based Heavy Fighter Readied For Flight Tests," *Aerospace Daily & Defense Report*, April 27, 2011: 1-2; David A. Fulghum, "New Chinese Ship-Based Fighter Progresses," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, April 28, 2011; Wendell Minnick, "China Confirms J-15 Carrier-Based Fighter; Aircraft Based on Russian-Designed Su-33," *Defense News*, May 2, 2011: 4; Andrew Erickson and Gabe Collins, "Flying Shark' Gaining Altitude: How might new J-15 strike fighter improve China's maritime air warfare ability?" *China SignPost*, June 7, 2011, 11 pp.; Gabe Collins and Andrew Erickson, "China's J-15 No Game Changer," *The Diplomat* (<http://the-diplomat.com>), June 23, 2011.

the J-18 for use on its aircraft carriers, but observers are divided on whether such a program exists and, if so, what its specific aims or current status may be.⁷⁴ DOD states that

China has demonstrated an interest in foreign carrier-borne fighters and carrier aviation, but it appears that a domestic carrier aircraft production program is progressing. Currently in flight testing, the carrier aircraft, known as the J-15, is reportedly an unlicensed copy of a Russian Su-33, which China obtained from Ukraine in 2004. China is also looking abroad for operational expertise. In May 2009, Brazilian Defense Minister Nelson Jobim announced that the Brazilian Navy would provide training to PLA Navy officers in aircraft carrier operations. However, Brazil's limited capabilities in this area and the extensive problems associated with Brazil's own carrier program raise some questions as to the implications of the offer.⁷⁵

Surface Combatants

China since the early 1990s has purchased four Sovremenny-class destroyers from Russia and deployed nine new classes of indigenously built destroyers and frigates (some of which are variations of one another) that demonstrate a significant modernization of PLA Navy surface combatant technology. China has also deployed a new kind of missile-armed fast attack craft that uses a stealthy catamaran hull design. The August 2009 ONI report states that “the PLA(N) surface force is one of the largest in the world, and its capabilities are growing at a remarkable rate,”⁷⁶ and that “in recent years, the most notable upgrade to the PLA(N) surface force has been its shipboard area-air-defense (AAD) capability.”⁷⁷ DOD similarly states that “the PLA Navy continues its acquisition of domestically produced surface combatants.... These ships reflect the leadership's priority on an advanced anti-air warfare capability for China's naval forces, which has historically been a weakness of the fleet.”⁷⁸

Sovremenny-Class Destroyers

China in 1996 ordered two Sovremenny-class destroyers from Russia; the ships entered service in 1999 and 2001. China in 2002 ordered two additional Sovremenny-class destroyers from Russia; the ships entered service in 2005 and 2006. Sovremenny-class destroyers are equipped with the Russian-made SS-N-22 Sunburn ASCM, a highly capable ASCM.

⁷⁴ See, for example, Wendell Minnick, “Is China Developing a VSTOL Fighter?” *DefenseNews.com*, April 22, 2011; David Axe, “China's Jump Jet Mystery,” *The Diplomat* (the-diplomat.com), April 25, 2011, accessed online May 19, 2011, at <http://the-diplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2011/04/25/chinas-jump-jet-mystery/>; Dave Majumdar, “Analysts Skeptical About China's J-18,” *Defense News*, May 2, 2011: 8; Wendell Minnick, “China Confirms J-15 Carrier-Based Fighter; Aircraft Based on Russian-Designed Su-33,” *Defense News*, May 2, 2011: 4.

⁷⁵ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 46.

⁷⁶ 2009 ONI Report, p. 16. This comment may relate not solely to China's surface combatants (e.g., destroyers, frigates, and fast attack craft), but to China's entire surface fleet, which includes other types of ships as well, such as aircraft carriers, amphibious ships, and auxiliary and support ships.

⁷⁷ 2009 ONI Report, p. 18.

⁷⁸ 2010 DOD CMSD, p. 3.

Five New Indigenously Built Destroyer Classes

As shown in **Table 2**, China since the early 1990s has deployed five new classes of indigenously built destroyers, one of which is a variation of another. The classes are called the Luhu (Type 052), Luhai (Type 051B), Luyang I (Type 052B), Luyang II (Type 052C), and Louzhou (Type 051C) designs.

Table 2. PLA Navy Destroyer Commissionings

Actual (1994-2010) and Projected (2011-2012)

	Sovremenny (Russian-made)	Luhu (Type 052)	Luhai (Type 051B)	Luyang I (Type 052B)	Luyang II (Type 052C)	Louzhou (Type 051C)	Annual total	Cumulative total
1994		1					1	1
1995							0	1
1996		1					1	2
1997							0	2
1998							0	2
1999	1		1				2	4
2000							0	4
2001	1						1	5
2002							0	5
2003							0	5
2004				2	1		3	8
2005	1				1		2	10
2006	1					1	2	12
2007						1	1	13
2008							0	13
2009							0	13
2010							0	13
2011							0	13
2012					1 ^a		1	14

Source: *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, and previous editions.

- a. *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012* states that this ship was launched on November 28, 2010, and is being built to a modified version of the Luyang II design. Jane's expects three further ships in the class.

Compared to China's 13 remaining older Luda (Type 051) class destroyers, which entered service between 1971 and 1991, these five new indigenously built destroyer classes are substantially more modern in terms of their hull designs, propulsion systems, sensors, weapons, and electronics. Among other things, the ships include improved AAW capabilities. One observer states that "the new Chinese missile destroyers were apparently designed, at least on the basic level, at the Russian Northern Design Bureau."⁷⁹ Like the older Luda-class destroyers, these new destroyer classes are armed with ASCMs.

⁷⁹ Norman Friedman, "Russian Arms Industry Foundering," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, September 2009: 90-91.

Figure 6. Luyang II (Type 052C) Class Destroyer



Source: Photograph provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 2010.

The *Luhu-class ships* reportedly were ordered in 1985 but had their construction delayed by a decision to give priority to the construction of six frigates that were ordered by Thailand. According to one report, the Luhu-class ships were refitted with new systems in 2003-2004 and again in 2009-2011.⁸⁰

The *Luhai-class ship* is believed to have served as the basis for the Luyang-class designs. Compared to the Luhai, the *Luyang I-class ships* appear stealthier.

The *Luyang II-class ships* appear to feature an even more capable AAW system that includes a Chinese-made SAM system called the HHQ-9 that has an even longer range, a vertical launch system (VLS), and a phased-array radar that is outwardly somewhat similar to the SPY-1 radar used in the U.S.-made Aegis combat system.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Source: blog entry dated July 4, 2011, available online at <http://www.informationdissemination.net/2011/07/plan-activity-outside-of-varyag.html>. See also Ted parsons, "Images Reveal Modest Refit of China's Luhu Destroyers," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, July 20, 2011: 17.

⁸¹ The August 2009 report from the Office of Naval Intelligence states that "the Luyang II DDG possesses a sophisticated phased-array radar system similar to the western AEGIS radar system." *2009 ONI Report*, p. 1. Another author states that "the Chinese bought their active-array destroyer radar from the Ukrainian Kvant organization, which is unlikely to have the resources to develop the project much further." (Norman Friedman, "Russian Arms Industry Foundering," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, September 2009: 90-91.)

DOD stated in 2007 the *Luzhou-class design* “is designed for anti-air warfare. It will be equipped with the Russian SA-N-20 SAM system controlled by the TOMBSTONE phased-array radar. The SA-N-20 more than doubles the range of current PLA Navy air defense systems marking a significant improvement in China’s ship-borne air defense capability.”⁸²

As shown in **Table 2**, China between 1994 and 2007 commissioned only one or two ships in each of its five new indigenously built destroyers classes, suggesting that these classes were intended as stepping stones in a plan to modernize the PLA Navy’s destroyer technology incrementally before committing to larger-scale series production of destroyers.

As also shown in **Table 2**, after commissioning no new destroyers in 2008-2010, construction of new destroyers appears to have resumed with serial production of Luyang II-class ships. *Jane’s Fighting Ships* states that a third Luyang II-class ship, built to a modified version of the Luyang II design, was launched (i.e., put into the water for the final phase of its construction) on November 28, 2010, and is expected to enter service in 2012, and that three further ships are expected.⁸³ An October 17, 2011, blog entry states that the third Luyang II-class ship started sea trials during the weekend of October 15-16, 2011, and that the fourth, fifth, and perhaps sixth ships in the class are visible in the shipyard.⁸⁴

Four New Indigenously Built Frigate Classes

As shown in **Table 3**, China since the early 1990s has deployed four new classes of indigenously built frigates, two of which are variations of two others. The classes are called the Jiangwei I (Type 053 H2G), Jiangwei II (Type 053H3), Jiangkai I (Type 054), and Jiangkai II (Type 054A) designs.

Compared to China’s 28 remaining older Jianghu (Type 053) class frigates, which entered service between the mid-1970s and 1989, the four new frigate classes feature improved hull designs and systems, including improved AAW capabilities. Production of Jiangkai II-class ships continues, and *Jane’s* projects an eventual total of 16.

The *Jiangkai I-class ships* feature a stealthy design that somewhat resembles France’s La Fayette-class frigate, which first entered service in 1996.⁸⁵ The *Jiangkai II-class ships* are a modified version of the Jiangkai I-class design that features a VLS system for its SAMs.

⁸² 2007 DOD CMP, p. 3.

⁸³ *Jane’s Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, p. 139.

⁸⁴ “Update From PLAN Land,” *Information Dissemination* (www.informationdissemination.net), October 17, 2011.

⁸⁵ France sold a modified version of the La Fayette-class design to Taiwan; the six ships that Taiwan built to the design entered service in 1996-1998.

Table 3. PLA Navy Frigate Commissionings

Actual (1991-2010) and Projected (2011-2013)

	Jiangwei I (Type 053 H2G)	Jiangwei II (Type 053H3)	Jiangkai I (Type 054)	Jiangkai II (Type 054A)	Annual total	Cumulative total
1991	1				1	1
1992	1				1	2
1993	1				1	3
1994	1				1	4
1995					0	4
1996					0	4
1997					0	4
1998		1			1	5
1999		4			4	9
2000		1			1	10
2001					0	10
2002		2			2	12
2003					0	12
2004					0	12
2005		2	1		3	15
2006			1		1	16
2007					0	16
2008				4	4	20
2009					0	20
2010				2	2	22
2011				2	2	25
2012				3	3	28
2013				1	1	29

Source: *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, and previous editions.

Figure 7. Jiangkai II (Type 054A) Class Frigate

Source: Photograph provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 2010.

Report of Potential New Type 056 Corvette

A December 2010 press report stated that China may be developing a design for a new corvette (i.e., light frigate), possibly to be called the Type 056, that might be intended as a replacement for some of China's older light frigates and fast attack craft.⁸⁶

Houbei (Type 022) Fast Attack Craft

As an apparent replacement for at least some of its older fast attack craft, or FACs (including some armed with ASCMs), China in 2004 introduced a new type of ASCM-armed fast attack craft, called the Houbei (Type 022) class, that uses a stealthy, wave-piercing, catamaran hull. The Houbei class is being built in at least six shipyards. DOD states that "China has deployed some 60 of its new HOUBEI-class (Type 022) wave-piercing catamaran hull missile patrol boats. Each boat can carry up to eight YJ-83 ASCMs. These ships have increased the PLA Navy's littoral warfare capabilities."⁸⁷ Production of the design slowed in 2009, but a total of as many as 100 might be built.⁸⁸ The August 2009 ONI report states that "the Houbei's ability to patrol coastal and littoral waters and react at short notice allows the PLA(N)'s larger combatants to focus on

⁸⁶ Ted Parsons and Mrityunjay Mazumdar, "Photos Provide Clues for Chinese 'Type 056' Corvette Design ..." *Jane's Navy International*, December 2010: 4. (the ellipsis appears in the article's title) See also *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, p. 149.

⁸⁷ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 4.

⁸⁸ *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, p. 151.

offshore defense and out-of-[home]area missions without leaving a security gap along China's coastline."⁸⁹

Figure 8. Houbei (Type 022) Class Fast Attack Craft

With an older Luda-class destroyer behind



Source: Photograph provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 2010.

Amphibious Ships

Yuzhao (Type 071) Amphibious Ship

China has built and deployed a new class of amphibious ships called the *Yuzhao* or *Type 071 class*. The lead ship in the class entered service in 2008 and formed part of one of China's anti-piracy patrols off Somalia. The second ship in the class was launched in November 2010, began sea trials around September 2011, and is expected to enter service in 2011.⁹⁰ A third ship in the class reportedly has been launched (i.e., put into the water for the final phase of its construction), and a fourth may be under construction.⁹¹

The Type 071 design has an estimated displacement of 17,600 tons, compared with about 15,900 tons to 16,700 tons for the U.S. Navy's Whidbey Island/Harpers Ferry (LSD-41/49) class amphibious ships, which were commissioned into service between 1985 and 1998, and about 25,900 tons for the U.S. Navy's new San Antonio (LPD-17) class amphibious ships, the first of which was commissioned into service in 2006. The Type 071 design features a hull with clean,

⁸⁹ 2009 ONI Report, p. 20. For further discussion of the Houbei class, see John Patch, "A Thoroughbred Ship-Killer," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2010: 48-53.

⁹⁰ *Jane's Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, p. 154, and the blog entry dated September 27, 2011 and available online at <http://www.informationdissemination.net/2011/09/latest-activity-at-hd-shipyard.html>.

⁹¹ Blog entry dated September 27, 2011 and available online at <http://www.informationdissemination.net/2011/09/latest-activity-at-hd-shipyard.html>.

sloped sides—a design that resembles the hulls of modern Western amphibious ships and appears intended to reduce the ship’s visibility to radar.

Figure 9. Yuzhao (Type 071) Class Amphibious Ship

With two Houbei (Type 022) fast attack craft behind



Source: Photograph provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, December 2010.

Reported Potential Type 081 Amphibious Ship

China reportedly might also begin (or might have already begun) building a larger amphibious ship, called the Type 081 LHD, that might displace about 20,000 tons.⁹² Such a ship might have, among other things, a greater aviation capability than the Type 071 design. Some observers believe China may build a total of three or more Type 081s.

Potential Roles for Type 071 and Type 081 Ships

Although larger amphibious ships such as the Type 071 and the Type 081 might have some value for conducting amphibious landings in Taiwan-related conflict scenarios, some observers believe that China would build and operate such ships more for their value in conducting other kinds of operations that are more distant from China’s shores. Larger amphibious ships can be used for conducting not only amphibious landings, but humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) operations, maritime security operations (such as anti-piracy operations),⁹³ and non-combatant evacuation operations (NEOs). (Some countries are acquiring larger amphibious ships

⁹² *Jane’s Fighting Ships 2011-2012*, p. 153.

⁹³ On June 30, 2010, it was reported that the Type 071 amphibious ship was one of three ships forming the sixth anti-piracy naval group sent by China to waters of Somalia for anti-piracy operations. “China Sends Sixth Naval Escort Flotilla to Gulf of Aden,” *Xinhua*, June 30, 2010. (The story carries a mistaken dateline of July 30.)

as much, or more, for these kinds of operations as for conducting amphibious landings.) Politically, larger amphibious ships can also be used for naval diplomacy (i.e., port calls and engagement activities).

Other New Amphibious Ships and Landing Craft

Aside from the Type 071 and Type 081 projects, China between 2003 and 2005 commissioned into service three new classes of smaller amphibious ships and landing craft. Each type was built at three or four shipyards. Between these three other classes, China commissioned into service a total of 20 amphibious ships and 10 amphibious landing craft in 2003-2005. China also has numerous older amphibious ships and landing craft of various designs.

Change in Amphibious Lift Capability Between 2000 and 2009

Although China in recent years has deployed new amphibious ships and craft, DOD stated in 2009 that “PLA air and amphibious lift capacity has not improved appreciably since 2000 when the Department of Defense assessed the PLA as capable of sealift of one infantry division.”⁹⁴

Maritime Surveillance and Targeting Systems

China reportedly is developing or deploying maritime surveillance and targeting systems that can detect U.S. ships and submarines and provide targeting information for Chinese ASBMs and other Chinese military units. These systems reportedly include land-based over-the-horizon backscatter (OTH-B) radars, land-based over-the-horizon surface wave (OTH-SW) radars, electro-optical satellites, radar satellites, and seabed sonar networks.⁹⁵ DOD states that

The PLA Navy is improving its over-the-horizon (OTH) targeting capability with sky wave and surface wave OTH radars. In combination with early-warning aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and other surveillance and reconnaissance equipment, the sky wave OTH radar allows the PRC to carry out surveillance and reconnaissance over the western Pacific. The OTH radars can be used in conjunction with reconnaissance satellites to locate targets at great distances from the PRC, thereby supporting long-range precision strikes, including employment of ASBMs.⁹⁶

DOD also states that “Over the long-term, improvements in China’s C4ISR, including space-based and over-the-horizon sensors, could enable Beijing to identify, track, and target military activities deep into the western Pacific Ocean.”⁹⁷

⁹⁴ 2009 DOD CMP, p. viii.

⁹⁵ For an article discussing these systems, see Andrew S. Erickson, “Eyes in the Sky,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2010: 36-41. See also Ben Blanchard, “China Ramps Up Military Use of Space With New Satellites – Report,” *Reuters*, July 11, 2011.

⁹⁶ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 3. See also Andrew Erickson, “Satellites Support Growing PLA Maritime Monitoring and Targeting Capabilities,” *China Brief*, February 10, 2011: 13-18; Torbjorg Hemmingsen, “Enter the Dragon: Inside China’s New Model Navy,” *Jane’s Navy International*, May 2011: 14-16, 18, 20, 22, particularly the section on target tracking on pages 15-16; and Simon Rabinovitch, “China’s Satellites Cast Shadow Over US Pacific Operations,” *Financial Times*, July 12, 2011.

⁹⁷ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 38.

Numbers of Chinese Navy Ships and Naval Aircraft

Numbers Provided by Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI)

Table 4 shows Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) figures on numbers of Chinese navy ships and aircraft from 1990 to 2009, and projected figures for 2015 and 2020. *The figures in the table lump older and less capable ships together with newer and more capable ships discussed above.* The modern attack submarines, destroyers, and frigates shown in **Table 1**, **Table 2**, and **Table 3** for 2009 account for about half of the attack submarines, about half of the destroyers, and about 42% of the frigates shown in **Table 4** for 2009. DOD states that the percentage of modern units within China's submarine force has increased from less than 10% in 2000 and 2004 to 50% in 2008 and about 56% in 2010, and that the percentage of modern units within China's force of surface combatants has increased from less than 10% in 2000 and 2004 to about 25% in 2008 and 26% in 2010.⁹⁸

As can be seen in the table, ONI projects that, between 2009 and 2020, the total number of submarines will increase, a small number of aircraft carriers and major amphibious ships will be added to the fleet, the total number destroyers will remain more or less unchanged, and the total number of frigates will decline slightly. The total number of larger combat ships in China's navy (defined here as submarines, aircraft carriers, destroyers, and frigates) is projected to increase somewhat, mostly because of the projected increase in attack submarines. As these changes take place, the overall capability of China's navy will increase as newer and more capable units replace older and less capable ones. The August 2009 ONI report states that "as newer and more capable platforms replace aging platforms, the PLA(N)'s total order of battle may remain relatively steady, particularly in regard to the surface force."⁹⁹

As can also be seen in the table, ONI projects that that the numbers of land-based maritime strike aircraft, carrier-based fighters, and helicopters, will almost triple between 2009 and 2020, and that most of this increase will occur between 2009 and 2015.

⁹⁸ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 43 (figure).

⁹⁹ 2009 ONI Report, p. 46.

Table 4. Numbers of PLA Navy Ships and Aircraft Provided by Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI)

(Figures include both older and less capable units and newer and more capable units)

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2009	Projection for 2015	Projection for 2020
<i>Ships</i>							
Ballistic missile submarines	1	1	1	2	3	4 or 5?	4 or 5?
Attack submarines (SSNs and SSs)	80	82	65	58	59	~70	~72
SSNs	5	5	5	6	6	n/a	n/a
SSs	75	77	60	52	53	n/a	n/a
Aircraft carriers	0	0	0	0	0	1?	2?
Destroyers	14	18	21	25	26	~26	~26
Frigates	35	35	37	42	48	~45	~42
Subtotal above ships	130	136	124	127	136	~146 or ~147?	~146 or ~147?
Missile-armed attack craft	200	165	100	75	80+	n/a	n/a
Amphibious ships	65	70	60	56	58	n/a	n/a
Large ships (LPDs/LHDs)	0	0	0	0	1	~6?	~6?
Smaller ships	65	70	60	56	57	n/a	n/a
Mine warfare ships	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	40	n/a	n/a
Major auxiliary ships	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	50	n/a	n/a
Minor auxiliary ships and support craft	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	250+	n/a	n/a
<i>Aircraft</i>							
Land-based maritime strike aircraft	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	~145	~255	~258
Carrier-based fighters	0	0	0	0	0	~60	~90
Helicopters	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	~34	~153	~157
Subtotal above aircraft	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	~179	~468	~505

Source: Prepared by CRS. Source for 2009, 2015, and 2020: 2009 ONI report, page 18 (text and table), page 21 (text), and (for figures not available on pages 18 or 21), page 45 (CRS estimates based on visual inspection of ONI graph entitled “Estimated PLA[N] Force Levels”). Source for 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005: Navy data provided to CRS by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, July 9, 2010.

Notes: n/a is not available. The use of question marks for the projected figures for ballistic missile submarines, aircraft, carriers, and major amphibious ships (LPDs and LHDs) for 2015 and 2020 reflects the difficulty of resolving these numbers visually from the graph on page 45 of the ONI report. The graph shows more major amphibious ships than ballistic missile submarines, and more ballistic missile submarines than aircraft carriers. Figures in this table for aircraft carriers include the ex-Ukrainian carrier Varyag, which is likely to enter service before any new-construction indigenous carrier. The ONI report states on page 19 that China “will likely have an operational, domestically produced carrier sometime after 2015.” Such a ship, plus the Varyag, would give China a force of 2 operational carriers sometime after 2015.

The graph on page 45 shows a combined total of amphibious ships and landing craft of about 244 in 2009, about 261 projected for 2015, and about 253 projected for 2015.

Since the graph on page 45 of the ONI report is entitled “Estimated PLA[N] Force Levels,” aircraft numbers shown in the table presumably do not include Chinese air force (PLAAF) aircraft that may be capable of attacking ships or conducting other maritime operations.

Numbers Presented in Annual DOD Reports to Congress

DOD states that

The PLA Navy possesses some 75 principal surface combatants, more than 60 submarines, 55 medium and large amphibious ships, and roughly 85 missile-equipped small combatants.¹⁰⁰

Table 5 shows numbers of Chinese navy ships as presented in annual DOD reports to Congress on military and security developments involving China (previously known as the annual report on China military power). *As with Table 4, the figures in Table 5 lump older and less capable ships together with newer and more capable ships discussed above.* The modern attack submarines, destroyers, and frigates shown in **Table 1**, **Table 2**, and **Table 3** for 2009 account for about half of the attack submarines, about half of the destroyers, and about 42% of the frigates shown in **Table 5** for 2009. As mentioned earlier, DOD states that the percentage of modern units within China's submarine force has increased from less than 10% in 2000 and 2004 to about 47% in 2008 and 50% in 2009, and that the percentage of modern units within China's force of surface combatants has increased from less than 10% in 2000 and 2004 to about 25% in 2008 and 2009.¹⁰¹

Table 5. Numbers of PLA Navy Ships Presented in Annual DOD Reports to Congress

(Figures include both older and less capable units and newer and more capable units)

	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Nuclear-powered attack submarines	5	5	~ 60	n/a	6	5	5	5	6	6	5
Diesel attack submarines	~60	~ 50	~ 60	n/a	51	50	53	54	54	54	49
Destroyers	~20	~ 60	> 60	n/a	21	25	25	29	27	25	26
Frigates	~40			n/a	43	45	47	45	48	49	53
Missile-armed coastal patrol craft	n/a	~ 50	~ 50	n/a	51	45	41	45	70	85	86
Amphibious ships: LSTs and LPDs	almost 50	~ 40	> 40	n/a	20	25	25	26	27	27	27
Amphibious ships: LSMs				n/a	23	25	25	28	28	28	28

Source: Table prepared by CRS based on data in 2002-2011 editions of annual DOD report to Congress on military and security developments involving China (known for 2009 and prior editions as the report on China military power).

Notes: n/a means data not available in report. **LST** means tank landing ship; **LPD** means transport dock ship; **LSM** means medium landing ship.

Chinese Naval Operations Away from Home Waters

Chinese navy ships in recent years have begun to conduct operations away from China's home waters. Although many of these operations have been for making diplomatic port calls, some of them have been for other purposes, including in particular anti-piracy operations in waters off

¹⁰⁰ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 43 (figure).

Somalia. Reported examples of Chinese naval operations away from home waters include but are not limited to the following:

- In November 2004, a Han-class SSN was detected in Japanese territorial waters near Okinawa.¹⁰² DIA states that, as part of the same deployment, this submarine traveled “far into the western Pacific Ocean.”¹⁰³ Press reports state that the submarine operated in the vicinity of Guam before moving toward Okinawa.¹⁰⁴
- On October 26, 2006, a Song-class SS reportedly surfaced five miles away from the Japan-homeported U.S. Navy aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* (CV-63), which reportedly was operating at the time with its strike group in international waters in the East China Sea, near Okinawa. According to press reports, the carrier strike group at the time was not actively searching for submarines, and the Song-class boat remained undetected by the strike group until it surfaced and was observed by one of the strike group’s aircraft.¹⁰⁵ The Chinese government denied that the submarine was following the strike group.¹⁰⁶
- In December 2008, China deployed two destroyers and a support ship to waters off Somalia to conduct anti-piracy operations. According to one source, this was only the third deployment of Chinese naval ships into the Indian Ocean in more than six centuries.¹⁰⁷ China since that time has deployed successive small groups of ships to waters of Somalia to maintain its anti-piracy operations there.¹⁰⁸ U.S. officials have stated that they welcome a Chinese contribution to the current multi-nation effort to combat piracy off Somalia. DOD states that “China continues to conduct counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. PLA Navy

¹⁰² Mark Magnier, “China Regrets Sub Incident, Japan Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 2004; Martin Fackler, “Japanese Pursuit Of Chinese Sub Raises Tensions,” *Wall Street Journal*, November 15, 2004: 20; Kenji Hall, “Japan: Unidentified sub is Chinese,” *NavyTimes.com* (Associated Press), November 12, 2004. See also 2006 DOD CMP, pp. 11-12.

¹⁰³ Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States, Vice Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby, U.S. Navy, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, Statement for the Record [before the] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 16 February 2005, p. 16-17. See also Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States, Vice Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby, U.S. Navy, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, Statement For the Record [before the] Senate Armed Services Committee, 17 March 2005, p. 17.

¹⁰⁴ Timothy Hu, “Ready, steady, go ...,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, April 13, 2005: 27; “China Sub Tracked By U.S. Off Guam Before Japan Intrusion,” *Japan Times*, November 17, 2004.

¹⁰⁵ Bill Gertz, “China Sub Secretly Stalked U.S. Fleet,” *Washington Times*, November 13, 2006: 13; Philip Creed, “Navy Confirms Chinese Sub Spotted Near Carrier,” *NavyTimes.com*, November 13, 2006; Bill Gertz, “Defenses On [sic] Subs To Be Reviewed,” *Washington Times*, November 14, 2006; En-Lai Yeoh, “Fallon Confirms Chinese Stalked Carrier,” *NavyTimes.com*, November 14, 2006; Bill Gertz, “Admiral Says Sub Risked A Shootout,” *Washington Times*, November 15, 2006; Jeff Schogol, “Admiral Disputes Report That Kitty Hawk, Chinese Sub Could Have Clashed,” *Mideast Starts and Stripes*, November 17, 2006.

¹⁰⁶ Associated Press, “China Denies Reports That Sub Followed Kitty Hawk,” *NavyTimes.com*, November 16, 2006. A shorter version of the same story was published as Associated Press, “China Denies Sub Followed A Group Of U.S. Warships,” *Asian Wall Street Journal*, November 17, 2006: 11.

¹⁰⁷ Andrew S. Erickson and Juston D. Mikolay, “Welcome China to the Fight Against Pirates,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, March 2009: 36.

¹⁰⁸ For a discussion of China’s anti-piracy operations in waters off Somalia, see Andrew S. Erickson, “Chinese Sea Power in Action: The Counterpiracy Mission in the Gulf of Aden and Beyond,” which is Chapter 7 (pages 295-376) of Roy Kamphausen, David Lai, and Andrew Scobell, editors, *The PLA At Home and Abroad: Assessing the Operational Capabilities of China’s Military*, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, June 2010, available at <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=995>.

ships have remained in the Gulf of Aden since January 2009. In July 2011 the PLA Navy deployed its ninth escort formation.”¹⁰⁹

- In March 2010, Chinese navy ships involved in China’s antipiracy operations entered the Persian Gulf—reportedly, the first time that Chinese naval ships had entered that body of water.¹¹⁰ Chinese ships have since made additional visits to the Persian Gulf. In July or August 2010, Chinese navy ships involved in China’s antipiracy operations entered the Mediterranean Sea, during which time they reportedly conducted port calls at Alexandria, Egypt; Taranto, Italy; and Piraeus, Greece.¹¹¹
- In April 2010, a group of about 10 Chinese ships, reportedly including two Sovremenny-class destroyers, three frigates, and two Kilo-class attack submarines, transited Japan’s Miyako Strait on their way to and from anti-submarine warfare exercises in the Western Pacific. Helicopters from the formation flew close to Japanese destroyers that were sent to the area to observe the Chinese ships, prompting a protest from Japan.¹¹²
- In late-February/early-March 2011, China deployed a frigate through the Suez canal to waters off Libya to support China’s operation to evacuate Chinese nationals from Libya. The frigate was diverted from anti-piracy operations off Somalia.¹¹³
- In June 2011, China reportedly deployed a group of 8 to 11 navy ships between Okinawa and Miyako islands and into the Pacific to conduct live-fire exercises.¹¹⁴

DOD states that

The PLA Navy’s ongoing deployment to conduct counter-piracy escort missions in the Gulf of Aden is one example of China’s pursuit of its new historic missions.

Another example was the 2010 voyage of China’s first large hospital ship, which made stops in Asia and Africa. The ship is able to support combat operations, but PRC official press reporting stresses the humanitarian aspects of the ship’s mission.

¹⁰⁹ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 7.

¹¹⁰ Greg Torode, “PLA Navy Ships Enter Gulf For The First Time,” *South China Morning Post*, March 27, 2010: 1.

¹¹¹ “Chinese Naval Flotilla In Greece After Anti-Piracy Mission,” *GreekReporter.com* (via Zinhua), August 12, 2010; Christopher P. Cavas, “Chinese Warships Tour the Mediterranean,” *DefenseNews.com*, August 9, 2010.

¹¹² Mure Dickie, “Japan Seeks Answers Over Chinese Warships,” *Financial Times*, April 13, 2010; Jay Alabaster, “Tokyo Wary Of Chinese Military Vessels,” *Washington Times*, April 14, 2010; Greg Torode, “Exercises Show PLA Navy’s New Strength,” *South China Morning Post*, April 18, 2010: 1; “Japan Protests Over Chinese Helicopter’s Fly-By,” *Agence France-Presse*, April 21, 2010; “Japan: Protest Over Chinese Helicopter,” *New York Times*, April 22, 2010; “China’s Naval Drills Near Japan ‘Not A Threat,’” *Singapore Straits Times*, April 24, 2010: 59; “China Envoy Says Naval Chopper Fly-By Was Japan’s Fault (Updated),” *Agence France-Presse*, April 27, 2010; L. C. Russell Hsiao, “In A Fortnight,” *China Brief*, April 29, 2010: 1-2.

¹¹³ See, for example, Andrew S. Erickson and Gabriel B. Collins, “Missile Frigate Xuzhou Transits Suez Canal, to Arrive off Libya ~Wednesday 2 March: China’s first operational deployment to Mediterranean addresses Libya’s evolving security situation,” *China SignPost*, February 27, 2011, 5 pp.

¹¹⁴ “Eight Chinese Navy Vessels Cross High Seas Between Okinawa Islands,” *Kyodo News*, June 9, 2011; Associated Press, “Japan Says It Monitored 11 Chinese Warships Crossing High Seas Off Japanese Southern island,” *WashingtonPost.com*, June 23, 2011.

Most recently, the PLA employed lift assets to assist in the evacuation of PRC citizens from Libya. This marked the PLA's first noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO).¹¹⁵

DOD further states that

The PLA Navy has demonstrated the capability to conduct limited deployments of modern surface platforms outside the second island chain, including nine separate deployments to the Gulf of Aden to support sustained counter-piracy operations from 2009 through mid 2011. The PLA Navy also has acquired new classes of ships to support conventional military operations as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions, including the Type 071 amphibious transport dock and the hospital ship, which the Chinese call the "Peace Ark."

The PLA Navy's investment in platforms such as nuclear-powered submarines and its first aircraft carrier suggest China is seeking to support additional military missions beyond a Taiwan contingency.¹¹⁶

DOD also states that:

The PLA Navy's counter-piracy role in the Gulf of Aden has provided opportunities to advance China's image as a modern military that can act alongside other major world navies. PLA Navy port calls made both in the region and in transit to and from the Gulf of Aden reinforce China's political, military, and economic ties with those countries....

Over the past decade the PLA steadily increased its participation in international HA/DR missions. Investment in large amphibious ships, a new hospital ship, long-range transport aircraft, and improved logistics has made this mission a practical reality....

In late 2010, PLA Navy's new hospital ship PEACE ARK conducted the 88-day "MISSION HARMONY-2010" deployment to the Gulf of Aden to provide medical care to the PLA Navy counter-piracy flotilla and to treat needy residents in Djibouti, Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles, and Bangladesh. This mission marked the PLA Navy's first foreign deployment of a hospital ship.¹¹⁷

DOD also states that "Outside of foreign 'goodwill cruises,' [China's anti-piracy operation] represents the PLA Navy's only series of operational deployments beyond the immediate western Pacific region."¹¹⁸

One group of observers, reviewing out-of-area Chinese naval operations, concluded the following:

The PLAN still has some ways to go before it can operate effectively out of area. At present, it can effectively replenish at sea, conduct intra-task force resupply, perform long-distance navigation, conduct formation-keeping with competent seamanship, and operate in all weather conditions. The PLAN cannot currently conduct a full-scale joint forcible entry

¹¹⁵ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 17.

¹¹⁶ 2011 DOD CMSD, pp. 32-33.

¹¹⁷ 2011 DOD CMSD, pp. 65 and 67. See also Peter W. Mackenzie, *Red Crosses, Blue Water[:] Hospital Ships and China's Expanding Naval Presence*, CNA, September 2011, 24 pp.

¹¹⁸ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 7. The report similarly states on page 3 that "Outside of peacetime counter-piracy missions, for example, China's Navy has little operational experience beyond regional waters."

operation, maintain maritime superiority out of area, conduct multicarrier or carrier strike group operations, or provide comprehensive protection against threats to an out of area task force (antiaircraft warfare, ASW, and antisurface warfare).

The PLAN appears to be expanding its out of area operations incrementally. This will allow the United States, its allies, and other countries time to work out (with each other and with the Chinese) how to respond to opportunities for greater cooperation and potential challenges posed by a more capable PLAN.

China has an even longer way to go before it can be considered a global military power. In particular, it has no network of facilities and bases to maintain and repair its ships. The possession or absence of such a network may ultimately be the best indication of China's future intentions. If China lacks such a support network, it will have great difficulty engaging in major combat operations (MCOs) far from its shores.

Experience gained through out of area operations will help make the PLAN somewhat more effective (in areas such as navigation and seamanship) in some of its other operations. However, most of the tasks performed and lessons gained from out of area operations are not directly transferrable to either a Taiwan contingency or a notional out of area MCO. This implies that time spent on conducting nontraditional out of area deployments for a PLAN unit is time away from combat training for a Taiwan contingency or preparing for MCOs out of area.

A more capable and active PLAN will present new challenges for U.S. policy. On the one hand, the United States wants China to "become a responsible stake holder" in support of international security objectives, which implies a need for greater naval capability to operate out of area. On the other hand, improved PLAN operational capabilities potentially pose a greater military threat to the United States and its allies, especially Asia. The United States has to reassure its allies that it will remain present in the region as a hedge even as Chinese military capabilities improve.¹¹⁹

Some observers believe that China may want to eventually build a series of naval and other military bases in the Indian Ocean—a so-called "string of pearls"—so as to support Chinese naval operations along the sea line of communication linking China to Persian Gulf oil sources.¹²⁰ Other observers argue that although China has built or is building commercial port facilities in the Indian Ocean, China to date has not established any naval bases in the Indian Ocean and instead appears to be pursuing what U.S. officials refer to as a "places not bases" strategy (meaning a collection of places for Chinese navy ships to occasionally visit for purposes of refueling and restocking supplies, but not bases).¹²¹ In May 2011, Pakistan's foreign minister reportedly stated

¹¹⁹ Christopher D. Yung et al, *China's Out of Area Naval Operations: Case Studies, Trajectories, Obstacles, and Potential Solutions*, Washington, National Defense University Press, December 2010. (Institute for National Strategic Studies, China Strategic Perspectives, No. 3.) 65 pp.

