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# RETHINKING UNITED STATES MILITARY BASES IN EAST ASIA

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# Task Force 2015

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## Acronyms

A2/AD	Anti-Access and Area Denial
AD12	Air Defense Identification Zone
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADIZ	Air Defense Identification Zone
AIIB	Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank
ALCM	Air-Launched Cruise Missiles
ASBM	Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRAC	Base Closure and Realignment Commission
BTWC	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention 1975
C2	Command and Control
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, and Nuclear
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, 1996
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention, 1997
DMZ	De-Militarized Zone
DPRK	Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
DOD	Department of Defense
EDCA	Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zones, as stipulated by UNCLOS Article 55

EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ELINT	Electronic Intelligence
FIP	Facility Improvement Program
FTAAP-21	Free Trade Area Agreement of the Asia-Pacific 21
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GOJ	Government of Japan
HHOP	Humphreys Housing Opportunity Plan
HNS	Host Nation Support
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, 1987
IRP	Increased Rotational Presence
KPA	Korean Peoples' Army, DPRK
KPAF	Korean Peoples' Air Force, DPRK
KPN	Korean Peoples' Navy, DPRK
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party, Japan
LPP	Land Partnership Plan
MBT	Main Battle Tank
MFN	Most Favored Nations, as defined by World Trade Organization trade laws
MND	Ministry of National Defense, ROK
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MRBM	Medium-Range Ballistic Missiles
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NFPC	Nuclear-Free Philippines Coalition
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NLG	Natural Liquid Gas
NMI	Nautical Miles
NPT	Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OHA	Overseas Housing Allowance
PACOM	US Pacific Command
PLA	Peoples' Liberation Army
PLAAF	Peoples' Liberation Army Air Force
PLAN	Peoples' Liberation Army Navy
PRC	Peoples' Republic of China
RAND	Research and Development Corporation
ROK	Republic of Korea
ROKFC	Republic of Korea Funded Construction
S&ED	6 <sup>th</sup> Round of PRC-US Strategic & Economic Dialogue
SIGINT	Signal Intelligence
SLBM	Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles
SLOC	Sea Lines of Communication
SMA	Special Measures Agreements
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SRBM	Short-Range Ballistic Missiles
SRF	Strategic Rocket Forces
SSD	Strategic Security Dialogue

START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, 1991
TPA	Trade Promotion Authority
TPP	Trans Pacific Partnership
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982
US	United States
USFJ	United States Forces Japan
USFK	United States Forces Korea
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VFA	Visiting Forces Agreement
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WRSA	War Reserve Stocks Ammunition
YRP	Yongsan Relocation Plan

**Issue for Decision: Rethinking US Military Bases in Japan and Korea**

Background: Abuses against local populations by US military members stationed in the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Okinawa, Japan have complicated regional diplomatic agendas and security relationships. The initial *raison d'etre* for a US presence in the region, the Cold War, no longer exists. According to the 2015 US National Security Strategy, a perpetual forward deployment in Northeast Asia is essential to US security interests. Increased capability and aggression of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the gradual rearmament of Japan, a resilient and nuclear Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) regime, and a changing security environment necessitates a reassessment of regional threats and the sustainability of the current regional US military presence.

U.S. Interests: Blowback from a large presence of US personnel in the region hampers diplomatic and strategic agendas. The nuclear capabilities of the DPRK poses an existential threat to the US and that of its allies. Increased PRC aggression challenges regional security. The US has a vested interest in strengthening economic relations with trading partners in the region, supporting free and open sea lanes for commerce, and maintaining regional stability.

Policy Options: Maintaining the status quo will increasingly frustrate local populations, and in the long run, will not adaptively meet changing strategic demands. However, significantly downgrading U.S. military commitments leaves our allies vulnerable and compromises US power projection, impairing US ability to respond to crises. An approach

that increases regional security and reduces blowback from a US presence supports the "rebalance to Asia" while addressing concerns of an increased US footprint.

Recommendations:

- Encourage China to join TPP negotiations, TPA passage is a priority
- Discourage the revision of the Japanese Constitution, while encouraging a build-up of Japan's Self-Defense Force
- Work with Beijing to create an independent Northeast Asian Cooperative Security Forum
- Ratify UNCLOS
- Push through BRAC to reduce spending
- Expand cultural training of US military members
- Redeploy non-essential US Marine forces from Okinawa to Guam
- Modify SOFA agreements

# Chapter 1

## History and Developments

Matthew Lee

This paper will explain, update, and discuss current US military installations in East Asia, particularly those in Okinawa, Japan and the ROK. These bases have been in place since the beginning of the Cold War and have undergone little change despite tremendous changes in administrations, policies, economics, and the overall security environment in East Asia. Unsurprisingly, America's legitimacy in maintaining bases abroad is challenged by the imposed cost on the host nation and the resulting unrest among locals. This paper will first provide a historical context in which to understand why the bases were established, then proceed to explain the transforming security environment in East Asia with the intention of emphasizing the necessity of military policy rethink in East Asia.

## Introduction

This Task Force Report will evaluate the need for US military bases in Okinawa and the ROK. Initially, the bases were constructed to protect the US' East Asian allies from the spread of Communism. However, changes in the geopolitical landscape challenge this assertion. Today, the US is facing a different kind of military and economic threat. The rise of China has spurred a great deal of discussion; many believe the international order may return to a bipolar or multipolar state if the US does not assert itself in East Asia, especially with the emerging economic and political clout of the PRC. The Korean Peninsula remains divided to this day and the DPRK has acquired nuclear weapons capabilities, further destabilizing an insecure environment. Russia's recent maneuvers in Ukraine have alienated it from its Western European counterparts and may consequently look towards East Asia to stabilize its economy and search for further political allies.

These security issues call for a continued, if not increased, US presence in East Asia; however, the ways in which US military bases in Japan and the ROK currently operate is unsustainable and do not efficiently serve US interests. The US, under President Barack Obama, is making more of a concerted effort to become a part of the global order rather than tackling problems unilaterally.

This paper will provide background on how these bases were established, and what purpose they have. It will focus mostly on the Cold War and the assumptions that drove US policy in determining its security priorities at the time. Then, it will examine the aftermath and consequences of the Cold War and how the world transitioned into a period of US unipolarity. Next, this paper will detail and examine how these bases and a US regional presence fits into the current world.

## **Beginning and End of the Cold War**

After the Cold War, Congress found that the situation in Europe endangered the establishment of a lasting peace, the general welfare and national interests of the US, and the attainment of the objectives of the United Nations (Marshall Plan, Sec 102). The US established the Marshall Plan to extend economic assistance to countries in Europe and Asia to help rebuild. While there was reconstruction in Europe, the US looked to Japan, the defeated threat.

In 1951, the US and Japan signed the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty which was a “ten-year, renewable military agreement that outlined a security arrangement for Japan in light of its pacifist constitution. U.S. forces would remain on Japanese soil after Japan regained sovereignty” (Xu, *The U.S.-Japan*, Par. 3). Japan would not have to worry about defending itself, and in exchange the US could stage operations, house troops, and receive budgetary aid for the maintenance of these bases. This made the US, in effect, Japan’s protector against potential military confrontations that threatened Japanese sovereignty. An established US presence in Japan also served as a security measure against the former expansionist nation.

To the west of Japan, the Koreans suffered a civil war that ended in a stalemate and an armistice in 1952. As a result, the Mutual Defense Treaty between the US and Republic of Korea was signed on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1953. The treaty outlines, “the Republic of Korea grants... the right to dispose US land, air and sea forces in and about the territory of the Republic of Korea as determined by mutual agreement” (Mutual Defense Treaty, Article IV). With Japan and the ROK both incorporated into the Western Bloc against the Communist USSR, the US made two valuable allies in East Asia and established a security buffer.

## **The Aftermath of the Cold War**

The US emerged from the Cold War the sole superpower in a unipolar world order. Subsequently, the US became increasingly involved in international military conflicts. President George H. W. Bush led a coalition against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait during the First Gulf War, the US spearheaded NATO involvement in the civil and ethnic wars in the former Yugoslavia, and became embroiled in recent conflicts in the Middle East. In a short period of about 20 years, the US has led and been a part of multiple coalitions in an effort to end conflict around the globe. There was no questioning the enormous and overwhelming force that the US possessed, and it became clear that the US was asserting itself in a more overt manner, politically and militarily wiping out any trace of influence of the USSR from the Cold War. The sudden surge of military interventionism and power prompted few to question the purpose of these military bases.

