

The purpose of this paper is to assess China's strategic behavior from the viewpoint of politics, economics and the military, and provide an analysis of the impact that this may have on the United States.

The paper asserts that "regime survival" is "central to China's strategic" outlook and this impacts many facets of its domestic (including the issue of Taiwan, economic growth, etc.) and foreign policy, as well as its military development. This is explained further below.

### **Politics:**

- Ensuring the government's legitimacy is a key issue that impacts Chinese strategic thinking. This includes maintaining a hold over Taiwan and ensuring China's continued economic growth. Included in this perspective is the need to acquire the military strength to maintain and advance the Chinese Communist Party's "hold on power".
- Another aspect that may figure into China's strategic perspective is "national prestige" and China's status as a world player. Some analysts contend that this has compelled China to "restructure the international system", while others have suggested that China is willing to work within the boundaries of the existing system as this is beneficial to the People's Republic of China (PRC).

### ***China and the U.S.:***

- China and Russia reinforce their common interests in constraining "U.S. military and diplomatic power" through bolstering "multipolarity" and curbing U.S. influence in the region.
- In an effort to balance India's close military and diplomatic relationship with the U.S., China has sought to increase its "political, economic and military ties with India", thus promoting China's growth in the region in a "positive light".

### **Economics:**

- China's high economic growth will have to be sustained by access to oil and raw material imports. Already, China imports 46% of its oil from the Middle East and 32% from Africa through various sea routes (a total of 80%).

### ***China and the U.S.:***

- With China's imports coming in through a limited number of "Straits and waterways," U.S. scholars have indicated that these "sea lines of communication (SLOC) connecting China to the Middle East and Africa" have become "strategic vulnerabilities" for China. If disrupted by the U.S., this could effectively "throttle" the Chinese economy.
- Current assessments suggest that the U.S. may block the SLOC in the case of a military confrontation over Taiwan, or in case that the United States believes that China's rise is either "not peaceful" or too swift.

### **Military:**

- Defending the SLOC, protecting access to “distant supply lines” and settling maritime disputes in the South China Sea is a major Navy preoccupation. Chinese scholars have highlighted the importance of China possessing a “blue water navy” to secure its SLOC.
- As a result of negligible disputes over territory with other countries, and the fact that the Cold War has come to an end, China requires a reduced standing army but a well developed Navy. This has led to the armed forces transitioning from a “continental land power to a sea power”.

***China and the US:***

- The Gulf War (1991) and the other high tech wars in the Balkans (1996), Kosovo (1999) and Afghanistan (2001-2002) highlighted that China will not be able to match the U.S. in terms of conventional military capabilities. Thus, it will be necessary to utilize asymmetric tactics to target U.S. vulnerabilities, which, from a military perspective, is the U.S. military’s reliance on IT and satellites.
- China has stated that its military development is appropriate to its rising economic status. The PRC has also argued that it has to modernize its military in order to keep up with the U.S. As well, even though China has published a number of White Papers over the last 10 years, the details of developed weapons systems are kept to a minimum. As a result of these statements and lack of specifics, it is hard for the U.S. to ascertain what types of weapons systems the country possess and it is also difficult to establish China’s strategic intent in developing these military and other weapons capabilities.