¹²⁰ Bill Gertz, "China Builds Up Strategic Sea Lanes," *Washington Times*, January 18, 2005, p.1. See also Daniel J. Kostecka, "The Chinese Navy's Emerging Support Network in the Indian Ocean," *China Brief*, July 22, 2010: 3-5; Edward Cody, "China Builds A Smaller, Stronger Military," *Washington Post*, April 12, 2005, p. 1; Indrani Bagchi, "China Eyeing Base in Bay of Bengal?" *Times of India*, August 9, 2008, posted online at http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/China_eyeing_base_in_Bay_of_Bengal/articleshow/3343799.cms; Eric Ellis, "Pearls for the Orient," *Sydney Morning Herald*, July 9, 2010.

¹²¹ Daniel J. Kostecka, "A Bogus Asian Pearl," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2011: 48-52; Daniel J. Kostecka, "Places and Bases: The Chinese Navy's Emerging Support Network in the Indian Ocean," *Naval War College Review*, Winter 2011: 59-78; Daniel J. Kostecka, "Hambantota, Chittagong, and the Maldives – Unlikely Pearls for the Chinese Navy," *China Brief*, November 19, 2010: 8-11; Daniel J. Kostecka, "The Chinese Navy's Emerging Support Network in the Indian Ocean," *China Brief*, July 22, 2010: 5.

that China had agreed to take over operation of Pakistan's port of Gwadar from the Singaporean government firm that has been managing the port, and that Pakistan wants to have China build a naval base at Gwadar for the Pakistani navy.¹²² Shortly thereafter, however, a spokeswoman for China's foreign ministry stated that operation of the port Gwadar was neither offered by Pakistan nor accepted by China.¹²³ DOD states that

China has invested in several civilian port projects throughout Asia and along the Indian Ocean. Although such investments may improve peacetime logistical support options for the PLA Navy, not to mention enhancing PRC soft power in the region, they are not a substitute for military bases. Without overseas military bases, China will be constrained in its ability to project and sustain power beyond the immediate region. A decision in Beijing to abandon its longstanding and self-imposed policy against overseas basing would signal that China seeks a greater blue water combat capability.¹²⁴

The August 2009 ONI report contains additional discussion of operations away from home waters.¹²⁵

April 2011 Testimony of Commander, U.S. Pacific Command

For additional remarks regarding China's military modernization effort, including its naval modernization effort, see the excerpt from the April 2011 testimony of Admiral Robert Willard, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, presented in **Appendix E**.

Comparing U.S. and Chinese Naval Capabilities

U.S. and Chinese naval capabilities are sometimes compared by showing comparative numbers of U.S. and Chinese ships. Although numbers of ships (or aggregate fleet tonnages) can be relatively easy to compile from published reference sources, they are highly problematic as a means of assessing relative U.S. and Chinese naval capabilities, for the following reasons:

- A fleet's total number of ships (or its aggregate tonnage) is only a partial metric of its capability. In light of the many other significant contributors to naval capability,¹²⁶ navies with similar numbers of ships or similar aggregate tonnages can have significantly different capabilities, and navy-to-navy comparisons of

¹²² See, for example, Jeremy Page, "Beijing Agrees To Operate A Key Port, Pakistan Says," *New York Times*, May 23, 2011: 17; Agence France-Presse, "Pakistan Asks China to Build Naval Base in Nation," *DefenseNews.com*, May 22, 2011; Farhan Bokhari and Kathrin Hille, "Pakistan Turns to China for Naval Base," *Financial Times* (www.ft.com), May 22, 2011.

¹²³ See, for example, Michael Wines, "Pakistan And China: Two Friends Hit A Bump," *New York Times*, May 27, 2011: 4.

¹²⁴ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 33.

¹²⁵ 2009 ONI Report, p. 40. See also Dean Chang, "The Chinese Navy's Budding Overseas Presence," Heritage Foundation Web Memo, No. 2752, January 11, 2010, 3 pp; and Wendell Minnick, "Chinese Expeditions Boost Naval Expertise," *DefenseNews.com*, January 11, 2010.

¹²⁶ These include types (as opposed to numbers or aggregate tonnage) of ships; types and numbers of aircraft; the sophistication of sensors, weapons, C4ISR systems, and networking capabilities; supporting maintenance and logistics capabilities; doctrine and tactics; the quality, education, and training of personnel; and the realism and complexity of exercises.

numbers of ships or aggregate tonnages can provide a highly inaccurate sense of their relative capabilities.

- Total numbers of ships of a given type (such as submarines, destroyers, or frigates) can obscure potentially significant differences in the capabilities of those ships, both between navies and within one country's navy.¹²⁷ The potential for obscuring differences in the capabilities of ships of a given type is particularly significant in assessing relative U.S. and Chinese capabilities, in part because China's navy includes significant numbers of older, obsolescent ships. Figures on total numbers of Chinese submarines, destroyers, frigates, and coastal patrol craft lump older, obsolescent ships together with more modern and more capable designs.¹²⁸ As mentioned earlier, DOD states that the percentage of modern units within China's submarine force has increased from less than 10% in 2000 and 2004 to 50% in 2008 and about 56% in 2010, and that the percentage of modern units within China's force of surface combatants has increased from less than 10% in 2000 and 2004 to about 25% in 2008 and 26% in 2010.¹²⁹ This CRS report shows numbers of more modern and more capable submarines, destroyers, and frigates in **Table 1**, **Table 2**, and **Table 3**, respectively.
- A focus on total ship numbers reinforces the notion that increases in total numbers necessarily translate into increases in aggregate capability, and that decreases in total numbers necessarily translate into decreases in aggregate capability. For a Navy like China's, which is modernizing in some ship categories by replacing larger numbers of older, obsolescent ships with smaller numbers of more modern and more capable ships, this is not necessarily the case. As shown in **Table 4**, for example, China's submarine force today has fewer boats than it did in the 1990, but has greater aggregate capability than it did in 1990, because larger numbers of older, obsolescent boats have been replaced by smaller numbers of more modern and more capable boats. A similar point might be made about China's force of missile-armed attack craft. DOD states that "Since the 1990s, the PLA Navy has rapidly transformed from a large fleet of low-capability, single-mission platforms, to a leaner force equipped with more modern, multi-mission platforms."¹³⁰ The August 2009 ONI report states that "even if [China's] naval force sizes remain steady or even decrease, overall naval capabilities can be expected to increase as forces gain multimission capabilities."¹³¹ For assessing navies like China's, it can be more useful to track the growth in numbers of more modern and more capable units. This CRS report shows numbers of more modern and more capable submarines, destroyers, and frigates in **Table 1**, **Table 2**, and **Table 3**, respectively.
- Comparisons of numbers of ships (or aggregate tonnages) do not take into account maritime-relevant military capabilities that countries might have outside

¹²⁷ Differences in capabilities of ships of a given type can arise from a number of other factors, including sensors, weapons, C4ISR systems, networking capabilities, stealth features, damage-control features, cruising range, maximum speed, and reliability and maintainability (which can affect the amount of time the ship is available for operation).

¹²⁸ For an article discussing this issue, see Joseph Carrigan, "Aging Tigers, Mighty Dragons: China's bifurcated Surface Fleet," *China Brief*, September 24, 2010: 2-6.

¹²⁹ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 43 (figure).

¹³⁰ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 3.

¹³¹ 2009 ONI Report, p. 46.

their navies, such as land-based anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs), land-based anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCMs), and land-based air force aircraft armed with ASCMs or other weapons. Given the significant maritime-relevant non-navy forces present in both the U.S. and Chinese militaries, this is a particularly important consideration in comparing U.S. and Chinese military capabilities for influencing events in the Western Pacific. Although a U.S.-China incident at sea might involve only navy units on both sides, a broader U.S.-China military conflict would more likely be a force-on-force engagement involving multiple branches of each country's military.

- The missions to be performed by one country's navy can differ greatly from the missions to be performed by another country's navy. Consequently, navies are better measured against their respective missions than against one another. Although Navy A might have less capability than Navy B, Navy A might nevertheless be better able to perform Navy A's intended missions than Navy B is to perform Navy B's intended missions. This is another significant consideration in assessing U.S. and Chinese naval capabilities, because the missions of the two navies are quite different.

Potential Oversight Issues for Congress

China as a Defense-Planning Priority

In U.S. defense planning and programming, how much emphasis should be placed on programs for countering improved Chinese military forces in coming years?

The question of how much emphasis to place in U.S. defense planning on programs for countering improved Chinese military forces is of particular importance to the U.S. Navy, because many programs associated with countering improved Chinese military forces would fall within the Navy's budget. In terms of potential impact on programs and spending, the Navy might have more at stake on this issue than the Army and Marine Corps, and perhaps at least as much, if not more, than the Air Force.

Decisions that Congress and the executive branch make regarding U.S. Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military capabilities could affect the likelihood or possible outcome of a potential U.S.-Chinese military conflict in the Pacific over Taiwan or some other issue. Some observers consider such a conflict to be very unlikely, in part because of significant U.S.-Chinese economic linkages and the tremendous damage that such a conflict could cause on both sides. In the absence of such a conflict, however, the U.S.-Chinese military balance in the Pacific could nevertheless influence day-to-day choices made by other Pacific countries, including choices on whether to align their policies more closely with China or the United States. In this sense, decisions that Congress and the executive branch make regarding U.S. Navy programs for countering improved Chinese maritime military forces could influence the political evolution of the Pacific, which in turn could affect the ability of the United States to pursue goals relating to various policy issues, both in the Pacific and elsewhere.

Summary of Arguments

Those who argue that relatively less emphasis should be placed on programs for countering improved Chinese military forces in coming years could argue one or more of the following:

- Preparing for a potential conflict over Taiwan years from now might be unnecessary, since the situation with Taiwan might well be resolved by then.
- It is highly unlikely that China and the United States will come to blows in coming years over some other issue, due to the deep economic and financial ties between China and the United States and the tremendous damage such a conflict could inflict.
- Placing a strong emphasis on programs for countering improved Chinese military forces could induce China to increase planned investments in its own naval forces, leading to an expensive U.S.-China naval arms race.
- Far from coming to blows, Chinese and U.S. naval forces in coming years can and should cooperate in areas of common interest such as humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HA/DR) operations, anti-piracy operations, and other maritime-security operations.

Those who argue that relatively more emphasis should be placed on programs for countering improved Chinese military forces in coming years could argue one or more of the following:

- Not preparing for a potential conflict over Taiwan years from now could make such a conflict more likely by emboldening China to use military force to attempt to achieve its goals regarding Taiwan. It might also embolden China to use its naval forces more aggressively in asserting its maritime territorial claims and its interpretation of international laws relating to freedom of navigation in exclusive economic zones (an interpretation at odds with the U.S. interpretation).
- China's naval modernization effort may be driven more by internal Chinese factors than by external factors such as U.S. decisions on defense spending. To the extent that China's naval modernization effort might be influenced by U.S. decisions on defense spending, a decision to not emphasize programs for countering improved Chinese military forces might encourage China to continue or even increase its naval modernization effort out of a belief that the effort is succeeding in terms of dissuading U.S. leaders from taking steps to prevent a shift in China's favor in the balance of military forces in the Western Pacific.
- Even if China and the United States never come to blows with one another, maintaining a day-to-day presence in the Pacific of U.S. naval forces capable of successfully countering Chinese naval forces will be an important U.S. tool for shaping the region—that is, for ensuring that other countries in the region do not view China as the region's emerging military leader (or the United States as a fading military power in the region), and respond by either aligning their policies more closely with China or taking steps to improve their own military capabilities that the United States might prefer they not take, such as developing nuclear weapons.
- Placing a relatively strong emphasis on programs for countering improved Chinese military forces does not preclude cooperating with China in areas such

as humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HA/DR) operations, anti-piracy operations, and other maritime-security operations.

September 2011 Press Report About New Defense Planning Guidance

A September 29, 2011, press report stated that a new DOD Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) document¹³² dated August 29 “advocat[es] increased investment in military capabilities designed for high-end war among major powers, according to sources familiar with the document.” The report stated that the new DPG “signals a ‘new seriousness [in DOD planning] about major-power war,’ which could trigger a ‘flowering of air and naval power,’ said a former service official familiar with the guidance.” The report stated that DOD “is planning to reduce capability for conventional military operations and counterinsurgency, shrink the size of the military, maintain counterterrorism capability and invest more in countering high-end threats like long-range weapons being developed by China that could challenge U.S. power projection capabilities in the Western Pacific, said a military official familiar with Panetta’s guidance.” The report stated that “if the [DOD] budget [for FY2013 and beyond] comes out with the ‘one-third, one-third, one-third’ ratio intact, the comprehensive review ‘should be judged a complete failure,’ an administration official said. The Army’s [budget] topline will likely be cut harder than other services, the official said.”¹³³

Air-Sea Battle (ASB) Concept

DOD has been developing a new Air-Sea Battle (ASB) concept that is intended to increase the joint operating effectiveness U.S. naval and Air Force units, particularly in operations for countering anti-access forces. The ASB development effort was announced in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (see “2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)” below). Although little of an authoritative nature has been reported about the ASB concept, many observers believe it is focused to a large degree, if not principally, on countering Chinese and Iranian anti-access forces.

An October 12, 2011, press report states that

The Pentagon is engaged in a behind-the-scenes political fight over efforts to soften, or entirely block, a new military-approved program to bolster U.S. forces in Asia.

The program is called the Air Sea Battle concept and was developed in response to more than 100 war games since the 1990s that showed U.S. forces, mainly air and naval power, are not aligned to win a future war with China.

A senior defense official said Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta is reviewing the new strategy.

¹³² The DPG is an internal DOD document that guides DOD’s preparation of its proposed budget.

¹³³ Christopher J. Castelli, “DOD Aims To Boost Investment In Capabilities For Major-Power War,” *Inside the Pentagon*, September 29, 2011. The phrase “one-third, one-third, one-third ratio” is a reference to the division of the DOD “base” budget (i.e., the DOD budget other than the part that funds operations in Afghanistan and Iraq) between the Army, the Navy and Marine Corps, and the Air Force. The current division of the DOD base budget not an exact one-third, one-third, one-third division, but the phrase has come into use as a shorthand way of referring to the current budget division, which has remained relatively unchanged in recent years.

“We want to do this right,” the official said. “The concept is on track and is being refined to ensure that we are able to implement it wherever we need to—including in the Asia-Pacific region, where American force projection is essential to our alliances and interests.”

The official noted that the program is “the product of unprecedented collaboration by the services.”

Pro-defense members of Congress aware of the political fight are ready to investigate. One aide said Congress knows very little about the concept and is awaiting details.

Officially, the Pentagon has said the new strategy is not directed at China.

But officials familiar with the classified details said it is designed to directly address the growing threat to the United States and allies in Asia posed by what the Pentagon calls China’s “anti-access” and “area denial” weapons—high-technology arms that China has been building in secret for the past several decades....

The U.S. response in the Air Sea Battle concept is said to be a comprehensive program to protect the “global commons” used by the United States and allies in Asia from Chinese military encroachment in places such as the South China Sea, western Pacific and areas of Northeast Asia.

The highly classified program, if approved in its current form, will call for new weapons and bases, along with non-military means. Plans for new weapons include a long-range bomber.

Other systems and elements of the program are not known....

However, defense officials said China’s government was alerted to some aspects of the concept earlier this year when the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments think tank presented its own concept for a new warfighting strategy against China.

Andrew Krepinevich, the center’s director who recently left the Pentagon’s Defense Policy Board, could not be reached for comment.

As a result of the disclosure, China launched a major propaganda and influence campaign to derail it. The concept was raised in several meetings between Chinese and U.S. officials, with the Chinese asserting that the concept is a sign the Pentagon does not favor military relations and views China as an enemy.

Officials in the Obama administration who fear upsetting China also are thought to have intervened, and their opposition led Mr. Panetta to hold up final approval.

The final directive in its current form would order the Air Force and the Navy to develop and implement specific programs as part of the concept. It also would include proposals for defense contractors to support the concept.¹³⁴

An October 2011 magazine article stated:

AirSea Battle emerged from a memorandum between the air and sea services in 2009. The Air Force and Navy realized sophisticated threats involving high technology, networked air defenses, modern ballistic missile, and sea and air capabilities, and anti-space weapons

¹³⁴ Bill Gertz, “Inside the Ring,” *Washington Times*, October 12, 2011 (item entitled “Air Sea Battle Fight”).

required the services to marry up many of their respective strengths. The plan, which has received a great amount of attention since the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, mandated the creation of an operations concept to protect US and allied access to certain areas in the world while also protecting forward-based assets and bases....

Both services are said to be fully on board with the plan, and to weed out duplication, officers from each branch have been cleared to see “all the black programs,” or classified projects, of the other service as the ASB plan has matured....

The plan had been vetted by both services by June [2011], and is awaiting blessing from the Office of the Secretary of Defense.... Service officials have been predicting a formal release of more information on the doctrine for months as well.

As early as Feb. 17 [2011], Lt. Gen. Herbert J. Carlisle, the Air Force’s deputy chief of staff for operations, plans, and requirements, had said a public document explaining the outlines of ASB in detail would occur “possibly within two weeks.” The now-retired Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead told reporters in Washington in March he expected to release details on ASB in “a few weeks,” as the service Chiefs of the Marines Corps, USAF, and Navy were “basically done” with their work on the concept. The majority of the plan will remain classified, he added, “as it should be.”¹³⁵

A sidebar to this magazine article stated:

The AirSea Battle rollout was repeatedly delayed over the course of 2011. According to Office of the Secretary of Defense and Air Force officials, new Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta is reviewing the ASB plan—a sort of executive summary of the overall operations concept (which, as of early September, remains classified).

However, then-Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert, now the CNO, told the House Armed Services Committee in late July he expected a release of unclassified portions of the plan soon.

The AirSea Battle concept was signed by the USAF, Navy, and Marine Corps service Chiefs, and the Air Force and Navy Secretaries on June 2 and “forwarded to the [Secretary of Defense] for approval,” the Air Force said in a brief official statement Aug. 2.

Previous Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, who departed July 1, had the document in his possession and had told senior Air Force officials he would sign it before his departure. In late July, however, Air Force and DOD officials privately indicated the concept was held up in OSD’s policy shop, and Gates did not sign the document before leaving the Pentagon.

Air Force and defense officials have indicated both publicly and privately that there are strong international political considerations at play. Spin “concern” has likely contributed to the delay in officially rolling out the AirSea Battle concept. In late July, USAF officials privately indicated that there is a great deal of concern within OSD about how China will perceive and react to the concept.¹³⁶

A September 29, 2011, press report on a reported new DOD Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) document (see “September 2011 Press Report About New Defense Planning Guidance” above)

¹³⁵ Marc V. Schanz, “AirSea Battle’s Turbulent Year,” *Air Force Magazine*, October 2011: 32-33.

¹³⁶ “An ASB Summer,” *Air Force Magazine*, October 2011: 33.

quoted “a senior defense official” as stating: “It seems clear that there will be increased emphasis on [the] AirSea Battle approach going forward.”¹³⁷

A July 26, 2011, press report, stated:

U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta is reviewing an Air Force-Navy battle concept that was ordered by the Pentagon last year in response to China’s military buildup and Iran’s advanced weapons, Vice Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jonathan Greenert said today.

The Navy and Air Force have submitted to Panetta the equivalent of an executive summary of the battle concept with the intent to release unclassified portions within weeks, depending on Panetta’s reaction, Greener told a House Armed Services readiness panel and a Bloomberg News reporter after the hearing.

The plan aims to combine the strengths of the Navy and Air Force to enable long-range strikes. It may employ a new generation of bombers, a new cruise missile and drones launched from aircraft carriers. The Navy also is increasing funding to develop new unmanned submarines.¹³⁸

A June 21, 2011, blog entry stated:

If you have been following [Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Gary] Roughead’s speeches lately... you may have noticed that AirSea Battle is no longer discussed. The question has come up a few times... is AirSea Battle dead?

The answer is yes and no. AirSea Battle doctrine is rarely discussed anymore in public by the Navy because the Navy is backing off AirSea Battle, and some would call it backpedaling with speed....

As it turns out, many have been looking at AirSea Battle as a way to promote and emphasize the prominent role of big deck aircraft carriers in the 21st century. In the past it had been suggested that Vice Admiral Bruce Clingan was appointed N3/N5 specifically for the purpose of insuring aircraft carriers were prominently featured in AirSea Battle doctrine being developed....

As of late AirSea Battle has not unfolded in the way many in the Navy believed it should. Studies and wargames associated with AirSea Battle doctrine development began consistently suggesting that aircraft carriers do not play the prominent role in future military operations from the sea as originally envisioned by the Navy, indeed the findings that divide roles and missions have pushed the Navy away from using big deck aircraft carriers as the sustained strike platform, and instead push the Navy towards more of a long range precision munitions regime primarily conducted by submarines and surface combatants. These findings suggests that the Air Force becomes the primary lead in conventional strike airpower while the Navy leverages their unique capabilities for infiltration and rolling back enemy defense networks. Essentially the Navy’s role becomes kicking the doors down in support of the Air Force and preventing enemy to leverage the sea against allied infrastructure, but sustained combat air operations are conducted primarily by the Air Force in the AirSea Battle doctrine that is currently being developed.

¹³⁷ Christopher J. Castelli, “DOD Aims To Boos Investment In Capabilities For Major-Power War,” *Inside the Pentagon*, September 29, 2011.

¹³⁸ Tony Capaccio, “Panetta Reviewing Air-Sea Battle Plan Summary, Greenert Says,” *Bloomberg News*, July 26, 2011.

None of this is decided, indeed nothing is decided at all, but what has happened during the development of AirSea Battle doctrine is that the Navy has realized they had lost control of the AirSea Battle narrative. The Navy narrative placed the aircraft carrier at the center of AirSea Battle doctrine, and the Air Force's role was supposed to be in support of seapower and filling in gaps not covered by the Navy. As the new narrative emerged with AirSea Battle doctrine development, the Navy saw it as a threat to the institutionalized prominence of big deck aircraft carriers.

It was at that point folks like VADM Clingan and ADM Willard withdrew support for AirSea Battle doctrine as it was being developed, and OPNAV supported their withdraw seeing further development of AirSea Battle doctrine at this time as a budget threat to aircraft carriers.

So AirSea Battle doctrine development is dead, right? Not really....

AirSea Battle doctrine development has helped clarify threats and challenges facing naval forces, and it has revealed how the Navy must evolve existing forces in order to manage the 21st century threat environment. US Navy leadership believes the American way of war at sea is over and under the ocean, and Navy leaders firmly believe that at no time has any weapon system or capability made obsolete the big deck aircraft carrier and submarine as the superior capabilities required in naval warfare. To those in the Navy opposed to the vision of AirSea Battle that has been winning the arguments, the challenges revealed in AirSea Battle doctrine development are a guide towards developing new capabilities that extend the relevance of aircraft carriers and submarines in the face of emerging threats, even in the face of difficult budgets that threaten both aircraft carriers and submarines due to their very high costs.

AirSea Battle doctrine development has informed the Navy that new unmanned technologies like unmanned underwater vehicles and unmanned combat air systems are desperately needed....

If you go back and look at plans discussed in the media 5-6 years ago, you will find the Navy was starting to move that direction in the middle of last decade, but those plans got sidetracked.

Two problems occurred. First, unmanned aircraft development for the Navy in particular got sidetracked when the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq began wearing down F-18s faster than the Navy expected.... Second, the Littoral Combat Ship mission modules that focused on unmanned vehicles ran into serious development problems that have led to a complete restructuring of the mission module programs....

Navy leaders always discuss in public speeches what the focus is, and by not discussing AirSea Battle the Navy is basically signaling they are not ready yet....

In other words, AirSea Battle isn't alive because the Navy is sitting on it, but it isn't dead either because the Navy is actively engaged in addressing the shortcomings revealed by the doctrine development. Basically, AirSea Battle is in stasis until such a time the Navy is better positioned with actual technologies instead of PowerPoint possibilities to argue more effectively their vision for what a Navy strike regime looks like in the 21st century - a strike regime the Navy believes is far more effective and survivable against a peer competitor than

the Air Force alternative currently winning the argument in the AirSea Battle doctrine development discussions.¹³⁹

A June 10, 2011, press report stated that “while defense officials publicly insist that the military’s new AirSea Battle concept, a study meant to reshape the way the U.S. military fights future wars, is not focused on China, one Navy team is quietly contradicting their claims. The group, called the China Integration Team, is hard at work applying the lessons of the study to a potential conflict with China, say sources familiar with the effort.” The report also stated that “though sources familiar with the study have said that the first draft of the concept has been completed, those same sources highlighted that the project is ongoing—something that official spokesmen have stressed as well.”¹⁴⁰ A January 10, 2011, press report stated that “the AirSea Battle concept study, meant to outline the future of Navy and Air Force operations in anti-access environments, is near completion and is being briefed to Navy Secretary Ray Mabus and Air Force Secretary Michael Donley this month, according to sources familiar with the study.”¹⁴¹

A February 18, 2011, press report stated:

The commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific said Thursday [February 17] that the Pentagon is developing new battle plans for Asia that include adding Marines to better-coordinated naval and air forces in the region where China is expanding its military might....

On the new AirSea Battle Concept, which the Pentagon is still crafting, Adm. Willard said: “This is a natural evolution, progression for us, as we advance our military capabilities, and I think it will only enhance the capabilities that we present to this region, the Asia Pacific, within U.S. Pacific Command.”

The battle concept calls for a broad range of steps to better coordinate the Air Force and the Navy in the Pacific, said defense officials close to the study. The plans include better joint communications and integrated attack and defense strategies.

Officials said the plan responds to China’s “anti-access” strategy of using ballistic and cruise missiles, submarines and aircraft to drive U.S. forces out of the western Pacific or limit them in aiding U.S. allies....

The four-star admiral’s comments were unusual because the study’s details are highly classified. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates ordered the study in 2009 amid concerns that U.S. forces, especially the Navy and the Air Force, were unable to operate closely in a wartime scenario.

“We’ve since integrated [the] Marine Corps into the study and their capabilities, and at the end of the day, this will be an enhancement to our joint force writ large,” he said after a speech to the Asia Society in Washington.

One defense official said later that the Marine Corps was added to the AirSea Battle Concept amid growing assertiveness by China’s military. The concept will call for potentially using

¹³⁹ Source blog entry available online at <http://www.informationdissemination.net/2011/06/navy-is-losing-narratives-battle.html>.

¹⁴⁰ Andrew Burt and Christopher J. Castelli, “Despite Improved Ties, China Weighs Heavily In Pentagon’s War Planning,” *Inside the Navy*, June 13, 2011.

¹⁴¹ Andrew Burt, “Final AirSea Study Being Briefed To Mabus And Donley This Month,” *Inside the Navy*, January 10, 2011.

Marines in sensitive scenarios, such as ejecting Chinese forces from disputed islands in the East China or South China seas.

“The Japanese and South China Sea states don't have Marine Corps-type capabilities to stop a Chinese occupation of islands, a U.S. Marine Corps specialty for 80 years,” the official said....

The concept will give the Marines a new role in Asian Pacific strategy....

One part of the battle plan calls for expanding war games in Asia against simulated Chinese forces, something the U.S. military had been limited in doing in the past. For example, the Air Force will do exercises in protecting aircraft carriers, and the Navy will work on defending air bases throughout the region.

The battle-plan study also is examining a major increase in defenses on the U.S. western Pacific island of Guam that are vulnerable to long-range Chinese missile attacks. Military facilities would be hardened on Guam.¹⁴²

Proposed FY2012 Budget

Some observers believe that DOD's proposed FY2012 budget reflects a shift in spending toward a stronger emphasis on programs for countering improved Chinese military forces. A January 25, 2011, press report states:

After years of shining a laser-like focus on winning “today's wars,” [Secretary of Defense Robert] Gates shifted gears when he mapped out spending cuts and new investment priorities in the 2012 budget at a marathon news conference earlier this month.

Funding for a new generation of long-range nuclear bombers, new electronic jammers and radar, and rockets to launch satellites would help the U.S. military maintain its competitive edge even as China flexes its growing military muscle, Gates told reporters during his recent trip to Asia.

Revival of those projects—which Gates largely halted in April 2009—would be good news for big U.S. defense companies like Lockheed Martin Corp, Boeing Co and Northrop Grumman Corp, which are scrambling for new work now that defense spending is beginning to taper off.

For the past two years, Gates had focused—perhaps too much—on land wars while deferring investments in long-term capabilities aimed more at possible enemies like China, said Patrick Cronin at the Center for a New American Security.

“You have to walk and chew gum at the same time,” he said, adding, “Gates may have tilted too far, but he has indeed made some adjustments with this latest plan.”

U.S. defense officials say the fiscal 2012 budget plan, which was nearly a year in the making, is not a knee jerk reaction to China's military buildup, and Pentagon budgets have factored in Chinese military ambitions for many years.

¹⁴² Bill Gertz, “Military To Bolster Its Forces In Pacific,” *Washington Times*, February 18, 2011: 1.

The new budget reflects a swing of the pendulum toward future challenges now that the U.S. military has begun pulling troops out of Iraq and has set 2014 as a date for withdrawal from Afghanistan, said the officials.¹⁴³

Speeches in 2011 by Then-Secretary of Defense Gates

June 4, 2011, Speech at Singapore Shangri-La Dialogue

In a June 4, 2011, speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue (a multilateral conference sponsored by the International Institute for Strategic Studies that is held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore), then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated in part:

The opportunity to lead the United States Department of Defense for four and a half years has been an extraordinary honor, for which I thank both President Bush and President Obama. It has also given me perspective on the principal subject I want to discuss today: the enduring and consistent nature of America's commitments in Asia, even in times of transition and change....

No doubt, fighting two protracted and costly wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has strained the U.S. military's ground forces, and worn out the patience and appetite of the American people for similar interventions in the future. On the domestic front, the United States is emerging slowly from a serious recession with huge budget deficits and growing debt that is putting new scrutiny and downward pressure on the U.S. defense budget.

These are some of the stark realities we face, to be sure. But at the same time, it is important, in this place, before this audience, to recognize an equally compelling set of facts with respect to America's position in Asia. A record demonstrating that, irrespective of the tough times the U.S. faces today, or the tough budget choices we confront in the years to come, that America's interests as a Pacific nation – as a country that conducts much of its trade in the region – will endure. And the United States and Asia will only become more inextricably linked over the course of this Century. As I hope my presentation today will show, these realities, and this understanding – shared by U.S. leaders and policy makers across the political spectrum – argue strongly for sustaining our commitments to allies while maintaining a robust military engagement and deterrence posture across the Pacific Rim.

This statement is underscored by the significant growth in the breadth and intensity of U.S. engagement in Asia in recent years – even at a time of economic distress at home and two major military campaigns ongoing in Iraq and Afghanistan. Three years ago, I spoke at this gathering and touted the fact that I was on my fourth major trip to Asia-Pacific in the previous 18 months. Now, I can report that this is my fourteenth Asia trip over the last four and a half years. Next month, Secretary of State Clinton will embark on her eighth trip to Asia, and President Obama has made a major Asia trip each year he has been in office.

Indeed, one of the most striking – and surprising – changes I've observed during my travels to Asia is the widespread desire across the region for stronger military-to-military relationships with the United States – much more so than during my last time in government 20 years ago.

¹⁴³ Andrea Shalal-Esa, "China Prism Focuses Pentagon Budget On New Weapons," *Reuters.com*, January 25, 2011.

Our engagement in Asia has been guided by a set of enduring principles that have fostered the economic growth and stability of the region. I spoke about these principles last year, but I think it is worth reiterating our commitment to them once more today:

- Free and open commerce;
- A just international order that emphasizes rights and responsibilities of nations and fidelity to the rule of law;
- Open access by all to the global commons of sea, air, space, and now, cyberspace; and
- The principle of resolving conflict without the use of force.

The commitment and presence of the United States as a Pacific nation has been one of relatively few constants amidst the furious changes in this region over the past half-century. But as this region has changed, America has always shown the flexibility not only maintain our presence in the Asia-Pacific, but to enhance it – by updating relationships, developing new capabilities, and transforming our defense posture to meet the challenges of the day....

Although bolstering our bilateral relationships in the region has been a key priority in the Asia-Pacific area, the United States has also made a major commitment to help foster new multilateral cooperation. One of the critical challenges of the Asian security environment has long been the lack of strong mechanisms for cooperation between nations in the region. Over the past few years, I have made it a personal priority to support efforts underway to remedy this problem. This is the reason that last year the United States was the first non-ASEAN nation to accept the invitation to join the ASEAN Defense Ministers Plus forum. It was an honor to attend the inaugural meeting of the ADMM-Plus in Hanoi last October, and I am optimistic that it will be a key body for making progress on a number of issues of shared interest – including maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and peacekeeping operations.

Maritime security remains an issue of particular importance for the region, with questions about territorial claims and the appropriate use of the maritime domain presenting on-going challenges to regional stability and prosperity. The U.S. position on maritime security remains clear: we have a national interest in freedom of navigation; in unimpeded economic development and commerce; and in respect for international law. We also believe that customary international law, as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, provides clear guidance on the appropriate use of the maritime domain, and rights of access to it. By working together in appropriate regional and multilateral fora, and adhering to principles that we believe are of benefit to all in the region, we can ensure that all share equal and open access to international waterways.

Experience consistently shows that pursuing our common interests together increases our common security. As I have stated before, providing for security and upholding the principles I mentioned earlier is not the task of any one nation alone, but the shared responsibility of all nations. This is the one reason we have placed a premium on building the partner capacity of friends in the region and enhancing the role of multilateral cooperation and organizations in Asia-Pacific security affairs.

Even so, we recognize that the American defense engagement – from our forward deployed forces to exercises with regional partners – will continue to play an indispensable role in the stability of the region. Although much of the press in both the United States and the region has been focused in recent years on our efforts to modernize our basing arrangements with traditional allies in Northeast Asia – and our commitment to those efforts is absolute – we’ve

taken a number of steps towards establishing a defense posture across the Asia Pacific that is more geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable. A posture that maintains our presence in Northeast Asia while enhancing our presence in Southeast Asia and into the Indian Ocean.

For example, this past November, the U.S. and Australia established a force posture working group tasked with expanding opportunities for our two militaries to train and operate together – to include alliance arrangements that would allow for more combined defense activities and shared use of facilities.

Together, we are evaluating a range of options, including:

- Increasing our combined naval presence and capabilities to respond more readily to humanitarian disasters;
- Improving Indian Ocean facilities – a region of growing international importance; and
- Expanding training exercises for amphibious and land operations, activities that could involve other partners in the region.

In Singapore, we are strengthening our bi-lateral defense relationship within the context of the Strategic Framework Agreement and pursuing more operational engagement – most notably, by deploying U.S. Littoral Combat Ships to Singapore. We are examining other ways to increase opportunities for our two militaries to train and operate together, to include:

- Prepositioning supplies to improve disaster response;
- Improving command and control capabilities; and
- Expanding training opportunities to help prepare our forces for the challenges both militaries face operating in the Pacific.

Although we will continue to maintain and enhance our traditional presence in the Asia-Pacific region through efforts such as these, we believe that U.S. presence, and the associated impact and influences should not solely be measured in terms of conventional metrics, or “boots on the ground.” In the coming years, the U.S. military is going to be increasing its port calls, naval engagements, and multilateral training efforts with multiple countries throughout the region. These types of activities not only broaden and deepen our relationships with friends and allies, they help build partner capacity to address regional challenges.

Taken together, all of these developments demonstrate the commitment of the United States to sustaining a robust military presence in Asia – one that underwrites stability by supporting and reassuring allies while deterring, and if necessary defeating, potential adversaries.

No doubt, sustaining this forward military presence and commitments is costly, and cannot be disentangled from the wider discussions of the U.S. fiscal predicament in general, and the pressures on our defense budget in particular. I know this topic is top of the mind at this conference and around the region.

As I noted at the beginning of my remarks, the U.S. faces some serious fiscal challenges at home, and the defense budget – even if not the cause of America’s fiscal woes – must be at least part of the solution. Anticipating this scenario, I have spent that last two years carving

out as much budget space as possible by cancelling troubled or unneeded weapons programs and culling excess overhead.

As I said at a speech last week, having removed the most troubled and questionable weapons programs from the budget, we are left with modernization efforts that our defense leaders have deemed absolutely critical to the future – relating to air superiority and mobility, long-range strike, nuclear deterrence, maritime access, space and cyber, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. Though the review is not complete, I am confident that these key remaining modernization programs – systems that are of particular importance to our military strategy in Asia – will rank at or near the top of our defense budget priorities in the future.

Many of those key modernization programs would address one of the principal security challenges we see growing over the horizon: The prospect that new and disruptive technologies and weapons could be employed to deny U.S. forces access to key sea routes and lines of communication.

The U.S. Navy and Air Force have been concerned about anti-access and area denial scenarios for some time. These two military services are working together to develop a new concept of operations – called “Air-Sea Battle” – to ensure that America’s military will continue to be able to deploy, move, and strike over great distances in defense of our allies and vital interests.