However, after the Cold War, there was no clearly defined enemy of the US, which raised questions as to the purpose of US military bases deployed overseas. The constant and rapid fluctuation of the international balance of power during the 20<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries revealed a need for US engagement abroad. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies (2012), “America’s national security depends on a stable and peaceful international order, especially in Asia. President Obama recognized this fundamental reality when he spoke of the need to rebalance US forces globally to reflect the importance of a rising Asia” (p.2). The US was in a position of unprecedented power and left with military capabilities and bases that needed a new purpose. Considering that East Asia now contains the most populous country in the world and two of the largest economies, the US must reevaluate the purpose and use of military bases in the region. The

sentiments and security threats of the Cold War may influence the conflicts that the US current needs to face in East Asia, but rather than adopting a military defensive posture, the US must adapt to peacetime military, political, economic, and social relations between countries in the region.

### **Current Situation**

The US faces threats that may warrant the upkeep of current military installations in the ROK and Japan. The base options for decision are to increase, decrease, or maintain its presence in East Asia, but before acting there must be sufficient understanding of the varied military, political, economic, and social factors that will shape the power structure of the region in the upcoming years.

#### *Rising China*

Arguably one of the most controversial and alarming foreign policy issues that the US has had to face is the so-called “Rise of China”. In *Tangled Titans: The US and China*, David Shambaugh (2013) argues that now that the PRC is seeking to become a superpower, there is a clash of ideologies paralleling the Cold War USSR, where “China may have discredited Maoist ideology, but the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has definitely not abandoned Marxist socialism or Leninist authoritarianism – and it certainly has not abandoned the ideology of being a great power” (p. 7). The People’s Republic of China replaced the security threat of the USSR during the post-Cold War era, with their rapid economic and military development provoking worry of a competition of global influence with the US. For instance, the PRC and the ROK in November of 2014 agreed to a trade agreement that would remove 90% of tariffs on exports between the two countries (Choe, 2014, para. 1).

Looking at the PRC's recent economic developments, it seems that the US and the PRC are on a path to confrontation and isolation rather than engagement. A potential point of conflict is the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank by the PRC. The bank aims to "offer quick financing for badly needed transportation, telecommunication and energy projects in underdeveloped countries across the region" (Perlez, 2014, para. 1). There remains many Western critics, especially in the US, because they view it as "a deliberate effort to undercut the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank" (para. 6). China's economic clout and influence is something that cannot be ignored by the United States and its allies. Criticizing the bank and what it aims to do will not produce productive or beneficial relations with the growing economic powerhouse. The United States must come to terms that China is growing and statements from state officials will do little to stop China from trying to achieve its own goals.

China's military modernization and economic expansion has caused raised tensions in East Asia. East Asia is presently full of states that are assessing their neighbors' capabilities and gauging their own. Japan is cautiously pursuing normalization of their military while China has made major updates to its arsenals by way of aircraft carriers and aviation technology. The ROK also regularly updates its military technology and capabilities due to the threat posed by the DPRK. This type of behavior is unsustainable and detrimental to US interests in the area. China currently spends only 2% of its GDP on its military and only 40<sup>th</sup> in terms of GDP percentage expenditure in the world (CIA World Factbook, 2014, "China"). Many believe that "China's naval, cyber, anti-satellite, and ballistic missile modernization programs... are perceived as destabilizing and even aggressive by many American strategists" (Shambaugh, p. 12). An aggressive China is one

that will pose many problems for the US. There is no reasonable method to contain China's growing economics and military expenditures. China should be framed as a latent threat, and rather than trying to control or guide its military and economic expansion, the United States should look to integrate China as a partner instead of a competitor.

### *North Korea's Unpredictable Threat*

The threat of a nuclear DPRK is also on the minds of those determining policy in East Asia. It was previously assumed that although the DPRK had successfully produced weapons grade uranium and in turn a nuclear weapon, it has been unable to fit it onto a ballistic missile. On October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the New York Times reported that Gen. Curtis M. Scapparotti predicts that the DPRK has successfully shrunk "a nuclear weapon to a size that could fit atop a ballistic missile" (Sanger, 2014, para. 1). Although this is only an estimate, in considering a worst case scenario this is arguably the largest contributing factor for keeping military bases in the region. The threat of the DPRK is downplayed by some due to their lack of modern military technology, however, a nuclear weapon makes the DPRK a credible threat.

Although the DPRK threat may not be apparent to those looking on the outside, the ROK remains anxious and wants the US' full support in dealing with the DPRK, both militarily and diplomatically. Presently, it appears that the ROK may have the resources and capabilities to rout the DPRK if hostilities were to openly resume. But it has been reported that the ROK has asked the US to delay its transfer of wartime military control to an indefinite period of time (Schwartz, 2014, para. 3). During a meeting between former Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel and Defense Minister Han Min-Koo, Hagel "pledged to maintain the current U.S. force posture on the Korean peninsula, despite spending pressure

and growing demands for American troops in other parts of the world” (2014). The ROK also feels that it needs to “secure the capabilities necessary to transfer operational control in ‘the middle of 2020’” (Schwartz, 2014, par. 3). To the ROK, a well-maintained presence in the South is reassuring as if there were a military confrontation, the US would be able to respond immediately.

### *Japan’s Push for Offensive Military*

The normalization of Japan’s self-defense forces may cause some anxiety among those in the ROK and the PRC. Japan’s historical legacy with its East Asian neighbors makes Japan’s remilitarization a politically dangerous option. Prime Minister Abe has also been criticized for his conservative views on Japan’s history. Prime Minister Abe was the first Prime Minister to visit the Yasukuni Shrine since 2006, a controversial gesture, and “his supporters describe... a [Abe’s] personal desire to revise an overly negative portrayal of Japan’s actions during the war” (Tabuchi, 2013, par. 11). But Prime Minister Abe’s conservative party has expressed a vested interest in reforming Japan’s current pacifist constitution. On February 12, 2015, Prime Minister Abe addressed the Japanese Parliament and since the execution of two Japanese hostages by the Islamic State he and his party “have seized on that crisis to urge changes that will probably include rewriting Article 9, which bars Japan from maintaining its own armed forces” (Fackler, 2015, par. 4).

Some in the ROK and the PRC speculate that while tensions between the three states are relatively high, the remilitarization of Japan under Abe would be seen as a show of strength towards the ROK and the PRC. Japan is currently embroiled in conflicts over Takeshima/Dokdo and the Senkaku/Diaoyu Island disputes, and an effort towards remilitarization may result in heightened tensions. Japan’s Ministry of Defense Annual

Defense of Japan White Papers for 2014. It states that “Japan will particularly prioritize... providing an effective deterrence and response to a variety of security situations and supporting stability in the Asia-Pacific and improving the global security environments”, and later specifically highlights its commitment to develop a “response to attacks on remote islands” (2014, n.p.). The conflict is one that the United States does not openly address, for it is understood that they are “to be under Japanese Administration and thus covered by the security treaty” (Xu, 2014, sec. 4 par. 1). But being covered by the security treaty would entail that should the PRC lay claim to these islands by force, then the US would be obligated to defend Japan from the Chinese invasion. The United States has much to lose if Japan were to engage in war with the PRC over a territorial dispute as it would damage its lucrative economic relations with the PRC while simultaneously damaging chances of engagement with the PRC. Prime Minister Abe and President Xi Jinping of the PRC said: “that they are trying to roll back a prolonged standoff that has inflamed nationalist sentiments, damaged economic ties and at times appeared to bring them close to military conflict” (Perlez, 2014, par. 2). It appears that the PRC and Japan agree that a military confrontation would be undesirable, but with China’s growth and continual economic and military expansion, there may be other means of forcing Japan’s hand in this dispute.