“Response to Strategic Situation”	Actions Taken / Possible Actions that could be Taken	Means of Achieving This
<b>Taiwan and Anti-access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China is taking a two-pronged approach to deter Taiwan from seeking a “two Chinas solution”. This includes land strikes on Taiwan coupled with denying the U.S. access to the island (“offshore defense strategy”).</li> <li>• Thus, China needs to develop a navy that is capable of slowing or stopping the advance of “U.S. aircraft carrier strike groups” to the island by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— blocking U.S. ships by undertaking operations out to a “first island chain” which could stretch from “the tip of Japan, south past Taiwan, and around the South China Sea”.</li> <li>— utilize a more “offensive” approach that entails moving east “into the Pacific to a “second Island chain” that reaches a thousand miles off the Chinese coast”, and also includes the “American island of Guam”.</li> <li>— utilize a “Far Sea Defense Strategy” that focuses on using “multidimensional attacks” past the “first island chain” and also conduct “operations outside China’s 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone”.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The development of these new capabilities also allows for striking capabilities at a much further distance from the Chinese coast than was previously possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of “medium range anti-ship ballistic missiles” that could sink U.S. aircraft carriers (by 2015); missiles armed with “multiple warheads” that has a 900 mile range and “onboard guidance systems for terminal homing to strike surface ships”.</li> <li>• Recent addition of stealthy submarines to navy fleet. Includes the following which are all equipped with “anti-ship cruise missiles”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— “Russian built Kilo-class diesel electric submarines”,</li> <li>— Chinese built “Song- and Yuan-class diesel submarines”,</li> <li>— “Shang-class nuclear-propelled attack submarines”.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to protect China’s SLOC “through the South China sea, the Strait of Malacca, the Indian Ocean, and beyond”.</li> <li>• Need to create and have access to naval bases overseas in order to carry out anti-piracy operations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add an aircraft carrier to the existing fleet (possibly a “Russian Su-33 ship-based fighter”) to protect sea lines, enforce China’s “claims in the South China Sea”, and undertake “peacekeeping and disaster relief operations”.</li> <li>• Building 8 new stealthy “amphibious ships”.</li> <li>• Development of new “naval base near Sanya, on the southern tip of Hainan Island” capable of housing “surface ships, carriers and nuclear-propelled, nuclear warhead armed, ballistic missile submarine (SSBNs)”.</li> <li>• Already built 2 “Jin-class nuclear-propelled, nuclear warhead armed” SSBNs and 3 more expected to be built, perhaps with “multiple warheads”.</li> <li>• Developing further access to “ports and airfields” along the SLOC which would extend from Hong Kong to the Red Sea. This includes: “an airstrip on the Parcel islands, a contained shipping facility in Bangladesh, a deep water port in Myanmar, and a navy base in Pakistan”.</li> </ul>
<b>Informationization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to match military technological advancements of the U.S. and other major powers, China has undertaken an “informationization of its military forces”.</li> <li>• Revolution in Military Affairs has doctrinal and technological components to it, which includes integrating “advanced military technologies” into the People’s Liberation Army (PLA).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China is the second largest defense spender in world.</li> <li>• Current defense budget estimated to run between \$70B (Chinese government) and over \$100B (US estimates).</li> <li>• Military technology focused on “advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities (C4ISR), and networked warfare”.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military programs focused on providing “extended range power projection”.</li> <li>• Strategically focused on “launching communications, surveillance and navigation satellites”.</li> <li>• Operationally focused on “Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft” and “unmanned aerial vehicles”, including “high altitude (like America’s Global Hawk) and medium altitude (like the Predator) aircraft”.</li> <li>• Air: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— “pursuing long-range air launched cruise missiles” (similar to American Tomahawk).</li> <li>— developed J10 4<sup>th</sup> generation advanced fighter jet (similar to Canada’s F-18).</li> <li>— in 10 years will have developed a 5<sup>th</sup> generation fighter aircraft (similar to America’s F-22 or Joint Strike Fighter).</li> <li>— possibly pursuing “stealthy unmanned combat aerial vehicle armed with precision guided munitions”.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— developing armoured vehicles (similar to America’s Stryker).</li> <li>— developing “self-propelled artillery and howitzers”.</li> <li>— 15% of China’s army (currently at 2.3M) is being trained as an “elite force capable of taking the fight to the enemy”.</li> <li>— plan to develop strategic airlift capability (similar to America’s C-17).</li> <li>— concentrate on constructing “mechanized units around lighter platforms”.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Asymmetric Approaches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One view is that it is necessary to adopt asymmetric tactics against very powerful conventional military forces. An alternate view is that China has to keep up with the U.S. if the Government believes that the U.S. is weaponizing space.</li> <li>• Since America’s defense is very dependent on satellites for everything from identifying terrorist training camps, to using GPS, to enabling “network centric warfare”, this is an ideal vulnerability that can be exploited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “hold at risk” America’s “C4ISR satellites” through asymmetric tactics such as the use of cyber attack strategies and through establishing China’s ability to target satellites. A demonstration of the latter occurred when China conducted an anti-satellite test and destroyed one of its old weather satellites.</li> <li>• Army training exercises regularly incorporate “counter space scenarios”.</li> <li>• Compared to other military powers, China has the smallest number of nuclear weapons and this stockpile may not survive a first strike – China has 100 to 200 warheads as compared to 2000 in the U.S. and Russia. To counter this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— China has made it more difficult for American spy satellites to detect where China’s land-based nuclear forces are held.</li> <li>— has also deployed SSBNs at the Sanya base and has built “road mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles” (ICBMs) which are more survivable than “land-based ICBMs”.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Asymmetry in how China may utilize its nuclear strike capability against a conventional force: increasingly, it is seen as possible that China will deter a conventional land force with nuclear capabilities even though the government’s official position on nuclear weapons is “no-first-use”.</li> <li>• Undertake cyber warfare to target the U.S. military’s reliance on communication and information networks. For example, “Canadian researchers” revealed hundreds</li> </ul>

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		of cyber attacks on “foreign ministries and embassies around the world” that originated from China.
<b>Other Approaches</b>	Driven by the domestic need for “rare earth metals”, China has recently attempted to strictly control the export of these materials. These metals are used in many technological devices – both civilian and military – from cell phones to radars, and today, approximately 95% of supplies come from China.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In August 2009, a “policy directive” was issued suggesting a ban and/or limitation on exporting certain rare earth metals; this policy was not adopted after organizations and various governments threatened action at the World Trade Organization.</li> <li>• Over the years, the number of rare earths exported by China has fallen from 75% to 25%.</li> <li>• The U.S. Government is already focused on assessing the prevalence of these metals in the “Pentagon’s supply chain”.</li> <li>• While other countries such as Canada, Australia, the U.S. and South Africa have significant resources of these metals, they were restricted from extracting and processing these metals in the past as a result of labor costs and environmental concerns. In spite of efforts to restart mining and processing in these countries, this is a 5 to 10 year process, and the world will depend significantly on China for these metals in the years to come.</li> </ul>