The record of growing U.S. engagement in Asia, combined with the investments being made in capabilities most relevant to preserving the security, sovereignty, and freedom of our allies and partners in the region, show that America is, as the expression goes, putting “our money where our mouth is” with respect to this part of the world – and will continue to do so. These programs are on track to grow and evolve further into the future, even in the face of new threats abroad and fiscal challenges at home, ensuring that that we will continue to meet our commitments as a 21st century Asia-Pacific nation – with appropriate forces, posture, and presence.¹⁴⁴

March 4, 2011, Speech at Air Force Academy

In a March 4, 2011, speech at the Air Force Academy, then-Secretary Gates stated in part:

Given that the military will face a broadening spectrum of conflict, and that our nation finds itself in an era of fiscal duress, the military’s resources need to be invested in those capabilities that are of use across the widest possible range of scenarios. One of the ways that spectrum will broaden is with the emergence of high end, asymmetric threats. Indeed, looking at capabilities that China and others are developing – long-range precision weapons, including anti-ship cruise and ballistic missiles, quieter submarines, advanced air defense missiles – and what the Iranians and North Koreans are up to, they appear designed to neutralize the advantages the U.S. military has enjoyed since the end of the Cold War – unfettered freedom of movement and the ability to project power to any region across the globe by surging aircraft, ships, troops and supplies.

The Air Force will play a lead role in maintaining U.S. military supremacy in the face of this anti-access, area-denial strategy. In fact, as you may know, the Air Force and Navy have been working together on an Air Sea battle concept that has the potential to do for America’s

¹⁴⁴ Transcript of speech as delivered, accessed online June 7, 2011, at <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1578>.

military deterrent power at the beginning of the 21st century what Air Land Battle did near the end of the 20th. The leadership of the Air Force and the Navy, who are collaborating closely on this new doctrine, recognize the enormous potential in developing new joint war fighting capabilities – think of naval forces in airfield defense, or stealth bombers augmented by Navy submarines – and the clear benefits from this more efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

These high end conflict scenarios are also driving the development of new air power capabilities. Although program cuts and cancellations tend to make the headlines, the Air Force is actually investing in significant new modernization programs. The budget the president submitted to the Congress last month included funds for a joint portfolio of long-range strike systems, including a new, optionally-manned, nuclear-capable, penetrating Air Force bomber, which remains a core element of this nation's power projection capability. The budget also funds F-22 modernization that leverages radar and electronic protection technologies from the F-35 program to ensure the F-22's continued dominance. Meanwhile, the multi-billion dollar effort to modernize the radars of the F-15s will keep this key fighter available and viable into the future. Finally, a new follow-on to the AMRAAM, the medium range air-to-air missile, will have greater range, lethality and protection against electronic jamming.

A key aspect of the service's portfolio of capabilities will remain its nuclear deterrent. Thanks to the leadership of Secretary Donley and General Schwartz, the Air Force has come a long way in restoring institutional excellence to this mission, where there is no room for error. America's nuclear deterrent – including the missile and bomber legs maintained by the Air Force – will remain a critical guarantor of our security, even as the nation works toward the long term goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

All told, I've described a wide range of capabilities – from low-end asymmetric to high end asymmetric and conventional – that the Air Force will need in the 21st Century. Over the last four years, I have pushed the Air Force, and indeed all of the services, to institutionalize capabilities needed for asymmetric threats and unconventional warfare. However, as my discussion of air supremacy today should confirm, this is not because these are the only kinds of missions I believe the military must be prepared for.

But my message to the services is being distorted by some and misunderstood by others. At the Navy League last year, I suggested that the Navy should think anew about the role of aircraft carriers and the size of amphibious modernization programs. The speech was characterized by some as my doubting the value of carriers and amphibious assault capabilities altogether. At West Point last week I questioned the wisdom of sending large land armies into major conflicts in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, and suggested the Army should think about the number and role of its heavy armored formations for the future. That has been interpreted as my questioning the need for the Army at all, or at least one its present size, the value of heavy armor generally, and the even the wisdom of our involvement in Afghanistan. I suspect that my remarks today will be construed as an attack on bombers and tac-air.

But my actions and my budgets over the last four years belie these mistaken interpretations. You have just heard me elaborate what we are doing to modernize the tactical air and bomber fleet. For the Navy, I have approved continuing the carrier program but also more attack submarines, a new ballistic missile submarine, and more guided missile destroyers. For the Army, we will invest billions modernizing armored vehicles, tactical communications, and other ground combat systems. And the Marine Corps' existing amphibious assault capabilities will be upgraded and new systems funded for the ship-to-shore mission. During my tenure as Secretary of Defense, I have approved the largest increases in the size of the Army and Marine Corps in decades. In 2007 I stopped the

drawdown in personnel for both the Air Force and Navy. And I supported and have presided over the surges in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

All that said, I have also been trying to get across to all of the military services that they will have many and varied missions in the 21st Century. As a result, they must think harder about the entire range of these missions and how to achieve the right balance of capabilities in an era of tight budgets. As I said a few moments ago, military leaders must have a comprehensive and integrated view of their service's future needs and capabilities, a view that encompasses with equal emphasis all of the services' varied missions. And service leaders must think about how to use the assets they have with the greatest possible flexibility, and how much capability they need.

This country requires all the capabilities we have in the services – yes, I mean carriers, tac-air, tanks, and amphibious assault – but the way we use them in the 21st Century will almost certainly not be the way they were used in the 20th Century. Above all, the services must not return to the last century's mindset after Iraq and Afghanistan, but prepare and plan for a very different world than we all left in 2001.

Finally, all the services also need to think aggressively about how to truly take advantage of being part of the joint force – whether for search and rescue, ISR, fire support, forced entry from the sea, long-range strike, or anything else. From the opening weeks of the Afghan campaign nearly a decade ago, to the complex operations required in both combat theaters, we have seen what is possible when America's military services are employing and integrating every tool at their disposal. As I mentioned earlier, the Air Force and the Navy are off to a promising start in trying to leverage each other's capabilities to overcome future anti-access and area-denial threats. But we must always guard against the old bureaucratic politics and parochial tendencies – especially after the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns wind down and budgets become tight. It's easier to be joint and talk joint when there's money to go around and a war to be won. It's much harder to do when tough choices have to be made within and between the military services – between what is ideal from a particular service perspective, and what will get the job done taking into account broader priorities and considerations.¹⁴⁵

February 25, 2011, Speech at U.S. Military Academy

In a February 25, 2011, speech at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, then-Secretary Gates stated in part:

The need for heavy armor and firepower to survive, close with, and destroy the enemy will always be there, as veterans of Sadr City and Fallujah can no doubt attest. And one of the benefits of the drawdown in Iraq is the opportunity to conduct the kind of full-spectrum training – including mechanized combined arms exercises – that was neglected to meet the demands of the current wars. Looking ahead, though, in the competition for tight defense dollars within and between the services, the Army also must confront the reality that the most plausible, high-end scenarios for the U.S. military are primarily naval and air engagements – whether in Asia, the Persian Gulf, or elsewhere. The strategic rationale for swift-moving expeditionary forces, be they Army or Marines, airborne infantry or special operations, is self-evident given the likelihood of counterterrorism, rapid reaction, disaster response, or stability or security force assistance missions. But in my opinion, any future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into

¹⁴⁵ Transcript of speech as delivered, accessed online June 7, 2011, at <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1543>.

Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should “have his head examined,” as General MacArthur so delicately put it.¹⁴⁶

2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR)

China-Related Passages in 2010 QDR

DOD’s report on the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) states:

China’s growing presence and influence in regional and global economic and security affairs is one of the most consequential aspects of the evolving strategic landscape in the Asia-Pacific region and globally. In particular, China’s military has begun to develop new roles, missions, and capabilities in support of its growing regional and global interests, which could enable it to play a more substantial and constructive role in international affairs. The United States welcomes a strong, prosperous, and successful China that plays a greater global role. The United States welcomes the positive benefits that can accrue from greater cooperation. However, lack of transparency and the nature of China’s military development and decision-making processes raise legitimate questions about its future conduct and intentions within Asia and beyond. Our relationship with China must therefore be multidimensional and undergirded by a process of enhancing confidence and reducing mistrust in a manner that reinforces mutual interests. The United States and China should sustain open channels of communication to discuss disagreements in order to manage and ultimately reduce the risks of conflict that are inherent in any relationship as broad and complex as that shared by these two nations.¹⁴⁷

In a section entitled “Deter and Defeat Aggression in Anti-Access Environments,” the 2010 QDR report states:

U.S. forces must be able to deter, defend against, and defeat aggression by potentially hostile nation-states. This capability is fundamental to the nation’s ability to protect its interests and to provide security in key regions. Anti-access strategies seek to deny outside countries the ability to project power into a region, thereby allowing aggression or other destabilizing actions to be conducted by the anti-access power. Without dominant U.S. capabilities to project power, the integrity of U.S. alliances and security partnerships could be called into question, reducing U.S. security and influence and increasing the possibility of conflict.

In the future, U.S. forces conducting power projection operations abroad will face myriad challenges. States with the means to do so are acquiring a wide range of sophisticated weapons and supporting capabilities that, in combination, can support anti-access strategies aimed at impeding the deployment of U.S. forces to the theater and blunting the operations of those forces that do deploy forward.

North Korea and Iran, as part of their defiance of international norms, are actively testing and fielding new ballistic missile systems....

As part of its long-term, comprehensive military modernization, China is developing and fielding large numbers of advanced medium-range ballistic and cruise missiles, new attack

¹⁴⁶ Transcript of speech as delivered, accessed online June 7, 2011, at <http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1539>.

¹⁴⁷ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February 2010, p. 60.

submarines equipped with advanced weapons, increasingly capable long-range air defense systems, electronic warfare and computer network attack capabilities, advanced fighter aircraft, and counter-space systems. China has shared only limited information about the pace, scope, and ultimate aims of its military modernization programs, raising a number of legitimate questions regarding its long-term intentions.

U.S. power projection forces also confront growing threats in other domains. In recent years, a number of states have acquired sophisticated anti-ship cruise missiles, quiet submarines, advanced mines, and other systems that threaten naval operations. In addition to these weapons, Iran has fielded large numbers of small, fast attack craft....

U.S. air forces in future conflicts will encounter integrated air defenses of far greater sophistication and lethality than those fielded by adversaries of the 1990s.... Several states have the capability to disrupt or destroy satellites that provide surveillance, communications, positioning, and other functions important to military operations....

Because of their extreme lethality and long-term effects, nuclear weapons are a source of special concern, both for the United States and for its allies and partners in regions where adversary states possess or seek such weapons....

DoD is taking steps to ensure that future U.S. forces remain capable of protecting the nation and its allies in the face of this dynamic threat environment. In addition to ongoing modernization efforts, this QDR has directed the following further enhancements to U.S. forces and capabilities:

- **Develop a joint air-sea battle concept.** The Air Force and Navy together are developing a new joint air-sea battle concept for defeating adversaries across the range of military operations, including adversaries equipped with sophisticated anti-access and area denial capabilities. The concept will address how air and naval forces will integrate capabilities across all operational domains—air, sea, land, space, and cyberspace—to counter growing challenges to U.S. freedom of action. As it matures, the concept will also help guide the development of future capabilities needed for effective power projection operations.
- **Expand future long-range strike capabilities.** Enhanced long-range strike capabilities are one means of countering growing threats to forward-deployed forces and bases and ensuring U.S. power projection capabilities. Building on insights developed during the QDR, the Secretary of Defense has ordered a follow-on study to determine what combination of joint persistent surveillance, electronic warfare, and precision-attack capabilities, including both penetrating platforms and stand-off weapons, will best support U.S. power projection operations over the next two to three decades. Findings from that study will inform decisions that shape the FY 2012-17 defense program. A number of related efforts are underway. The Navy is investigating options for expanding the capacity of future Virginia-class attack submarines for long-range strike. It is also slated to conduct field experiments with prototype versions of a naval unmanned combat aerial system (N-UCAS). The N-UCAS offers the potential to greatly increase the range of ISR and strike operations from the Navy's carrier fleet. The Air Force is reviewing options for fielding survivable, long-range surveillance and strike aircraft as part of a comprehensive, phased plan to modernize the bomber force. The Navy and the Air Force are cooperatively assessing alternatives for a new joint cruise missile. The Department also plans to experiment with conventional prompt global strike prototypes.
- **Exploit advantages in subsurface operations.** The Navy is increasing funding for the development of an unmanned underwater vehicle that will be capable of a wide range of tasks.

- **Increase the resiliency of U.S. forward posture and base infrastructure.** In key regions, U.S. forces will need to have access to networks of bases and supporting infrastructures that are more resilient than today's in the face of attacks by a variety of means. The Department is studying options to increase the resiliency of bases in selected theaters and will consult with allies and fund these as promising initiatives are identified through analysis. Appropriate steps will vary by region but will generally involve combinations of measures, including hardening key facilities against attack, redundancy and dispersal concepts, counterintelligence, and active defenses, complemented by long-range platforms for ISR and strike operations.
- **Assure access to space and the use of space assets.** The Department, through the implementation of priorities from the Space Posture Review, will explore opportunities to leverage growing international and commercial expertise to enhance U.S. capabilities and reduce the vulnerability of space systems and their supporting ground infrastructure.... Ongoing implementation of the 2008 Space Protection Strategy will reduce vulnerabilities of space systems, and fielding capabilities for rapid augmentation and reconstitution of space capabilities will enhance the overall resiliency of space architectures.
- **Enhance the robustness of key C4ISR capabilities.** In concert with improving the survivability of space systems and infrastructure, U.S. forces will require more robust and capable airborne and surface-based systems to provide critical wartime support functions. In particular, airborne ISR assets must be made more survivable in order to support operations in heavily defended airspace. The Department is also exploring options for expanding jam-resistant satellite communications and for augmenting these links with long-endurance aerial vehicles that can serve as airborne communications relay platforms.
- **Defeat enemy sensor and engagement systems.** In order to counter the spread of advanced surveillance, air defense, and strike systems, the Department has directed increased investments in selected capabilities for electronic attack.
- **Enhance the presence and responsiveness of U.S. forces abroad.** In consultation with allies, the Department is examining options for deploying and sustaining selected forces in regions facing new challenges. For example, selectively homeporting additional naval forces forward could be a cost-effective means to strengthen deterrence and expand opportunities for maritime security cooperation with partner navies. The Department will conduct regional and global reviews of U.S. defense posture to identify key posture priorities that require consultation with allies and constituents.¹⁴⁸

In assessing the above section from the 2010 QDR report, potential oversight questions for Congress include the following:

- Of the various initiatives discussed in the above section, how many are new initiatives?

¹⁴⁸ Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February 2010, pp. 31-34. The report on the 2010 QDR uses the terms China, Chinese, anti-access (with or without the hyphen), and area-denial (with or without the hyphen) a total of 34 times, compared to a total of 18 times in the report on the 2006 QDR, and 16 times in the report on the 2001 QDR. Subtracting out the uses of anti-access and area denial, the report on the 2001 QDR used the terms China or Chinese zero times; the report on the 2006 QDR used them 16 times; and the report on the 2010 QDR used them 11 times.

- To what degree do the remarks in the above section amount to firm commitments to provide funding (particularly procurement funding) for the initiatives mentioned in the above section?
- What net effect will the first of the initiatives above—the development of the air-sea battle concept—have on Navy and Air Force spending on programs for countering anti-access forces? Will the air-sea battle concept provide an argument for increasing Navy and Air Force spending on programs for countering anti-access forces because development of the concept will identify gaps in Navy and Air Force capabilities for countering such forces? Will it provide an argument for not increasing (or reducing) Navy and Air Force spending on programs for countering anti-access forces because development of the concept will identify joint efficiencies between the services?¹⁴⁹

Press Reports Regarding China-Related Passages in 2010 QDR

A February 7, 2010, news report stated:

As the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review moved from a December draft to the February final version, Pentagon officials deleted several passages and softened others about China's military buildup.

Gone is one passage, present in the Dec. 3 draft, declaring that “prudence requires” the United States prepare for “disruptive competition and conflict” with China.

Altered are passages about Russian arms sales to Beijing and China's 2007 destruction of a low-orbit satellite.

Why the changes? One Pentagon official said department and Obama administration officials worried that harsh words might upset Chinese officials at a time when the United States and China are so economically intertwined.

Beijing, for example, holds a large chunk of U.S. debt.

“Don't piss off your banker,” the Pentagon official said.

Both versions contain this passage: “The United States welcomes a strong, prosperous, and successful China that plays a greater global role.” But the draft version goes on to include the following passage, which was stripped from the final QDR: “However, that future is not fixed, and while the United States will seek to maximize positive outcomes and the common benefits that can accrue from cooperation, prudence requires that the United States balance against the possibility that cooperative approaches may fail to prevent disruptive competition and conflict.” Several defense insiders said that latter portion of that section amounts to strong language.

In another section, both the final and draft versions discuss Beijing's military buildup, but the draft language is more specific.

¹⁴⁹ For more on the air-sea battle concept, see Jan van Tol with Mark Gunzinger, Andrew Krepinevich, and Jim Thomas, *AirSea Battle[?]: A Point-of-Departure Operational Concept*, Washington, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2010, 123 pp.; and Andrew F. Krepinevich, *Why AirSea Battle?*, Washington, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2010, 40 pp.

“Over the past ten years, for example, China has fielded more than one thousand short- and medium-range ballistic and cruise missiles, advanced attack submarines armed with wake-homing torpedoes, increasingly lethal integrated air defense systems, extensive electronic warfare and computer network attack capabilities, and counter-space systems,” the draft says.

Gone from the final version are the estimates on the number of ballistic missiles in China’s arsenal. Also deleted is a mention of the torpedoes’ “wake-homing” capabilities. And the wording of the descriptions of Beijing’s air defense and electronic warfare platforms was softened.

The draft refers directly to alleged Russian surface-to-air missile system sales to China, while the final QDR refers only to “proliferation of modern surface-to-air missile systems by Russia and others.” The early version mentions China’s 2007 destruction of one of its satellites in orbit, but the final version says simply, “Several states have the capability to disrupt or destroy satellites that provide surveillance, communications, positioning, and other functions important to military operations.” Retired Air Force Gen. Charles Wald, now with Deloitte and a former vice president of L-3 Communications, said the 2010 incarnation of the review featured an unprecedented level of involvement from other U.S. agencies.

Wald, who worked on past QDRs while serving in senior Air Force and Joint Staff posts, said altering the China language “was definitely a diplomatic issue.” State Department officials weighed in on the wording, he said.

A DoD spokeswoman did not provide answers to questions about the changes by press time.¹⁵⁰

A February 18, 2010, news report stated:

The Pentagon’s Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) makes little overt reference to China’s military buildup. Missing from the 2010 version are several concerns of the 2006 edition, such as China’s cyberwarfare capabilities, nuclear arsenal, counterspace operations, and cruise and ballistic missiles.

Instead, there’s a stated desire for more dialogue with Beijing—and prescriptions for countering the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of unnamed countries.

Analysts say the QDR attempts to address the threat posed by China without further enraging Beijing.

“If you look at the list of ‘further enhancements to U.S. forces and capabilities’ described in the section ‘Deter and Defeat Aggression in Anti-Access Environments,’ those are primarily capabilities needed for defeating China, not Iran, North Korea or Hizbollah,” said Roger Cliff, a China military specialist at Rand. “So even though not a lot of time is spent naming China ... analysis of the China threat is nonetheless driving a lot of the modernization programs described in the QDR.” Among the QDR’s recommendations: expand long-range strike capabilities; exploit advantages in subsurface operations; increase the resiliency of U.S. forward posture and base infrastructure; assure access to space and space assets; improve key intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities; defeat enemy sensors and engagement systems; and increase the presence and responsiveness of U.S. forces abroad.

¹⁵⁰ John T. Bennett, “China Language Softened In Final Version Of QDR,” *Defense News*, February 7, 2010: 8.

All of these could respond to China's development of anti-ship and intercontinental ballistic missiles, ballistic missile defenses, anti-satellite weapons and submarines.

The report does offer concerns about transparency: "The nature of China's military development and decision-making processes raise legitimate questions about its future conduct and intentions within Asia and beyond." It urges building a relationship with China that is "undergirded by a process of enhancing confidence and reducing mistrust in a manner that reinforces mutual interests." The new emphasis on confidence-building measures (CBMs) and military dialogue is in tune with President Obama's strategy of offering an "open hand rather than a clenched fist," said Dean Cheng, a Chinese security affairs specialist at the Heritage Foundation. "This includes, it would appear, a greater emphasis on CBMs, arms control proposals and the like toward the PRC [People's Republic of China]." Compared with the 2006 QDR, the new report makes no reference to Taiwan, but the reasons might be more pragmatic. "The issue of Taiwan has receded since 2006, as cross-Strait tensions have distinctly declined," Cheng said. "The QDR is reflecting that change." Still, Beijing reacted with unusual fury to Washington's Jan. 29 release to Taiwan of a \$6.4 billion arms sale, including Black Hawk helicopters and Patriot missile defense systems.

China canceled military exchanges, threatened sanctions against U.S. defense companies and publicized calls by some People's Liberation Army officers to dump U.S. Treasury bonds.

China had already sold off \$34.2 billion in U.S. securities in December, lowering its total holdings from \$789.6 billion to \$755.4 billion, but that appears unrelated to the arms sale.¹⁵¹

Another February 18, 2010, news report stated:

The Pentagon deleted language expressing concerns about a future conflict with China and dropped references to Beijing's missiles and anti-satellite threats from its major four-year strategy review release earlier this month.

Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell defended the softening of language that was contained in an unofficial Dec. 3 draft of the Quadrennial Defense Review, known as the QDR.

Mr. Morrell said that any previous versions of the QDR were "staff-level documents" that lacked "senior leader input or approval."

The offensive language that was cut in the final QDR was pulled from the section on how and why U.S. forces will "deter and defeat aggression in anti-access environment." The reference to "anti-access" is terminology often used by the Pentagon to describe key weapons systems in China's arsenal, such as its anti-satellite weapons and the maneuvering warheads on ballistic missiles designed to kill U.S. aircraft carriers that would be called on to defend Taiwan from a mainland strike.

"Chinese military doctrine calls for pre-emptive strikes against an intervening power early in a conflict and places special emphasis on crippling the adversary's [intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance], command and control, and information systems," the draft stated. It noted that in January 2007 China carried out a anti-satellite missile test that "demonstrated its ability to destroy satellites in low-Earth orbit."

¹⁵¹ Wendell Minnick, "U.S. QDR Uses Veiled Language on China," *DefenseNews.com*, February 18, 2010.

“Accordingly, prudence demands that we anticipate that future conflicts could involve kinetic and non-kinetic (e.g. jamming, laser ‘dazzling’) attacks on space-based surveillance, communications, and other assets,” the report said.

Those references were omitted from the final report, dated Jan. 26 and made public Feb. 1.

Another key omission from the Obama administration QDR was any reference to China being a major competitor of the United States. The 2006 report stated that China “has the greatest potential to compete militarily” with the U.S.

Both the December draft and the final version contained references to excessive Chinese secrecy about the “pace, scope, and ultimate aims of its military modernization programs.”...

Mr. Morrell, the Pentagon spokesman, defended the QDR’s treatment of China, noting that “the QDR provides a clear-eyed assessment of both the challenges and the opportunities that China presents for the United States and the international community in the twenty-first century.”

Mr. Morrell then said, quoting President Obama, that U.S.-China relations involved both cooperation and competition. “And we are under no illusions about the potential challenges presented by China’s growing military capabilities,” he said. “That is precisely why the QDR identifies trends that we believe may be potentially destabilizing and why we have repeatedly pushed China for greater strategic transparency and openness.” The QDR, along with the forthcoming annual report on China’s military power, due out next month, “provide a fair, unbiased, and comprehensive assessment.”

A defense official familiar with the QDR deliberations said the deletion was due to pressure from Obama administration officials who fear angering Beijing.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxu said in Beijing Feb. 2 that the QDR made “irresponsible” statements about China’s military buildup. However, a military commentator, Li Shuisheng, from the Academy of Military Science, stated Feb. 12 that the QDR downgraded the Pentagon’s view of the threat posed by China from that of a global rival to a regional problem more akin to North Korea and Iran.

John J. Tkacik, a former State Department China specialist, said the changes were probably ordered by the White House.

“By removing references to the breathtaking advances in China’s weaponry and technologies, the White House is basically ordering the Pentagon not to consider them in the planning or budgeting stages,” Mr. Tkacik said.

It is a mistake, Mr. Tkacik said, to leave out references on the need for prudence in dealing with China, and instead focus on welcoming China’s increasing role in world affairs.

“By doing so, the White House national security staff enjoins the military from either planning for, or budgeting for, a future confrontation with China,” he said.

“That places foolhardy trust in China’s future goodwill, especially given Beijing’s cynical support of Iran, North Korea and other American adversaries, and its territorial clashes with Japan, India, Taiwan and other American friends,” he said.¹⁵²

¹⁵² Item entitled “QDR soft on China, in Bill Gertz, “Inside the Ring,” *Washington Times*, February 18, 2010: 8.

Independent Panel Assessment of 2010 QDR

The law that requires DOD to perform Quadrennial Defense Reviews (10 U.S.C. 118) states that the results of each QDR shall be assessed by an independent panel. The report of the independent panel that assessed the 2010 QDR was released on July 29, 2010. The independent panel's report recommends a Navy of 346 ships (about 10% more than the Navy's planned 313-ship fleet), including 11 aircraft carriers (the same number as in the Navy's 313-ship plan) and 55 attack submarines (compared to 48 in the Navy's 313-ship plan).¹⁵³ The report states the following, among other things:

- “The QDR should reflect current commitments, but it must also plan effectively for potential threats that could arise over the next 20 years.... we believe the 2010 QDR did not accord sufficient priority to the need to counter anti-access challenges, strengthen homeland defense (including our defense against cyber threats), and conduct post-conflict stabilization missions.” (Page 54)
- “In this remarkable period of change, global security will still depend upon an American presence capable of unimpeded access to all international areas of the Pacific region. In an environment of ‘anti-access strategies,’ and assertions to create unique ‘economic and security zones of influence,’ America’s rightful and historic presence will be critical. To preserve our interests, the United States will need to retain the ability to transit freely the areas of the Western Pacific for security and economic reasons. Our allies also depend on us to be fully present in the Asia-Pacific as a promoter of stability and to ensure the free flow of commerce. A robust U.S. force structure, largely rooted in maritime strategy but including other necessary capabilities, will be essential.” (Page 51)
- “The United States will need agile forces capable of operating against the full range of potential contingencies. However, the need to deal with irregular and hybrid threats will tend to drive the size and shape of ground forces for years to come, whereas the need to continue to be fully present in Asia and the Pacific and other areas of interest will do the same for naval and air forces.” (Page 55)
- “The force structure in the Asia-Pacific needs to be increased. In order to preserve U.S. interests, the United States will need to retain the ability to transit freely the areas of the Western Pacific for security and economic reasons. The United States must be fully present in the Asia-Pacific region to protect American lives and territory, ensure the free flow of commerce, maintain stability, and defend our allies in the region. A robust U.S. force structure, one that is largely rooted in maritime strategy and includes other necessary capabilities, will be essential.” (Page 66)
- “Force structure must be strengthened in a number of areas to address the need to counter anti-access challenges, strengthen homeland defense (including defense against cyber threats), and conduct post-conflict stabilization missions: First, as a Pacific power, the U.S. presence in Asia has underwritten the regional stability that has enabled India and China to emerge as rising economic powers. The

¹⁵³ Stephen J. Hadley and William J. Perry, co-chairmen, et al., *The QDR in Perspective: Meeting America’s National Security Needs In the 21st Century, The Final Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Panel*, Washington, 2010, Figure 3-2 on page 58.

United States should plan on continuing that role for the indefinite future. The Panel remains concerned that the QDR force structure may not be sufficient to assure others that the United States can meet its treaty commitments in the face of China's increased military capabilities. Therefore, we recommend an increased priority on defeating anti-access and area-denial threats. This will involve acquiring new capabilities, and, as Secretary Gates has urged, developing innovative concepts for their use. Specifically, we believe the United States must fully fund the modernization of its surface fleet. We also believe the United States must be able to deny an adversary sanctuary by providing persistent surveillance, tracking, and rapid engagement with high-volume precision strike. That is why the Panel supports an increase in investment in long-range strike systems and their associated sensors. In addition, U.S. forces must develop and demonstrate the ability to operate in an information-denied environment.” (Pages 59-60)

- “To compete effectively, the U.S. military must continue to develop new conceptual approaches to dealing with operational challenges, like the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO). The Navy and Air Force’s effort to develop an Air-Sea Battle concept is one example of an approach to deal with the growing anti-access challenge. It will be necessary to invest in modernized capabilities to make this happen. The Chief of Naval Operations and Chief of Staff of the Air Force deserve support in this effort, and the Panel recommends the other military services be brought into the concept when appropriate.” (Page 51; a similar passage appears on page 67)

In a letter dated August 11, 2010, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates provided his comments on the independent panel’s report. The letter stated in part:

I completely agree with the Panel that a strong navy is essential; however, I disagree with the Panel’s recommendation that DoD should establish the 1993 Bottom Up Review’s (BUR’s) fleet of 346 ships as the objective target. That number was a simple projection of the then-planned size of [the] Navy in FY 1999, not a reflection of 21st century, steady-state requirements. The fleet described in the 2010 QDR report, with its overall target of 313 to 323 ships, has roughly the same number of aircraft carriers, nuclear-powered attack submarines, surface combatants, mine warfare vessels, and amphibious ships as the larger BUR fleet. The main difference between the two fleets is in the numbers of combat logistics, mobile logistics, and support ships. Although it is true that the 2010 fleet includes fewer of these ships, they are all now more efficiently manned and operated by the Military Sealift Command and meet all of DoD’s requirements....

I agree with the Panel’s general conclusion that DoD ought to enhance its overall posture and capabilities in the Asia-Pacific region. As I outlined in my speech at the Naval War College in April 2009, “to carry out the missions we may face in the future ... we will need numbers, speed, and the ability to operate in shallow waters.” So as the Air-Sea battle concept development reaches maturation, and as DoD’s review of global defense posture continues, I will be looking for ways to meet plausible security threats while emphasizing sustained forward presence—particularly in the Pacific.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ Letter dated August 11, 2010, from Secretary of Defense Robert Gates to the chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services and Appropriations Committees, pp. 3 and 4. The ellipsis in the second paragraph appears in the letter.

Perspectives Favoring Strong Naval and Other U.S. Forces in the Pacific

Some observers argue that the United States should respond to China's military (including naval) modernization effort by maintaining strong U.S. naval and other military forces in the Western Pacific, even during a period of constrained or declining U.S. defense spending. This section presents some examples of such perspectives. One such observer states:

Leon Panetta has begun his tenure as secretary of defense with big challenges to manage—conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, and looming cuts in defense spending—and two clouds on the national security horizon he knows he cannot ignore.

These threatening developments are in regions long considered to be of vital interest to the United States: the Western Pacific and the Persian Gulf. They will be difficult, if not impossible, to reverse....

China is fielding precision-guided ballistic and cruise missiles in increasing numbers. Their principal purpose appears to be threatening the major U.S. air bases in the Western Pacific, such as the one at Kadena on the Japanese island of Okinawa. China is also equipping its air force and navy with high-speed anti-ship cruise missiles capable of overwhelming the U.S. Navy's carrier defenses, and it is developing a new anti-ship ballistic missile, the DF-21.

Beijing believes the U.S. military has an Achilles' heel: its "nervous system" of battle networks. Without its satellite and fiber-optic data links, the U.S. ability to coordinate forces, target the enemy, guide weapons to their targets and maintain control over unmanned drones such as the Predator would be severely compromised. The People's Liberation Army has in recent years fielded and tested anti-satellite lasers and rockets, and it is suspected of probing U.S. defenses with its cyber-weapons. This has led to concerns that the opening moves of a future major conflict would be against America's information system. As Panetta put it at his confirmation hearing last month: "The next Pearl Harbor that we face could well be a cyber attack."

Does China want war with the United States? Almost certainly not. What China does want, apparently, is to shift the military balance in the Western Pacific so that the United States will not be able to provide credible military support to longtime security partners such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

We had a word for this phenomenon during the Cold War: Finlandization. Then, the United States sought to maintain a stable military balance with the Soviet Union. One reason was that if the balance shifted in Moscow's favor, America's European allies might conclude that Moscow could not be resisted and would fall under Soviet sway. All of Europe would share the fate of Finland, which remained nominally independent after World War II but abided by foreign policy rules dictated in Moscow.

The second concern is Iran, which, like Beijing, is buying into the precision-guided weapons revolution.... The apparent goal is to turn the Persian Gulf's constricted waters, through which 40 percent of the world's oil shipping passes, into an Iranian lake....

If the United States fails to respond to these challenges, the strategically vital Persian Gulf and major parts of the Western Pacific will become "no-go" zones for the U.S. military—areas where the risks of operating are prohibitively high.

The U.S. military is likely to confront these growing challenges with significantly diminished resources. The Pentagon budget is projected to be cut by \$400 billion, and perhaps quite a bit more, over the next decade as Washington struggles to get its fiscal house

in order. Wisely, both Panetta and his predecessor, Robert Gates, have declared that any budget cuts must be informed by a well-crafted strategy, and the Pentagon is working to craft one. A crucial test will be how well it addresses these rapidly growing risks.¹⁵⁵

Another observer states that

The United States Navy and Marine Corps are the ultimate guarantors of U.S. maritime interests around the world. Unlike the PLAN, U.S. naval forces must operate far from their own shores, which increases wear and tear on ships while extending transit time from home ports to patrol areas. Consequently, the U.S. must maintain robust and substantial naval forces in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the Indian Ocean, if it is to be able to dissuade and deter potential opponents and support national interests.

This, in turn, means that reductions in the size of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps and their operational tempo will have a disproportionate effect not only on actual abilities to operate in the region, but also on perceptions of American commitment and credibility. Far from reducing Navy and Marine resources, it may be that additional resources are necessary. The U.S. cannot afford to see its navy shrink further.¹⁵⁶

Two observers state:

China's military rise is changing the balance of power in its neighborhood. While Washington debates how to cut America's military, China continues to spend generously on defense. Last year, the Obama administration took the first steps in a \$400 billion defense spending cut, ending several crucial programs. The White House has now asked for another \$400 billion in cuts. China, meanwhile, has averaged 10% annual spending increases for more than 20 years. As former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown once said of the Soviets, "When we build, they build; when we cut, they build."

Beijing has the most ambitious missile program in the world—including an anti-ship ballistic missile that threatens U.S. aircraft carriers. China is also investing heavily in submarines and surface ships; stealthy fighter aircraft; and space and cyber-warfare capabilities. The equation budget cutters should ponder is that China's aggressive build-up plus American defense cuts equals Asian instability.

That instability could have far-reaching consequences. America's military has ensured peace and stability in the region, made the seas safe for trade and transit, provided Asians with the political space to prosper, and guaranteed that no hostile power would again use the Pacific as an avenue of approach for an attack on American soil.

Indeed, there would be no possibility of an "Asian Century" absent U.S. power. The international trade that has fueled the region's economic boom is dependent upon the immeasurable strategic tasks undertaken by the U.S. military—from keeping safe maritime shipping to reassuring friends and allies while deterring China and North Korea. The value of these daily operations is hard to price in a budget....

The long-term costs of defense cuts are not worth the short-term savings. If America skimps on its military, China will become the regional hegemon. One need only look to Beijing's

¹⁵⁵ Andrew Krepinevich, "Panetta's Challenge," *Washington Post*, July 15, 2011: 15. See also Andrew F. Krepinevich, "China's 'Finlandization' Strategy in the Pacific," *Wall Street Journal*, September 11, 2010.

¹⁵⁶ Dean Cheng, *Sea Power and the Chinese State: China's Maritime Ambitions*, Heritage Foundation Background Paper No. 2576, July 11, 2011, p. 10.

recent behavior to imagine an Asia under Chinese domination. China has been bullying its neighbors over disputed claims in the South and East China Seas, while continuing an arms build-up across from Taiwan.

In response allies and friends are asking for greater American presence—the U.S. military is obliging, but is doing more with less. Such strategic insolvency is unsustainable. Should American military power further erode, the region would face one of two unhappy futures. China could successfully pacify its neighbors and dominate Asia. America would thus fail to maintain a longstanding objective—the prevention of a hostile hegemon dominating Asia.

Alternatively, Asian countries might find ways to resist Chinese pressure themselves. In this scenario, countries would arm to the teeth and form ever-shifting constellations of power. Many would develop weapons of mass destruction. Asia would look something like Europe did before World War I—but with nuclear weapons. Confronting either future tomorrow could be more expensive than properly resourcing our Pacific forces today.¹⁵⁷

Another observer states that

the United States is now in a multi-front arms race with China. In some areas the Obama Administration is trying to respond, but in others, for reasons ideological and/or fiscal, it is either failing or refusing to respond. There is an increasing danger that instead of leading PLA military technical developments and sustaining deterrence, the U.S. instead may increasingly find that it is following PLA developments and losing the ability to deter Chinese aggression, against Taiwan and perhaps against Japan and Korea. However, while sustaining an American military lead in this arms race with China will require adequate investments, the Obama Administration is preparing for further U.S. defense cuts. As such, contrary to General Chen's preference for U.S. rhetorical disarmament regarding the PLA, there is a requirement for far greater candor from U.S. leaders about the PLA's growing threats in order ensure U.S. defense capabilities will be adequate to deter, counter or defeat them.¹⁵⁸

Another observer states:

America's secretary of defense has two main jobs. As a senior official in the chain of command, the defense secretary supports military commanders in executing the missions of the nation. Equally important, he must plan and shape the force of the future. And since it takes a long time to develop and deploy new equipment, the Pentagon's planning horizon is 20 years down the road.