### *Relations Between Allies*

Although the ROK and Japan are the US’ two closest allies in Asia, there is still a large amount of tension between them. The tensions and general unfriendliness date back to Japan’s colonial rule of Korea from 1910 until the end of WWII. The ROK and Japan most recently “have not renewed a currency-swap agreement, have shelved free-trade talks and

have failed to complete two defense agreements” (Cha, 2013, para. 5). The two countries also have an island dispute of their own. The Takeshima/Dokdo Island dispute is one that has fanned anti-Japanese sentiments in the ROK and hurt relations. Also, the annual visits to the Yasukuni Shrine draw criticism from both the PRC and the ROK governments. If the United States wants to realign future policy towards engaging East Asia, then it is imperative that the ROK and Japan work together. The failure to cooperate because of historical issues hamstrings the United States and its allies’ abilities. The threat of the DPRK is the most pressing problem, as of December of 2014 the US, the ROK, and Japan have agreed to a trilateral intelligence (AP, 2014, para. 1). This is a small breakthrough, but it is also essential for the US and its allies to act in a unified manner in order to engage the PRC. With the fluctuation of relations between the PRC, the ROK, and Japan, it seems that the US’ interests are disjointed. The PRC and the ROK signed a major trade agreement that will strengthen their relationship while Japan remains involved in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute with the PRC. A fragmented alliance only hinders the US and its interests in East Asia. Military bases provide at least some sort of stability and coherence for the US-ROK-Japan alliance.

#### *Local Sentiment of US Military Bases*

The local populations that must sacrifice land for military installations and deal with unruly US military personnel’s behavior has also become a concern. Particularly in the communities of Okinawa, opposition to US military expansion has become a political thorn in Tokyo’s side. One notable issue is that “US forces still occupy 20 percent of the land of Okinawa Island and concentrate three-quarters of all US military presence in the country” (McCormack, 2014, sec. 3 para. 1). The problem of the bases’ presence would not be as

notable if personnel issues were minimized. However, the US military presence in Okinawa is largely perceived as negative by local populations. Johnson in *Blowback*, observes that:

Sexual assault, for example, remains a fact of daily life... given that in a period of only six months in 1949 journalist Frank Gibney reported G.I.s killing twenty-nine Okinawans and raping another eighteen and that in late 1958 a quarter to a third of the Third Marine Division in Okinawa was infected with venereal disease. (p. 41)

Though these occurrences remain outliers of US military personnel on the islands, it significantly sours local attitudes toward the US. Little has changed since then and even now the US is looking to expand their operations to Henoko in Northern Okinawa (McCormack, sec. 3 para. 7). The local populace of Okinawa has attempted to move the US Marines Corps bases to a different island of the Ryukyu Chain or to a different place in Japan altogether. Okinawans observe that their countrymen in Tokyo or Osaka do not have to put up with the offenses and violations of US military personnel. Okinawans perceive that they alone bear the costs of Japan's security alliance. The United States is then placed in an awkward position: if the locals have democratically elected a leader whose platform is to remove US military bases from Okinawa, the alliance relationship becomes increasingly complicated to navigate. The US must rely on Japanese domestic politics and negotiations in order for the base relocation to move forward.

## **Conclusion**

An overall withdrawal of troops East Asia is unrealistic. However, it is still difficult to justify such a large presence of US forces in the region, particularly in Okinawa. The forces provide a common ground between Japan and the ROK, but there are deeper issues as to why the US' two closest East Asian allies are failing to cooperate. A rebalance towards Asia is necessary given its strategic importance and rise in economic and political relevancy. The United States has vested interests in East Asia and as such must create a

climate in which peace and prosperity are at the forefront. An overall retreat from the region and forcing too large of a burden upon allies would detract from US interests. Instead, the United States must find ways to work with its allies and modernize military and diplomatic relationships. In doing so, the US can integrate China, deter North Korea, and lessen the footprint of US military bases abroad. Engaging the PRC and integrating it into the current world order and ensuring that the PRC follows international norms should be the United States' foremost diplomatic goal. Japan and the ROK have become developed countries that have advanced functional military capabilities. The United States should augment those capabilities instead of aiming to be the bulk of them. This report will continue to detail the advantages, disadvantages, and potential questions that a rebalance towards Asia may bring.

## Chapter 2

# The Evolving Security Challenges and the Geopolitical Necessities of the US Military Bases in Japan and the Republic of Korea

Jaehyung Kim

Kela Wong

The purpose of this chapter is to examine current US security concerns in the East Asia region in order to evaluate the proposal to repurpose US military bases in the Republic of Korea and Japan in a context of an evolving security environment. The first part evaluates potential security threats from major regional powers that are not among US allies – China, Russia, and the Democratic Republic of Korea – and the necessity of the US military bases in Japan and the ROK in addressing those issues. The second part of the chapter assesses current military capabilities of the US and its allies in the Western Pacific, Japan and the ROK. An in-depth examination of the military, technological, and strategic power of the US provides an understanding of the country’s abilities to maintain regional stability and protect the security of the homeland and that of US allies. The analysis is based on official defense publications and security agendas of each government in the region, various think-tanks’ interpretations of raw data and up-to-date defense strategies, and a wide spectrum of articles on this issue.

## Introduction

The Cold War has ended, but the current attitudes in East Asia are altering the security environment in which the US operates. These neighbors are currently deteriorating and challenging the security environment for the US. While China's economic growth fundamentally reshaped the regional security and economic dynamics, Russia's foreign policy pivoted towards the Far East and the Obama administration's rebalance policies intensified the geopolitical priority of the region.<sup>1</sup> Coupled with the DPRK's nuclear missiles and the "2015 Great Reunification War" plan, Japan's recent moves to normalize its self-defense forces increased the regional tensions and contributed to the region's militarization (Kim & Hwang, 2014, n.p.). Additionally, with given security environment, the ROK's recent strategic hedging towards the PRC further complicated the geopolitical conditions for the United States (Pollack, 2014, n.p.). However, despite existing challenges, the opportunity cost of discarding trade in East Asia is too great for the US future economy. Thus, the US has overriding concerns to maintain the military bases in Japan and the ROK with updated visions and up-to-date-tailored necessities in order to fulfill current security demands and to counter potential challenges in East Asia.

The paper will initially evaluate existing and potential threats from the PRC, Russia and the DPRK by analyzing each country's governmental objectives and strategies, weapons of mass destructions (WMDs) capabilities, conventional weaponry and defense economics. The WMDs encompass nuclear weapons, biological/chemical weapons and

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<sup>1</sup> The Obama administration's "Rebalance to Asia" policy has originated from the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's October speech in 2011 that shifted the administration's geopolitical priorities to Asia (<http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/>).

delivery systems. The rise of cyber and space warfare is integral to the asymmetric warfare capabilities, which concerns the US and its allies in East Asia. The conventional weaponry analysis consists of the army, navy and air force capabilities, including the special operations forces (SOFs). Regarding defense economics, the paper attempts to evaluate each country's the economic potential, which could translate into the military measures. The analysis evaluated that the PRC's military growth does not pose a significant threat while its increasing military potential is a destabilizing factor in the region's security environment. In contrast, Russia and the DPRK currently threaten to destabilize the security atmosphere based on strategic and military measures. Accordingly, the subsequent task is to evaluate the current capabilities of the US and its allies in relations to the PRC, Russia and the DPRK. The comparison comprises WMDs, conventional weaponry, SOFs, and the potential risk between Japan and the ROK. Following is the conclusive analysis of the US and its allies' overall competency in comparison to the non-allies group. The paper analyzed that the US would not encounter direct security challenges except from the DPRK, contingent upon the absence of significant modifications of current alliance system or surprise provocations. However, the pressing concern to the US in East Asia primarily lies in the security of Japan and the ROK. Ultimately, the threats are based upon each state's objectives and strategies. Thus, the paper concludes the PRC as a latent risk, Russia as a peripheral but potential threat, and the DPRK as an immediate threat to the security environment in East Asia.

## **Section I: Threat Assessment**

### **The PRC: the latent risk**

Within the United States, there are many concerns about the rise of China and its significance to US interests in the East Asia region. The PRC is now the biggest economy in the world, and that advancement is reflected in the growth of the PRC's military budget and power. Another concern is the PRC's increasing aggression in the East Asia region, particularly over territorial disputes in the South and East China Seas. The PRC has asserted that it is committed to "the road of peaceful development" and that the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) core interests lie in "safeguarding national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity, supporting the country's peaceful development" (2013 China Defense White Paper, p.28). An integral component of the path to realizing these goals is strengthening military power through a comprehensive military modernization program. One of the most central concerns regarding the PRC to the US is the PRC's lack of transparency, which forces the US to prepare accordingly.

### **Understanding PRC National Security Objectives and Strategies**

Chinese leadership has viewed the period since 2002 as the "period of strategic opportunity" to support domestic development and expand national power, including state, economic, military and diplomatic strength. This expansion of power will allow the CCP to further its internal goals of "sustaining economic growth and development, maintaining domestic political stability, defending national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and securing China's status as a great power" (2014 US Report on China, p.15).