[Secretary of Defense Robert] Gates conflates the two responsibilities, to the detriment in particular of our naval and air services. He often refers to the need to "rebalance the force" to better fight the wars of today. If he means only that the services should use current assets to win the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, then the statement is unremarkable.

But that isn't all that Gates means. He uses the current counterinsurgency missions as an excuse for not sustaining programs that are necessary to ensure the United States will be able to contain Russia, Iran, and especially the growing power of China.

¹⁵⁷ Dan Blumenthal and Michael Mazza, "Asia Needs a Larger U.S. Defense Budget," *Wall Street Journal*, July 5, 2011.

¹⁵⁸ Richard Fisher, Jr., "PLA and U.S. Arms Racing in the Western Pacific," available online at http://www.strategiccenter.net/research/pubID.247/pub_detail.asp.

One example is Gates's treatment of the Navy. Its size cut in half since the Reagan years, the Navy at 288 ships is smaller today than at any time since 1916. And it is still shrinking:...

In a speech before the Navy League earlier this year, however, Gates dismissed the idea that the Navy is too weak....

In his speech, Gates dismissed concerns by noting that the world's other navies, taken as a whole, have shrunk even more. But that is true largely because America's major European allies have reduced their naval capabilities since the end of the Cold War.

The Chinese, however, aren't shrinking their navy. Within about five years, their fleet of modern submarines will nearly equal ours. China also is building its first aircraft carrier and has announced plans to build a new class of destroyers. These are two clear signals China seeks the ability not only to hold the U.S. Navy at bay in the Western Pacific, but to project power around the world.¹⁵⁹

Another observer states:

Until now, most U.S. policymakers and analysts have ignored China's emerging missile capability, reflecting a general sense that the threat of growing Chinese military power is too remote to take seriously at present—a sense born from the United States' focus on fighting land wars at the expense of preserving the maritime power on which U.S. grand strategy has historically rested. But China's policy beyond its borders has recently become more assertive—a fact not unrelated to its new military and naval capabilities....

For the immediate future, the administration is right to shore up U.S. alliances in the Western Pacific and continue to pursue a region-wide agreement on how to resolve territorial disputes in the South China Sea. It should also increase the level of naval exercises with allies in the region and proceed as scheduled with joint naval exercises planned with Japan in December on or around the Ryukyu Islands, which form the eastern perimeter of the East China Sea.

The Obama administration should also lift its seeming gag order on the U.S. Navy's ability to speak candidly about the dangers posed by China's naval enlargement. Allowing the Navy to publicly discuss China's naval buildup as strategic justification for a larger naval force and presence could be useful: it might help build congressional support for reversing the U.S. Navy's virtual self-disarmament.¹⁶⁰

Another observer states:

The greatest geopolitical development that has occurred largely beneath the radar of our Middle East-focused media over the past decade has been the rise of Chinese sea power....

The geographical heart of America's hard-power competition with China will be the South China Sea, through which passes a third of all commercial maritime traffic worldwide and half of the hydrocarbons destined for Japan, the Korean Peninsula and northeastern China. That sea grants Beijing access to the Indian Ocean via the Strait of Malacca, and thus to the entire arc of Islam, from East Africa to Southeast Asia. The United States and others consider the South China Sea an international waterway; China considers it a "core interest." Much like when the Panama Canal was being dug, and the United States sought domination of the Caribbean to be the preeminent power in the Western Hemisphere, China seeks

¹⁵⁹ Jim Talent, "The Gates Legacy," *Weekly Standard*, December 13, 2010: 27.

¹⁶⁰ Seth Cropsey, "Keeping the Pacific Pacific," *ForeignAffairs.com*, September 27, 2010.

domination of the South China Sea to be the dominant power in much of the Eastern Hemisphere....

America's preoccupation with the Middle East suits China perfectly. We are paying in blood and treasure to stabilize Afghanistan while China is building transport and pipeline networks throughout Central Asia that will ultimately reach Kabul and the trillion dollars' worth of minerals lying underground. Whereas Americans ask how can we escape Afghanistan, the Chinese, who are already prospecting for copper there, ask: How can we stay? Our military mission in Afghanistan diverts us from properly reacting to the Chinese naval challenge in East Asia.

The United States should not consider China an enemy. But neither is it in our interest to be distracted while a Chinese economic empire takes shape across Eurasia. This budding empire is being built on our backs: the protection of the sea lines of communication by the U.S. Navy and the pacification of Afghanistan by U.S. ground troops. It is through such asymmetry—we pay far more to maintain what we have than it costs the Chinese to replace us—that great powers rise and fall. That is why the degree to which the United States can shift its focus from the Middle East to East Asia will say much about our future prospects as a great power.¹⁶¹

Potential Implications for U.S. Navy Programs

What are the potential Navy-related program implications of placing a relatively strong emphasis on countering improved Chinese military forces in coming years?

Actions Already Taken

The U.S. Navy and (for sea-based ballistic missile defense programs) the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) have taken a number of steps in recent years that appear intended, at least in part, at improving the U.S. Navy's ability to counter Chinese maritime anti-access capabilities, including but not limited to the following:

- increasing antisubmarine warfare (ASW) training for Pacific Fleet forces;
- shifting three Pacific Fleet Los Angeles (SSN-688) class SSNs to Guam;
- basing all three Seawolf (SSN-21) class submarines—the Navy's largest and most heavily armed SSNs—in the Pacific Fleet (at Kitsap-Bremerton, WA);
- basing two of the Navy's four converted Trident cruise missile/special operations forces submarines (SSGNs) in the Pacific (at Bangor, WA);¹⁶²
- assigning most of the Navy's ballistic missile defense (BMD)-capable Aegis cruisers and destroyers to the Pacific—and homeporting some of those ships at Yokosuka, Japan, and Pearl Harbor, HI;

¹⁶¹ Robert D. Kaplan, "While U.S. Is Distracted, China Develops Sea Power," *Washington Post*, September 26, 2010: A25.

¹⁶² For more on the SSGNs, see CRS Report RS21007, *Navy Trident Submarine Conversion (SSGN) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

- announcing an intention to base a few Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs) in Singapore;
- expanding the planned number of BMD-capable ships from three Aegis cruisers and 15 Aegis destroyers to at least 10 Aegis cruisers and *all* Aegis destroyers;¹⁶³ and
- increasing planned procurement quantities of SM-3 BMD interceptor missiles.

In addition, the Navy's July 2008 proposal to stop procurement of Zumwalt (DDG-1000) class destroyers and resume procurement of Arleigh Burke (DDG-51) class Aegis destroyers can be viewed as having been prompted in large part by Navy concerns over its ability to counter China's maritime anti-access capabilities.¹⁶⁴

Potential Further Actions

As mentioned earlier (see "Limitations and Weaknesses" in "Background"), China's navy exhibits limitations or weaknesses in several areas, including C4ISR systems, anti-air warfare (AAW), antisubmarine warfare (ASW), and mine countermeasures (MCM). Countering China's naval modernization might thus involve, among other things, actions to exploit these limitations and weaknesses, such as developing and procuring electronic warfare systems, antiship cruise missiles, Virginia (SSN-774) class attack submarines, torpedoes, unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs), and mines.

It might also involve stating publicly (while withholding classified details) the U.S. Navy's ability to counter improved Chinese maritime forces. Such public statements could help prevent Chinese overconfidence that might lead to incidents, while also reassuring regional allies, partners, and neutrals. Conversely, some observers might argue, having an ability to counter Chinese maritime military forces but not stating it publicly could invite Chinese overconfidence and thereby be destabilizing.

A February 1, 2011, press report stated:

U.S. military commanders are expressing confidence that they can hold their own in the face of faster-than-expected advances by China's military, but looming cost cuts are adding to doubts about the future of American power in the Pacific....

In an interview from an office at the Washington Navy Yard, a military base in the nation's capital, the top Navy commander said the military had plans in place to cope with advances in China, and elsewhere. "We're not flat footed" in the response to China, Admiral Gary Roughead told Reuters.

¹⁶³ For further discussion, see CRS Report RL33745, *Navy Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke

¹⁶⁴ The Navy stated that this proposal was driven by a change over the last two years in the Navy's assessment of threats that U.S. Navy forces will face in coming years from ASCMs, ballistic missiles, and submarines operating in blue waters. Although the Navy in making this proposal did not highlight China by name, the Navy's references to ballistic missiles and to submarines operating in blue waters can be viewed, at least in part, as a reference to Chinese ballistic missiles (including ASBMs) and Chinese submarines. (In discussing ASCMs, the Navy cited a general proliferation of ASCMs to various actors, including the Hezbollah organization.) For further discussion, see CRS Report RL32109, *Navy DDG-51 and DDG-1000 Destroyer Programs: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

“I would say that we are responding, or advancing, our capabilities in such a way that we’re pacing the global developments that are taking place,” he said.

“That includes Chinese advances, it includes developments that are taking place in other parts of the world as well.”¹⁶⁵

A December 2010 press report stated:

The man who would face the Chinese in battle, Adm. Patrick Walsh, the current commander of the U.S. Navy’s Pacific Fleet, sees preparation as a way to avoid a future fight. “When we look at these sorts of [Chinese military] developments, such as the ASBM, they are technological developments that we respect, but do not necessarily fear,” Walsh says. “The key element in any sort of deterrent strategy is to make it clear to those who would use a given piece of technology that we have the means to counter it, and to maintain a technological edge.”¹⁶⁶

One observer stated in 2009 that

It is time for the national security community to get a grip on itself. The AA/AD [anti-access/area-denial] threat is neither new nor all that daunting. The U.S. military has already faced down the mother of all AA/AD threats. It was the Soviet military. The Red Army was postured for the ultimate AA/AD operation, including a massive air and missile assault—employing chemical weapons—on all our forward bases and using hundreds of submarines and aircraft to sweep the seas of our ships. The AA/AD Cassandras are hyping today’s threat. Equally bad, they are forgetting recent history.

The U.S. military will employ a full sweep of technologies, tactics and techniques to counter the AA/AD threat. As my colleague Loren Thompson pointed out... a few weeks ago the U.S. Navy has ways of addressing the anti-shipping ballistic missile threat. Advanced organic mine warfare capabilities are being developed to counter sea mines. The Air Force will employ a combination of airfield defenses, electronic warfare, SEAD [suppression of enemy air defenses], unmanned systems, long-range precision weapons and most important, stealthy aircraft to defeat the AA/AD threat. There is an AA/AD threat, but it is not an apocalyptic danger.¹⁶⁷

A decision to place a relatively strong defense-planning emphasis on countering improved Chinese military forces in coming years could lead to one or more of the following:

- developing and procuring highly capable ships, aircraft, weapons, and supporting C4ISR systems for defeating Chinese anti-access systems;
- assigning a larger percentage of the Navy to the Pacific Fleet (and, as a result, a smaller percentage to the Atlantic Fleet);
- homeporting more of the Pacific Fleet’s ships at forward locations such as Hawaii, Guam, and Japan;

¹⁶⁵ Phil Stewart, “U.S. Military Says Keeps Up With China; Is It Enough?” *Reuters.com*, February 1, 2011.

¹⁶⁶ Erik Sofge, “China’s Deadliest Game,” *Popular Mechanics*, December 2010: 83.

¹⁶⁷ Daniel Goure, “The Overblown Anti-Access, Area Denial Threat,” Lexington Institute Early Warning Blog, October 23, 2009, accessed at <http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/the-overblown-anti-access-area-denial-threat?a=1&c=1171>.

- increasing training and exercises in operations relating to countering Chinese maritime anti-access forces, such as antisubmarine warfare (ASW) operations; and
- increasing activities for monitoring and understanding developments in China's navy, as well as activities for measuring and better understanding operating conditions in the Western Pacific.

Acquiring Highly Capable Ships

Placing a strong emphasis on countering Chinese maritime anti-access capabilities could involve maintaining or increasing funding for procurement of Ford (CVN-78) class aircraft carriers,¹⁶⁸ Virginia (SSN-774) class attack submarines,¹⁶⁹ and Arleigh Burke (DDG-51) class Aegis destroyers, including the new Flight III version of the DDG-51, which is to be equipped with a new radar for improved air and missile defense operations. The Navy wants to start procuring the Flight III version in FY2016.¹⁷⁰ An emphasis on acquiring highly capable ships could also involve maintaining or increasing funding for adding a BMD capability to existing Aegis cruisers and destroyers,¹⁷¹ increasing funding for procurement of SM-3 BMD interceptors, modifying the Flight III DDG-51 design to include a larger number of missile-launch tubes,¹⁷² procuring an adjunct radar ship, perhaps similar to the Cobra Judy Replacement ship, to assist Aegis ships in conducting BMD operations,¹⁷³ and procuring future Virginia-class attack submarines with an enhanced strike capability.¹⁷⁴ It could also mean fully funding programs for maintaining, upgrading, and extending the service lives of ships currently in service. Potential candidates for service life extension programs include the Navy's 22 Ticonderoga (CG-47) class Aegis cruisers, the Navy's first 28 DDG-51 class destroyers (known as the Flight I/II DDG-51s), the final 23 Los Angeles (SSN-688) class attack submarines (known as the Improved 688s), and the Navy's three Seawolf (SSN-21) class submarines.

Some observers, viewing the anti-access aspects of China's naval modernization effort, including ASBMs, ASCMs, and other anti-ship weapons, have raised the question of whether the U.S. Navy should respond by shifting over time to a more highly distributed fleet architecture featuring a reduced reliance on carriers and other large ships and an increased reliance on smaller ships. Supporters of this option argue that such an architecture could generate comparable aggregate fleet capability at lower cost and be more effective at confounding Chinese maritime anti-access

¹⁶⁸ For more on the CVN-78 program, see CRS Report RS20643, *Navy Ford (CVN-78) Class Aircraft Carrier Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

¹⁶⁹ For more on the Virginia-class program, see CRS Report RL32418, *Navy Virginia (SSN-774) Class Attack Submarine Procurement: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

¹⁷⁰ For more on the DDG-51 program, including the planned Flight III version, see CRS Report RL32109, *Navy DDG-51 and DDG-1000 Destroyer Programs: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

¹⁷¹ For more on the program to add a BMD capability to existing Aegis cruisers and destroyers, see CRS Report RL33745, *Navy Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

¹⁷² This option is discussed in CRS Report RL32109, *Navy DDG-51 and DDG-1000 Destroyer Programs: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

¹⁷³ This option is discussed in CRS Report RL32109, *Navy DDG-51 and DDG-1000 Destroyer Programs: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

¹⁷⁴ This option is discussed in CRS Report RL32418, *Navy Virginia (SSN-774) Class Attack Submarine Procurement: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

capabilities. Skeptics, including supporters of the currently planned fleet architecture, question both of these arguments.¹⁷⁵

Acquiring Highly Capable Aircraft

Placing a strong emphasis on countering Chinese maritime anti-access capabilities could also involve maintaining or increasing funding for a variety of naval aviation acquisition programs, including F-35C carrier-based Joint Strike Fighters (JSFs),¹⁷⁶ F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighters and EA-18G Growler electronic attack aircraft,¹⁷⁷ E-2D Hawkeye early warning and command and control aircraft, the P-8A Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA), the Navy carrier-based Unmanned Combat Air System (N-UCAS program) demonstrator program, and the follow-on Unmanned Carrier Launched Airborne Surveillance and Strike (UCLASS) system.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ The question of whether the U.S. Navy concentrates too much of its combat capability in a relatively small number of high-value units, and whether it should shift over time to a more highly distributed fleet architecture, has been debated at various times over the years, in various contexts. Much of the discussion concerns whether the Navy should start procuring smaller aircraft carriers as complements or replacements for its current large aircraft carriers.

Supporters of shifting to a more highly distributed fleet architecture argue that the Navy's current architecture, including its force of 11 large aircraft carriers, in effect puts too many of the Navy's combat-capability eggs into a relatively small number of baskets on which an adversary can concentrate its surveillance and targeting systems and its anti-ship weapons. They argue that although a large Navy aircraft carrier can absorb hits from multiple conventional weapons without sinking, a smaller number of enemy weapons might cause damage sufficient to stop the carrier's aviation operations, thus eliminating the ship's primary combat capability and providing the attacker with what is known as a "mission kill." A more highly distributed fleet architecture, they argue, would make it more difficult for China to target the Navy and reduce the possibility of the Navy experiencing a significant reduction in combat capability due to the loss in battle of a relatively small number of high-value units.

Opponents of shifting to a more highly distributed fleet architecture argue that large carriers and other large ships are not only more capable, but proportionately more capable, than smaller ships, that larger ships are capable of fielding highly capable systems for defending themselves, and that they are much better able than smaller ships to withstand the effects of enemy weapons, due to their larger size, extensive armoring and interior compartmentalization, and extensive damage-control systems. A more highly distributed fleet architecture, they argue, would be less capable or more expensive than today's fleet architecture. Opponents of shifting to a more highly distributed fleet architecture argue could also argue that the Navy has already taken an important (but not excessive) step toward fielding a more distributed fleet architecture through its plan to acquire 55 Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs), which are small, fast surface combatants with modular, "plug-and-flight" mission payloads. (For more on the LCS program, see CRS Report RL33741, *Navy Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) Program: Background, Issues, and Options for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.)

The issue of Navy fleet architecture, including the question of whether the Navy should shift over time to a more highly distributed fleet architecture, was examined in a report by DOD's Office of Force Transformation (OFT) that was submitted to Congress in 2005. OFT's report, along with two other reports on Navy fleet architecture that were submitted to Congress in 2005, are discussed at length in CRS Report RL33955, *Navy Force Structure: Alternative Force Structure Studies of 2005—Background for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke. The functions carried out by OFT have since been redistributed to other DOD offices. See also Wayne P. Hughes, Jr., *The New Navy Fighting Machine: A Study of the Connections Between Contemporary Policy, Strategy, Sea Power, Naval Operations, and the Composition of the United States Fleet*, Monterey (CA), Naval Postgraduate School, August 2009, 68 pp.; and the blog entry available online at <http://www.informationdissemination.net/2011/06/navy-is-losing-narratives-battle.html>.

¹⁷⁶ For more on the F-35 program, see CRS Report RL30563, *F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Program*, by Jeremiah Gertler.

¹⁷⁷ For more on the F/A-18E/F and EA-18G programs, see CRS Report RL30624, *Navy F/A-18E/F and EA-18G Aircraft Procurement and Strike Fighter Shortfall: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Jeremiah Gertler.

¹⁷⁸ The Navy is currently developing a stealthy, long-range, unmanned combat air system (UCAS) for use in the Navy's carrier air wings. The demonstration program for the system is called UCAS-D. The subsequent production version of the aircraft is called N-UCAS, with the N standing for Navy. Some observers, including analysts at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), believe that N-UCAS would be highly useful, if not critical, for (continued...)

Some analysts, such as those at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), an independent defense study group, have emphasized the need for the Navy to develop and acquire a long-range unmanned aircraft such as UCLASS for use on Navy aircraft carriers. A September 29, 2011, press report on a new DOD Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) document (see “September 2011 Press Report About New Defense Planning Guidance” above) stated:

“The Navy and Air Force are positioned to do well [in forthcoming DOD budgets]—but I imagine business as usual for them won’t be an option either,” [an administration official] said, noting unmanned aircraft will need to be a prominent feature for both. The Navy needs to “get serious” about unmanned combat air vehicles “if they want to keep carriers relevant” and the Air Force “needs to rethink whether the [service’s planned new] long-range bomber will be manned,” the official said.¹⁷⁹

Acquiring Weapons and Systems for Countering ASBMs

Although China’s projected ASBM, as a new type of weapon, might be considered a “game changer”—a term that some observers have used—that does not mean it cannot be countered. There are several potential approaches for countering an ASBM that can be imagined, and these approaches could be used in combination. The ASBM is not the first “game changer” that the Navy has confronted; the Navy in the past has developed counters for other new types of weapons, such as ASCMs, and is likely exploring various approaches for countering ASBMs.

Countering China’s projected ASBMs could involve employing a combination of active (i.e., “hard-kill”) measures, such as shooting down ASBMs with interceptor missiles, and passive (i.e., “soft-kill”) measures, such as those for masking the exact location of Navy ships or confusing ASBM reentry vehicles. Employing a combination of active and passive measures would attack various points in the ASBM “kill chain”—the sequence of events that needs to be completed to carry out a successful ASBM attack. This sequence includes detection, identification, and localization of the target ship, transmission of that data to the ASBM launcher, firing the ASBM, and having the ASBM reentry vehicle find the target ship.

Attacking various points in an opponent’s kill chain is an established method for countering an opponent’s military capability. A September 30, 2011, press report, for example, quotes Lieutenant General Herbert Carlisle, the Air Force’s deputy chief of staff for operations, plans,

(...continued)

countering improved Chinese maritime military forces. N-UCASs, they argue, could be launched from a carrier shortly after the ship leaves port in Hawaii, be refueled in flight, and arrive in the Taiwan Strait area in a matter of hours, permitting the carrier air wing to contribute to U.S. operations there days before the carrier itself would arrive. They also argue that N-UCASs would permit Navy carriers to operate effectively while remaining outside the reach of China’s anti-access weapons, including ASBMs. (Thomas P. Ehrhard and Robert O. Work, *The Unmanned Combat Air System Carrier Demonstration Program: A New Dawn For Naval Aviation?*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Washington, 2007. 39 pp. [CSBA Backgrounder, May 10, 2007]. The authors briefed key points from this document on July 11, 2007, in room S-211 of the Capitol.) Another observer states that China’s deployment of ASBM’s and supporting surveillance and targeting systems “argues for a stealth long-range attack aircraft as part of the [carrier] airwing to provide more flexibility on how we employ our carriers.” (James Lyons, “China’s One World?” *Washington Times*, August 24, 2008: B1).

¹⁷⁹ Christopher J. Castelli, “DOD Aims To Boos Investment In Capabilities For Major-Power War,” *Inside the Pentagon*, September 29, 2011.

and requirements, as stating in regard to Air Force planning that “We’ve taken [China’s] kill chains apart to the ‘nth’ degree.”¹⁸⁰

To attack the ASBM kill chain, Navy surface ships, for example, could operate in ways (such as controlling electromagnetic emissions or using deception emitters) that make it more difficult for China to detect, identify, and track those ships.¹⁸¹ The Navy could acquire weapons and systems for disabling or jamming China’s long-range maritime surveillance and targeting systems, for attacking ASBM launchers, for destroying ASBMs in various stages of flight, and for decoying and confusing ASBMs as they approach their intended targets. Options for destroying ASBMs in flight include developing and procuring improved versions of the SM-3 BMD interceptor missile (including the planned Block IIA version of the SM-3), accelerating the acquisition of the Sea-Based Terminal (SBT) interceptor (the planned successor to the SM-2 Block IV terminal-phase BMD interceptor),¹⁸² accelerating development and deployment of the electromagnetic rail gun (EMRG), and accelerating the development and deployment of shipboard high-power free electron lasers (FELs) and solid state lasers (SSLs).¹⁸³ Options for decoying and confusing ASBMs as they approach their intended targets include equipping ships with systems, such as electronic warfare systems or systems for generating radar-opaque smoke clouds, that could confuse an ASBM’s terminal-guidance radar.¹⁸⁴ One observer has argued that active defenses alone are unlikely to succeed, and that the U.S. Navy should place stronger emphasis on passive defenses.¹⁸⁵

An August 29/September 5, 2011, press report states:

Each possible [Chinese] source of ISR [intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance targeting data] for the DF-21 looks vulnerable in its own way, helping to explain why the U.S. Navy says it can break the kill chain for the missile. Yet it seems that in many links [in

¹⁸⁰ David A. Fulghum, “USAF: Slash And Burn Defense Cuts Will Cost Missions, Capabilities,” *Aerospace Daily & Defense Report*, September 30, 2011: 6.

¹⁸¹ For a journal article discussing actions by the Navy during the period 1956-1972 to conceal the exact locations of Navy ships, see Robert G. Angevine, “Hiding in Plain Sight, The U.S. Navy and Dispersed Operations Under EMCON, 1956-1972,” *Naval War College Review*, Spring 2011: 79-95. See also Jonathan F. Sullivan, *Defending the Fleet From China’s Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile: Naval Deception’s Roles in Sea-Based Missile Defense*, A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Georgetown University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Security Studies, April 15, 2011, accessed August 10, 2011 at <http://gradworks.umi.com/1491548.pdf>.

¹⁸² For more on the SM-3, including the Block IIA version, and the SBT, see CRS Report RL33745, *Navy Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O’Rourke.

¹⁸³ For more on SSLs and FELs, see CRS Report R41526, *Navy Shipboard Lasers for Surface, Air, and Missile Defense: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O’Rourke.

¹⁸⁴ Regarding the option of systems for generating radar-opaque smoke clouds, Thomas J. Culora, “The Strategic Implications of Obscurants,” *Naval War College Review*, Summer 2010: 73-84; Scott Tait, “Make Smoke!” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, June 2011: 58-63.

¹⁸⁵ Marshall Hoyler, “China’s ‘Antiaccess’ Ballistic Missiles and U.S. Active Defense,” *Naval War College Review*, Autumn 2010: 84-105.

For additional discussions of options for countering ASBMs, see Sam J. Tangredi, “No Game Changer for China,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, February 2010: 24-29; and Loren B. Thompson, “China’s New “Carrier-Killing” Missile Is Overrated,” *Lexington Institute (Early Warning Blog)*, August 9, 2010 (available online at <http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/chinas-new-carrier-killing-missile-is-overrated?a=1&c=1171>). See also Craig Hooper and Christopher Albion, “Get Off the Fainting Couch,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2010: 42-47; and Duncan Lennox, “China’s ASBM Project: Keep Calm and Carry On,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, February 16, 2011: 23.

the kill chain], information [on the location of U.S. Navy ships] could be collected redundantly, so breaking one [link] does not mean breaking the chain....

In all cases, the data needs to flow back to China from the [ISR] sensor, and the system's control center presumably needs to send commands to the sensor platform—more links in the kill chain that would have to be protected [by the Chinese]. If the DF-21D needs targeting updates as it flies, then that data feed would also be at risk.

If the missile is designed for an air burst—to spread destruction across a carrier's deck rather than lunging into the hangar, machinery and command spaces—then its fuse could also be a target of countermeasures.¹⁸⁶

The Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead, stated the following in an interview published on April 4, 2011:

Question: China reportedly has deployed a so-called aircraft carrier killer. Does such a weapon upset the balance of power insofar as the Navy is concerned?

Roughead: No. You have to look at the total employment of the weapon. You have to look at the nature of being able to first locate, then target, and then engage a moving sea-borne target at range. I'm always struck at how captivated people have gotten about the carrier killer. Nobody's talking about the precision with which every fixed airfield in the region could be targeted. I really do think that it is not the game-changer people have played it up to be.¹⁸⁷

A March 16, 2011, press report states:

"There has been a lot of discussion about the Dong Feng 21 missile," [Admiral Gary] Roughead acknowledged. "But the DF 21 is no more an anti-access weapon than a submarine is. I would argue that you can put a ship out of action faster by putting a hole in the bottom [with a torpedo] than by putting a hole in the top [with a weapon like the DF-21]."

Noting the superiority of the Navy's Virginia-class attack submarines over the several types China is building, Roughead declared that "even though the DF 21 has become a newsworthy weapon, the fact is our aircraft carriers can maneuver, and we have systems that can counter weapons like that."

"My objective," in regards to the Chinese, Roughead said, "is to not be denied ocean areas where we can operate, or not be restricted in our ability to operate."¹⁸⁸

A February 15, 2011, press report states:

A new "carrier killer" missile that has become a symbol of China's rising military might will not force the U.S. Navy to change the way it operates in the Pacific, a senior Navy commander told The Associated Press.

¹⁸⁶ Bradley Perrett, "Pacific Projections," *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, August 29/September 5, 2011: 67-68.

¹⁸⁷ "'We're Not Gambling,'" *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, April 4, 2011: 66.

¹⁸⁸ Christopher P. Cavas, "Roughead Says Russian, Chinese Navies Growing," *NavyTimes.com*, March 16, 2011.

Defense analysts say the Dong Feng 21D missile could upend the balance of power in Asia, where U.S. aircraft carrier battle groups have ruled the waves since the end of World War II.

However, Vice Adm. Scott van Buskirk, commander of the U.S. 7th Fleet, told the AP in an interview that the Navy does not see the much-feared weapon as creating any insurmountable vulnerability for the U.S. carriers - the Navy's crown jewels.

"It's not the Achilles heel of our aircraft carriers or our Navy - it is one weapons system, one technology that is out there," Van Buskirk said in an interview this week on the bridge of the USS George Washington, the only carrier that is home-based in the western Pacific....

Van Buskirk, whose fleet is responsible for most of the Pacific and Indian oceans, with 60-70 ships and 40,000 sailors and Marines under its command, said the capabilities of the Chinese missile are as yet unproven. But he acknowledged it does raise special concerns.

"Any new capability is something that we try to monitor," he said.

"If there wasn't this to point to as a game changer, there would be something else," he said. "That term has been bandied about for many things. I think it really depends in how you define the game, whether it really changes it or not. It's a very specific scenario for a very specific capability - some things can be very impactful..."

Still, van Buskirk said the Navy has no intention of altering its mission because of the new threat and will continue to operate in the seas around Japan, Korea, the Philippines and anywhere else it deems necessary.

"We won't change these operations because of this specific technology that might be out there," he told The AP while the USS George Washington was in its home port just south of Tokyo for repairs last week. "But we will carefully monitor and adapt to it."¹⁸⁹

Admiral Roughead stated the following in a January 14, 2011, interview:

Question: As you say, you don't jump with the revelation of another capability, particularly as you might have known it was coming. But excitable headline writers like to talk about the ASBM as a game-changer. Is that accurate?

Roughead: I think it is a bit of an overstatement. I find it very interesting when you talk about the ballistic missile capability and the fixation on the ASBM, the fact of the matter is that with regard to the other military capabilities that are land-based, you could have the coordinates of every 20 feet of airstrip preprogrammed and you know it is not going to move. I would submit the beauty of naval forces is their flexibility, and the challenges of finding, targeting and then hitting them. It is a new capability and a new application of a ballistic missile, but at the same time, I look at it and say let's move forward with this.

Question: Do you have any idea about timetables for deployment? Admiral Willard has talked about this.

Roughead: He talked about the initial operational capability, which is a term we use. It would not surprise me that in the next couple of years that that capability will be in play.

¹⁸⁹ Eric Talmadge, "3-Star: Anti-Carrier Missile Won't Stop Navy," *NavyTimes.com*, February 15, 2011.

Question: But have you been preparing for some time your own structure to incorporate that?

Roughead: I think across the board I am always looking at developments and at how do we keep our options open relative to those developments. For me personally, the PLAN has been an area of interest since I was first exposed to it in a very personal way starting in 1994. Through a series of assignments I have been able to watch it. I have had a focused professional interest in it. So I watch and do the things that I have to do to make sure that my navy is ready.¹⁹⁰

Vice Admiral David J. Dorsett, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Dominance, stated the following at a January 5, 2011, meeting with defense reporters:

Question: What are the resourcing requirements implications of the Chinese missile given you said it's got capability [inaudible]? Are there major improvements in the Aegis air defense system that you're recommending or [inaudible] the edges? What are the defensive implications for the Navy and resources in the next four or five years?

Dorsett: First of all, Tony, going into any level of detail would be a classified answer, and I'll tell you, like any advanced technology that's developed for military use around the globe, the U.S. Navy needs to develop counters. We need to be innovative in that approach. I think that's one of the things that with creation of information dominance, we've been able to look at a variety of kinetic and non-kinetic solution sets to counter advancing capabilities. And relative to advanced missile systems, we're doing that as well. It's a vague answer for you, but it's the best I can do.

Question: Can you give a sense of whether the Aegis system is roughly capable of handling this threat?

Dorsett: Because of the – I'd prefer not to answer the question.¹⁹¹

A December 17, 2010, press report quotes Rear Admiral Terry Kraft, the head of Carrier Strike Group 12, as stating:

"What I will say about that is, before you can target a ship you've got to find the ship.... There are a lot of tactics that you could look at and that you could use to try to make yourself harder to find. And if you could break that chain at the part where they can't locate you, you make it much harder for potential adversaries."¹⁹²

Acquiring Weapons and Systems for Countering Submarines

Countering China's attack submarines more effectively could involve procuring platforms (i.e., ships and aircraft) with ASW capabilities, and/or developing technologies for achieving a new approach to ASW that is distributed and sensor-intensive (as opposed to platform-intensive). Navy officials in 2004-2005 spoke of their plans for achieving distributed, sensor-intensive ASW

¹⁹⁰ Source: Transcript of interview, as appended to Richard McGregor, "US Fleet Chief Voices Doubts On Chinese Navy," *Financial Times*, January 18, 2011.

¹⁹¹ Source: Transcript of Defense Writers Group roundtable with Vice Admiral David J. Dorsett, Deputy CNO for Information Warfare. Material in brackets as in the transcript.

¹⁹² Andrew Burt, "Carriers Could Use Evasive Tactics Against Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles," *Inside the Navy*, December 20, 2010.

architecture.¹⁹³ Such an approach might involve the use of networked sensor fields, unmanned vehicles, and standoff weapons. Implementing such an approach to ASW reportedly would require overcoming some technical challenges, particularly for linking together large numbers of distributed sensors, some of which might be sonobuoys as small as soda cans.¹⁹⁴

Countering wake-homing torpedoes more effectively could require completing development work on the Navy's new anti-torpedo torpedo (ATT) and putting the weapon into procurement.¹⁹⁵ A July 21, 2011, press report states that DOD "is seeking congressional permission to immediately boost funding for a high-priority Navy effort to give aircraft carriers and other high-value ships the ability to defend against torpedo attacks, something they lack today. Pentagon comptroller Robert Hale, in a May 8 reprogramming request not made public by the Defense Department, told lawmakers DOD wants to shift \$8 million into Navy research-and-development accounts to support rapid prototyping of the Anti-Torpedo Torpedo Defense System (ATTDS)."¹⁹⁶

Acquiring Highly Capable C4ISR Systems

An October 10, 2011, press report states that Admiral Jonathan Greenert, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), in a memorandum dated September 23, 2011, "has launched a new review to identify warfighting investments that could counter Chinese military methods for disrupting key battlefield information systems." According to the report, the memorandum "requests options for warfighting in 'the complex electromagnetic environment' and for countering 'anti-access/area-denial' threats—terms closely associated with China's military." The report quotes the memorandum as stating that "Today's weapons rely on EM [electromagnetic] sensors, EM communications and EM seekers to complete their 'kill chains,' while defenders are increasingly turning to EM methods for protection," and that "some kill chains never leave the EM environment at all, damaging an adversary's military capability by affecting control systems alone—no bomb or missile required." The report states that the memorandum "directs the group to 'generate innovative concepts for [the] Navy to employ the EM environment as a primary line of operation in a 2025-2030 warfighting campaign.'"¹⁹⁷

¹⁹³ See, for example, Otto Kreisher, "As Underwater Threat Re-Emerges, Navy Renews Emphasis On ASW," *Seapower*, October 2004, p. 15, and Jason Ma, "ASW Concept Of Operations Sees 'Sensor-Rich' Way Of Fighting Subs," *Inside the Navy*, February 7, 2005.

¹⁹⁴ Jason Ma, "Autonomous ASW Sensor Field Seen As High-Risk Technical Hurdle," *Inside the Navy*, June 6, 2005. See also Jason Ma, "Navy's Surface Warfare Chief Cites Progress In ASW Development," *Inside the Navy*, January 17, 2005. More recent press reports discuss research on ASW concepts involving bottom-based sensors, sensor networks, and unmanned vehicles; see Richard Scott, "GLINT In the Eye: NURC Explores Novel Autonomous Concepts For Future ASW," *Jane's International Defence Review*, January 2010: 34-35; Richard Scott, "DARPA Goes Deep With ASW Sensor Network," *Jane's International Defence Review*, March 2010: 13; Richard Scott, "Ghost In The Machine: DARPA Sets Course Towards Future Unmanned ASW Trail Ship," *Jane's Navy International*, April 2010: 10-11; Norman Friedman, "The Robots Arrive," *Naval Forces*, No. IV, 2010: 40-42, 44, 46; Bill Sweetman, "Darpa Funds Unmanned Boat For Submarine Stalking," *Aerospace Daily & Defense Report*, January 6, 2011: 5; Richard Scott, "Networked Concepts Look to Square the ASW Circle," *Jane's International Defence Review*, January 2011: 42-47; Richard Scott, "DARPA's Unmanned ASW Sloop Concept Casts Lines," *Jane's Navy International*, January/February 2011: 5.

¹⁹⁵ For an article discussing torpedo defense systems, including ATTs, see Richard Scott, "Ships Shore Up," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, September 1, 2010: 22-23, 25, 27.