The way to actualize these goals specifically include an extensive modernization of their military in order to gain the capabilities to win potential regional conflicts, protect sea lines of communication (SLOCs), win territorial claims in the South and East China Seas,

and defend the western peripheral borders. The 2013 Chinese Defense white paper states the PLA's military goals as follows:

The fundamental tasks of China's armed forces are consolidating national defense, resisting foreign aggression and defending the motherland. Responding to China's core security needs, the diversified employment of the armed forces aims to maintain peace, contain crises and win wars; safeguard border, coastal and territorial air security; strengthen combat-readiness and warfighting-oriented exercises and drills; readily respond to and resolutely deter any provocative action which undermines China's sovereignty, security and territorial integrity; and firmly safeguard China's core national interests. (p.28)

The main threats to the overall goals of the PRC are primarily internal issues, with the biggest confrontational threat being Taiwan. Unofficially, the main reason behind the extensive military investment is to prepare for conflict in the Taiwan Strait, including confronting possible involvement by a third-party. A secondary concern is the potential for territorial maritime disputes in the East and South China Seas.

The PRC also views stability in foreign relations with neighboring countries and the United States as a significant element in continuing a stable environment for development. Although Chinese leadership has done its best to project the “benign” rise of the PRC, it is a concern of the PRC that the US’s “rebalance to Asia” is in fact an attempt to contain the PRC’s growth, and that the rise of the PRC could make other countries feel threatened and thus increase levels of cooperation with the US. The increasing amounts of “forceful rhetoric and confrontational behavior” have also undermined the view of the PRC’s “peaceful rise” (2014 US Report on China, p. 16).

### **Defense Economics**

The continuation of national economic development is viewed as an integral part of maintaining a stable environment in which to continue PRC growth. However, some of the risks to economic stability include the PRC’s overreliance on investment and exports as

main method to push forward economic growth, domestic resource constraints, labor shortages and rising wages (2014 US Report on China, p. 17). In 2012, the PRC's economic growth was at its lowest in 13 years, at 7.8%.

As the PRC's economy has generally swelled on an upward trend, the PRC's defense spending has also increased a great deal over the past decade. The PRC's 2013 defense budget was 10.7% higher than in 2012. According to the *2015 Military Balance*, the PRC's official defense spending numbers included personnel, operations, and equipment expenditures, but others figures are excluded, including R&D, overseas weapons purchases, and funding for the People's Armed Police. Experts' estimates of these expenditures would increase the official budget by half again (2015, p.210). The PRC's 'defense economy' has also been significantly impacted by economic development through reorganization of state monopolies to privatize state owned defense industries and a melding with international trade and production networks.

### **Other Factors**

The PRC's friction with several regional actors, such as strained tensions with Japan in the East China Sea, and with other Southeast Asian countries in the South China Seas, also pose a danger to maintaining a stable environment and periphery for growth. These strained relations also cause unease for Chinese leadership about increased military and security cooperation between these nations and the United States to rival the PRC (2014 US Report on China, p. 17). The PRC also has to address domestic unrest concerning government corruption, transparency and accountability, which all could threaten the legitimacy of the CCP.

### **Military Assessment of the PRC**

## Capabilities in the Weapons of Mass Destructions (WMDs)

### *Nuclear Weapons Capabilities*

The PRC has an estimated 250 nuclear warheads in its arsenal of nuclear weapons. There is some uncertainty about the real number of the PRC's nuclear arsenal; the lack of transparency has made it difficult to ascertain the true number of the PRC's nuclear weapons. Such as any country's nuclear arsenal, the PRC's nuclear weapons pose a potential risk, especially deployed nuclear arsenals that could face accidental or unauthorized use. However, the PRC's stated intentions for its nuclear weapons program are to focus on "survivability and maintaining a second-strike capability" (NTI, country profiles). Since the birth of the program in 1955, the PRC has conducted 45 nuclear tests. In 1992, the PRC joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a nuclear weapon state, which obligated the country to work towards "general and complete disarmament" (NTI, Nuclear Threats section). The PRC also adopted a nuclear "no first use (NFU)" policy that pledges not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states (NTI, China country profile). Ultimately, the potential security threat that is posed by the PRC's nuclear weapons is reduced by the fact that the PRC's nuclear technology remains inferior to American technology. Furthermore, the PRC has agreed to various non-proliferation treaties, and their current official stance on nuclear weapons is to maintain second-strike abilities: "We will not attack unless we are attacked; but we will surely counterattack if attacked" (China's 2013 Defense White paper, p. 24).

### *Delivery Systems Capabilities*

The Second Artillery controls the PRC's nuclear and conventional ballistic missiles. As of 2014, the Second Artillery was developing and testing new classes of offensive

missiles, forming more missile units, upgrading old missile systems, and developing counter methods to ballistic missile defenses. According to the 2013 Chinese Defense white paper, the Second Artillery is “primarily responsible for deterring other countries from using nuclear weapons against the PRC, and carrying out nuclear counterattacks and precision strikes with conventional missiles.” As of 2014, the PRC possessed 66 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), 134 medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs), and 252 short-range ballistic missiles (SRBM). The PLA is also improving ranges, accuracies, and payloads of their some 1,1000 short-range ballistic missiles. The PRC’s medium-range conventionally armed ballistic missiles are “limited but growing,” greatly improving the PLA’s capacity to strike nearby regional targets (US 2013 Report on China, p. 6). The PRC’s MRBMs increasingly have the ranges to threaten US bases in Okinawa. The increasing number of armed MRBMs, including the DF-21D and anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) also allow the PRC to attack large ships, including aircraft carriers, in the western Pacific. The PRC also continues to develop ICBMs, which do have the capabilities to reach most locations within the United States. Further recent development of missiles has advanced their effectiveness to threaten regional air bases, logistic facilities, and other ground based infrastructure (2014 US Report on China, p. 31). Additional development of the PRC’s advanced delivery system technology would enable significant increase in military power, and pose a more substantial threat to US forces or US allies in the case of confrontation.

### *Biological Weapons Capabilities*

While the PRC has the capability to produce biological weapons, the PRC does not pose a significant threat in these areas of warfare because the country has agreed to most

major treaties and agreements regarding their use and destruction, including the Geneva Protocol and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). The PRC does have the delivery systems capabilities that could be used for a potential biological weapons attack. Despite the PRC's compliance with BW agreements, there is not much known about the true extent of the PRC's biological weapons capabilities, and in 2010 there were some concerns raised by the US about the Chinese efforts to fully enforce export controls on biological weapons-related dual use items (Arms Control Association, 2014). These concerns presently appear settled; in its most recent report, the State Department concluded, "No BWC compliance issues were raised between the United States and China" (NTI, 2014, China profile overview section, para. 9).

#### *Chemical Weapons Capabilities*

Concerns over the PRC's ability to produce chemical weapons were disputed and resolved, and currently does not pose a threat to the US and allies. However, the US government does continue to have some concerns over the possibility of a transfer of chemicals to undeclared facilities of a third party country. The approximated 700,000 chemical weapons munitions that the Japanese abandoned in Chinese territory at the end of WWII also remains a concern. Under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the PRC and Japan agreed to work together to dispose of them. The 2012 deadline was not met, and was extended to 2016 (NTI, 2014, China profile overview section, para.12).

#### **Conventional weaponry**

##### *PLA Ground Force*

In 2014, the PLA Ground Forces received significant amounts of investment in order to modernize with an emphasis on the capability to deploy campaign-level forces across

long distances quickly. This includes a wide restructuring of the ground forces to have a more effective, advanced special operations force, improved army aviation units using precision helicopters, and improved, real-time data C2 capabilities. The modernization of the ground forces also includes a shift from motorized forces to mechanized forces and improving coordination between armored, air defense, aviation, ground-air coordination, and electronic warfare capabilities (US 2014 Report on China, p. 10). Eight of the nine armored ground divisions were redistributed into eight new armored brigades and eight new mechanized brigades, while relying on the mechanized infantry divisions as the new brigades are formed. The changes to the new brigades imply a standardization of tanks, armored vehicles<sup>2</sup> and artillery in these brigades (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 207). Additional new equipment includes the Z-10 and Z-19 attack helicopters, the Z-8B transport helicopter, a medium range SAM, and a new advanced air defense artillery system (US 2014 Report on China, p. 10; “Military Balance”, 2015, p. 207).

#### *PLA Navy (PLAN)*

In regards to naval development, the PRC intends to become a major maritime power with blue-water naval capabilities in securing its trade and energy routes (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 207). The PRC’s navy currently has the highest number of major combatants, submarines, and amphibious warfare ships in Asia, with three fleets of 235,000 officers and men.<sup>3</sup> These deployed forces are increasingly sent further and further

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<sup>2</sup> Armored vehicles being produced are high-end Type-991 MBT, Type-04A AIFV and Type-09APC in smaller numbers, and the rest are Type-96A MBT, Type-86A AIFV and Type-92 APC (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 207).

<sup>3</sup> The 2013 US Report on China states that PLAN forces include 77 principal surface combatants, over 60 submarines, 55 medium and large amphibious ships, and around 85 missile-equipped small combatants (US 2014 Report on China, p. 7).

into the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The largest ever open-sea PLAN exercise occurred in October 2013 and included all three PLAN fleets (US 2014 Report on China, p.7).

In the 2013 China Defense White paper, the goals for the PLAN are stated as “accelerat[ing] the modernization of its forces for comprehensive offshore operations, develop[ing] advanced submarines, destroyers and frigates, and improv[ing] integrated electronic and information systems” (China’s 2013 Defense White Paper, p.26). Over the last couple of decades, the PRC’s shipbuilding methods were to lower expenses by building one or two of the four different classes of newly developed vessels rather than mass-producing them from the start. Now, the PRC has begun to produce the satisfactory vessels in higher numbers, which improves the PLAN’s capabilities to deploy anti-air, anti-ship and land-attack cruise missiles<sup>4</sup> (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 208). The modernization of the PLA Navy’s submarine forces has continued as a high priority, seen through the production of JIN-class nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBN). Progress is slow, but the next generation of SSBN together with a new JL-2 submarine launched ballistic missile will give the PLA Navy its first reliable sea-based nuclear deterrent (US Report on China, p. 6). The PRC’s advancements in attack submarines may enable a submarine-based land-attack capability in the next decade with a guided-missile attack submarine (SSGN).

In 2012, the PLA Navy commissioned the PRC’s first aircraft carrier Liaoning, purchased from Ukraine in 1998. The first successful launch and recovery of a fighter was completed the following month. The PRC also continues an indigenous aircraft carrier program, and they are expected to build several more operational aircraft carriers in the

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<sup>4</sup> These include six Type-052C destroyers and three of the new Type-052D ships (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 208).

next decade (2014 US Report on China, p. 6). The commissioning of the new aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, could represent the PRC's moving beyond the military power projections capabilities for the Taiwan issue and other regional issues (2014 US Report on China, p. 22). However, there has not yet been evidence of the carrier's capability to perform carrier battle group operations. There is also currently a naval aviation platform in early production in Shanghai, which could potentially be the first indigenous Chinese aircraft carrier or a large amphibious assault vessel ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 208).

#### *PLA Air Force (PLAAF)*

The PRC has the third largest air force in the world and the largest air force in Asia, with 330,000 personnel and over 2,800 aircraft<sup>5</sup> (US 2014 Report on China, p. 9). The modernization of the PLAAF is rapid, quickly shrinking the gap with Western air force capabilities including aircraft, command and control (C2), jammers, electronic warfare (EW) and data links (US 2014 Report on China, p. 9). The last deliveries of the older Q-5 *Fantan* and J-7 fighters were made in 2013, and will soon likely be replaced by newer fighters. There have been flight tests of two prototype combat aircraft – the Chengdu J-20 heavy fighter and the smaller Shenyang J-31. The air-to-air missile designs carried by the J-20 fighters may indicate an "air superiority" function ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 209). The PRC's combat aircraft have been improved with new indigenous designs, upgrades to current in-service aircraft (including the Chengdu J-10 and Shenyang J-11 family), and equipment orders from Russia. In 2013, the PRC negotiated with Russia for new Su-35 *Flankers*, and improved version of the Su-27 *Flanker* which the PRC last received from

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<sup>5</sup> 1,900 of these are combat aircraft (fighters, bombers, fighter-attack and attack aircraft), including 600 modern aircraft (US 2014 Report on China, p. 9).

Russia in 1995. The test flights of the new Y-20 heavy transport aircraft could lead to a significant development in long-range power-projection operations (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 209).

#### *PLA’s Cyber/Space Warfare Capabilities*

According to the *2014 US Report on China’s Defense*, the PRC is currently investing heavily in cyberspace and space warfare programs and weaponry. Major PLA military exercises have included offensive and defensive cyber and information operations since 2008. However, the PRC’s stance on transparency and cooperation in the area of cyberspace is a positive sign for future joint collaboration on cyber controls.

The PRC and Russia have both expressed support for an increased intergovernmental control over cyberspace. Both countries seek to implement an “Information Security Code of Conduct that advances a state-centric concept of cyberspace and seeks to impose state control of content in cyberspace” (2014 US Report on China, p.11). The PRC also joined the consensus of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Context of International Security (UN GGE), acknowledging that current international law does apply to cyberspace, affirming the need for “international stability, transparency, and confidence in cyberspace,” and consideration of how the global community can aid less-developed states in cybersecurity abilities (2014 US Report on China, p. 11).

The PRC’s cyberspace and space capabilities will also likely play a role in the anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) plans that aim to counter long range intervention by the US, particularly through the “information blockade” that will employ cyberspace and outer space to use informational security to gain an advantage over others. To the PRC, outer

space warfare programs form a “natural extension of other forms of territorial control” and will very likely be included in future PLA military planning (Wortzel, 2007). In 2014, the PRC had 59 satellites total; 5 *Zhongxing* satellites for communications; 17 *Beidou* satellites for navigation, positioning, and timing; 25 intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance satellites; and 12 satellites for electronic intelligence (ELINT) and signals intelligence (SIGINT) (“Military Balance”, 2015, p.231). Recent progress includes the development of energy weapons, satellite jammers, and a direct-ascent kinetic kill capability against low Earth orbit satellites. The US is considered by the PRC to be the greatest potential opponent in space warfare.

### **Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD)**

The PRC continues to advance “anti-access and area denial” (A2/AD) capabilities that focus on deterring or countering third-party interventions, especially that by the US. These include “develop[ing] the capability to attack, at long ranges, military forces that might deploy to or operate in the western Pacific” with air, sea, undersea, space and counterspace, and information warfare developments (2014 US Report on China, p.30). Maintaining control over China’s periphery has generally motivated the A2/AD goals. The effectiveness of PRC’s missiles has increased considerably, and as of 2014 the PRC fielded “an array of conventionally armed ballistic missiles, ground- and air-launched land-attack cruise missiles, special operations forces, and cyber warfare capabilities to hold such targets at risk throughout the region” (2014 US Report on China, p.31). The information warfare capabilities are increasingly becoming a central aspect of A2/AD capabilities. The PRC is advancing the country’s information and operational security and warfare

capabilities such as denial and deception to defeat opposition (2014 US Report on China, p.31).

### **In Summary**

The PRC is currently focused primarily on developing an effective military that has the capabilities to enforce the CCP's goals of ensuring national security, territorial integrity, and national development. The PRC aims to have to effective abilities to respond to the shifting security environment of the region and become more involved in conducting military operations other than war (MOOTW) (China's Defense White Paper, 2013). The 2013 Chinese Defense white paper also demonstrates a new wide range of goals of the PLA, such as missions in peacekeeping operations, disaster relief and humanitarian aid, and joint exercises. The PRC is focused on building an informationized military as a form of asymmetric warfare in order to counter technology military disadvantages, and while the PRC's military expansion program and advancements have been significant, the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) lack of wartime experience, uncertainties regarding training and morale, and significant deficiencies in areas like command and control and anti-submarine warfare, ultimately indicate that the PRC's military still remains inferior to the ROK, Japan, and the US's more advanced regional forces (2014 US Report on China, p.32).

### **Russia: the peripheral but potential threat**

#### Preview

Coupled with the PRC's growing influence, Russia's recent provocations in Eastern Europe have created complicated dynamics for East Asia by prompting Moscow's strategic shift to East Asia. Meanwhile, Russia's strategic partnership with the DPRK and Japan infused a different momentum in East Asia's regional security environment. Russia's

geostrategic movement to East Asia reflects not only Moscow's determination to secure its Far East peripheries but also inevitable conflicts in the region (Auslin, 2012; Masters, 2014). The underpinning force behind this shift is President Putin's desire for Moscow's global leadership stature. Consequently, Russia's engagement would, by necessity, involve substantial military measures and instigate regional diplomatic quarrels through proxies. Russia, although peripheral at the moment, would augment the potential security risk in East Asia by destabilizing the status quo and provoking conflicts for dominant leadership.