¹⁹⁶ Jason Sherman, "Navy Seeks Funding To Develop First Anti-Torpedo Capability For Carriers," *Inside the Navy*, July 18, 2011.

¹⁹⁷ Christopher J. Castellil, "Memo: Navy Seeks To Counter China's Battle-Disruption Capabilities," *Inside the Navy*, October 10, 2011.

Hardening Systems Against EMP and Other Nuclear Weapons Effects

The Navy can respond to the possibility that the PLA might use nuclear weapons or high-power microwave (HPM) weapons to generate electromagnetic pulse (EMP) or other nuclear weapon effects against U.S. Navy ships and aircraft by hardening its ships and aircraft against such effects. For further discussion, see **Appendix D**.

Increasing the Pacific Fleet's Share of the Navy

The final report on the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) directed the Navy “to adjust its force posture and basing to provide at least six operationally available and sustainable carriers and 60% of its submarines in the Pacific to support engagement, presence and deterrence.”¹⁹⁸ The Navy has met the 2005 QDR directive of having six CVNs in the Pacific. As of September 30, 2010, 58% of the Navy’s SSNs and SSGNs were homeported in the Pacific. The Navy can increase that figure to 60% by assigning newly commissioned Virginia-class SSNs to the Pacific, by moving SSNs or SSGNs from the Atlantic to the Pacific, by decommissioning Atlantic Fleet SSNs, or through some combination of these actions.

As part of a “strategic laydown analysis” that the Navy performed in support of its January 2009 proposal to transfer a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier (CVN) to Mayport, FL,¹⁹⁹ the Navy projected that of its planned 313-ship fleet, 181 ships, or 58%, would be assigned to the Pacific Fleet.²⁰⁰

Placing a strong emphasis on countering Chinese maritime anti-access capabilities could involve assigning a greater percentage of the Navy to the Pacific Fleet than the percentages reflected in the previous two paragraphs. Doing this would likely reduce the number of ships assigned to the Atlantic Fleet, which would reduce the Navy’s ability to maintain forward deployments in, and surge ships quickly to, the Mediterranean Sea and possibly also the Persian Gulf/Northern Arabian Sea area.²⁰¹

An October 15, 2010, press report stated that “The Obama administration is considering increasing the size of the U.S. military presence in Asia, according to sources familiar with an ongoing global force posture review as well as early discussions with countries such as Australia, Singapore and Vietnam.” The article stated that China’s increased assertiveness had caused other

¹⁹⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*. Washington, 2006. (February 6, 2006) p. 47.

¹⁹⁹ For more on this proposal, see CRS Report R40248, *Navy Nuclear Aircraft Carrier (CVN) Homeporting at Mayport: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

²⁰⁰ Source: Slide entitled “Strategic Laydown Summary,” in Navy briefing entitled “Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Proposed Homeporting of Additional Surface Ships at Naval Station Mayport, FL, dated November 18, 2008, and presented to CRS on December 5, 2008. For more on the Navy’s proposed 313-ship fleet, see CRS Report RL32665, *Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

²⁰¹ Shifting additional ships from the Atlantic Fleet to the Pacific Fleet might reduce the Navy’s ability to maintain forward deployments in, and surge ships quickly to, the Persian Gulf/Northern Arabian Sea area because the transit distance from the U.S. Atlantic Coast to the Persian Gulf/Northern Arabian Sea area using the Suez canal is less than the transit distance from the U.S. Pacific Coast to the Persian Gulf/Northern Arabian Sea area. If, however, the ships shifted from the Atlantic Fleet to the Pacific Fleet were homeported at Hawaii, Guam, or Japan rather than on the U.S. Pacific Coast, there might be no reduction in the Navy’s ability to maintain forward deployments in, and surge ships quickly to, the Persian Gulf/Northern Arabian Sea area.

countries in the region to ask the United States for additional actions to reinforce its commitment to the region. The article stated that although the posture review was global, it includes a particular focus on the Pacific and the role of the Navy.²⁰²

A February 24, 2011, press report stated:

The head of the U.S. 7th Fleet revealed plans this week for an increased naval presence in the Asia-Pacific region, divulging details about the deployment of Ohio-class guided missile submarines, the doubling of the Navy's mine countermeasures ships in the area and added submarine maintenance facilities in Guam and Diego Garcia, as well as the use of civilian shipyards in Vietnam for maintenance on Navy ships....

"It is often asserted—quite falsely—that U.S. presence in this region is shrinking," [Vice Admiral Scott Van Buskirk] said. "On the contrary, our growth in capabilities and maritime partnerships reflects a clear focus." The U.S. Navy, he added, "is here to stay."²⁰³

A September 17, 2011, press report stated:

The defence alliance between the US and Australia is to be significantly beefed up as more American ships, aircraft and troops move from North Asia to the southern hemisphere to be based locally at joint military facilities.

New US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said yesterday that enhancement of the relationship between the alliance partners was intended to send a "very clear signal" to the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr Panetta was speaking in San Francisco after a high-level ministerial meeting, known as Ausmin, that marked the 60th anniversary of the signing of the ANZUS [Australia-New Zealand-U.S.] treaty in the same city.

"We've done exchanges, we've had exercises together," he said. "That is something we've done pretty much in the past. The goal here is to strengthen that relationship as best we can to send a clear signal to the Asia-Pacific region that the US and Australia are going to continue to work together to make very clear to those that would threaten us that we are going to stick together."

The Ausmin talks yesterday, which included cyber terrorism as part of the alliance pact for the first time, were hosted by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and attended by Mr Panetta, Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd and Defence Minister Stephen Smith....

Australia will also host more US troops and military hardware at jointly run bases on its soil, although Mr Smith stressed at the conclusion of yesterday's talks that negotiations were continuing about the planned expansion....

Mrs Clinton said after the meeting that the US and Australia were committed to working together to seize the opportunities of a "fast-changing Asia-Pacific" region.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Andrew Burt, "U.S. Considering Increasing Military Presence in Pacific Region," *Inside the Navy*, October 18, 2010.

²⁰³ Andrew Burt, "Fleet Commander Outlines Navy's Increasing Presence In Asia," *Inside the Pentagon*, February 24, 2011.

²⁰⁴ Brad Norington, "Troop Boost A Signal To Asia-Pacific," *The Weekend Australian*, September 17, 2011: 2.

A September 16, 2011, blog entry stated that

China's improving air and naval power and its assertion of claims in the South China Sea are very likely moving the most important [U.S.] defense mission [in the Western Pacific] 2,000 miles south from [Japan and South Korea,] where U.S. forces in the region are now concentrated. This mismatch is presumably not lost on the U.S. and Australian ministers gathered in San Francisco.

In addition to pledging greater cooperation on cyberdefense (a problem increasingly blamed on sources in China), the United States will gain greater access to Australian military training areas, pre-position military equipment in Australia, obtain access to Australian facilities and ports, and establish options for more joint military activities in the region.

This step-up in military coordination with Australia follows similar U.S. diplomatic forays around the South China Sea. In 2005, the United States and Singapore signed a strategic framework agreement on military cooperation that was expanded this year with an agreement to deploy new U.S. Navy littoral combat ships to Singapore. The deepening of this agreement will enhance the ability of the U.S. Navy to support the multilateral military training exercises it leads every year with partners around the South China Sea.

However, Washington appears to be taking a notably different approach in the southwest Pacific. Unlike its agreement with Japan and South Korea, the new agreements with Australia and Singapore, along with other low-key arrangements with the Philippines and others in the region, do not call for the permanent basing of U.S. combat units in these countries. Both the United States and its partners in the region have an interest in maintaining the "forward presence" of U.S. military forces in the region. But the permanent bases and garrisons in South Korea and Japan have become corrosive, especially on Okinawa, where the local population has become hostile to the U.S. military presence. In addition, restrictions on training areas in Japan and South Korea are impairing the readiness of U.S. forces there and reducing the utility of their presence.

The model the U.S. planners appear to have in mind for Australia, Singapore, and around the South China Sea involves regular and frequent training exercises, temporary access to host countries' facilities, and frequent consultation by staff officers and advisors. For training exercises or in response to crises, U.S. air and ground forces would fly in and meet up with pre-positioned equipment, with naval forces arriving soon thereafter. This method would avoid the political friction the United States has encountered in Japan and South Korea and allow U.S. soldiers to remain at bases inside the United States that have better training facilities and provide better living arrangements for soldiers and their families.

This new method of providing security for the southwest Pacific remains mostly a theory and will face increasing pressure if Chinese forces eventually threaten easy access to the region. But if the model succeeds, it could call into question the utility of maintaining the existing garrisons on Okinawa and South Korea, which in any case are increasingly untenable as the Chinese missile threat expands. The trick for U.S. military strategists and diplomats will be implementing this more flexible deployment model while simultaneously reassuring regional partners that U.S. security commitments are as firm as ever. As pressures increase, that trick may not be easy to pull off.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ Robert Haddock, "The New Pacific Theater," *SmallWarsJournal.com*, September 16, 2011. See also Anne Gearan and Lolita C. Baldor, "Deal Near On More US Military Access In Australia," *Yahoo.com (Associated Press)*, September 15, 2011; Simon Mann, "US, Australia Inch Towards Troops, Military Deal," *Sydney Morning Herald (smh.com.au)*, September 16, 2011; Australian Associated Press, "US, Australia Coy About Asia-Pacific Strategy," (continued...)

Homeporting Additional Pacific Fleet Ships in Forward Locations

Navy ships homeported in Japan include an aircraft carrier strike group consisting of a CVN and 11 cruisers, destroyers, and frigates; an amphibious ready group consisting of three amphibious ships; and additional mine countermeasures ships. Navy ships homeported at Guam include three Los Angeles (SSN-688) class attack submarines and a submarine tender. Navy ships homeported in Hawaii include 15 Virginia (SSN-774) and Los Angeles class SSNs, and 11 cruisers, destroyers, and frigates. As mentioned earlier, DOD has also announced an intention to base a few Littoral Combat Ships (LCSs) in Singapore.

Placing a strong emphasis on countering Chinese maritime anti-access capabilities could involve homeporting more of the Pacific Fleet's ships at forward locations such as Hawaii, Guam, Japan, and Singapore. A 2002 Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report discussed the option of homeporting a total of as many as 11 SSNs at Guam.²⁰⁶ Additional cruisers and destroyers could be homeported in Hawaii, Guam, or Japan. Another option, at least in theory, would be to establish additional home ports for Navy ships in South Korea or Australia.

Submission to Congress of 2011 Edition of DOD Report on China Military and Security Developments

Section 1202 of the FY2000 defense authorization act (S. 1059/P.L. 106-65 of October 5, 1999), as amended by Section 1246 of the FY2010 defense authorization act (H.R. 2647/P.L. 111-84 of October 28, 2009), requires DOD to submit an annual report to Congress on military and security developments involving China. (The report was previously known as the report on Chinese military power.) DOD is required to submit the report not later than March 1 each year. The 2011 edition of the report was released by DOD on August 24, 2011, almost six months after the March 1 deadline. The 2010 edition of the report was similarly released by DOD on August 16, 2010, about five and one-half months after the March 1 deadline.

Potential oversight questions for Congress include the following:

- Why did DOD not release the 2011 edition of the report until August 24, 2011?
- How might DOD's delay in submitting the 2011 edition of the report affect Congress's ability to take military and security developments involving China into account in evaluating and marking up the Navy's proposed FY2012 budget (as well as other parts of DOD's proposed FY2012 budget)?
- Does DOD anticipate submitting the 2012 edition of the report by March 1, 2012, and if not, by what date does DOD anticipate submitting the 2012 edition of the report?

(...continued)

TheAustralian.com.au, September 16, 2011; Ernie Bower and Alexander Vagg, "AUSMIN Outcomes: GIs Based Down Under?" *CogitASIA (CSIS Asia Policy Blog) (cogitasia.com)*, September 14, 2011.

²⁰⁶ U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *Increasing the Mission Capability of the Attack Submarine Force*, Washington, CBO, 2002. (A CBO Study, March 2002), 41 pp.

At an August 24, 2011, DOD press briefing on the release of the 2011 edition of the report, a DOD official, when asked why DOD submitted the report so long after the March 1 deadline, stated:

There were no—you know, I realize a good conspiracy is, you know, a lot more fun than just sort the simple banal truth of bureaucracies grinding away on a—on a daily basis. You know, this is a very, very complex and important set of issues, as I—as I know you all appreciate.

To turn out a good product, and to turn out a good product that we were able to coordinate across the U.S. Government, because we think that it benefits greatly from that sort of coordination, simply—simply took time. I, you know, wish that it didn't, wish we had been able to turn it out—to turn it out quicker, but I think the results, when you have the chance to read through the report, speak to—speak to the benefits of taking that time to really—to really turn out a product that—that I think—and I don't just say this because I'm paid to say it—but that I think really has a lot of very, very good, cogent content and analysis.²⁰⁷

Legislative Activity for FY2012

Resolution Calling for Peaceful and Multilateral Resolution to Maritime Territorial Disputes in Southeast Asia (S.Res. 217)

Senate

S.Res. 217 was introduced in the Senate on June 27, 2011, and passed by the Senate the same day by unanimous consent. The text of S.Res. 217 is as follows:

RESOLUTION

Calling for a peaceful and multilateral resolution to maritime territorial disputes in Southeast Asia.

Whereas, on June 9, 2011, 3 vessels from China, including 1 fishing vessel and 2 maritime security vessels, ran into and disabled the cables of an exploration ship from Vietnam, the VIKING 2;

Whereas that use of force occurred within 200 nautical miles of Vietnam, an area recognized as its Exclusive Economic Zone;

Whereas, on May 26, 2011, a maritime security vessel from China cut the cables of another exploration ship from Vietnam, the BINH MINH, in the South China Sea in waters near Cam Ranh Bay;

Whereas, in March 2011, the Government of the Philippines reported that patrol boats from China attempted to ram 1 of its surveillance ships;

²⁰⁷ Transcript of DOD press briefing with Michael Schiffer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, accessed at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4868>.

Whereas those incidents occurred within disputed maritime territories of the South China Sea, including the Spratly Islands, composed of 21 islands and atolls, 50 submerged land atolls, and 28 partly submerged reefs over an area of 340,000 square miles, and the Paracel Islands, a smaller group of islands located south of China's Hainan Island;

Whereas China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Brunei have disputed territorial claims over the Spratly Islands, and China and Vietnam have a disputed claim over the Paracel Islands;

Whereas the Government of China claims most of the 648,000 square miles of the South China Sea, more than any other nation involved in those territorial disputes;

Whereas, in 2002, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China signed a declaration on the code of conduct of parties in the South China Sea;

Whereas that declaration committed all parties to those territorial disputes to 'reaffirm their respect for and commitment to the freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea' and to 'resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force';

Whereas the South China Sea contains vital commercial shipping lines and points of access between the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean;

Whereas, although not a party to these disputes, the United States has a national economic and a security interest in ensuring that no party uses force unilaterally to assert maritime territorial claims in East Asia;

Whereas, in September 2010, the Government of China also deliberately provoked a controversy within the waters of the Senkaku Islands, territory under the legal administration of Japan in the East China Sea;

Whereas the actions of the Government of China in the South China Sea have also affected United States military and maritime vessels transiting through international air space and waters, including the collision of a fighter plane of the Government of China with a United States surveillance plane in 2001, the harassment of the USNS IMPECCABLE in March 2009, and the collision of a Chinese submarine with the sonar cable of the USS JOHN MCCAIN in June 2009;

Whereas, like every nation, the United States has a national interest in freedom of navigation and open access to the maritime commons of Asia;

Whereas the Government of the United States expressed support for the declaration by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China in 2002 on the code of conduct of parties in the South China Sea, and supports a collaborative diplomatic process by all claimants for resolving the various territorial disputes without coercion;

Whereas the United States has a national interest in freedom of navigation and in unimpeded economic development and commerce;

Whereas, on October 11, 2010, Secretary Gates maintained 'The United States has always exercised our rights and supported the rights of others to transit through, and operate in, international waters.';

Whereas, on June 3, 2011, at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Secretary Gates stated that '[m]aritime security remains an issue of particular importance for the region, with

questions about territorial claims and the appropriate use of the maritime domain presenting on-going challenges to regional stability and prosperity’;

Whereas, on June 4, 2011, at the Shangri-La Dialogue, Liang Guanglie, the Defense Minister from China, said, ‘China is committed to maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea.’;

Whereas, on June 11, 2011, the Government of Vietnam held a live-fire military exercise on the uninhabited island of Hon Ong, 25 miles off the coast of Vietnam in the South China Sea; and

Whereas, on June 11, 2011, Hong Lei, the Foreign Ministry spokesman of China, stated, ‘[China] will not resort to force or the threat of force’ to resolve the territorial dispute: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the strong support of the United States for the peaceful resolution of maritime territorial disputes in the South China Sea, and pledges continued efforts to facilitate a multilateral, peaceful process to resolve these disputes;

(2) deplores the use of force by naval and maritime security vessels from China in the South China Sea;

(3) calls on all parties to the territorial dispute to refrain from threatening force or using force to assert territorial claims; and

(4) supports the continuation of operations by the United States Armed Forces in support of freedom of navigation rights in international waters and air space in the South China Sea.

FY2012 Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 1540/S. 1253)

House

Section 1221 of H.R. 1540 as reported by the House Armed Services Committee (H.Rept. 112-78 of May 17, 2011) states:

SEC. 1221. REVIEW AND REPORT ON IRAN’S AND CHINA’S CONVENTIONAL AND ANTI-ACCESS CAPABILITIES.

(a) Review- The Secretary of Defense shall direct an appropriate entity outside the Department of Defense to conduct an independent review of the following:

(1) The gaps between Iran’s conventional and anti-access capabilities and United States’ capabilities to overcome them.

(2) The gaps between China’s anti-access capabilities and United States’ capabilities to overcome them.

(b) Report-

(1) IN GENERAL- Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the review conducted under subsection (a).

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED- In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means—

(A) the congressional defense committees; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(c) Additional to Other Reports, etc- The review conducted under subsection (a) and the report required under subsection (b) are in addition to the report required under section 1238 of the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (P.L. 111-383; 124 Stat. 4402) and the strategy and briefings required under section 1243 of such Act (P.L. 111-383; 124 Stat. 4405).

(d) Definition- In this section, the term ‘anti-access’ has the meaning given the term in section 1238(f) of the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (P.L. 111-383; 124 Stat. 4403).

Regarding Section 1221, the committee’s report states:

This section would require the Secretary of Defense not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act to submit to the congressional defense committees a classified study undertaken by an independent entity outside the Department of Defense assessing the gaps between the conventional and anti-access capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the People’s Republic of China and the U.S. forces’ ability to overcome such capabilities. The committee notes that sections 1238 and 1243 of the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (Public Law 111–383) required a report and a briefing from the Department of Defense on these subjects. However, given the potentially grave threats posed by these capabilities to U.S. national security and stability in the western Pacific and Middle East, the committee believes an additional, independent assessment is warranted to further inform the Department’s planning and the committee’s oversight of these issues. The committee encourages the Secretary to select an entity with the necessary security clearances and expertise to review the intelligence assessments upon which the Department’s findings were based pursuant to the report and briefing required by sections 1238 and 1243. (Page 243)

Section 1227 of H.R. 1540 states:

SEC. 1227. ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY POWER OF THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

(a) Matters to Be Included- Subsection (b) of section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65; 113 Stat. 781; 10 U.S.C. 113 note), as most recently amended by section 1246(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (P.L. 111-84; 123 Stat. 2544), is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (7)—

(A) by adding at the end before the period the following: ‘or otherwise undermine the Department of Defense’s capability to conduct information assurance’; and

(B) by adding at the end the following: ‘Such analyses shall include an assessment of the damage inflicted on the Department of Defense by reason thereof.’; and

(2) in paragraph (9), by adding at the end the following: ‘Such analyses shall include an assessment of the nature of China’s cyber activities directed against the Department of Defense and an assessment of the damage inflicted on the Department of Defense by reason thereof. Such cyber activities shall include activities originating or suspected of originating from China and shall include government and non-government activities believed to be sanctioned or supported by the Government of China.’.

(b) Conforming Amendment- Such section is further amended in the heading by striking ‘military and security developments involving’ and inserting ‘military power of’.

(c) Effective Date- The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to reports required to be submitted under subsection (a) of section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, as so amended, on or after that date.

Regarding Section 1227, the committee’s report states:

This section would amend section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–65), as most recently amended by section 1246(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (Public Law 111–84), by changing the name of the annual report required by such section from “Annual Report on Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China” to “Annual Report on Military Power of the People’s Republic of China”. This section would also clarify the reporting requirements relating to China’s cyber and espionage activities. (page 245)

The committee’s report also states:

Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China

The committee commends the Secretary of Defense for delivering a comprehensive report on the “Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China,” in accordance with section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–65), including a discussion of the extent to which China’s ballistic and cruise missiles increase its ability to control access to the western Pacific.²⁰⁸ The committee does not believe, however, that the report sufficiently addressed China’s domestic production capabilities or proliferation of these technologies.

The committee directs the Secretary of Defense to include greater detail on the ballistic and cruise missile activities of the People’s Republic of China, in subsequent submission of report required by section 1202, including China’s domestic development and production of these capabilities, and any Chinese proliferation activities of technologies related to cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, and weapons of mass destruction to other countries. This detail should include, but should not be limited to, the proliferation of missile technologies and components at or near the threshold prohibited by the Missile Technology Control Regime and other multinational export control regimes, in as much unclassified detail as possible.

²⁰⁸ This may be a reference to the release in August 2010 of the 2010 edition of the report. As of the date of the committee’s report (May 17, 2011), the 2011 edition of the report was not known to have been released.

Finally, the committee encourages the Secretary to submit the next report by March 1, 2012, as required by section 1202. (page 234)

Senate

Section 1079 of S. 1253 as reported by the senate Armed Services Committee (S.Rept. 112-26 of June 22, 2011) states:

SEC. 1079. STUDY ON UNITED STATES FORCE POSTURE IN EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION.

(a) Independent Assessment-

(1) IN GENERAL- The Secretary of Defense shall commission an independent assessment of America's security interests in East Asia and the Pacific region. The assessment shall be conducted by an independent, non-governmental institute which is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code, and has recognized credentials and expertise in national security and military affairs with ready access to policy experts throughout the country and from the region.

(2) ELEMENTS- The assessment conducted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall include the following elements:

(A) A review of current and emerging United States national security interests in the East Asia and Pacific region.

(B) A review of current United States military force posture and deployment plans, with an emphasis on the current plans for United States force realignments in Okinawa and Guam.

(C) Options for the realignment of United States forces in the region to respond to new opportunities presented by allies and partners.

(D) The views of noted policy leaders and regional experts, including military commanders in the region.

(b) Report- Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the designated private entity shall provide an unclassified report, with a classified annex, containing its findings to the Secretary of Defense. Not later than 90 days after the date of receipt of the report, the Secretary of Defense shall transmit the report to the congressional defense committees, together with such comments on the report as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) Authorization of Appropriations- Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated under section 301 for operation and maintenance for Defense-wide activities, up to \$1,000,000, shall be made available for the completion of the study required under this section.

Regarding Section 1079, the committee report states:

The committee recommends a provision that would require the Secretary of Defense to commission an independent assessment of America's security interests in the Asia and Pacific region.

The committee notes that the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) emphasized the critical need of the United States to consistently assess and adapt to a dynamic world environment and changes in the international security environment. The QDR also established a goal to seek new opportunities for cooperation with existing allies and emerging partners to mutually address regional and global security challenges.

In the Asia and Pacific region, the United States has embarked on a series of initiatives intended to realign its military force structure to respond to regional interests with the understanding that U.S. forces play an indispensable role in protecting our security and economic interests, while ensuring a stable and prosperous Asia. In this regard, U.S. bilateral security arrangements in the region, especially with Japan and with South Korea, remain the foundation for our security posture and activities in Asia.

The committee realizes the region is changing and opportunities are emerging to update the U.S. force posture to better align it with our dynamic regional interests. As such, the committee believes that defense and foreign policy decision makers in the administration and in Congress would benefit from an independent assessment of plans in the region with the goals of freeing the review from the inertia of past decisions and instead assessing what lies ahead in terms of security challenges and opportunities.

The committee believes an independent assessment of current initiatives, to include force deployment plans and options for the realignment of forces in the region to respond to new opportunities presented by allies and partners, should be undertaken by a nongovernmental institute that has broad credibility in national security, drawing widely from policy experts throughout the country, and from the region. The report would be delivered to the Secretary of Defense within 90 days of enactment of this Act, and then, 90 days later, to Congress, incorporating the comments of the Secretary. (Pages 185-186)

The committee's report also states:

United States force posture in the Asia-Pacific region

The committee strongly supports the need for a robust U.S. presence in the Asia-Pacific, but has become increasingly concerned about the posture planning for U.S. military forces and, particularly, the strategic implications and costs associated with U.S. commitments throughout the region. The Defense Department's (DOD) 2010 report on the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) states that the United States needs to "sustain and strengthen our Asia-Pacific alliances and partnerships to advance mutual security interests and ensure sustainable peace and security in the region," and that, to accomplish this, DOD "will augment and adapt our forward presence" in the Asia-Pacific region. The QDR report does not provide detail on what is intended by this broad policy objective. Since the 2010 QDR was published, however, more detail has begun to emerge regarding the broad plans for the region. The 2011 National Military Strategy (NMS), released in January 2011, stated that the United States intends to "invest new attention and resources in Southeast and South Asia." Likewise, in testimony before the committee in April, the Commander, U.S. Pacific Command offered that "attaining better access to and support from Allied and partner nations in South and Southeast Asia is increasingly important." The Commander also stated that "[c]urrent force posture throughout the Asia-Pacific remains heavily influenced by post-World War II- and Cold War-era basing and infrastructure." In addition to potential new resource requirements in these southern areas, DOD remains engaged in significant realignment efforts for U.S. forces in Northeast Asia, specifically in South Korea and Japan.

Despite the enhanced explanation from DOD regarding what is planned for the region, the details, and particularly details regarding cost, have not been fully presented. A recently released Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, entitled "Comprehensive Cost

Information and Analysis of Alternatives needed to assess Military Posture in Asia,” reached the independent conclusion that “across the Pacific region, DOD has embarked on complex initiatives to transform U.S. military posture, and these initiatives involve major construction programs and the movement of tens of thousands of DOD civilians and military personnel, and dependents—at an undetermined total cost to the United States and host nations.” The report goes on to explain that “DOD is presenting Congress with near-term funding requests that will result in significant long-term financial requirements whose extent is unknown.” The committee agrees with GAO’s conclusion that DOD needs to develop comprehensive cost estimates of posture in the Pacific and the recommendation that DOD develop annual cost estimates for DOD posture in the U.S. Pacific Command area of responsibility.

The strategic posture and presence of the U.S. military in the Asia-Pacific is critically important to the overall security and stability in that region. Expanding U.S. military presence in Southeast Asia is a mid- to long-term prospect that will require deliberate planning and resource allocation. Strategic choices regarding posture and presence must support the strong alliances we maintain in the region and respond to the opportunities presented by emerging alliances and partners, while also addressing the reality of constrained budgets and the intense competition for resources in the United States as well as in our allied and partner nations.

Accordingly, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to complete the following actions no later than December 31, 2011:

1. Review the current operational plans of Commander, U.S. Pacific Command to determine whether the existing force posture, as well as proposed U.S. force realignments in the region are consistent with the QDR, the NMS, and the forecast of future U.S. national security objectives in the region over the next 20 years;
2. Develop a strategic plan for the region with goal for force posture realignments required to sustain U.S. national interests that will guide agreements and investments over the next 20 years; and
3. Require the military departments to develop annual cost estimates for DOD posture in the U.S. Pacific Command area of responsibility that provide a comprehensive assessment of overall posture costs, including costs associated with posture initiatives.

The committee also directs the Secretary of Defense to provide for an independent assessment of America’s security interests in Asia, current force deployment plans, and likely future needs related to the posture of U.S. military forces in the region, to include plans for South and Southeast Asia as well as plans to realign U.S. forces and increase the number of families in South Korea, transfer U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam, and substantially increase the U.S. force presence on Guam with the corresponding impact on Guam’s infrastructure. This independent study should be conducted by a group of policy and regional experts drawn widely from throughout the country and the Asia-Pacific region and should incorporate input from the Secretary of Defense and the congressional defense committees of Congress. Results of the study should be available to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives by May 1, 2012, in order to inform future congressional deliberations on the adequacy of the Department’s force deployments plans in the Asia-Pacific region. (Pages 196-197)

The committee’s report also states:

Naval laser technology

The budget request included \$60.0 million in PE 602114N for directed energy research. The committee recommends a reduction of \$30.0 million to terminate the Free Electron Laser (FEL) and continue pursuing other laser technologies such as fiber and slab solid state lasers that have more near-term applications as weapon systems.

The Navy is pursuing a variety of directed energy weapons to provide naval platforms with point defense capabilities against current and future surface and air threats, including anti-ship cruise missiles and swarms of small boats. The key laser systems are the Laser Weapon System (LaWS), the Maritime Laser Demonstration (MLD), and FEL. The LaWS and MLD have been demonstrated against an unmanned aerial vehicle and small boat respectively, with the MLD test being conducted on a ship and the LaWS test being conducted from shore. The FEL is in a much earlier state of development and has just commenced the critical design phase.

The committee understands that each of these lasers is based upon different technologies with different capabilities and different stages of development and technical risk. Earlier this year, the Congressional Research Service published a report, “Navy Shipboard Lasers for Surface, Air, and Missile Defense: Background and Issues for Congress” that laid out a number of options for Congress, ranging from altering the Navy’s funding requests for the development of potential shipboard lasers to encouraging or directing the Navy to adopt a program of record for procuring a production version of a shipboard laser with a roadmap that calls for installing lasers on specific ships by specific dates.

The committee believes that in the current budgetary environment, the Navy needs to develop a broader affordable strategy on which laser systems it will develop and migrate onto ships or other platforms. In light of these considerations, the committee directs the Navy to conduct comparative analyses and testing to determine whether the LaWS or the MLD or both should be carried forward for further technology maturation and ultimate integration as a shipboard weapon system. The strategy should also include plans for which ships will receive which laser weapons systems. Furthermore, the committee expresses concerns over the technical challenges such as thermal management considerations and packaging that the FEL potentially faces in scaling to a megawatt class laser for actual weapon use.

Naval electromagnetic railgun

The budget request included \$10.0 million in PE 602114N and \$16.9 million in PE 603114N for the development of an electromagnetic railgun.

The Navy is developing an electromagnetic railgun (EMRG) for engagements of surface and air threats at long-ranges up to 200 nautical miles. While such a capability theoretically could be revolutionary, the committee believes that the technical challenges that have to be overcome in order to develop a fully operational weapon system that will have realistic power and thermal management requirements suitable for ships, as well as far greater barrel life compared to current barrel life, are daunting.

Based upon the committee’s belief that the significant future resources required for attempting to develop and operationalize an EMRG would be better spent on other naval science and technology activities, the committee recommends authorizing no funding in these PE’s for the EMRG and recommends terminating the program. (Pages 43-44)

The committee’s report also states:

Surface ship torpedo defense

The Navy has been developing an anti-torpedo torpedo defense system (ATTDS) within the surface ship torpedo defense program. The ATTDS consist of a torpedo warning system (TWS) and a countermeasures anti-torpedo (CAT). Last year, the Navy was planning to field the ATTDS with the combined capability of the TWS and the CAT, with an initial operating capability (IOC) in fiscal year 2015, beginning with cruisers and destroyers.

Since last year, the Navy has bifurcated and delayed the program and now intends to do the two subcomponents of the ATTDS system separately. The Navy would achieve an IOC for the TWS in fiscal year 2017 and for the CAT in fiscal year 2021.

The committee understands that the Navy is seeking to field some prototype versions of the TWS and the CAT in 2015 on different ships, but those prototypes would not have the benefit of testing or a robust logistics support system. The committee also understands that this delay is not due to technical issues, but merely reflects a lower funding priority for this program in fiscal year 2013 and beyond.

This lower funding priority and resultant delay in fielding full capability is at odds with testimony the committee received about the importance to war fighting capability of fielding a full ATTDS system as soon as possible.

The committee encourages the Navy to review this decision and, if the combined ATTDS system is as important as the testimony to the committee indicated it was, reallocate funds to support the original IOC dates in its fiscal year 2013 budget request. (Page 79)

Appendix A. Excerpt on China's Evolving Maritime Strategy from 2011 DOD Report

This appendix reprints a “special topic” section on China’s evolving maritime strategy that was included in the DOD’s 2011 report to Congress on military and security developments involving China.

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHINA'S EVOLVING MARITIME STRATEGY

THE RISE OF CHINA'S MARITIME SECURITY INTERESTS

Historically a continental power, China increasingly looks to the maritime domain as a source of economic prosperity and national security. China's evolving “maritime consciousness,” as reflected in senior-level rhetoric and resource allocation, has potentially far reaching consequences in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. Many PRC officials and citizens view maritime power as a prerequisite to becoming a “great power.” This chapter addresses China's attention to the maritime domain, with a particular focus on the security dimension. It identifies the catalysts influencing PRC thinking on maritime interests and the steps China has taken to address these challenges, including naval development, legislation, improving civilian maritime enforcement, and diplomatic initiatives. Finally, it addresses China's specific maritime interests and addresses how China's posture could evolve in the future.

In its 2010 “China Ocean's Development Report,” China's State Oceanic Administration (SOA) proclaimed, “building maritime power is China's historic task for the 21st century, and the decade from 2010-2020 is the key historic stage for realizing this task.” Although China appears to lack an official maritime strategy, PRC officials, military strategists, and academics are focused on the growing relevance of maritime power to China's interests.

THE EVOLUTION IN “MARITIME CONSCIOUSNESS”

Since the early 1980s, two important factors catalyzed a transformation in Beijing's maritime outlook. First, China's geostrategic environment fundamentally shifted after the Cold War ended. As PRC concerns over a major continental conflict, including the possibility of nuclear war with Russia,

subsided, Beijing turned its attention towards a range of other challenges, particularly Taiwan, which it feared was drifting steadily toward a state of *de jure* independence.

The U.S. response in the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crisis underscored to Beijing the potential challenge of U.S. military intervention and highlighted the importance of developing a modern navy, capable of conducting A2AD operations, or “counter-intervention operations” in the PLA's lexicon.

Second, China's expanding economic interests, including both maritime commerce and the exploitation of marine resources, have affected Beijing's perception of maritime power as it relates to national interests. Speaking in 2007, President Hu asserted that, “to develop maritime issues is one of the strategic tasks to boost our national economic development.” China looks to the oceans as a critical resource, providing fish and potentially large oil and gas reserves.

The oceans also serve as a vital artery for trade and support China's economic health, with approximately ninety percent of China's imports and exports transiting by sea. A net oil exporter until 1993, China now imports over half of the oil it consumes, over 80 percent of which transits the Malacca Strait and South China Sea. Additionally, China's economic engine is concentrated in dense population centers along the country's East coast. Conflicts affecting these coastal regions would have far reaching consequences for China.

EVOLVING NAVAL STRATEGY

PLA General Liu Huaqing, who commanded a poorly equipped and trained PLA Navy through most of the 1980s, and later served on the CCP Politburo Standing Committee and

as CMC Vice Chairman, advanced the cause of naval modernization amid a strategic culture overwhelmingly dominated by the PLA ground force. Until Liu instituted the PLA Navy's "Offshore Defense" strategy in 1986, the PLA Navy was focused mainly on "resisting invasions and defending the homeland."

Often referred to as the "father of the modern Chinese Navy," Liu, who died in January 2011, called for naval operations beyond the PRC littoral and appealed for the eventual development of aircraft carriers. Years would pass before many of Liu's proposals gained political support; however, his ideas fundamentally affected the way PRC strategists conceptualize maritime power and approach maritime strategy.

Although not defined by specific boundaries, Offshore Defense is generally characterized by the maritime space within China's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) or sometimes by the "first island chain," including the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea. In recent years, the PLA Navy has begun emphasizing missions in the so-called "far seas," an area loosely defined by the "second island chain," which stretches from Northern Japan, through the Northern Mariana Islands, through Guam.

Consideration of more distant contingencies has been accompanied by limited peacetime operations outside of this region, including counter-piracy patrols, humanitarian and disaster relief and noncombatant evacuations. These peacetime operations have provided the PLA with valuable operational experience.

NEW SECURITY INTERESTS DRIVING REQUIREMENTS

In the early 1990s, the PRC watched with concern as more modern militaries adopted high technology weapons and platforms that were changing the nature of modern warfare, including in the maritime domain. From the perspective of many PRC strategists and military officials, military developments in

developed nations made the PLA's coastal-oriented Navy appear antiquated, inadequate, and vulnerable. PRC leaders subsequently directed the PLA to prepare to fight and win "local wars under modern, high-tech conditions." The term "high-tech" was later replaced with "informatized" to reflect the importance of network-centric warfare and information technology.

In his 1992 address to the 14th Party Congress, former President Jiang Zemin articulated the need to protect China's evolving "maritime interests." During the nearly two decades that followed, the PRC has pursued its maritime objectives through naval development, legislation, civilian enforcement, and diplomacy. Ambitious naval acquisition closed many of the capability gaps that defined China's Navy prior to and through the 1990s. China today possesses a limited ability to respond to maritime threats beyond the range of land-based aviation. This includes limited power projection capability in the farther regions of the South China Sea and western Pacific. This progress has been slow, but has begun to accelerate as new systems come on line, and China's naval forces gain additional experience in operations beyond the littoral.

Civilian and military officials have underscored the economic impetus for advancing China's maritime interests, reflecting a perception that economic welfare and national security are increasingly linked. PLA Navy Commander Wu Shengli asserted in 2006 that China requires a "powerful navy to protect fishing, resource development and strategic passageways for energy." This dimension is particularly important to the CCP, which has built its legitimacy on the promise of sustained development.

China's maritime interests, including territorial and sovereignty disputes, resource interests, and critical SLOC dependencies remain heavily concentrated in Asia. Consequently, China's naval orientation retains a decidedly regional focus. However, the PLA is assuming more "global" missions.

This reflects the recognition that Chinese economic interests, including commercial shipping and investment projects, along with PRC citizens, are now located across the globe. It also reflects a desire to cast China as a “great power.” China’s leaders have offered unambiguous guidance that the PLA Navy will play a growing role in protecting China’s far-flung interests.

In 2004, not long after assuming Chairmanship of the CMC, Hu Jintao promulgated the “Historic Missions of the Armed Forces in the New Period of the New Century” (*Xin Shiji Xin Jieduan Wojun Lishi Shiming*), commonly referred to as the “New Historic Missions.” In addition to reiterating the Armed Forces’ role in sustaining CCP rule, and protecting China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, the New Historic Missions highlight the PLA’s role in safeguarding China’s expanding “national interests” and in “ensuring world peace.”

In drawing a clear link between China’s economic interests and national security, the New Historic Missions established a justification for missions beyond China’s maritime periphery. Although the PLA remains focused on regional contingencies, the New Historic Missions imply that the pursuit of China’s interests would not be constrained by geographic boundaries and would evolve to meet a diverse array of challenges. China’s 2006 National Defense White Paper expanded upon the New Historic Missions, when it introduced the concept of “diversified military tasks” (*duoyanghua junshi renwu*—多样化军事任务). This emphasized the need for the PLA to prepare not only for traditional military missions, but also military operations other than war (MOOTW). The PLA Navy has since focused greater attention on counter-piracy, HA/DR, and noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO).

NEW “FIRSTS” FOR THE PLA NAVY

The PLA Navy’s counter-piracy deployment to the Gulf of Aden, which it has sustained since 2009, remains the most visible manifestation of this policy shift under Hu Jintao. Not including naval diplomacy, the Gulf of Aden mission marked China’s first operational deployment of naval forces outside of regional waters. In September 2010, the PLA Navy’s hospital ship, “PEACE ARK” conducted its first overseas humanitarian mission by visiting five countries in Asia and Africa.

Most recently, the PLA Navy participated in its first noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO). In February 2011, the PLA Navy deployed a JIANGKAI-II class frigate, which had been operating in the Gulf of Aden, to support its evacuation of PRC citizens from Libya. Although largely symbolic, this deployment enabled the PLA Navy to demonstrate a commitment to the protection of PRC citizens living and working overseas.

CHINA’S MARITIME INTERESTS

These increasingly “diverse” missions have not supplanted regional priorities. The Taiwan challenge remains the “main strategic direction” (*zhuyao zhanlue fangxiang*—主要战略方向) for China’s armed forces, particularly the Navy. Aside from Taiwan, China faces several high priority maritime challenges. First is strengthening and gradually expanding China’s maritime buffer zone as a means to prevent foreign attack or “interference.” A second priority remains advancing China’s maritime territorial claims, particularly the East and South China Seas. Third, China is focused on the protection of regional sea lines of communication (SLOCs).

Fourth, the PRC hopes to advance China’s image as a “great power,” and finally, China intends to deploy a survivable, sea-based nuclear deterrent in the foreseeable future.

Expanding the Maritime Periphery: China has long regarded the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea as areas of unique strategic importance. From the perspective of Beijing, these so called “near seas” constitute a security buffer and hold potentially significant oil and gas resources. The PRC has attempted to use legal pronouncements, civilian enforcement, and naval assets to advance PRC interests within this buffer zone.

In 1992, China’s National People’s Congress passed the Law of Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zones, which proclaimed the South China Sea as PRC “historic waters.” Beijing has crafted a series of laws that codify PRC claims to regional territory and proscribe special restrictions on foreign activities in China’s EEZ.

As the name implies, the Exclusive Economic Zone affords states exclusive access to the economic resources within a defined maritime space, not exceeding 200 nautical miles from the coastal baseline. China has attempted to apply security restrictions to the EEZ, which are inconsistent with customary international law as reflected in UNCLOS. Attempts to impede or harass sovereign U.S. vessels and aircraft operating legally in China’s EEZ (beyond China’s 12nm territorial seas) have repeatedly created friction in the U.S.-China relationship.

Regional Territorial Disputes: During the 1930s and 1940s, the Republic of China (ROC) began delineating essentially all of the South China Sea, including the Spratly and Paracel Islands, within a nine-dashed line. Although preserving ambiguity on the nature of this claim, the PRC maintains that the territories within the dashed line and their adjacent waters belong to China. Different portions of China’s expansive claim are disputed in whole or in part by Taiwan,

Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei. China’s ability to employ coercion in these disputes has grown steadily in recent years. China’s naval modernization, in particular, is affecting security perceptions among rival South China Sea claimants.

China is leveraging both civilian enforcement and naval assets in pursuit of its territorial objectives. In recent years, PRC naval ships and civilian law enforcement agencies have shown signs of greater assertiveness in the region, occasionally triggering friction with rival claimants. In the East China Sea, China faces a contentious dispute with Japan over maritime boundaries. Where this line is drawn has implications for disputed territory and subsea energy resources. In 2010, tensions between Tokyo and Beijing rose after a PRC fishing boat rammed a Japanese Coast Guard vessel near the disputed Senkaku Islands.

The PRC has increasingly sought to enforce its broad maritime claims with civilian assets including the maritime police, the Border Control Department (BCD), Maritime Safety Administration (MSA), State Oceanographic Administration (SOA), Fisheries Law Enforcement Command (FLEC), and Coast Guard. Beijing wishes to present the issue of regional maritime territory as one of law enforcement rather than military rivalry. Beijing likely calculates that the employment of naval assets in these matters raises the risk of escalation, generates regional animosity, and unnecessarily burdens the PLA Navy with non-military tasks. Compared to developed countries, particularly Japan and the United States, China’s civilian maritime agencies are poorly equipped and operated. However, they are improving steadily and will play an increasingly critical function in China’s maritime enforcement efforts.

Debating China's Role in "Distant Seas"

Around the time President Hu Jintao articulated the "New Historic Missions" in 2004, Chinese officials and scholars began openly discussing the extent to which China should expand its maritime power. The term "*yuanhai fangwei*" (远海防卫) which translates to "distant/far sea defense," began appearing with increasing frequency in Chinese publications. Authors associated with the Naval Research Institute (NRI) called the "shift from offshore to open ocean naval operations" an "inevitable historic choice" for China noting that naval power must "match the expansion of China's maritime interests."

Navy deployment trends in recent years underscore China's interests in a limited "far seas" capability. Some PRC commentators advocate a sustained shift from an "Offshore Defense" strategy to "Far Seas Defense." Many others characterize Far Seas Defense as simply an extension or adjustment of the existing strategy, rather than a fundamental change. China's 2010 Defense White Paper reiterated the PLA Navy's commitment to its Offshore Defense strategy while acknowledging efforts to improve operational capabilities in far seas.

Recently, several Navy officials and commentators have broached the once-taboo topic of overseas military basing. In late 2009, Rear Admiral Yin Zhuo (retired), attracted extensive international media attention when he suggested in an interview, that China requires a "stable and permanent supply and repair base" to support its overseas counter-piracy activities. With an aircraft carrier program being realized over the next decade, the Navy may face even greater incentive to improve its support options.

It is not clear if China will pursue traditional military "bases," suited for supporting distant combat operations, or a more limited set of logistical supply "places," that are better suited to peacetime deployments, such as counter-piracy and HA/DR.

SEA LANE PROTECTION

Since China's emergence as a global economic actor, it has relied nearly exclusively on the United States as the guarantor of a safe and unrestricted maritime domain. Approximately 90 percent of China's trade volume is conducted via maritime transport and approximately 50 percent of global merchant traffic passes through regional waters.

This dependency has prompted greater attention to SLOC protection missions. PRC officials have expressed particular concern over the Strait of Malacca. Even with its recent advances in naval power, would face great difficulty responding to threats to shipping in the far reaches of the South China Sea, including the Strait of Malacca.

The PLA Navy's ongoing effort in the Gulf of Aden underscores China's strong interest in protecting maritime commerce, from both traditional and non-traditional threats. The United States welcomes China's contribution to maintaining the safety and security of the global maritime domain. This deployment underscores an area where mutual interest can foster cooperation.

GREAT POWER STATUS

China's ambitious naval modernization remains a great source of pride for the PRC public and leadership. China has deployed its most modern ships to engage in naval diplomacy and counter-piracy in a coalition environment. Many in China see naval power as a prerequisite for great power status.

PRC officials and commentators occasionally lament the fact that China is the only permanent member of the U.S. Security Council without an aircraft carrier. The PLA Navy's anticipated deployment of aircraft carriers over the coming decade will likely serve as a great source of national pride, regardless of actual combat capability.

China's leaders have tapped into this nationalistic sentiment, contrasting China's current naval power with the late Qing Dynasty, which was easily overwhelmed by more modern Japanese and Western naval forces. On December 27, 2006, President Hu Jintao expressed confidence in China's naval development, asserting to a group of PLA Navy officers that China was now "a great maritime power" (*haiyang daguo*), adding that the PRC must continue strengthening and modernizing its Navy.

SEA-BASED NUCLEAR FORCES

China continues efforts to deploy a sea-based nuclear deterrent. Although the PLA Navy has received the JIN-class SSBN, it has faced repeated challenges with the JL-2 weapons system. The system did not reach an initial operational capability (IOC) by 2010 as DoD had anticipated. Once China overcomes remaining technical hurdles, the PLA Navy will be charged with protection of a nuclear asset.

OVERCOMING KEY CHALLENGES

Although areas of PLA progress frequently attract attention, lesser understood capability gaps remain. For example, the Gulf of Aden deployment has underscored the complexity of distant operations to China's military and civilian leadership. According to Rear Admiral Yin Zhuo, the Gulf of Aden mission has "shown the Navy's equipment is not particularly suited to blue water operations... [and] our equipment, our technology, especially our level of information infrastructure and communication means, as well as our blue water deployment

capabilities... still have a relatively long way to go to catch up with that of the Western countries."

China's regional capabilities have improved significantly over the past two decades. However, in the near term, China would face great difficulty projecting military power beyond regional waters during a sustained conflict. China lacks overseas bases and supply infrastructure, and despite some recent progress, remains reliant on shore-based defenses. Over time, China's growing involvement in international peacekeeping efforts, military diplomacy, counter-piracy operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, evacuation of Chinese citizens from overseas trouble spots, and exercise activity, will improve the PLA's capability to operate at greater distances from the mainland. This operational experience could eventually facilitate a "global" military presence, should China's leadership pursue that course.

ASSESSING THE FUTURE

The evolution of China's economic and geostrategic interests has fundamentally altered Beijing's view of maritime power. Today, the PLA Navy and China's civilian maritime agencies are addressing gaps in regional capabilities while engaging in a small number of peacetime operations beyond the region, where their capabilities remain more limited. The expansion of missions reflects the availability of resources and the PRC's increasingly diverse interests.

Beyond immediate regional interests, China's expanding capabilities might facilitate greater attention to maritime challenges further into the Pacific and Indian Oceans. In contrast to a decade ago, many of China's new naval platforms can utilize space-based communications, advanced sensors, and area air-defense, enabling combat capability at great distances from land. Current peacetime deployments are providing PLA Navy

operators with valuable experience outside of the region.

The establishment of overseas bases and the development of more than a few aircraft carriers might signal a trend towards more “global” missions. Greater openness from

China regarding the nature and scope of its maritime ambitions could help mitigate suspicions and ensure that China’s maritime development becomes a source of global stability rather than a source of friction.

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Appendix B. China's Maritime Territorial Claims and Position Regarding Operations in EEZ

This appendix provides additional discussion of China's maritime territorial claims and China's position regarding foreign military operations in China's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).²⁰⁹

Excerpts from 2011 DOD Annual Report

In its 2011 report to Congress on military and security developments involving China, DOD states that:

China faces extensive territorial disputes along its land and maritime periphery. Next to the status of Taiwan, these disputes play a central role in PLA planning. Although China has generally adopted a less confrontational posture towards its regional disputes since the late 1990s (China has settled eleven land disputes with six of its neighbors since 1998), some regional actors fear China's growing military and economic weight is beginning to produce a more assertive posture, particularly in the maritime domain.

In addition to a longstanding and contentious border dispute with India, China has maritime boundary disputes with Japan over the East China Sea and throughout the South China Sea with Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, and Taiwan. These have sparked occasional armed conflict, including a 1962 border conflict with India and a 1979 ground invasion of Vietnam. In the South China Sea, China fought Vietnamese forces in the Paracel Islands in 1974 and near Fiery Cross Reef in 1988. In 1995, China occupied Mischief Reef, also in the Spratly Islands, amid protest from the Philippines. In 2002, Beijing and ASEAN brokered a Declaration on Conduct in the South China Sea. While non-binding, the declaration was followed by a period of relative stability.

China's broad claim to potentially all of the South China Sea remains a source of regional contention. Beginning in the 1930s and 1940s, the Republic of China began publishing regional maps with a dashed line around the perimeter of South China Sea. After taking power in 1949, the CCP maintained this claim. Both the PRC and Taiwan continue to base their South China Sea claims on that broad delineation. China increasingly regards the South China Sea as a vital commercial and security corridor for East and Southeast Asia.

In recent years, some of China's neighbors have questioned Beijing's long-term commitment to peacefully and cooperatively resolve the remainder of its disputes. PLA Navy assets have repeatedly circumnavigated the South China Sea since 2005, and civilian enforcement ships, sometimes supported by the PLA Navy, have occasionally harassed foreign vessels. Underscoring the volatility of these various disputes, a PRC-flagged fishing boat collided with Japanese Coast Guard vessels near the disputed Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea, triggering a highly charged political standoff between Tokyo and Beijing in September 2010.²¹⁰

DOD further states in the report that:

²⁰⁹ For further information on this issue, see CRS Report RL31183, *China's Maritime Territorial Claims: Implications for U.S. Interests*, by Kerry Dumbaugh et al. This archived report is dated November 12, 2001.

²¹⁰ 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 15.

Before the CCP took power in 1949, the Chinese government regarded the South China Sea as a region of geostrategic interest and a part of China's "historical waters." As early as the 1930's, the Republic of China was considering a broad line delineating the South China Sea as Chinese territory. The "U-shaped" dashed line that began appearing on Chinese maps in 1947 continues to define PRC claims to the South China Sea. Until recently, however, the PLA Navy's limited operational reach constrained Beijing's military options in the South China Sea.

Over the past five years, China has begun demonstrating a more routine naval and civilian enforcement presence in the South China Sea. In several instances, particularly in 2009, China's use of force and coercion to push it disputed maritime territorial claims elicited concern among many of its Asian neighbors.

Although the PRC remains wary of triggering regional opposition and may have adjusted certain tactics, Beijing appears eager to strengthen its claim to the disputed region over the long-term. This includes legal efforts as well as the deployment of more capable naval and civilian law enforcement ships. A more robust presence would position China for force projection, blockade, and surveillance operations to influence the critical sea lanes in the region, through which some 50 percent of global merchant traffic passes.

Competition for resources, including oil, gas, and fishing rights, coupled with strong nationalistic sentiments continues to drive territorial disputes among several South China Sea claimants. Although tensions in this hotly disputed region subsided after the-1990s, signs of friction re-emerged in 2007, particularly between China and Vietnam.

In response to the 2004 articulation of the PLA's "New Historic Missions," China's senior military leaders began developing concepts for an expanded regional maritime strategy and presence. For example, in 2006, PLA Navy Commander Wu Shengli called for a "powerful navy to protect fishing, resource development and strategic passageways for energy." Many of these ideas echo the debates in the late 1980s and early 1990s over building PLA naval capabilities. However, the rise of Taiwan contingency planning as the dominant driver of PLA force modernization in the mid-1990s, and especially after 2001, largely sidelined these discussions. The 2008 and 2010 Defense White Papers reflect greater attention to the PLA's expanding mission set.

As part of its military modernization effort, China has increasingly shifted resources away from the PLAN's North Sea Fleet to the South Sea Fleet, greatly expanding the latter's capabilities. China's ability to deploy a more robust strategic and conventional military presence off its southern coast is having a growing impact on regional rivalries and power dynamics.²¹¹

DOD also states in the report that:

The Chinese concept of "three warfares"... refers specifically to psychological warfare, media warfare, and legal warfare. It reflects China's desire to effectively exploit these force enablers in the run up to and during hostilities. During military training and exercises, PLA troops employ the "three warfares" to undermine the spirit and ideological commitment of the adversary. In essence, it is a non-military tool used to advance or catalyze a military objective.

²¹¹ 2011 DOD CMSD, pp. 39-40.

- **Psychological Warfare** seeks to undermine an enemy's ability to conduct combat operations through operations aimed at deterring, shocking, and demoralizing enemy military personnel and supporting civilian populations.
- **Media Warfare** is aimed at influencing domestic and international public opinion to build support for China's military actions and dissuade an adversary from pursuing actions contrary to China's interests.
- **Legal Warfare** uses international and domestic law to claim the legal high ground or assert Chinese interests. It can be employed to hamstring an adversary's operational freedom and shape the operational space. Legal warfare is also intended to build international support and manage possible political repercussions of China's military actions. China has attempted to employ legal warfare in the maritime domain and in international airspace in pursuit of a security buffer zone.

In 2003, the CCP Central Committee and the CMC endorsed the —three warfares! concept, reflecting China's recognition that as a global actor, it will benefit from learning to effectively utilize the tools of public opinion, messaging, and influence. China likely hopes to employ these three concepts in unison, particularly during the early stages of a crisis, as they have a tendency to bolster one another.²¹²

China's Territorial Claims in the South China Sea

China's territorial claims in the South China Sea are somewhat ambiguous but potentially expansive enough to go well beyond what would normally be supported by international legal norms relating to territorial waters. The ambiguity over China's territorial claims in the South China Sea relates in part to the so-called map with nine dashed lines—a Chinese map that predates the founding of the People's Republic of China and which includes nine dashed lines that, if connected, would circumscribe an area encompassing most of the South China Sea. DOD has published a map of China's disputed territories that connects the nine dashed lines.²¹³ China has maintained ambiguity over the meaning of this map. One observer states:

The Chinese government repeated this cartographic feature after the Communist party came to power on the mainland in 1949, and today it remains depicted on every map published in China and Taiwan. But the nature of China's claim over the expanse of water and the numerous islands, shoals, rocks, and islets contained within the nine dashes of the U-shaped line has never been specified. Among Chinese scholars and officials there appear to be four dominant schools of thought as to the line's meaning. The Chinese government, however, continues to avoid publicly taking an official position, perhaps because it benefits from continued ambiguity and the negotiating latitude that it affords.

Sovereign Waters

Some Chinese policy analysts continue to assert that the waters within the U-shaped line should be considered sovereign Chinese waters, subject to the government's full jurisdiction, presumably either as internal waters or territorial seas....

Historic Waters

²¹² 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 26.

²¹³ See 2011 DOD CMSD, p. 16.

Perhaps because it is one of the least well-defined aspects of international law, some Chinese have suggested that the concept of “historic waters” may enable the government to legitimately claim broad control over the South China Sea....

Island Claims

Some Chinese view the U-shaped line as simply asserting a claim to all the islands, rocks, sand bars, coral heads, and other land features that pierce the waters of the South China Sea, and to whatever jurisdiction international law of the sea allows coastal states to claim based on sovereignty over these small bits of land....

Security Interests

China’s assertiveness about its claims in the waters of its near sea has grown in tandem with the size of its navy and maritime services, and from these forces has emerged a fourth perspective, namely that the U-shaped line reflects security interests in the South China Sea, and that they should have legal protection.²¹⁴

According to some press reports, Chinese officials in early 2010 began describing their territorial claims in the South China Sea a “core national interest”—a phrase that was interpreted as meaning that, for the Chinese, the issue is comparable in importance to China’s interest in Taiwan and Tibet. China’s reported assertion about its claims in the South China Sea being a core national interest prompted concern and among observers. A July 3, 2010, press report, for example, stated:

American and European experts who assembled here [in Stockholm] in early June [2010] for the semi-annual Stockholm China Forum were a bit taken aback when their Chinese colleagues defined the South China Sea as a “core national interest” of the People’s Republic [of China]. The Chinese have long used this diplomatic term in discussing Tibet and Taiwan to signify issues that go to the heart of its national sovereignty.

The academics were not speaking out of turn. According to *The New York Times*, Chinese leaders told visiting Obama administration officials earlier this spring that Beijing would not tolerate interference in the South China Sea, a vast expanse that is a major maritime transit area, because the entire region was a “core interest” of their nation.

Since then, “the Chinese are using this term more often and more expansively,” said Aaron Friedberg, a China expert at Princeton University. “And they are defining it as a red line, as a nerve you can’t touch.”

Beijing’s decision to test its neighbors and the United States now in this manner has scholars puzzled. “You would think,” one American analyst living in Beijing observed, that “they would have an interest in finessing this issue for the time being” given its sensitivity to other nations bordering the sea, and other, more pressing issues on the international agenda. The fact that Chinese officials are not masking their ambitions may actually be more important than Beijing’s specific objectives.

The South China Sea is not just any body of water. At least a third of global maritime commerce and more than half of Northeast Asia’s imported energy supplies pass through its 1.2 million square miles. U.S. forces traverse the sea between the Pacific and Indian oceans, including the naval forces that support the war in Afghanistan.

²¹⁴ Peter A. Dutton, “Through A Chinese Lens,” *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2010: 26-27.

The sea is bounded by Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam. All have overlapping claims in the region. Beijing has asserted that 80 percent of the area is China's "historic waters." Friedberg said that recent Chinese assertions are "a very significant extension of claims they have made in the past."²¹⁵

In an apparent response to China's reported statements that its claim to the South China Sea is a core national interest, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated at a meeting in Hanoi on July 23, 2010, that

The United States, like every nation, has a national interest in freedom of navigation, open access to Asia's maritime commons, and respect for international law in the South China Sea. We share these interests not only with ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] members or ASEAN Regional Forum participants, but with other maritime nations and the broader international community.

The United States supports a collaborative diplomatic process by all claimants for resolving the various territorial disputes without coercion. We oppose the use or threat of force by any claimant. While the United States does not take sides on the competing territorial disputes over land features in the South China Sea, we believe claimants should pursue their territorial claims and accompanying rights to maritime space in accordance with the UN convention on the law of the sea. Consistent with customary international law, legitimate claims to maritime space in the South China Sea should be derived solely from legitimate claims to land features.

The U.S. supports the 2002 ASEAN-China declaration on the conduct of parties in the South China Sea. We encourage the parties to reach agreement on a full code of conduct. The U.S. is prepared to facilitate initiatives and confidence building measures consistent with the declaration. Because it is in the interest of all claimants and the broader international community for unimpeded commerce to proceed under lawful conditions. Respect for the interests of the international community and responsible efforts to address these unresolved claims and help create the conditions for resolution of the disputes and a lowering of regional tensions.²¹⁶

On October 12, 2010, at a meeting of defense ministers from countries belonging to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and additional countries, then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated that

a topic of particular importance for all nations here today is maritime security. Disagreements over territorial claims and the appropriate use of the maritime domain appear to be a growing challenge to regional stability and prosperity.

²¹⁵ Bruce Stokes, "China's New Red Line At Sea," *National Journal*, July 3, 2010.

²¹⁶ Remarks by Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State, National Convention Center, Hanoi, Vietnam, July 23, 2010, available online at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/07/145095.htm>. See also Michael Wines, "Behind Gusts Of A Military Chill: A More Forceful China," *New York Times*, June 9, 2010; Mark Landler, "Offering to Aid Talks, U.S. Challenges China on Disputed Islands," *New York Times*, July 23, 2010; Daniel Ten Kate and Nicole Gaouette, "U.S. Says Settling South China Sea Disputes 'Leading Diplomatic Priority,'" *Bloomberg.com*, July 23, 2010; Andrew Jacobs, "China Warns U.S. To Stay Out Of Islands Dispute," *New York Times*, July 27, 2010; ; John Pomfret, "U.S. Takes Tougher Stance With China," *Washington Post*, July 30, 2010: 1; John Pomfret, "China Renews Claim To South China Sea, Vows Freedom Of Passage," *Washington Post*, July 31, 2010: 7.

The United States does not take sides on competing territorial claims, such as those in the South China Sea. Competing claims should be settled peacefully, without force or coercion, through collaborative diplomatic processes, and in keeping with customary international law.

On that note, we are encouraged to see claimant nations in the South China Sea making initial steps to discuss the development of a full code of conduct, in line with the 2002 ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of Parties. We applaud this multilateral approach and we stand ready to help facilitate such initiatives.

The U.S. position on maritime security remains clear: we have a national interest in freedom of navigation; in unimpeded economic development and commerce; and in respect for international law. We also believe that customary international law, as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, provides clear guidance on the appropriate use of the maritime domain, and rights of access to it. By adhering to this guidance, we can ensure that all share equal and open access to international waterways.

The United States has always exercised our rights and supported the rights of others to transit through, and operate in, international waters. This will not change, nor will our commitment to engage in exercises and activities together with our allies and partners.

These activities are a routine and critical component of demonstrating our commitment to the region, maintaining peace and stability, and promoting freedom of navigation. They are also essential to building habits of strong security cooperation, which is necessary as we move forward to address common security challenges together.²¹⁷

An October 13, 2010, press report states:

A senior U.S. defense official said the Chinese, at least in some recent meetings, appeared to have “backed away” from characterizing the South China Sea as a “core” interest and may be seeking to find “other ways to articulate their approach” to the disputed waters. The official said it is “probably fair to conclude that there is some internal debate in Beijing about exactly how they approach this set of issues.”...

Earlier this year, Beijing had characterized the South China Sea as one of its “core national interest”—on a par with Tibet and Taiwan—meaning it saw no room for compromise, though some officials have questioned whether that was a formal position....

The U.S. officials provided few details about how they reached their conclusion that the Chinese leadership may be rethinking how to address South China Sea disputes.²¹⁸

²¹⁷ Remarks by Secretary Gates at SEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus, accessed online at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4700>. The previous day, Secretary Gates, in response to a question at a press conference, stated that

as we have made clear in the past, the U.S. has a longstanding national interest in freedom of navigation and open access to Asia’s maritime commons. We believe that—we don’t take sides in this. We don’t have any territorial claims of our own, but we believe that these issues are best resolved through negotiation and collaboration and within a framework of customary international law, above all the United Nations Law of the Sea.

(Transcript of Joint Press Conference with Secretary Gates and Gen. Thanh from Hanoi, Vietnam, accessed online at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4699>.)

²¹⁸ Adam Entous, “In Asia, Tone Lightens On Sea Disputes,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 13, 2010: 15. See also Thom Shanker, “U.S. And China Soften Tone Over Disputed Seas,” *New York Times*, October 13, 2010; Paul Richter, “China Seeks To Ease Tensions,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 13, 2010: 4.

An October 23, 2010, press report states:

The Chinese government has effectively backed away from a new state policy which it had conveyed to the United States and considers the South China Sea as part of its “core interests” that concern China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, sources close to the matter said Friday [October 22].

Beijing informed Washington in March that it sees the South China Sea as a core interest, along with Taiwan and Tibet. But in recent meetings, Chinese officials have been refuting such claims, the sources said.

The apparent change in China’s policy comes in the wake of growing wariness among Southeast Asian nations, as well as other players such as the United States, about China’s arrogance amid its increasing military presence in the South China Sea.

China’s “core interest” policy has drawn protests from the United States and member nations of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, some that have territorial disputes with Beijing in the South China Sea.

The sources said, though, that China may no longer use the term “core interest,” but it remains unclear if China will ease its hard-line stance on protecting its maritime interests, which also includes the East China Sea....

According to the sources, China first informed the United States about this policy when U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Jim Steinberg and his delegation visited China in March.

In May, Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo officially conveyed China’s stance to U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during the countries’ strategic and economic dialogue in Beijing, the sources said.

But the Chinese officials have told U.S. officials lately that they did not say the South China Sea was a “core interest,” the sources said. During their Oct. 11 meeting in Hanoi, Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie did not even mention the matter to U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

A senior Pentagon official said China’s move to back down from its earlier strategy on the South China Sea was likely influenced by discussions within China.

Beijing’s shift in its policy is believed to be out of consideration to the United States, with some Chinese officials arguing that a continued hard-line stance on China’s part will limit the flexibility of the emerging economy’s diplomatic strategies.²¹⁹

China’s Opposition to U.S. Exercises in Yellow Sea

China in July 2010 also began expressing its opposition to the United States conducting military exercises in the Yellow Sea, which is a body of water between China and the Korean Peninsula.²²⁰ China’s announcement that it opposed such operations followed the announcement by the United

²¹⁹ “China Retracts Policy on S. China Sea, Tells U.S.,” *The Mainichi Daily News*, October 23, 2010. See also Edward Wong, “China Hedges Over Whether South China Sea Is a ‘Core Interest’ Worth War,” *New York Times*, March 30, 2011.

²²⁰ “China Opposes Foreign Warships, Planes Entering Yellow Sea and Adjacent Waters,” *Xinhua*, July 8, 2010.

States and South Korea of plans for conducting joint U.S.-South Korean antisubmarine warfare exercises in the Yellow Sea. The plans for conducting the exercises were announced following the sinking of a South Korean warship in the Yellow Sea—a sinking that South Korea, the United States, and other observers (but not North Korea or China) attributed to a torpedo fired by a North Korean mini-submarine.

In response to China's expression of opposition to the United States conducting military exercises in the Yellow Sea, U.S. officials have stated that U.S. Navy ships have a right to exercise in international waters in the Yellow Sea, that they have done so in the past,²²¹ and that future exercises will be held there. They have also noted that a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier operated there as recently as October 2009 without prompting criticism from China.²²²

China's View Regarding Foreign Military Operations in China's EEZ

China's view that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its EEZ appears to be at the crux of multiple incidents between Chinese and U.S. ships and aircraft in international waters and airspace in the South China Sea, including incidents in March 2001, March 2009, and May 2009 in which Chinese ships and aircraft confronted and harassed the U.S. naval ships *Bowditch* (TAGS-62), *Impeccable* (TAGOS-23), and *Victorious* (TAGOS-19), as they were conducting survey and ocean surveillance operations in China's EEZ, and an incident on April 1, 2001, in which a U.S. Navy EP-3 electronic surveillance aircraft flying in international airspace about 65 miles southeast of China's Hainan Island in the South China Sea was intercepted by Chinese fighters. One of the fighters accidentally collided with and damaged the EP-3, which then made an emergency landing on Hainan Island.²²³

It is important to note, particularly from a U.S. perspective, that China's view that it has the legal right to regulate foreign military activities in its EEZ is related to, but separate from the issue of disputes over maritime territorial claims in the South China Sea and East China Sea. Even if all territorial disputes in those areas were resolved, China's view that it has the legal right to regulate

²²¹ The Navy states that in the last five years, individual Navy ships have operated in the Yellow Sea for a total of several hundred ship days, that individual Navy ships have made five port calls at the South Korean port of Incheon, on the Yellow Sea, and that a total of more than a dozen Navy ships have participated in multiple-ship operations and exercises in the Yellow Sea for a total of more than 100 ship days, including two instances (the most recent being in October 2009) involving an aircraft carrier. (Source: U.S. Navy information paper dated July 26, 2010, on U.S. Navy operations in the Yellow Sea during the past five years, provided to CRS on August 6, 2010, by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs.)

²²² See, for example, John Pomfret, "U.S., South Korea Set To Announce Military Exercises," *Washington Post*, July 15, 2010: 15; Brian Spegele, "U.S., China Avoid Tiff Over Plans For Naval Exercises Off Korean Coast," *Wall Street Journal*, July 16, 2010: 12; Elisabeth Bumiller, "Major Ship In U.S. Fleet Will Visit South Korea," *New York Times*, July 20, 2010; Elisabeth Bumiller and Edward Wong, "China Warily Eyes U.S.-Korea Drills," *New York Times*, July 21, 2010; Sig Christenson, "Gates Orders Naval Maneuvers As 'Clear Message' To N. Korea," *San Antonio Express-News*, July 21, 2010; Bill Gertz, "Inside the Ring," *Washington Times*, July 22, 2010: 7; Jon Rabinoff, "Mullen Moves From 'Curious' To 'Concerned' Over China's Military," *Stripes.com*, July 21, 2010; Evan Ramstad, "U.S., South Korea Navies Drill," *Wall Street Journal*, July 27, 2010: 27; John Pomfret, "U.S. Takes Tougher Stance With China," *Washington Post*, July 30, 2010: 1; William Cole, "Sub Training Ends RIMPAC," *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, July 31, 2010.

²²³ For more on this incident, see CRS Report RL30946, *China-U.S. Aircraft Collision Incident of April 2001: Assessments and Policy Implications*, by Shirley A. Kan et al..

foreign military activities in its EEZ would continue to act as an ongoing source of potential incidents at sea between U.S. and Chinese ships and aircraft.

A November 26, 2010, press report states:

China opposes any military acts in its exclusive economic zone without permission, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Friday [November 26], days before a joint military exercise between United States and Republic of Korea (ROK) on the Yellow Sea.

“We hold a consistent and clear-cut stance on the issue. We oppose any party to take any military acts in our exclusive economic zone without permission,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said in a statement Friday.²²⁴

A November 22, 2010, press report states that at an October meeting in Hawaii between U.S. and Chinese officials held under the 1988 Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (MMCA) between the two countries, “The Chinese delegation, led by Rear Adm. Liao Shining, one of the Chinese navy’s deputy chiefs of staff, took a hardline stance against U.S. naval activities in China’s 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone, which Washington deems to be international waters.”²²⁵

China’s view that it has the right to regulate foreign military activities in its EEZ is an interpretation of international laws relating to EEZs that is at odds with the interpretation held by the United States and most other countries, which holds that that, in general, a country can regulate foreign economic activities but not foreign military activities in its EEZ. One observer states that

the state practice of the overwhelming majority of nations during the past three decades reflects that coastal states lack the authority to restrict foreign military activities within their respective EEZs. In fact, of the 192 member-states of the United Nations, only approximately fifteen nations purport to regulate or prohibit foreign military activities in an EEZ. Those countries are: Bangladesh, Brazil, Burma, Cape Verde, China, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, and Uruguay. Of course, it should be pointed out that the United States has protested and/or conducted operational challenges against all of those claims. In addition, two other states (Peru and Ecuador) unlawfully claim a 200 nautical mile territorial sea, in which they purport to regulate and restrict foreign military activities. Few of these nations other than the PRC have operationally interfered with U.S. military activities within the EEZ or claimed 200 nautical mile territorial seas. In short, the PRC’s legal position about the Impeccable’s operations in its EEZ is an extreme minority view among the community of nations....

the nations of the world should be concerned that the PRC’s [i.e., China’s] actions in the March 8th [2009] incident reflect an effort by the PRC government to unilaterally renegotiate a widely-accepted body of international law. This is a concern for all nations, and not merely the United States or the PRC’s neighbors in the South China Sea and East China Sea.²²⁶

²²⁴ “China Opposes Any Military Acts in Exclusive Economic Zone Without Permission,” *Xinhua*, November 26, 2010, accessed online on December 1, 2010 at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-11/26/c_13624036.htm.

²²⁵ Christopher J. Castelli, “U.S., Chinese Views Clash In Sino-U.S. Maritime Safety Talks,” *Inside the Navy*, November 22, 2010.

²²⁶ Jonathan G. Odom, “The True ‘Lies’ of the Impeccable Incident: What Really Happened, Who Disregarded International law, and Why Every Nation (Outside of China) Should Be Concerned,” *Michigan State Journal of International Law*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (May 2010), 42 pp. (The quoted passages appear on pages 30 and 39.) See also Peter (continued...)

Another observer states that

The creation of the exclusive economic zone in 1982 by UNCLOS [the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea] as a region extending beyond the territorial sea to a maximum of 200 nautical miles from a coastal state's shores was a carefully balanced compromise between the interests of coastal states in managing and protecting ocean resources and or maritime user states in ensuring high-seas freedoms of navigation and overflight, including for military purposes. This, while in the exclusive economic zone the coastal state was granted sovereign rights to the resources and jurisdiction to make law related to those resources, to ensure the participation of maritime powers high-seas freedoms of navigation were specifically preserved for all states. Nonetheless, China has persistently attempted to shift this carefully balanced compromise by making more expansive claims of legal protection for its security interests, especially in the South China Sea....