### **Understanding National Security Objectives and Strategies**

Russia's security objective mostly remained the stabilization of the borders and efficient controls of diverse peripheries. In *The Military Doctrine* (2014), Russia recognized any destabilizing factors in the border protection as the overarching national security threat while pronouncing the NATO expansion as the primary insecurity. Experts viewed that the recent doctrine appeared mostly consistent with the previous one in 2010 although the tone of overall document signaled a shift of Moscow's more acute security perception (Oliker, 2014, para.3). However, from Russia's perspective, a "dynamic and unstable neighborhood" has deteriorated Russia's security environment from all directions since the break of the USSR (Trenin, 2007, p.36). Especially, the PRC's growing influence in the Far East challenged Moscow's de facto rule in the region amidst increasing threats from NATO expansion in the western borders and turbulent Muslim population in the Caucasus ("Military Doctrine", 2014). Subsequently, the Putin's administration's perception of increased security risk corresponded to aggression in the foreign policy trajectories (Quinlivan, 2014).

Nevertheless, Russia's growing vision is to fundamentally extend its influence beyond the national borders based on the quintessential realist worldview. In considering President Putin's security strategy, Russia subscribes to the *Realpolitik* principle while not hesitant to make the instrumental use of military force (Trenin, 2007, p.35). "In their view, military force is a usable tool of foreign policy, and the war can be a legitimate extension of policy: war prevention is not enough" (Trenin, 2007, p.35). Recently, the increasing possibilities of Russia's withdrawal from a vital nuclear treaty further validated analysis on Moscow's aggression in the future foreign policy trajectories (The Editorial Board, 2015). Also, experts analyzed that Moscow ultimately wants to heighten its current stature in global politics as equivalent to the major actor, raising concerns over Putin's concealed determination "to reconstitute the Soviet Union" (The Editorial Board, 2015; Trenin, 2007). Thus, Russia's current strategic posture would inevitably cause frictions and challenge the current status quo even at the risk of a regional-scale war.

### **Internal Context and recent geopolitical strategies**

Moscow has recently initiated Russia's geostrategic expansion towards East Asia. With certain extent of desire to build a global influence, Russia's "Asia pivot" actually originated from the long-term economic diversification plan and for the economic development in its Far East territory (Center for Strategic and International Studies [CSIS], n.d.). However, as of the Ukrainian crisis, the Asia pivot became even more compelling due to the G-7 sanctions and the dual utility of economic and geopolitical potential in East Asia (Borger & Harding, 2014, n.p.). At the outset, it was Russia's overall necessities to diversify its economic and geopolitical assets that prompted the strategic shift, but the evolving

security environment in East Asia simultaneously provided a sufficient condition for Russia's eastwards shift.

Initially, Russia presumed that the Asia pivot could enhance both economic conditions and geopolitical leverage, ultimately strengthening Moscow's position in the global politics. For Russia, the PRC's growing influence in the Far East reduced Moscow's de facto control in the region (Hough, 2014). In the national level, Moscow feared that Beijing's overwhelming influence would constrain its status as a junior partner in the bilateral relations (Tweed, 2015). Russia was therefore in need of a loyal partnership to invigorate the Far East regional economy and to simultaneously counter-balance the PRC's regional influence (Hough, 2014). In addition, the DPRK's alienation from Beijing's foreign policy realm provided a timely opportunity for Moscow. Inevitably, building closer ties with Pyongyang could increase Moscow's geostrategic posture in a great extent because it could strengthen Moscow's bargaining leverage and curve the Western influence in Eastern Europe and East Asia (Talmadge, 2014). Thus, Russia's geostrategic necessities initially prompted the extension of Moscow's strategic posture into the Far East.

In East Asia, the PRC's growing leverage fundamentally triggered the evolution of security environment. With the PRC's military modernization, the intensified territorial disputes in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands necessitated Japan to focus on its southern maritime borders while making strategic truce with Russia over the Kuril Islands (Hough, 2014). But the partnership with Russia was two-fold because Russia's natural gas could also improve Japan's energy security after the Fukushima disaster (Hough, 2014). In particular, the geographic proximity not only cuts down transportation costs, but it also reduces a potential risk at the maritime trade route in the Middle East (Hough, 2014).

Meanwhile in the Korean peninsula, the PRC's increasing economic and geopolitical influence attracted the ROK to develop strategic cooperation vis-à-vis the DPRK and in trade relations (Talmadge, 2014). The warming bilateral relations between the PRC and the ROK consequently alienated the DPRK and prompted its strategic move towards Russia (Talmadge, 2014). These recent moves subsequently configured the regional geopolitics in favor of Russia's strategic shift to East Asia.

Correspondingly, Russia's military modernization provides a technical basis for efficient control of its vast territory and extension of Moscow's strategic posture beyond its borders. Of recent development, the Russian Army's *Ratnik* program increased the infantry combat capabilities with introduction of the new AK-rifles, modern communications and navigational equipment (Gibbons-Neff, 2015). The introduction of robotic system in the military was also a part of comprehensive mechanization in the defense to extend the scope of previous parameters ("Military Balance", 2015; Rusakova, 2015). In the Russia's Pacific Fleet, Moscow's plan to purchase two French *Mistral*-class amphibious assault ships further signified its efforts to extend the maritime scope in the Asia-Pacific, although it was interrupted by the Crimean conflict (Farley, 2014). The recent development therefore signals Moscow's institutionalized efforts, involving military measures, to carry out its strategic shift to the Asia-Pacific.

## **Weapons of Mass Destruction Capabilities**

### *Nuclear Weapons Capabilities*

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia inherited the USSR's weapons of mass destruction complex. Russia is now a nuclear weapon state party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and according to the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

(START), the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT, also known as the Moscow Treaty), and the New 2011 START Treaty, “Russia and the United States are limited to 1,550 strategic warheads by 2018” (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para.3). In October 2014, Russia possessed 1,643 warheads on 528 deployed ISBM, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), and heavy bomber warheads. Russia has around 8,000 non-deployed nuclear weapons, including those set to be dismantled. Thus far, Russia has not been transparent about their quantity of highly enriched uranium and plutonium (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para.3-4).

### *Biological Weapons Capabilities*

The Soviet Union developed and operated an extensive offensive biological weapons program until its collapse. The USSR had weaponized the numerous human-directed agents,<sup>6</sup> as well as anti-crop and anti-livestock agents along with a defensive anti-plague system that could prevent the threat of foreign pathogens that is still in operation currently in Russia. In 1975 the Soviet Union ratified the BTWC, but then secretly violated the terms. Currently it appears that Russia’s activities today are consistent with the BTWC terms but the degree of USSR biological weapons remnants are unknown (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para. 3-7).

### *Chemical Weapons Capabilities*

The Soviet Union had the largest chemical weapons arsenal in the world. These included artillery shells, bombs, and missiles that held choking agents, nerve agents, and

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<sup>6</sup> The USSR had weaponized anthrax, glanders, Marburg fever, plague, Q fever, smallpox, tularemia, and Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para. 3-7).

blister agents.<sup>7</sup> After Russia inherited the 40,000 metric tons arsenal, they ratified the CWC in 1997. By September 2013 Russia declared 76% of its stockpile destroyed, with the rest scheduled to finish by December 2020 (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para. 8-9).

### *Delivery Systems Capabilities*

Russia has a highly advanced missile program, almost three-quarters of which was inherited from the Soviet Union. Russia is party to several agreements including the Missile Technology Control Regime which restricts proliferation, and the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC) which also aims to regulate proliferation of WMD-carrying capable missiles. As of October 2014, Russia was deploying 1,643 warheads on 528 strategic nuclear delivery systems, possessed 356 ICBMs. Russia intends to reduce the arsenal to 60% by 2016 and 3% by 2021 (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para. 10-11). Russia's SRF Troops includes three Rocket Armies that operate silo and mobile launchers ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 180). Moscow is currently developing a new road mobile ICBM, the RS-26 Rubezh or "Missile Defense Killer" which has provoked concern for the United States as some of the ranges of the missile's flight test fit within the ranges that are banned by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty that the US and the USSR signed in 1987. However, the missile was also tested at longer ranges that are not prohibited by the INF and thus meets the requirements as a permitted ICBM. The development of a new ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM) named R-500 has also caused concern for the US as it also has been tested in violation of the INF. There are plans to develop a liquid-fueled heavy ICBM that could replace current silo-based ICBMs, but is

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<sup>7</sup> According to NTI, the CW that the Soviet Union possessed were as follows: choking agents (phosgene); nerve agents (sarin, soman and VS); and blister agents (mustard, Lewisite, and mustard-lewisite mixture) (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para. 8-9).

not likely to be completed within the next few years (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para. 11-13). Russia's air based deterrent delivery platform is currently the Kh-55 air-launched cruise missile (ALCM) that is deployed on Tu-95MS *Bear H* and Tu-160 *Blackjack* bombers.<sup>8</sup>

## **Conventional weaponry**

### *Ground Forces*

Russia has 250,000 active ground forces, 2,600 main battle tanks (MBTs) (100 in the Eastern Military District, 900 of these are 4<sup>th</sup> generation or above), over 6,000 armored personnel carriers, over 5,125 armored infantry fighting vehicles, 4,180 self-propelled artillery (1,500 4<sup>th</sup> generation or above), and over 850 multiple rocket launchers ("Military Balance", 2015, p.180-191). The reorganization of the ground forces into two elite divisions into brigades was reverted back to the division structure in May 2013, but there did not appear to be any significant changes in personnel or equipment figures. Successfully establishing brigade structures in the Russian armed forces will still require "considerable work" ("Military Balance", 2015, p.162). In 2013 a Special Operations Command (SOC) was established as a part of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief's reserve ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 163). One significant drawback for the Russian military is that it is made up mostly of conscripts, and sufficient manpower to fulfill conscription target numbers often falls short (Gordon, 2014; "Military Balance", 2015, p. 162).

### *Navy*

Russia's navy has 130,000 active personnel and 4 major fleet organizations that include 22 strategic submarines (3 in the Eastern Military District), 59 tactical submarines

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<sup>8</sup> A new Kh-102 ALCM is still in development (NTI, Russia country profile overview).

(12 in the EMD), 6 cruisers (1 in EMD), 18 destroyers (8 in EMD), 9 frigates, 84 patrol and coastal combatants (23 in EMD), 20 landing ships (4 in EMD), 25 landing crafts (2 in EMD) (“Military Balance”, 2015, pp. 180-191). In 2013, the new *Yury Dolgoruky Borey*-class SSBNs joined Russia’s navy, and the R-30 Bulava SLBM is currently being developed to be deployed from the new Borey-class submarines (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para. 10-11). Many of the Soviet Union platforms are being replaced with more modern infrastructure. Russia succeeded in procuring two Mistral-class landing platform docks that will be built by the end of 2015 (“Military Balance”, 2015, 166).

#### *Air Force*

Russia currently has 1,201 combat capable aircraft, 297 of which are deployed in the Eastern Military District. Russia’s air force contains 141 bombers including the Tu-95MS *Bear* and the Tu-160 *Blackjack* and 980 attack fighters, 581 of which are modern (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 180-191). A new long-range bomber, the PAK-DA, will eventually replace the Tu-95MS, the Tu-160 and the Tu-22 non-strategic bomber (NTI, Russia country profile overview, para. 12). The focus of Air Force development is in improving command and control, modernizing the combat aircraft fleet, and improving and increasing air-launched precision-guided weaponry. The air-force structure underwent significant reforms from the ‘air base’ approach to a ‘one airfield, one regiment’ approach. This was a shift from having multiple types of aircraft at single airfields to return to a division and regiment structure (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 163).

#### *Russia’s Cyber/Space Warfare Capabilities*

Russia is investing heavily in its space warfare programs in order to catch up to the US in space capabilities. Many Russian military experts consider outer space to hold the

biggest threat to Russian security (Honkova 2013, p. 4). The deputy prime minister made a statement in 2012 about the possibility of creating a 'Cyber Security Command' for the armed forces, but further information is scant. Russia's current military posture "seems to follow the Soviet tradition of emphasizing offense over defense," and this remains true for the space program (Honokva, 2013, p. 4).

According to the *2015 Military Balance*, Russia made new plans for the reorganization of the space-missile industry in 2013. The Federal Space Agency (Roskosmos) was changed into the United Rocket and Space Corporation, "a more effective, business-orientated, structure" ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 191). In 2014, Russia had 40,000 space forces with the role to "detect missile attack on the RF and its allies, to implement BMD, and to be responsible for the military/dual-use spacecraft launch and control" ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 182). Russia has 63 satellites total; 24 satellites for communications (mainly the *Strela* and *Rodnik (Gonets-M)*); 32 GLONASS satellites for navigation, positioning, and timing; 4 satellites for ELINT and SIGINT; and 3 early warning satellites ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 181).

Like the PRC, Russia has also shown support for more intergovernmental controls on cyberspace, and in official documents released in 2011 Moscow has also only expressed interest in defensive cyberspace warfare, and "focuses on force protection and prevention of information war." ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 191).

## **Overview**

Russia's recent army operations have demonstrated more developed training and strategy, but in spite of the new equipment built as a part of the extensive military modernization program, the conscription issue and the lack of advanced technology curbs

Russia's military strength in comparison to the US military (Isachenkov, 2015; Gordon, 2014). Vladimir Putin's most recent Russian Military Doctrine has labeled NATO's expanding military capabilities and regional destabilization as the "main external risks" for the nation, and continues to allocate spending towards the military in spite of an economic downturn ("Putin Signs New Russian Military Doctrine", 2014; Isachenkov, 2015).

### **The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK): the Immediate Threat**

#### *Preview*

The DPRK's military capacities have recently evolved into a serious threat not only directed towards the ROK but also for the continental US. While the US and its allies have focused on DPRK's nuclear and missile programs, the Korean Peoples' Army (KPA) has diversified its asymmetric warfare capabilities that range from bio/chemical weapons to cyberspace (Eckert, 2013; MND, 2015, pp. 24, 28-30). Simultaneously, the DPRK's strategic partnership with Russia and Japan, coupled with the paradox of its domestic politics—regime instability concurrent with consolidated leadership, further complicated and intensified the regional security environment (The British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC], 2014). The DPRK's ultimate objective nevertheless still remains the communization and reunification of the Korean peninsula. However, the overall underestimation of the DPRK's economic infrastructure and KPA's conventional weaponry essentially endanger the ROK's national security. Thus, the Korean peninsula should be the pivotal point of various East Asian security affairs. Ultimately, the situation in the Koreas could create a large scale military confrontation that involves neighboring countries and potentially trigger a worldwide conflict, when escalated.

### **Understanding National Security Objectives and Strategies**

The DPRK has constitutionalized the coercive reunification scheme based on the communization of the Korean peninsula, and by its constitutional objectives, the regime has historically threatened the national security of the ROK as an existential threat:

The Worker's Party of Korea establishes the Military-First politics as a socialist fundamental political system and leads the revolution and construction under the banner of the Military-First...The Worker's Party of Korea removes American imperialists' armed aggression from the South...crushes the re-invasive maneuvers of Japan's militarism...reunifies the fatherland based on the principle of the ethnic solidarity, and struggles to accomplish the reunification-based development of the nation and the people. (The Worker's Party of Korea's Constitution Preface, revised on September 28 2010)

In the constitution, the ethno-nationalistic thesis of Juche ideology is explicitly used as a justification for Pyongyang's demand of removing the US presence in the ROK as a fundamental condition for national reunification of the Koreas (Lee, S., 2014).<sup>9</sup> The DPRK has additionally stipulated in the text of the Socialist Constitution and of *Yuil Yeongdo*, or the Sole Leadership, that "[it] must struggle for the national reunification and nationwide victory of the revolution under the banner of Juche ideology" (Hwang & Kim, 2014a). In the *Defense White Paper 2014*, the ROK's Ministry of National Defense (MND) acknowledged the DPRK's stimulation of conflict in the US-ROK bilateral relations as a potential threat that would dismantle ROK's national security (2015). Experts also pointed out that it is a

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<sup>9</sup> Juche Ideology is North Korea's political philosophy of founding leader Kim Il-sung upon which North Korean constitution and political structure are built and under which it aims to unify two Koreas. It is primarily based on ethno-nationalism, or sharing common ethnicity, and ultimately rejects any foreign influence in the Korean peninsula. (Olsen, 2008, pp. 10-11) North-South Joint Statement of 1972 is a bilateral agreement between the DPRK and ROK, based on the principles of independence, peace and grand national unity. The notion of grand national unity, however, became a justification for the DPRK's demand for a complete withdrawal of the USFK at the pretext of supporting an independent and peaceful reunification. ("Joint Statement of North and South", 1972; Yonhap News, 2015)

The Constitution of the Workers' Party of Korea provides a theoretical ground for its aggression towards Japan while referring to its historical imperialist invasion of the Korean peninsula. Kim Il-sung unofficially claimed North Korea's eventual invasion of the Japanese isles after the communization of the Korean peninsula, and in alignment with this claim, the 534 Unit of the KPA was built to facilitate its invasion project (Ha, 2015).

precondition for Pyongyang's offensive reunification strategy under its communist ideology (Lee, Y., 2014).