In combination, China's claims are tantamount to a claim of full sovereignty over the South China Sea. Were these [claims] to become accepted, they would impede legitimate American naval operations in support of regional friends and allies, deterrence of regional conflict, and maintenance of freedom of navigation in the South China Sea's critical sea lines of communication....

Fortunately, China's perspectives on its legal authorities in the South China Sea do not reflect the current state of international law. Nor do the Chinese perspectives reflect the proper understanding of the balance of rights, interests, and freedoms expressed in the provisions of UNCLOS related to the exclusive economic zone. The Chinese nonetheless appear to be advocating revisionist legal interpretations to apply operational pressure on U.S. naval activities in the South China Sea and perhaps to create sufficient friction to cause American national security decision-makers to reduce the level of naval operations there.²²⁷

Additional Perspectives

At an April 12, 2011, hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the following exchanged occurred:

SENATOR WEBB: ... Admiral, you have mentioned many times about your concern with respect to increased Chinese naval activity in this part of the world. And I know after my visit last February, there was an increase in the operational tempo in the region – the Cheonan incident in Korea, the – the incident in the Senkaku Islands off of Okinawa.

I would like to get your – just your views on the dynamic behind this increase in activity and also it's pretty apparent that the Japanese have begun to adjust the positioning of their military, at least made – made some initial decisions in that area. Could you fill us in on that?

(...continued)

A. Dutton, "Through A Chinese Lens," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2010: 24-29; James Manicom, "China's Claims to an Extended Continental Shelf in the East China Sea: Meaning and Implications," *China Brief*, July 9, 2009: 9-11; Peter Dutton and John Garofano, "China Undermines Maritime Laws," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (online), April 3, 2009 (available online at <http://www.feer.com/essays/2009/april/china-undermines-maritime-laws>); and Raul Pedrozo, "Close Encounters At Sea, The USNS Impeccable Incident," *Naval War College Review*, Summer 2009: 101-111. For additional discussion, see CRS Report RL31183, *China's Maritime Territorial Claims: Implications for U.S. Interests*, by Kerry Dumbaugh et al.

²²⁷ Peter A. Dutton, "Through A Chinese Lens," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2010: 28-29.

ADMIRAL ROBERT WILLARD, COMMANDER, U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND: Yes, Senator, I will. To answer the last question first, the Japanese have determined that over the next several years, they will re-bias their ground forces from what is currently a focus in northern Japan, the Hokkaido area and northern Honshu, to be more balanced, I think. And we'll see their ground forces be laid down further south over time.

Their [i.e., Japan's] naval forces continue to advance, and they are I think in all respects becoming more influential throughout the region and with many of the allies and partners that the United States enjoys. So Japan is – is advancing and adjusting.

With regard to the Chinese and the challenge that we especially witnessed last year, the assertiveness that was demonstrated in the South China Sea and, as you mentioned, in the Senkaku Islands near Japan. We believe the motive behind that was – was a declaration by the Chinese regarding both their sovereign claims over the contested areas within the South China Sea region and over the Senkakus, as well as a declaration regarding Chinese security and what they termed the “near seas” and an assertion that military activity, foreign military activity within those near seas should only come with their permission and – and generally a design to influence foreign militaries and particularly the U.S. military from the region.

I would offer that – that, since the discussions that occurred in the ASEAN forums and very strong statements by Secretaries Clinton and Gates over the course of their participation in ASEAN, ASEAN regional forum, ASEAN defense ministers' meeting, plus the East Asia Summit and the Shangri-La Dialogue.

There has been a retrenchment, a bit, by – by the Chinese navy, such that, while we continue to experience their shadowing of some of our ships and so forth that are operating in these waters, we have not seen the same level of assertiveness in 2011 that we witnessed in 2010, which I take as a positive, particularly given the fact that we have mil-to-mil relations that have recommenced to a modest extent, and perhaps we can make an advancement in that regard.

But I think there's no question regarding their – you know, their aims [sic: aim is] to have a great influence over that maritime space and especially over the contested areas that they've laid claim to in both the South China Sea and East China Sea.²²⁸

A November 9, 2010, press report stated:

A series of recent aggressive actions by China were designed to test other nations, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has declared....

In an exclusive interview with The Australian yesterday, Mrs Clinton said the US was determined, along with other nations, to ensure that China abided by international law. She also reaffirmed the US commitment to remain militarily paramount in the Asia-Pacific....

Mrs Clinton was asked yesterday about China's blanket claim to sovereignty over the South China Sea, its furious reaction to Japan arresting a Chinese fishing captain who rammed a Japanese naval vessel, its demand that the US not send an aircraft carrier to exercise in the Yellow Sea near South Korea and a series of other aggressive actions from Beijing.

“We think it is part of the testing process that countries go through,” the Secretary of State said....

²²⁸ Source: Transcript of hearing.

“When the Chinese first told us at a meeting (in China) of the Strategic and Economic Dialogue that they view the South China Sea as a core interest, I immediately responded and said, ‘We don’t agree with that’...”

“So they (the Chinese) were on notice that if they were in the process of extending their efforts to claim and control to the detriment of international law, freedom of navigation, maritime security, and the claims of their neighbours, that was a concerning matter,” Mrs Clinton said.

“So we worked with a lot of the ASEAN countries who are directly impacted and 12 of us raised it at the ASEAN regional forum in July to make it clear that issues like that have to be resolved in accordance with the rule of law.”²²⁹

Two observers of Asian and Pacific security issues state that

as China has become more influential, it has also become uncharacteristically assertive in the diplomatic arena. This assertiveness is nowhere more evident than with its naval power, and is prompting many to ask if it is now verging on the reckless, particularly over the South China Sea....

It’s increasingly clear that Beijing may have misinterpreted a relatively passive but definitely welcoming set of international reactions to China’s rise. And the combination of China’s aggressive naval actions and maritime territorial claims suggests an alarming indicator: Chinese assertiveness over its region is growing as fast as China’s wealth and perceived power trajectory. Beijing’s unwelcome intent appears to give notice that China is opting out of the Global Commons, and that the Western Pacific is not to be accessible to all, but instead increasingly part of China’s exclusive sphere of influence.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in China’s attitude over the South China Sea, which recently has been defined as a ‘core interest’—the same phrase Chinese use to refer to Tibet, Taiwan and Xinjiang. In the process, China is in effect dismissing the international concept of the Global Commons, which refers to the maritime, air, space and cyberspace domains that comprise the circulatory system of our globalized world. Because the Global Commons hold together the international world order based on near-uncontested access, the rule of law and freedom of manoeuvre, China’s challenging of these principles puts it at direct odds with the United States.

Indeed, China seems to regard the maritime global commons in a proprietary fashion. For a given area, the Chinese wish either to dominate it or for others to stay away; in effect, in the Chinese view, there’s no ‘commons.’ China calling the South China Sea a ‘core concern’ is an attempt to place clear, Chinese-declared limits on the ability of the international community to assert its rights under international law.

China has two types of arbitrary claims: an assertion that China’s territorial seas extend into much of the South China Sea and the more recent claim that they have the right to control navigation and research activities, not just fishing and seabed resources, within their Exclusive Economic Zones. If not challenged, China’s assertive incrementalism has international legal risks, since international law is built on norms.

In contrast, long-standing US diplomatic and military doctrine has been explicit that navies—including China’s—have every right to operate on the high seas, even including in

²²⁹ Greg Sheridan, “China Actions Meant As Test, Hillary Clinton Says,” *TheAustralian.com.au*, November 9, 2010.

the territorial waters of other states. In support of this doctrine, Washington has attempted to establish a strong and open dialogue with the Chinese military. China, on the other hand, sees US operations inside the first island chain as impinging on its sovereignty, just as it has a very expansive interpretation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as to its authority within its own (and contested) Exclusive Economic Zones. China's combination of its international legal strategies with naval force is telling: unlike the other claimants to the South China Sea, China backs up its words with military force.

The US Navy remains the strongest and only true blue-water naval force in the world and is the enabler and enforcer of much of the Global Commons, a system of free trade and unfettered economic and political access. As such, it appears to be the object of a different Chinese worldview, one of limited access for others and exclusive access for China. Meanwhile, the result of China's asymmetric anti-access and area-denial strategy is a growing Navy-killing array of ever more capable anti-ship missiles and other weapons. Beijing is trying to establish the precedent for limited access on its own terms and diminished freedom of navigation.²³⁰

Another observer states:

Throughout the Cold War, the United States sought to maintain a military advantage over the Soviet Union. One reason was that if the military balance shifted in Moscow's favor, America's European allies might conclude that Moscow could not be resisted and would fall under Soviet sway. All of Europe would then share the fate of Finland, which had remained nominally independent after World War II but abided by foreign-policy rules set by the Soviets.

The Soviet Union never successfully "Finlandized" Europe. But the threat has returned—from China, which is now trying to do the same in the Western Pacific.

A country's military strategy offers a window into its intentions, and China is clearly seeking to effect a gradual but decisive shift in the Chinese-U.S. military balance. China's goal is to stop the U.S. from protecting its longstanding interests in the region—and to draw Washington's democratic allies and partners (such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan) into its orbit....

The PLA's area-denial capabilities focus on restricting the U.S. Navy's freedom of action out to the "second island chain," a line that extends from China's coast as far east as Guam....

East Asian waters are gradually becoming a "no-man's land" for American warships and forward-based aircraft, while U.S. satellites are becoming sitting ducks and the Pentagon's digital backbone is increasingly endangered.

China's "Assassin's Mace" approach cannot be justified as a counter to any U.S. military buildup. American forces in the Western Pacific are significantly smaller than they were at the end of the Cold War. Moreover, over the past two decades the U.S. has not used its military forces either to attack China or coerce it. Rather, it has underwritten a stable regional military balance that has enabled a period of unprecedented peace and prosperity—of which China has been the principal beneficiary.

²³⁰ Patrick Cronin and Paul Giarra, "China's Dangerous Arrogance," *The Diplomat*, July 23, 2010 (available online at <http://the-diplomat.com/2010/07/23/china%e2%80%99s-dangerous-arrogance/>).

China's buildup, then—its “peaceful rise,” as Beijing calls it—is best explained as a strategy of Finlandization. Such a strategy fits China's outlook, which is epitomized in Sun Tzu's famous observation that “To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.”²³¹

Another observer states:

It is abundantly clear that China claims, and will continue to assert, sovereignty over all islands in the SCS within their claimed “nine dash line.” It is also clear from their actions and words, that they will continue to assert a form of security jurisdiction in the EEZ which is incompatible with international law and exceeds the sovereign rights that they have in the EEZ – although China has stated that vessels enjoy freedom of navigation in the EEZ, China claims that they have the right to prohibit certain military activities in their EEZ – a position which they seek to enforce as part of their active defense and area denial strategy....

An integral part of China's active defense and area denial strategy is its use of legal warfare doctrine. In the 1999 text entitled “Unrestricted Warfare,” Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui introduced the concept of “international law warfare” as an example of “means and methods used to fight a non-military war.” In an article published in May 2006, Renmin Haijun provides additional insight into Chinese execution of the concept of legal warfare – stating that military warfare under modern high technology conditions is a political and legal battle of safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity against enemy countries' military interference.” It advocates the “use of law as a weapon” and calls for a strategy which is “far-sighted and strong.” The Chinese are actually quite persistent at attempting to explain or endorse their actions through a tortured and misplaced interpretation of customary international law and the provisions of UNCLOS. Ultimately, their attempts to justify their objections to military activities in the EEZ will fail as they do not accurately represent state practice or the language and negotiating history of UNCLOS. In fact, the opposite is true – the negotiating history of UNCLOS makes it abundantly clear that attempts to restrict military activities in the EEZ were debated and rejected during the negotiations.²³²

²³¹ Andrew F. Krepinevich, “China's ‘Finlandization’ Strategy in the Pacific,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 11, 2010.

²³² Prepared statement by Stacy A. Pedrozo, Capt, JAGC, USN, U.S. Navy Military Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, Before the U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission, January 27, 2011, pp. 5-6.

Appendix C. Press Reports on Operational Status of Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBM)

Press Reports Since December 2010

A July 12, 2011, news report from China quotes Chen Bingde, the chief of the PLA general staff, as stating that “the missile is still undergoing experimental testing” and that “it is a high-tech weapon and we face many difficulties in getting funding, advanced technologies and high-quality personnel, which are all underlying reasons why it is hard to develop this.”²³³

A February 18, 2011, press report from China quoted an unnamed source as saying that the DF-21D “is already deployed in the army.”²³⁴

On January 8, 2011, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, when asked whether he believed the ASBM had achieved IOC, stated: “I think that the development [of the system] has proceeded fairly – I think they’re fairly far along, but whether it’s actually reached IOC or not, I just don’t know.”²³⁵

At a January 5, 2011, meeting with defense reporters, Vice Admiral David J. Dorsett, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Dominance, stated the following:

Question: You mentioned the DF-21. Is that a game-changer? Do you consider that operational, or is that like what we did with Global Hawk where we rushed something out to the field really before it was fully shaken out?

Dorsett: I think [inaudible] has written an article on it just recently, and our assessment, Admiral Willard’s assessment at PACOM is that it has reached an initial operational capability. I think that’s true.

The Chinese have tested the DF-21D missile system over land a sufficient number of times that the missile system itself is truly competent and capable. The entire weapon capability, they have ISR, they have sensors on board ship that can feed into the targeting aspect of it. So could they start to employ that and field it operationally? Yes, I think so. It gets back to that question of proficiency. How proficient are they, though, in the end-to-end employment of that capability? Their 2nd Artillery’s been around for over five decades, so they have a competent missile system, or missile command and control capability. But the question of fusing all the information to use it in targeting, I think there’s still some questions of how proficient they would be to fully employ that at this point. But are they at the initial operational capability? Yes, I think so.

²³³ Hu Yinan, Li Xiaokun, and Cui Haipai, “Official Confirms China Building Aircraft Carrier,” *China Daily* (www.chinadaily.com.cn), July 12, 2011, accessed online July 13, 2011, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2011-07/12/content_12880708.htm. See also Bradley Perrett, “Imbalance of Power,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, July 18/25, 2011: 24-25.

²³⁴ Zhang Han and Huang Jingling, “New Missile ‘Ready by 2015,’” *Global Times* (<http://military.globaltimes.cn>), February 18, 2011. The new missile referred to in the title of the article is a missile other than the DF-21 that the article said is to have a range of up to 4,000 km, or about 2,160 nm.

²³⁵ Source: Transcript of media availability with Secretary Gates en route to Beijing, China, from Andrews Air Force Base, accessed online on January 11, 2011, at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4748>.

Question: One follow-up of that. The [Navy] people told me a year or two ago that the chances of hitting a carrier with a ballistic missile is pretty remote. Has that assessment changed?

Dorsett: Yes. The technology that the Chinese have developed and are employing in their DF-21D missile system has increased their probability of being able to employ a salvo of missiles to be able to hit a maneuvering target. How proficient they are, what that level of probability is, we don't know. Frankly, I'm guessing that they don't know. I'm assessing that they don't know. The reason I say that is they've probably simulated this in laboratories. They've certainly test-fired it over land. But to our knowledge they have not test-fired this over water against maneuvering targets. If you're an engineer and you've developed a weapon system, you pretty much want to make sure that you use the entire weapon system and employ it in an operational environment to understand how really competent and effective it is.

But to answer your question, yeah, they're demonstrating the technology to be able to hit maneuvering targets. A few years ago our assessment was no one had a capability.

Question: A salvo would be like two, three, four missiles?

Dorsett: Several missiles, let's put it that way.²³⁶

A January 3, 2011, press report states:

China doesn't yet have the capability to use its new anti-ship missiles effectively against U.S. aircraft carriers and other warships, according to U.S. Navy analysts.

While the Chinese have deployed an early version of the world's first anti-ship ballistic missile system, U.S. naval intelligence officials downplay the near-term impact, since China's military hasn't conducted a full-scale test or established an operational unit for the missiles.

China has a "workable design" for an anti-ship missile but "it is unknown to us and probably the Chinese as to how effective the missile will be without a full-scale test," the Navy's Office of Naval Operations for Information Dominance, which includes Navy intelligence, said in a statement yesterday to Bloomberg News.

The statement confirms and adds context to remarks last month by Admiral Robert Willard, the head of U.S. Pacific Command, to the Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun that China has acquired an "initial operational capability."

Neither the Navy statement nor Willard speculated on when China might have an effective system....

A senior Pentagon official who briefed reporters on [DOD's 2010 report on Military and Security Developments Affecting China] August 16 said the U.S. "continued to be concerned" about the missile's development.

²³⁶ Source: Transcript of Defense Writers Group roundtable with Vice Admiral David J. Dorsett, Deputy CNO for Information Warfare. Material in brackets as in the transcript. The transcript shows "BF-21" and "BF-21B;" the excerpt as shown here corrects the transcribing error to "DF-21" and "DF-21D."

Among the “roadblocks” China faced was “integrating” the missile system with China’s command, control, intelligence and reconnaissance systems, said the official, who spoke at a background briefing on condition of anonymity.

“They still have a ways to go before they manage to get that integrated so that they have an operational and effective system,” the official said.

China is developing an over-the-horizon radar network to spot U.S. ships at great distances from its mainland, and its navy since 2000 has tripled to 36 from 12 the number of vessels carrying anti-ship weapons, Scott Bray, the Office of Naval Intelligence’s senior officer for intelligence on China, said in an e-mail to Bloomberg last year.

The Navy statement yesterday said China now “likely has the space-based intelligence and ground processing necessary to support employment. China operates a wide spectrum of satellites which can provide useful targeting within its maritime region.”

Before launch, the missile also could receive targeting coordinates from non-space intelligence and reconnaissance such as aircraft, drones, fishing boats and over-the-horizon radar, the Navy said.²³⁷

A January 4, 2011, blog entry related to the above press article states:

In response to a query from Bloomberg news reporter Tony Capaccio, the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Dominance (N2/N6) provided the following responses on Monday 3 January 2011:

1. Does the US Navy agree with ADM Willard’s view that the Chinese have reached Initial Operational Capability (IOC) with the DF 21D?

Answer: The U.S. Navy agrees with Admiral Willard’s characterization of the DF-21D as [having reached] IOC. China has developed a workable design for an antiship ballistic missile. However, several definitions of IOC used by U.S. agencies include the requirement that an operational unit be capable of effectively employing the system in question. The U.S. Navy does not believe this is the case for China and the DF-21D.

2. Do the Chinese have the C2, satellite links, and other systems in place and operational to potentially employ the missile?

Answer: China likely has the space based intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), command and control structure, and ground processing capabilities necessary to support DF-21D employment. China operates a wide spectrum of satellites which can provide data useful for targeting within its maritime region. China employs an array of non-space based sensors and surveillance assets capable of providing the targeting information necessary to employ the DF-21D.

3. How effective can it be if it has not been flight tested?

Answer: It is unknown to us, and probably the Chinese, as to how effective the missile will be without a full-scale test.

²³⁷ Tony Capaccio, “China’s Anti-Ship Missiles Aren’t Effective Yet, U.S. Navy Says,” *Bloomberg.com*, January 3, 2011.

4. Has the satellite and command and control system needed to cue the weapon been IOC'd? If not, any sense of how many more years?

Answer: Yes, the satellite C2 systems are likely in place.

5. Does N2 assess that the missile itself, without the satellite cuing system, is a threat to Navy carriers and other vessels?

Answer: Yes, China's non-space based ISR could provide the necessary information to support DF-21D employment. This includes aircraft, UAVs, fishing boats, and over-the-horizon radar for ocean surveillance and targeting.²³⁸

A December 28, 2010, press report states:

[Admiral Robert Willard, commander of the U.S. Pacific Command] said he believes that China's anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM) system, known as [an] "aircraft carrier killer," has achieved initial operational capability (IOC), even though "it will continue to undergo testing ... for several more years."²³⁹

This press report was based on an interview with Admiral Willard. A transcript of the interview, which was appended to the press report, states in part:

Q: Let me go into China's anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capabilities. What is the current status of China's anti-ship ballistic missile development, and how close is it to actual operational deployment?

A: The anti-ship ballistic missile system in China has undergone extensive testing. An analogy using a Western term would be "initial operational capability," whereby it has—I think China would perceive that it has—an operational capability now, but they continue to develop it. It will continue to undergo testing, I would imagine, for several more years.

Q: China has achieved IOC?

A: You would have to ask China that, but as we see the development of the system, their acknowledging the system in open press reporting and the continued testing of the system, I would gauge it as about the equivalent of a U.S. system that has achieved IOC.

Q: Has China already perfected the technology to fly that missile and also the sensor systems for targeting? Has the entire system integration been completed?

A: Typically, to have something that would be regarded as in its early operational stage would require that that system be able to accomplish its flight pattern as designed, by and large.

Q: But they have not conducted the actual flight test or the test to attack moving ships yet, have they?

²³⁸ "Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Dominance (N2/N6): China Has Space-Based & Non-Space-Based C2 + ISR 'capable of providing the targeting information necessary to employ the DF-21D' Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBM)," blog entry dated January 4, 2011, accessed by CRS on January 7, 2011, at <http://www.andrewerickson.com/>.

²³⁹ Yoichi Kato, "U.S. Commander Says China Aims to Be A 'Global Military' Power," *Asahi.com (Asahi Shimbun)*, December 28, 2010.

A: We have not seen an over-water test of the entire system.

Q: But do you believe they already have that capability?

A: I think that the component parts of the anti-ship ballistic missile have been developed and tested.²⁴⁰

Earlier Press Reports

An August 16, 2010, news report stated:

China will test its new the [sic] Dong Feng 21D anti-ship ballistic missile, the country's state media said Friday [August 13]....

Internet China National Radio said the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation will soon test-fire "a weapon under an important state weapons project."

Although it did not specify what this project was, it carried a photo of a Dong Feng 21C medium-range ballistic missile, the same series as the Dong Feng 21D, and an artist's drawing of such missiles attacking an American aircraft carrier.²⁴¹

An August 5, 2010, news report stated:

²⁴⁰ Yoichi Kato, "U.S. Commander Says China Aims to Be A 'Global Military' Power," *Asahi.com (Asahi Shimbun)*, December 28, 2010. See also Andrew Erickson and Gabe Collins, "China Deploys World's First Long-Range, Land-Based 'Carrier Killer': DF-21D Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile (ASBM) Reaches 'Initial Operational Capability' IOC," *China SignPost*, December 26, 2010; Bill Gertz, "China Has Carrier-Killer Missile, U.S. Admiral Says," *Washington Times*, December 28, 2010: 1; Associated Press, "China Moving Toward Deploying Anti-Carrier Missile," *Washington Post*, December 28, 2010; Kathrin Hille, "Chinese Missile Shifts Power In Pacific," *Financial Times*, December 29, 2010: 1.

An August 26, 2010, news report stated:

A ballistic missile under development in China for the purpose of deterring and attacking U.S. aircraft carriers in the western Pacific is close to becoming operational, according to Adm. Robert Willard, commander of U.S. Pacific Command.

Willard provided the assessment in a recent round table discussion with Japanese media in Tokyo....

Asked how he perceives the current status of development [of China's anti-ship ballistic missile], Willard said, "To our knowledge, it has undergone repeated tests and it is probably very close to being operational."

(Yoichi Kato, "China's Anti-Ship Missile Is Nearly Operational," *Asahi.com (Asahi Shimbun)*, August 26, 2010.)

On March 23, 2010, Admiral Willard testified that China was "developing and testing a conventional anti-ship ballistic missile based on the DF-21/CSS-5 MRBM designed specifically to target aircraft carriers." (Statement of Admiral Robert F. Willard, U.S. Navy, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, Before the House Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, March 23, 2010, p. 14.) Some observers believe this was the first time that a DOD official stated publicly that China's ASBM was not only in development, but that it had reached the testing stage. (See, for example, Wendell Minnick, "Chinese Anti-Ship Missile Could Alter U.S. Power," *Defense News*, April 5, 2010: 6; and Greg Torode, "Beijing Testing 'Carrier Killer,' U.S. Warns," *South China Morning Post*, April 3, 2010.)

²⁴¹ "China to Test-Fire New Anti-Ship Missile," *The Chosen Ilbo (English edition) (english.chosen.com)*, August 16, 2010.

Analysts say final testing of the missile could come as soon as the end of this year [2010], though questions remain about how fast China will be able to perfect its accuracy to the level needed to threaten a moving carrier at sea....

Questions remain over when—and if—China will perfect the technology; hitting a moving carrier is no mean feat, requiring state-of-the-art guidance systems, and some experts believe it will take China a decade or so to field a reliable threat. Others, however, say final tests of the missile could come in the next year or two.²⁴²

A November 17, 2009, news report stated:

China's military is close to fielding the world's first anti-ship ballistic missile, according to U.S. Navy intelligence....

Scott Bray, who wrote the [August 2009] ONI report on China's Navy, said China has made "remarkable progress" on the missile. "In little over a decade, China has taken the program from the conceptual phase" to "near fielding a combat-ready missile," he said....

China has ground-tested the missile three times since 2006 and conducted no flight tests yet, Navy officials said....

Bray said China has the initial elements of its new over-the-horizon radar that can provide the general location of U.S. vessels before launching the new missile....

The radar is supplemented by reconnaissance satellites, another Navy official said, requesting anonymity. There are 33 in orbit and that number may grow to 65 by 2014, 11 of which would be capable of conducting ocean surveillance, he said.²⁴³

²⁴² Eric Talmadge, "AP Enterprise: Chinese 'Carrier-Killer' Missile Raises Concerns of Pacific Power Shift," Canadian Press, August 5, 2010.

²⁴³ Tony Capaccio, "China's New Missile May Create A 'No-Go Zone' For U.S. Fleet," *Bloomberg.com*, November 17, 2009.

Appendix D. Nuclear and High-Power Microwave (HPM) Weapons

China, as a longstanding nuclear weapon state, could put nuclear warheads on weapons such as TBMs (including ASBMs), LACMs, ASCMs, torpedoes, and naval mines. China could use nuclear-armed versions of these weapons (except the LACMs) to attack U.S. Navy ships at sea. China might do so in the belief that it could subsequently confuse the issue in the public arena of whose nuclear warhead had detonated,²⁴⁴ or that the United States in any event would not escalate the conflict by retaliating with a nuclear attack on a land target in China. During the Cold War, analysts debated whether the use of a Soviet nuclear weapon against U.S. Navy ships during a conflict would lead to a U.S. nuclear response.

One set of observers states:

In Chinese discussions of Russian ASW systems, there is a pointed recognition that the Soviets leaned heavily toward the use of tactical nuclear weapons (e.g., nuclear depth charges and torpedoes) in ASW operations. Tactical nuclear weapons are also mentioned in the context of mine warfare. An article in the July 2006 issue of [the Chinese military journal] *Modern Navy*, in discussing possible PLA Navy use of sea mines, suggests the potential combat value of nuclear-armed versions. It will be important to watch closely for any sign of Chinese efforts in this direction.²⁴⁵

China could also use a nuclear-armed ballistic missile to detonate a nuclear warhead in the atmosphere to create a high-altitude electromagnetic pulse (EMP) intended to temporarily or permanently disable the electronic circuits of U.S. or other civilian and military electronic systems. Some observers have expressed concern in recent years over the potential vulnerability of U.S. military systems to EMP effects.²⁴⁶

Some observers are concerned that China might develop or already possess high-power microwave (HPM) weapons, also called radio frequency weapons (RFWs) or E-bombs, which are non-nuclear devices that can be used to generate damaging EMP effects over relatively short distances to disable the electronic circuits of nearby enemy civilian and military systems. In theory, an HPM weapon could be placed on a TBM or ASCM and fired at a U.S. Navy ship. Although the effective EMP radius of such devices might be on the order of only a few hundred

²⁴⁴ Following the April 1, 2001, collision in international airspace off China's coast of a U.S. Navy EP-3 electronic surveillance aircraft and a PLA F-8 fighter, which many observers believed was caused by reckless flying by the pilot of the F-8, China attempted to convince others that the collision was caused by poor flying by the pilot of the slower-flying and less maneuverable U.S. EP-3. For more on this event, see CRS Report RL30946, *China-U.S. Aircraft Collision Incident of April 2001: Assessments and Policy Implications*, by Shirley A. Kan et al.

²⁴⁵ Gabriel Collins, Andrew Erickson, Lyle Goldstein, and William Murray, "Chinese Evaluations of the U.S. Navy Submarine Force," *Naval College War Review*, Winter 2008: 79.

²⁴⁶ See CRS Report RL32544, *High Altitude Electromagnetic Pulse (HEMP) and High Power Microwave (HPM) Devices: Threat Assessments*, by Clay Wilson; (Hereafter cited as CRS Report RL32544.) and John S. Foster, Jr., et al., *Report of the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) Attack, Volume I: Executive Report 2004*. Washington, 2004, 53 pp. (Hereafter cited as *2004 EMP commission report*.) See also the transcripts and written statements of hearings on EMP held before the House Armed Services Committee on July 22, 2004, and before the Military Research and Development Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on October 7, 1999, and July 16, 1997. (In 1997, the full committee was called the House National Security Committee.)

yards,²⁴⁷ such devices could be used to attack individual U.S. Navy ships without the political or escalatory risks of a high-altitude nuclear detonation.²⁴⁸

A 2004 study by one study group stated that

there is some evidence the PLA considers nuclear weapons to be a useful element of an anti-access strategy. In addition to the nuclear-capable [ballistic] missiles... China has nuclear bombs and aircraft to carry them, and is reported to have nuclear mines for use at sea and nuclear anti-ship missiles. At the very least, China would expect the presence of these weapons and the threat to use them to be a significant deterrent to American action.²⁴⁹

Regarding the possibility of China using a high-altitude nuclear detonation to create an EMP effect, DOD stated in 2005 that:

Some PLA theorists are aware of the electromagnetic effects of using a high-altitude nuclear burst to generate high-altitude electromagnetic pulse (HEMP), and might consider using HEMP as an unconventional attack, believing the United States and other nations would not interpret it as a use of force and as crossing the nuclear threshold. This capability would most likely be used as part of a larger campaign to intimidate, if not decapitate, the Taiwan leadership. HEMP causes a substantial change in the ionization of the upper atmosphere, including the ionosphere and magnetosphere. These effects likely would result in the degradation of important war fighting capabilities, such as key communication links, radar transmissions, and the full spectrum of electro-optic sensors. Additional effects could include severe disruptions to civil electric/power and transportation. These effects cannot easily be

²⁴⁷ One source states that “a 2,000-pound microwave munition will have a minimum radius [of effect] of approximately 200 meters,” or roughly 650 feet. (“High-power microwave (HPM)/E-Bomb,” accessed online at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/munitions/hpm.htm>.)

A second source says HPM weapons might have effective radii “on the order of hundreds of meters, subject to weapon performance and target set electrical hardness.” (Section 4.1 of Carlo Kopp, “The Electromagnetic Bomb—a Weapon of Electrical Mass Destruction,” accessed online at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1996/apjemp.htm>.)

A third source states that “a small RF device might have a range measured in feet, while a relatively large RF device might produce upset or damage in electronics systems at a range measured in hundreds of feet, and interference at a range of hundreds of miles.” (Statement of William R. Graham, Ph.D., before the Military Research and Development Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, October 7, 1999.)

²⁴⁸ One source states that:

An electromagnetic warhead detonated within lethal radius of a surface combatant will render its air defence system inoperable, as well as damaging other electronic equipment such as electronic countermeasures, electronic support measures and communications. This leaves the vessel undefended until these systems can be restored, which may or may not be possible on the high seas. Therefore launching an electromagnetic glidebomb on to a surface combatant, and then reducing it with laser or television guided weapons is an alternate strategy for dealing with such targets. (Section 10.4 of Carlo Kopp, “The Electromagnetic Bomb—a Weapon of Electrical Mass Destruction,” op. cit.)

For more on HPM weapons in general, see CRS Report RL32544, *High Altitude Electromagnetic Pulse (HEMP) and High Power Microwave (HPM) Devices: Threat Assessments*, by Clay Wilson. For articles discussing a U.S. Air Force effort to develop HPM weapons, see David A. Fulghum, “USAF Looks for High-Power Microwave Bomb in Fiscal 2010 POM,” *Aerospace Daily & Defense Report*, October 16, 2008: 1-2; and “David A. Fulghum and Amy Butler, “Fried Chips, New USAF Weapon Could Shut Down or Damage Enemy Electronics,” *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, October 20, 2008: 28. For additional discussion HPM weapons at sea, see Massimo Annati, “Non-Lethal Weapons: Their Application in the Maritime World,” *Naval Forces*, No. 1, 2006, particularly pages 50, 51, and 53.

²⁴⁹ *The Chinese Military, An Emerging Maritime Challenge*, Washington, Lexington Institute, 2004, pp. 13-14.

localized to Taiwan and would likely affect the mainland, Japan, the Philippines, and commercial shipping and air routes in the region.²⁵⁰

Whether China would agree with the above view that EMP effects could not easily be localized to Taiwan and surrounding waters is not clear. The effective radius of a high-altitude EMP burst is dependent to a strong degree on the altitude at which the warhead is exploded (the higher the altitude, the greater the radius).²⁵¹ China might therefore believe that it could detonate a nuclear warhead somewhere east of Taiwan at a relatively low altitude, so that the resulting EMP radius would be sufficient to affect systems in Taiwan and on surface ships in surrounding waters, but not great enough to reach systems on China's mainland.²⁵² Following the detonation, China could attempt to confuse the issue in the public arena of whose nuclear warhead had detonated. Alternatively, China could claim that the missile launch was an accident, and that China command-detonated the warhead at altitude as a failsafe measure, to prevent it from detonating closer to the surface and destroying any nearby ships.²⁵³

Regarding radio-frequency weapons, DOD stated in 2006 that:

Chinese technicians are working to develop several types of "new concept" weapon systems, two of which are radio frequency and laser-based systems.

Long-range beam weapons would use narrow radio frequency (RF) beams to engage targets such as aircraft or precision guided munitions (PGMs). Short-range systems would be packaged into missiles or artillery shells and launched into the vicinity of targets such as radars or command posts before releasing an RF pulse. In recent years, the application of RF weapons has expanded to include deployment on small vehicles or in suitcases for targeting critical military or civilian infrastructures where close access is possible.

²⁵⁰ 2005 DOD CMP, p. 40.

²⁵¹ A report by the Office of Technology Assessment (a congressional support agency that was closed in 1995), stated: "The size of the area that could be affected by EMP is primarily determined by the height of burst and is only very weakly dependent on the yield." (*MX Missile Basing*. Washington, Office of Technology Assessment, 1981. (September 1981) p. 297. The document is available on the Internet at <http://www.fas.org/ota/reports/8116.pdf>.

²⁵² CRS Report RL32544, op cit., states that "creating a HEMP [high-altitude EMP] effect over an area 250 miles in diameter [i.e., a radius of 125 miles], an example size for a battlefield, might only require a rocket with a modest altitude and payload capability that could loft a relatively small nuclear device."

One observer stated in 1999 that a detonation height of 200 kilometers (108 nautical miles) would produce an EMP effect out to a radius of about 1,600 kilometers (864 nautical miles), while a detonation height of 50 kilometers would produce an EMP effect out to a radius of about 800 kilometers (432 nautical miles). (Written Statement by Dr. Michael Bernardin, Provost for the Theoretical Institute for Thermonuclear and Nuclear Studies, Applied Theoretical and Computational Physics Division, Los Alamos National Laboratory, before the Military Research and Development Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, October 7, 1999.)

A map presented by another observer shows that a detonation height of 100 kilometers (54 nautical miles) would produce an EMP effect out to a radius of about 1,000 kilometers (540 nautical miles). (Statement of Dr. Gary Smith, Director, The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, before Military Research and Development Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, July 16, 1996.)

Another published map stated in 2000 that a detonation height of 30 miles would produce an EMP effect out to a radius of 480 miles. A source note attached to the map attributes it to the above-cited July 16, 1997 testimony of Gary Smith. (See page 3 of Jack Spencer, *America's Vulnerability To A Different Nuclear Threat: An Electromagnetic Pulse*. Washington, Heritage Foundation, 2000. 7 pp. (Backgrounder No. 1372, May 26, 2000) The document is available at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/MissileDefense/bg1372.cfm>).

²⁵³ Even if China does not have the capability to command the early detonation of a warhead on a ballistic missile in flight, it could claim afterward that it did.

PRC officials have publicly indicated their intent to acquire RF weapons as a means of defeating technologically advanced military forces. Chinese writings have suggested that RF weapons could be used against C4ISR, guided missiles, computer networks, electronically-fused mines, aircraft carrier battle groups, and satellites in orbit.

Analysis of Chinese technical literature indicates a major effort is underway to develop the technologies required for RF weapons, including high-power radiofrequency sources, prime-power generators, and antennas to radiate RF pulses.²⁵⁴

One observer stated in 2005 that “at least one U.S. source indicates the PLA has developed” non-nuclear radio frequency warheads for ballistic missiles.²⁵⁵ When asked at a hearing in 2005 about the possibility of China using a nuclear weapon to generate an EMP effect against Taiwan and U.S. naval forces, this observer stated:

What worries me more, Congressman, is non-nuclear electromagnetic pulse weapons. Non-nuclear explosive propelled radio frequency or EMP-like devices that could be used with far greater frequency and far more effect because they would not run the danger for China of prompting a possible nuclear response. Thereby it would be much more tempting to use and use effectively.

If you could combine a non-nuclear radio frequency weapon with a maneuvering ballistic missile of the type that the Pentagon report describes very briefly this year, that would constitute a real Assassin’s Mace weapon. One that, in my opinion, we cannot defend ourselves against and would possibly effectively deny effective military—effective American military intervention in the event of—not just a Taiwan crisis, but other crises as well.²⁵⁶

A 2004 commission studying the EMP issue expressed concerns about the potential vulnerability of U.S. tactical forces to EMP.²⁵⁷ The commission’s report was received at a July 22, 2004,

²⁵⁴ 2006 DOD CMP, p. 34.

²⁵⁵ Prepared statement of Richard D. Fisher, Jr., for a July 27, 2005, hearing before the House Armed Services Committee, p. 6. A footnote at this point in Fisher’s statement says this information was: “Disclosed to the author by a U.S. source in September 2004.” See also page 9.

²⁵⁶ Transcript of spoken testimony of Richard D. Fisher, Jr., at July 27, 2005 hearing before House Armed Services Committee, in response to a question from Representative Curt Weldon.

²⁵⁷ 2004 EMP commission report. The report of the commission stated on page 1 that “The high-altitude nuclear weapon-generated electromagnetic pulse (EMP) is one of a small number of threats that has the potential to hold our society seriously at risk and might result in defeat of our military forces.” The report stated later that

The end of the Cold War relaxed the discipline for achieving EMP survivability within the Department of Defense, and gave rise to the perception that an erosion of EMP survivability of military forces was an acceptable risk. EMP simulation and test facilities have been mothballed or dismantled, and research concerning EMP phenomena, hardening design, testing, and maintenance has been substantially decreased. However, the emerging threat environment, characterized by a wide spectrum of actors that include near-peers, established nuclear powers, rogue nations, sub-national groups, and terrorist organizations that either now have access to nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles or may have such access over the next 15 years have combined to place the risk of EMP attack and adverse consequences on the US to a level that is not acceptable.

Current policy is to continue to provide EMP protection to strategic [i.e., long-range nuclear] forces and their controls; however, the end of the Cold War has relaxed the discipline for achieving and maintaining that capability within these forces....The situation for general-purpose forces (GPF) is more complex.... Our increasing dependence on advanced electronics systems results in the potential for an increased EMP vulnerability of our technologically advanced forces, and if unaddressed makes EMP employment by an adversary an attractive asymmetric option.

(continued...)

hearing before the House Armed Services Committee. At the hearing, Representative Steve Israel asked about the role of EMP in exercises simulating operations in the Taiwan Strait:

Representative Steve Israel: [Representative Roscoe] Bartlett and I just attended an NDU [National Defense University] tabletop [exercise] with respect to the Straits of the Taiwan just last week. To your knowledge, has there been any tabletop exercise, has there been any simulation, any war-game that anticipates an EMP attack, and, if there has not been, do you believe that that would, in fact, be a useful exercise for NDU, the Pentagon or any other relevant entity? Dr. Graham, do you want to answer that?

Dr. William R. Graham (Commission Chairman): Thank you. Let me poll the commission and see if they have any experience with that. General Lawson?

General Richard L. Lawson, USAF (Ret.) (Commissioner): No, sir.

Graham: Dr. Wood?

Dr. Lowell L. Wood, Jr. (Commissioner): I don't believe there's been any formal exercise, certainly not to my knowledge. There's been extensive discussion of what the impact of Chinese EMP layoffs would be, not on Taiwan, which is, after all, considered by China to be part of its own territory, but on U.S. forces in the region which might be involved in the active defense of Taiwan. In particular, the consequences the EMP laydown on U.S. carrier task forces has been explored, and while, it's not appropriate to discuss the details in an open session like this, the assessed consequences of such an attack, a single-explosion attack, are very somber.

Since that is a circumstance in which the target might be considered a pure military one in which the loss of life might be relatively small, but the loss of military capability might be absolutely staggering, it poses a very attractive option, at least for consideration on the part of the Chinese military.

I would also remark that Chinese nuclear explosive workers at their very cloistered research center in northwestern China very recently published an authoritative digest and technical commentary on EMP in English, in a Chinese publication. It is very difficult to understand what the purpose of publishing a lengthy, authoritative article in English in a Chinese publication would be, if it was not to convey a very pointed message. This came not from

(...continued)

The United States must not permit an EMP attack to defeat its capability to prevail. The Commission believes it is not practical to protect all of the tactical forces of the US and its coalition partners from EMP in a regional conflict. A strategy of replacement and reinforcement will be necessary. However, there is a set of critical capabilities that is essential to tactical regional conflicts that must be available to these reinforcements. This set includes satellite navigation systems, satellite and airborne intelligence and targeting systems, an adequate communications infrastructure, and missile defense.

The current capability to field a tactical force for regional conflict is inadequate in light of this requirement. Even though it has been US policy to create EMP-hardened tactical systems, the strategy for achieving this has been to use the DoD acquisition process. This has provided many equipment components that meet criteria for durability in an EMP environment, but this does not result in confidence that fielded forces, as a system, can reliably withstand EMP attack. Adherence to the equipment acquisition policy also has been spotty, and the huge challenge of organizing and fielding an EMP-durable tactical force has been a disincentive to applying the rigor and discipline needed to do so. (Pages 47-48.)

military workers. It came from the people who would be fielding the weapon that would conduct the attack.

Graham: Dr. Pry on our staff has made a survey of foreign writings on EMP, and he noted that while U.S. exercises have not to our knowledge played that scenario, Chinese military writings have discussed that scenario. So it's certainly something they have thought of and it is within their mind. I have observed generally over the last 40 years that there's a tendency in the U.S. military not to introduce nuclear weapons in general and EMP in particular into exercise scenarios or game scenarios because it tends to end the game, and that's not a good sign. I think it would be a very interesting subject for the NDU group to take up and see and force them not to end the game. Time will not stop if such an event happens. Let them understand what the consequences will be.²⁵⁸

Later in the hearing, Representative Roscoe Bartlett returned to the topic of the potential effects of EMP on Navy ships:

Representative Bartlett: If China were to detonate a weapon high over our carrier task force, can we note in this [open] session what would the effects on the carrier task force be?

Graham: Mr. Bartlett, several years ago, the Navy dismantled the one simulator it had for exposing ships directly [to EMP]. It was the Empress simulator located in the Chesapeake Bay. So I don't believe any direct experimental work has been done for quite some time.

However, the general character of modern naval forces follows the other trends we've described, which is an increasing dependence upon sophisticated electronics for its functionality, and, therefore, I believe there's substantial reason to be concerned.

[Would] Any other commissioners [care to comment]?

Representative Bartlett: Dr. Wood?

Wood: In open session, sir, I don't believe it's appropriate to go much further than the comment that I made to [Representative] Israel that the assessments that are made of such attacks and their impacts are very somber.

The Navy generally believes—that portion of the Navy that's at all cognizant of these matters—that because they operate in an extremely radar-intensive environment, [since] they have a great deal of electromagnetic gear on board, some of which radiates pulses—radar pulses, for instance—because they can operate in that type of environment, that they surely must be EMP robust. These free-floating beliefs on the part of some Navy officers are not—repeat not—well grounded technically.²⁵⁹

In August 2011, a Defense Science Board (DSB) task force published an interim report on the survivability of DOD systems and assets to EMP and other nuclear weapons effects.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ Source: Transcript of hearing.

²⁵⁹ Source: Transcript of hearing.

²⁶⁰ Interim Report of the Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force on the Survivability of Systems and Assets to Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) and other Nuclear Weapon Effects (NWE), August 2011, 17 pp., accessed online at http://www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/2011-08-EMP_and_NWE.pdf.

Appendix E. Excerpt from April 2011 Testimony of Commander, U.S. Pacific Command

On April 6, 2011, Admiral Robert Willard, the Commander of U.S. Pacific Command, testified that

China's rise will largely define the Asia-Pacific environment in the 21st century. As noted in the 2010 National Security Strategy, "We welcome a China that takes on a responsible leadership role in working with the United States and the international community to advance priorities like economic recovery, confronting climate change, and nonproliferation. We will monitor China's military modernization program and prepare accordingly to ensure that U.S. interests and allies, regionally and globally, are not negatively affected. More broadly, we will encourage China to make choices that contribute to peace, security, and prosperity as its influence rises."

In support of this broader national strategy toward China, forward-postured USPACOM forces are focused on deterrence and reassurance missions as they apply to China and U.S. allies and security partners in the region. In addition, USPACOM's interactions with China assist the Administration's broader goals by contributing to an overall military-to-military relationship that is healthy, stable, reliable and continuous. Such a relationship is important to avoid misperception, miscommunication, and miscalculation while it expands opportunities for cooperation where our security interests overlap. However, our military relationship with China continues to suffer from an on-again/off-again cycle of interactions which limits its ability to accomplish the above tasks. China suspended bilateral military relations following our arms sales to Taiwan in January 2010 and restarted them in fall 2010. We look forward to continuing the progress made in recent months which includes Secretary Gates' successful visit in January of this year.

China's Military Modernization Program. Beginning in the mid-1990s, China's peacetime military modernization program has progressed at a rapid rate. While force modernization is understandable in light of China's growing regional and global roles and accompanying requirements, the scope and pace of its modernization without clarity on China's ultimate goals remains troubling. For example, China continues to accelerate its offensive air and missile developments without corresponding public clarification about how these forces will be utilized. Of particular concern is the expanding inventory of ballistic and cruise missiles (which include anti-ship capability) and the development of modern, fourth- and fifth-generation stealthy combat aircraft. In conjunction, China is pursuing counter-space and -cyber capabilities that can be used to not only disrupt U.S. military operations, but also to threaten the space- and cyber-based information infrastructure that enables international communications and commerce.

Absent clarification from China, its military modernization efforts hold significant implications for regional stability. The region is developing its own conclusions about why the People's Liberation Army (PLA) continues to expand its ability to project power outside China's borders, and to range both U.S. forces and U.S. Allies and partners in the region with new anti-access and area-denial weaponry. Of growing concern is China's maritime behavior. China's recent official statements and actions in what Beijing calls its "near seas" represent a direct challenge to accepted interpretations of international law and established international norms. While China does not make legal claims to this entire body of water, it does seek to restrict or exclude foreign, in particular, U.S., military maritime and air activities in the "near seas" - an area that roughly corresponds to the maritime area from the Chinese mainland out to the "first island chain" (described, generally, as a line through

Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, and Indonesia) and including the Bohai Gulf, Yellow Sea, East China Sea, and South China Sea. Chinese naval and maritime law enforcement vessels have been assertive in recent years in trying to advance China's territorial claims in the South China and East China Seas which has resulted U.S. partners and allies in East Asia seeking additional support and reassurance to balance and curb the Chinese behavior. Many of China's maritime policy statements and claims stand in contrast to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The U.S. has consistently sought the appropriate balance between the interests of countries in controlling activities off their coasts with the interests of all countries in protecting freedom of navigation. China has questioned whether a non-party may assert such rights under UNCLOS, a baseless argument but one that would be removed if the U.S. was a party to UNCLOS.

The current situation in the Taiwan Strait remains stable as tensions have declined in recent years; however, the Taiwan issue remains a challenge to long-term regional stability. China refuses to renounce the use of force to resolve the Taiwan question. As China's military modernization proceeds, the cross-Strait military balance continues to shift in the mainland's favor. U.S. policy in support of a peaceful resolution remains consistent and clear. We are committed to our one-China policy, based on the three U.S.-China communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act. We do not support Taiwan independence, and would oppose unilateral changes, by either side, to the status quo....

Prospects for continued development, increased security, and regional integration [in Southeast Asia] are promising, but the sub-region presents significant security challenges. China's increasing engagement in this sub-region—which, in many cases, is aimed at supplanting U.S. influence—as well as its expansive claims to, and growing assertiveness in, the South China Sea are two notable challenges....

China's rapid military expansion coupled with its unclear intent poses a concern to the U.S. and many regional nations; however, opportunities for collaboration between the U.S. and China are also apparent.²⁶¹

²⁶¹ Statement of Admiral Robert F. Willard, U.S. Navy, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, Before the House Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, April 6, 2011, pp. 9-11, 12, and 29.

Appendix F. Prior-Year Legislative Activity

FY2011

FY2011 Ike Skelton Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 6523/P.L. 111-383)

House (H.R. 5136)

Section 1060 of the FY2011 defense authorization bill (H.R. 5136) as reported by the House Armed Services Committee (H.Rept. 111-491 of May 21, 2010) states that:

The Secretary of Defense shall, in consultation with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the commanders of the regional combatant commands, submit to the congressional defense committees, not later than March 15, 2011, a comprehensive strategic assessment of the current and future strategic challenges posed to the United States by potential competitors out through 2021, with particular attention paid to those challenges posed by the military modernization of the People's Republic of China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia.

In discussing Section 1060, the committee's report states:

The committee notes that it received testimony from the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Independent Panel that, although useful, the QDR needs to be a long-term, twenty year study that addresses the issues that are of concern to Congress. The committee also received testimony that the 2010 QDR was a budget constrained exercise, which was fiscally responsible but may have limited more ambitious questioning of assumptions and creative thinking because basic budget and end-strength assumptions were not challenged. (page 372)

Section 1234 of H.R. 5136 as reported by the committee would require a report on U.S. efforts to defend against any threats posed by the advanced anti-access capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries, and amend the law that requires DOD to submit an annual report on military and security developments involving China to include a section on China's anti-access and area denial capabilities. The text of Section 1234 is as follows:

SEC. 1234. REPORT ON UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO DEFEND AGAINST THREATS POSED BY THE ADVANCED ANTI-ACCESS CAPABILITIES OF POTENTIALLY HOSTILE FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

(a) Congressional Finding- Congress finds that the report of the 2010 Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review finds that 'Anti-access strategies seek to deny outside countries the ability to project power into a region, thereby allowing aggression or other destabilizing actions to be conducted by the anti-access power. Without dominant capabilities to project power, the integrity of U.S. alliances and security partnerships could be called into question, reducing U.S. security and influence and increasing the possibility of conflict.'

(b) Sense of Congress- It is the sense of Congress that, in light of the finding in subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense should ensure that the United States has the appropriate authorities, capabilities, and force structure to defend against any threats posed by the advanced anti-access capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries.

(c) Report- Not later than April 1, 2011, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on United States efforts to defend against any threats posed by the advanced anti-access capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries.

(d) Matters to Be Included- The report required under subsection (c) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of any threats posed by the advanced anti-access capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries, including an identification of the foreign countries with such capabilities, the nature of such capabilities, and the possible advances in such capabilities over the next 10 years.

(2) A description of any efforts by the Department of Defense since the release of the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review to address the finding in subsection (a).

(3) A description of the authorities, capabilities, and force structure that the United States may require over the next 10 years to address the finding in subsection (a).

(e) Form- The report required under subsection (c) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex if necessary.

(f) Modification of Other Reports-

(1) CONCERNING THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA- Section 1202(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65; 113 Stat. 781; 10 U.S.C. 113 note), as most recently amended by section 1246 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (P.L. 111-84; 123 Stat. 2544), is further amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (12) as paragraphs (11) through (13), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

“(10) Developments in China’s anti-access and area denial capabilities.”.

(2) CONCERNING IRAN- Section 1245(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (P.L. 111-84; 123 Stat. 2542) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) A description and assessment of Iran’s anti-access and area denial strategy and capabilities.”.

In discussing Section 1234, the committee’s report states:

For the purposes of this section, to the extent possible, the committee encourages the Department to utilize information provided to Congress in the Annual Report on Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China, required by section 1201 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65), as most recently amended by section 1246 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (P.L. 111-84;) and the Annual Report on the Military Power of Iran as required by Section 1245 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (P.L. 111-84). (Page 395)

The committee's report also states:

Annual Report on Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China

Section 1246 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (P.L. 111-84) expanded the scope of the Annual Department of Defense Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China to include information on developments regarding U.S. engagement and cooperation with China on security matters, including through military-to-military contacts, and the U.S. strategy for such engagement and cooperation in the future. The report was due on March 1, 2010. The committee is disappointed that the report has not been delivered, as the information provided by the Administration in this report will inform the committee's assessments on a range of critical matters involving China. The committee requests that the Department of Defense submit the report to the committee at the earliest possible date, and in the interim, provide the committee with complete and timely information on all significant security developments involving China. (Page 382)

Senate (S. 3454)

Section 1064 of the FY2011 defense authorization bill (S. 3454) as reported by the Senate Armed Services Committee (S.Rept. 111-201 of June 4, 2010) would require a report on U.S. efforts to defend against any potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile nation-states. The text of Section 1064 is as follows:

SEC. 1064. REPORT ON UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO DEFEND AGAINST THREATS POSED BY THE ANTI-ACCESS AND AREA-DENIAL CAPABILITIES OF CERTAIN NATION-STATES.

(a) Finding- Congress finds that the 2010 report on the Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review concludes that '[a]nti-access strategies seek to deny outside countries the ability to project power into a region, thereby allowing aggression or other destabilizing actions to be conducted by the anti-access power. Without dominant capabilities to project power, the integrity of United States alliances and security partnerships could be called into question, reducing United States security and influence and increasing the possibility of conflict'.

(b) Sense of Congress- It is the sense of Congress that, in light of the finding in subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense should ensure that the United States has the appropriate authorities, capabilities, and force structure to defend against any potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries.

(c) Report- Not later than February 1, 2011, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on United States efforts to defend against any potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile nation-states.

(d) Elements- The report required under subsection (c) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of any potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries, including an identification of the foreign countries with such capabilities, the nature of such capabilities, and the possible advances in such capabilities over the next 10 years.

(2) A description of any efforts by the Department of Defense to address the potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries.

(3) A description of the authorities, capabilities, and force structure that the United States may require over the next 10 years to address the threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries.

(e) Form- The report required under subsection (c) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex if necessary.

(f) Definitions- In this section:

(1) The term ‘anti-access’, with respect to capabilities, means any action that has the effect of slowing the deployment of friendly forces into a theater, preventing such forces from operating from certain locations within that theater, or causing such forces to operate from distances farther from the locus of conflict than such forces would normally prefer.

(2) The term ‘area-denial’, with respect to capabilities, means operations aimed to prevent freedom of action of friendly forces in the more narrow confines of the area under a potentially hostile nation-state’s direct control, including actions by an adversary in the air, on land, and on and under the sea to contest and prevent joint operations within a defended battlespace.

Regarding Section 1064, the committee’s report states:

Report on United States efforts to defend against threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of certain nation-states (sec. 1064)

The committee recommends a provision that would require the Secretary of Defense, not later than February 1, 2011, to submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the Department’s efforts to defend against threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile nation states. The report should include a description of any efforts by the Department to address findings in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report regarding advanced anti-access capabilities of foreign countries. The report should also include a discussion of current and future U.S. long-range strike capabilities in the context of countering anti-access and area-denial strategies.

The committee is concerned by the emergence of what the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report described as “anti-access strategies [that] seek to deny outside countries the ability to project power into a region, thereby allowing aggression or other destabilizing actions to be conducted by the anti-access power.” The committee believes it is essential that the U.S. Armed Forces maintain the capability to project power globally in light of growing anti-access challenges. The global presence and reach of U.S. forces protects U.S. interests, provides stability and reassures our many allies and security partners. The committee expects that as anti-access threats emerge, the United States will develop the necessary capabilities and security partnerships, to meet those threats.

In this regard, the committee notes that the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force have initiated a dialogue addressing means by which our air and naval forces may more effectively work together in the face of anti-access challenges. The committee encourages the Chief of Naval Operations and Air Force Chief of Staff to work together with the purpose of overcoming emergent anti-access challenges.

Additionally, the committee notes its displeasure that the Department of Defense has failed to submit the Annual Report on the Military and Security Developments involving the People's Republic of China, as required by Section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65) by the statutory deadline of March 1. The timely submission of this report is required by law, and the committee expects it to be presented to Congress as required. (Pages 194-195)

Final Version (H.R. 6523/P.L. 111-383)

Section 1238 of the FY2011 defense authorization act (H.R. 6523/P.L. 111-383 of January 7, 2011) states:

SEC. 1238. REPORT ON UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO DEFEND AGAINST THREATS POSED BY THE ANTI-ACCESS AND AREA-DENIAL CAPABILITIES OF CERTAIN NATION-STATES.

(a) Finding- Congress finds that the 2010 report on the Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review concludes that '[a]nti-access strategies seek to deny outside countries the ability to project power into a region, thereby allowing aggression or other destabilizing actions to be conducted by the anti-access power. Without dominant capabilities to project power, the integrity of United States alliances and security partnerships could be called into question, reducing United States security and influence and increasing the possibility of conflict'.

(b) Sense of Congress- It is the sense of Congress that, in light of the finding in subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense should ensure that the United States has the appropriate authorities, capabilities, and force structure to defend against any potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries.

(c) Report- Not later than April 1, 2011, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on United States efforts to defend against any potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile nation-states.

(d) Elements- The report required under subsection (c) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of any potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries, including an identification of the foreign countries with such capabilities, the nature of such capabilities, and the possible advances in such capabilities over the next 10 years.

(2) A description of any efforts by the Department of Defense to address the potential future threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries.

(3) A description of the authorities, capabilities, and force structure that the United States may require over the next 10 years to address the threats posed by the anti-access and area-denial capabilities of potentially hostile foreign countries.

(e) Form- The report required under subsection (c) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex if necessary.

(f) Definitions- In this section—

(1) the term `anti-access', with respect to capabilities, means any action that has the effect of slowing the deployment of friendly forces into a theater, preventing such forces from operating from certain locations within that theater, or causing such forces to operate from distances farther from the locus of conflict than such forces would normally prefer; and

(2) the term `area-denial', with respect to capabilities, means operations aimed to prevent freedom of action of friendly forces in the more narrow confines of the area under a potentially hostile nation-state's direct control, including actions by an adversary in the air, on land, and on and under the sea to contest and prevent joint operations within a defended battlespace.

FY2010

FY2010 Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2647/P.L. 111-84)

House

The House Armed Services Committee, in its report (H.Rept. 111-166 of June 18, 2009) on H.R. 2647, states:

The committee welcomes recent positive exchanges between the navies of the U.S. and the People's Republic of China. Such exchanges are particularly important given the harassment of an unarmed U.S. ship, the U.S.N.S. Impeccable, by Chinese ships in international waters on March 8, 2009. This incident violated China's requirement under international law to operate with due regard for the rights and safety of other lawful users of the sea.

The committee urges more U.S.-China engagement and cooperation on maritime issues of mutual concern. The committee also supports the Administration's call for Chinese ships to act responsibly and refrain from provocative activities that could lead to miscalculation or a collision at sea, endangering vessels and the lives of U.S. and Chinese mariners. (Pages 412-413)

Section 1233 of H.R. 2647 would amend the current statute requiring DOD to submit an annual report to Congress on China's military power. The text of Section 1233 is as follows:

SEC. 1233. ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

(a) Annual Report- Subsection (a) of section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65; 113 Stat. 781; 10 U.S.C. 113 note) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking `on the current and future military strategy of the People's Republic of China' and inserting `on military and security developments involving the People's Republic of China';

(2) in the second sentence—

(A) by striking `on the People's Liberation Army' and inserting `of the People's Liberation Army'; and

(B) by striking `Chinese grand strategy, security strategy,' and inserting `Chinese security strategy'; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new sentence: ‘The report shall also address United States-China engagement and cooperation on security matters during the period covered by the report, including through United States-China military-to-military contacts, and the United States strategy for such engagement and cooperation in the future.’.

(b) Matters to Be Included- Subsection (b) of such section, as amended by section 1263 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (P.L. 110-181; 122 Stat. 407), is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ‘goals of’ inserting ‘goals and factors shaping’; and

(B) by striking ‘Chinese grand strategy, security strategy,’ and inserting ‘Chinese security strategy’;

(2) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

‘(2) Trends in Chinese security and military behavior that would be designed to achieve, or that are inconsistent with, the goals described in paragraph (1).’;

(3) in paragraph (6)—

(A) by inserting ‘and training’ after ‘military doctrine’; and

(B) by striking ‘, focusing on (but not limited to) efforts to exploit a transformation in military affairs or to conduct preemptive strikes’; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

‘(10) In consultation with the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of State, developments regarding United States-China engagement and cooperation on security matters.

‘(11) The current state of United States military-to-military contacts with the People’s Liberation Army, which shall include the following:

‘(A) A comprehensive and coordinated strategy for such military-to-military contacts and updates to the strategy.

‘(B) A summary of all such military-to-military contacts during the period covered by the report, including a summary of topics discussed and questions asked by the Chinese participants in those contacts.

‘(C) A description of such military-to-military contacts scheduled for the 12-month period following the period covered by the report and the plan for future contacts.

‘(D) The Secretary’s assessment of the benefits the Chinese expect to gain from such military-to-military contacts.

‘(E) The Secretary’s assessment of the benefits the Department of Defense expects to gain from such military-to-military contacts, and any concerns regarding such contacts.

‘(F) The Secretary’s assessment of how such military-to-military contacts fit into the larger security relationship between the United States and the People’s Republic of China.

“(12) Other military and security developments involving the People’s Republic of China that the Secretary of Defense considers relevant to United States national security.”.

(c) Conforming Amendment- Such section is further amended in the heading by striking “military power of” and inserting “military and security developments involving”.

(d) Repeals- Section 1201 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65; 113 Stat. 779; 10 U.S.C. 168 note) is amended by striking subsections (e) and (f).

(e) Effective Date-

(1) IN GENERAL- The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to reports required to be submitted under subsection (a) of section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, as so amended, on or after that date.

(2) STRATEGY AND UPDATES FOR MILITARY-TO-MILITARY CONTACTS WITH PEOPLE’S LIBERATION ARMY- The requirement to include the strategy described in paragraph (11)(A) of section 1202(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, as so amended, in the report required to be submitted under section 1202(a) of such Act, as so amended, shall apply with respect to the first report required to be submitted under section 1202(a) of such Act on or after the date of the enactment of this Act. The requirement to include updates to such strategy shall apply with respect to each subsequent report required to be submitted under section 1202(a) of such Act on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Regarding Section 1233, the committee’s report stated:

This section would amend section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65) by changing the title of the report to “Annual Report on Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China,” and by making certain clarifying and technical changes.

This section would also expand the scope of the report. It would require the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of State and Secretary of Energy, to provide analyses and forecasts of developments regarding U.S. engagement and cooperation with the People’s Republic of China on security matters, such engagement and cooperation through military-to-military contacts, and the U.S. strategy for such engagement and cooperation in the future. Specifically, the committee requests the Secretary to provide information regarding U.S.-China engagement and cooperation in the areas of: counter-terrorism; counter-piracy; maritime safety; strategic capabilities, including space, nuclear and cyber warfare capabilities; nuclear policy and strategy; nonproliferation, including export controls, border security, and illicit arms transfers and interdictions; energy and environmental security; peacekeeping; humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, including in the area of military medicine; crisis management, including use of the “defense hotline”; regional security issues, including in the Taiwan Strait and South and East China Seas and on the Korean peninsula; and regional security organizations and other mechanisms.

In addition, this section would incorporate the reporting requirement under section 1201 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65) on U.S.-China military-to-military contacts into the reporting requirement under section 1202 of that Act. It would also include a new requirement for a comprehensive and coordinated strategy for U.S.-China military-to-military contacts.

This section would further require the Secretary of Defense to provide additional information regarding military and security developments involving China that the Secretary considers relevant to U.S. national security. (Page 423)

Senate

The Senate Armed Services Committee, in its report (S.Rept. 111-35 of July 2, 2009) on the FY2010 defense authorization bill (S. 1390), states:

The Department of Defense's Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has included a brief description of the PRC concept of the "three warfares", generally identified as psychological warfare, media warfare, and legal warfare. These concepts, also referred to as "nonmilitary warfare concepts", have also been the subject of hearings before the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission and were discussed in some detail in the Commission's 2008 report to Congress. The March 2009 harassment of the USNS Impeccable by Chinese ships in the South China Sea stands as a recent example of how the PRC may be using the concept of "legal warfare", for instance, to influence regional events. The committee urges the Secretary of Defense to examine the implications of the "three warfares" on United States military affairs in the region and requests the Secretary to provide additional detail on each of them, including examples and trends, in the 2010 report to Congress. (Page 195)

Conference

Section 1246 of the conference report (H.Rept. 111-288 of October 7, 2009) on H.R. 2647/P.L. 111-84 of October 28, 2009, amends the current statute requiring DOD to submit an annual report to Congress on China's military power. The text of Section 1246 is as follows:

SEC. 1246. ANNUAL REPORT ON MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT.—Subsection (a) of section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65; 113 Stat. 781; 10 U.S.C. 113 note) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking "on the current and future military strategy of the People's Republic of China" and inserting "on military and security developments involving the People's Republic of China";

(2) in the second sentence—

(A) by striking "on the People's Liberation Army" and inserting "of the People's Liberation Army"; and

(B) by striking "Chinese grand strategy, security strategy," and inserting "Chinese security strategy"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new sentence: "The report shall also address United States-China engagement and cooperation on security matters during the period covered by the report, including through United States-China military-to-military contacts, and the United States strategy for such engagement and cooperation in the future."

(b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—Subsection (b) of such section, as amended by section 1263 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (P.L. 110-181; 122 Stat. 407), is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “goals of” inserting “goals and factors shaping”; and

(B) by striking “Chinese grand strategy, security strategy,” and inserting “Chinese security strategy”;

(2) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

“(2) Trends in Chinese security and military behavior that would be designed to achieve, or that are inconsistent with, the goals described in paragraph (1).”;

(3) in paragraph (6)—

(A) by inserting “and training” after “military doctrine”; and

(B) by striking “, focusing on (but not limited to) efforts to exploit a transformation in military affairs or to conduct preemptive strikes”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(10) In consultation with the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of State, developments regarding United States-China engagement and cooperation on security matters.

“(11) The current state of United States military-to-military contacts with the People’s Liberation Army, which shall include the following:

“(A) A comprehensive and coordinated strategy for such military-to-military contacts and updates to the strategy.

“(B) A summary of all such military-to-military contacts during the period covered by the report, including a summary of topics discussed and questions asked by the Chinese participants in those contacts.

“(C) A description of such military-to-military contacts scheduled for the 12-month period following the period covered by the report and the plan for future contacts.

“(D) The Secretary’s assessment of the benefits the Chinese expect to gain from such military-to-military contacts.

“(E) The Secretary’s assessment of the benefits the Department of Defense expects to gain from such military-to-military contacts, and any concerns regarding such contacts.

“(F) The Secretary’s assessment of how such military-to-military contacts fit into the larger security relationship between the United States and the People’s Republic of China.

“(12) Other military and security developments involving the People’s Republic of China that the Secretary of Defense considers relevant to United States national security.”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Such section is further amended in the heading by striking “MILITARY POWER OF” and inserting “MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS INVOLVING”.

(d) REPEALS.—Section 1201 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65; 113 Stat. 779; 10 U.S.C. 168 note) is amended by striking subsections (e) and (f).

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to reports required to be submitted under subsection (a) of section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, as so amended, on or after that date.

(2) STRATEGY AND UPDATES FOR MILITARY-TO-MILITARY CONTACTS WITH PEOPLE’S LIBERATION ARMY.—The requirement to include the strategy described in paragraph (11)(A) of section 1202(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, as so amended, in the report required to be submitted under section 1202(a) of such Act, as so amended, shall apply with respect to the first report required to be submitted under section 1202(a) of such Act on or after the date of the enactment of this Act. The requirement to include updates to such strategy shall apply with respect to each subsequent report required to be submitted under section 1202(a) of such Act on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Regarding Section 1246, the conference report states:

Annual report on military and security developments involving the People’s Republic of China (sec. 1246)

The House bill contained a provision (sec. 1233) that would amend section 1202 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (P.L. 106-65) by changing the title of the report to “Annual Report on Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China” and by making certain clarifying and technical changes. The provision would also expand the scope of the report to include information regarding U.S. engagement and cooperation with China on security matters, and information on additional developments involving China that the Secretary of Defense considers relevant to national security. In addition, the provision would repeal the reporting requirements on military-to-military contacts under sections 1201(e) and (f) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 and add these requirements to the reporting requirements under section 1202 of that Act. Details of the provision’s reporting requirements are set forth in the report accompanying the House bill (H.Rept. 111-166).

The Senate amendment contained no similar provision.

The Senate recedes.

The conferees encourage the Secretary to further examine the implications of China’s concepts of psychological warfare, media warfare, and legal warfare on U.S. military affairs in the region and include additional detail on each of these concepts, including examples and trends, in the fiscal year 2010 report to Congress required under this section. (Page 842)

FY2009

FY2009 Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 5658)

House

The House Armed Services Committee, in its report (H.Rept. 110-652 of May 16, 2008) on H.R. 5658, stated the following regarding the development of an anti-air warfare target for simulating Threat D, which some press reports suggest might be a term that refers to an ASCM with a flight profile similar that of the SS-N-27 Sizzler:²⁶²

The committee is pleased to note the anticipated source selection for the development of a Threat D missile target development program in the summer of 2008. The committee remains concerned that the estimated initial operating capability of such a target in 2014 creates substantial risk during the interim period. The committee encourages the Secretary to accelerate the target development program to the maximum extent practicable. In addition, the committee directs the Secretary of the Navy to notify the congressional defense committees in writing if the estimated initial operating capability of the Threat D target is delayed more than 90 days or if the costs associated with such program exceeds 10 percent of programmed funding. The committee further directs the Secretary to provide such notification within 30 days, along with the reasons for such delay or cost overrun and a mitigation plan consisting of actions that could restore the program to its original timeline. (Page 204)

FY2008

FY2008 Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 4986/P.L. 110-181)

House

Section 1244 of the House-reported version of the FY2008 defense authorization bill (H.R. 1585) stated:

SEC. 1244. SENSE OF CONGRESS CONCERNING THE STRATEGIC MILITARY CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS OF THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) United States military war-fighting capabilities are potentially threatened by the strategic military capabilities and intentions of the People’s Republic of China, as demonstrated by—

²⁶² See “United States: The Supersonic Anti-Ship Missile Threat,” *Stratfor.com*, April 18, available online at http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/united_states_supersonic_anti_ship_missile_threat?ip_auth_redirect=1; Tony Capaccio, “Navy Can’t Test Defense Against China’s Sizzler,” Until 2014,” *Bloomberg.com*, April 3, 2008; Chris Johnson, “Navy Issues Draft Request For Threat-D Target Development,” *Inside the Navy*, July 30, 2007; Chris Johnson, “Industry Day Planned To Develop Threat-D Target For Ship Tests,” *Inside the Navy*, July 9, 2007; and Chris Johnson, “Pentagon: Lack Of Threat-D Target Hinders Testing For New Vessels,” *Inside the Navy*, January 22, 2007. See also the transcript of the March 12, 2008, hearing before the House Armed Services Committee on the posture of the Pacific Command.

(A) the October 2006 undetected broach of a Chinese SONG-class diesel-electric submarine in close proximity of the USS Kitty Hawk in international waters; and

(B) the January 2007 test of a direct ascent anti-satellite (ASAT) weapon, posing a potential threat to United States military assets in space;

(2) it is in the national security interests of the United States to make every effort to understand China's strategic military capabilities and intentions; and

(3) as part of such an effort, the Secretary of Defense should expand efforts to develop an accurate assessment of China's strategic military modernization, particularly with regard to its sea- and space-based strategic capabilities.

Senate

The Senate-passed version of the FY2008 defense authorization bill (S. 1547; S.Rept. 110-77 of June 5, 2007) did not contain a provision analogous to Section 1244 of the House-passed version of H.R. 1585 (see above).

Conference

The conference report (H.Rept. 110-477 of December 6, 2007) on H.R. 1585 did not contain a provision analogous to the Sec. 1244 of the House-passed version of H.R. 1585. The conference report stated:

The conferees note China's continued investment in strategic military capabilities that could be used to support power projection and access denial operations beyond the Asia Pacific region, and the lack of transparency surrounding the strategic military capabilities and intentions relating to China's military modernization. The Pentagon's 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDR) found that China is at a strategic crossroads and that, "of the major and emerging powers, China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States." The conferees note that during the last year, China demonstrated such potential, including the October 2006 broach of a Chinese SONG-class diesel-electric submarine in close proximity to the USS Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier in international waters and the January 2007 test of a direct ascent anti-satellite missile against a Chinese weather satellite in low-earth orbit.

The conferees encourage the Secretary of Defense to expand efforts to develop an accurate assessment and understanding of China's strategic military modernization and strategic intentions, particularly with regard to its sea- and space-based strategic capabilities. (Page 1031)

H.R. 1585 was vetoed by the President on December 28, 2008. A new bill, H.R. 4986, was passed with changes that took into account the President's objection to certain parts of H.R. 1585. The President's objection to certain parts of H.R. 1585 did not relate to the passage quoted above. H.R. 4986 was signed into law as P.L. 110-181 of January 28, 2008. Except for the changes made by Congress to take into account the President's objection to certain parts of H.R. 1585, H.Rept. 110-477 in effect serves as the conference report for H.R. 4986.

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