Meanwhile, some discarded the significance of evolving military and geopolitical environment in the DPRK, discrediting Pyongyang's actual intentions of provoking a conflict. Some analysts argued that the DPRK's reunification rhetoric is a mere instrument to stabilize the internal regime and society in the midst of economic deprivation and political isolation ("Military and Security", 2014). Also, the Russia-DPRK rapprochement is "no more than routine diplomacy" as a result of Russia's perception of "serious threats from Europe and Central Asia" (Yu, 2014). However, such claims are inherently erroneous because they discard the multi-faceted dimensions of DPRK's internal dynamics and Russia's strategic moves to Asia. In addition, recent military development refuted such indolent claims, which may psychologically trap the ROK by leading to abandon the possibilities of potential conflict.

Recently, the DPRK's rhetoric has further embodied and clarified its coercive reunification strategy with continuous military provocations, cautioning impending conflict in the Korean peninsula. In 2013, the DPRK unilaterally abandoned the 1953 Korean War truce with the ROK, which was the only legal constraint of military engagement in the Korean peninsula (Choe, 2013). South Korean media is also cautious of the DPRK's actual war plans implantation, reporting that at the military commanders' conference, North Korean leader Kim Jung-un said that "[A]n armed conflict could take place in the Korean peninsula in 2015" and that the DPRK "[should] prepare strategic goods at the maximum for the Great Reunification War, and to be fully ready for getting engaged in a war at any time" (Hwang & Kim, 2014a). Moreover, according to the media, the DPRK recently

distributed South Korean topographic maps among the troops for their familiarization with major topographic characteristics in the ROK before military engagement (Hwang & Kim, 2014a). Upon the unilateral nullification of the Korean War truce, the DPRK's recent provocations could be a sign reflecting a potential military engagement, which are inevitable labor pains for the DPRK's reunification scheme. Additionally, not only the DPRK's constitutional missions but the ROK's underestimation of the DPRK's hostilities also further undermined the security environment in the Korean peninsula.

### **Internal Context and recent geopolitical strategies**

In 2013, the political purge of Jang Sung-taek and his faction revealed the ingrained instability within the regime and society in a stark contrast to the consolidation of Kim Jung-un's dictatorship. Some analysts observed that many political and economic factors have gradually instilled competing political factions within the regime (Baek & Kim, 2014). On rare occasions, the internal division culminated in forming a coalition that attempted to overthrow the dictatorship and revitalize the country's economy (Baek & Kim, 2014). Hwang Jang-yop who was by far the most high-profile North Korean defector and primary architect of the Juche ideology was also one of the members, participating in the 1996 political scheme to remove Kim Jung-il (Baek & Kim, 2014). While internal power struggle is still prevalent in the DPRK, many analysts explained that the execution further solidified Kim Jung-un's dictatorship and the oligarchical rule while bolstering the ideological and social basis in the DPRK ("Military and Security", 2014; Park. Y, 2014). However, the political paradox essentially signified the overall instability of the regime because it would continuously necessitate stronger measures of risk-taking adjustments to stabilize the dictatorship and oligarchical rule.

In terms of geopolitical postures, the DPRK's recent shifts in strategic partnership with Russia and Japan, while damaging the traditional alliance with the PRC, both complicate and endanger the security environment in the Korean peninsula. With the Ukrainian crisis, Russia has reached out to the DPRK in order to bolster its geopolitical influence in East Asia and thereby enhance its bargaining power with the US in Ukraine (Talmadge, 2014). However, the partnership, which initially started from economic cooperation, now evolved to the military alliance and would further involve the Russia's military in the regional security affairs (Sharkov, 2015). Also, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe attempted to resolve the emotional abduction issues with the DPRK to recover from its recent diplomatic recessions with the PRC and ROK (Fackler, 2014). This would, too, thwart the allied efforts to isolate the DPRK and earn strategic benefits to encourage denuclearization program in the DPRK. The increased complexity of security strategies would not only destabilize the geopolitical environment, but it would also prompt a miscommunication among countries and develop root-causes for international conflicts.

Simultaneously, the DPRK antagonized the PRC with military and institutional measures and thereby further complicated the US position in the Korean peninsula as well as in the PRC-ROK bilateral relations. Initially, Pyongyang's sharp criticism of Beijing for "lacking in a fixed principle" reflected the warming PRC-ROK bilateral relations (Hwang & Kim, 2014b). However, recently the KPA established the 12<sup>th</sup> army corps near the Chinese borders and further escalated the tensions vis-à-vis the PRC (Jung, 2014). Economically speaking, the DPRK restricted the domestic transactions in the Chinese renminbi (RMB) and fundamentally dismantled Chinese economic basis in the DPRK (Hwang & Kim, 2014a). In response, the PRC military has recently systematized the military drills intended for the

DPRK and in case of a sudden collapse of the regime in Pyongyang (Jung, 2014). The DPRK's strategic shifts essentially conglomerated the regional security affairs by interconnecting various geopolitical issues in the region, which ultimately require collaborative efforts to reduce geopolitical uncertainties.

### **Assessing military threats and risk**

#### *Strategic Posture*

Pyongyang's maneuver warfare scheme has primarily shaped the DPRK military structure and war plans while reflecting various ideological and economic factors in North Korean society and regime. The DPRK's national reunification still motivates its politics and military just as it does in the ROK (Foster-Carter, 2015; Hwang & Kim, 2014a). However, with the US-ROK alliance, the DPRK had to schematize an instant warfare plan in order to defeat the ROK before the US gets involved in the conflict ("Military Balance", 2015; "White Paper", 2015). Therefore, the DPRK's asymmetric capacities development essentially reflected Pyongyang's maneuver warfare scheme for reunification that would directly incapacitate the ROK in the event of confrontation. Also, alongside the aging conventional weaponry, the DPRK's economic deprivation demanded cost-effective weaponry for the KPA that does not require substantial military budget ("Military and Security", 2014; "White Paper", 2015). Furthermore, upon invalidating the Korean War truce, the DPRK threatened to carry out pre-emptive nuclear strikes in Washington and Seoul (Choe, 2013; Gladstone & Sanger, 2013). For Pyongyang, the overall circumstances and time are rapidly moving away against its favor, and the development of asymmetric weaponry is to overcome this countercurrent ("Military and Security", 2014; "White Paper", 2015). Thus,

the KPA's strategic focus remains the asymmetric capabilities while continuously investing on the quantitative measure of conventional weaponry.

## **Weapons of Mass Destructions (WMDs)**

### *Nuclear Weapons*

The DPRK's nuclear weapons system fundamentally reshaped the security relations in the Korean peninsula by presenting existential threats to the ROK, Japan and potentially the US. Despite serial U.N. sanctions, the DPRK continuously developed its nuclear programs, and its latest third nuclear test resulted in new U.N. sanctions in 2013 (Gladstone & Sanger, 2013; NTI, 2014). In 2003, the DPRK withdrew from the NPT and thereby abandoned a legal obligation of denuclearization (NTI, 2014). Concerning the development of the nuclear program, the United States Forces Korea (USFK) commander General Curtis Scaparroti testified the possibilities of nuclear miniaturization to the news conference in the Pentagon (Schwartz, 2014). In the *2014 Defense White Paper*, the South Korean MND also officially acknowledged (2015) that DPRK has miniaturized the nuclear weapons and extended the missile range to the continental US. Currently, the DPRK seemed quite capable of mounting miniaturized nuclear warheads onto intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) within an additional test and further developing highly enriched uranium (Albright, 2013; "Defense White Paper", 2015). Experts assumed that DPRK possesses approximately 20 units of nuclear weapons and that current rhetoric and strategies of the US and the ROK would not be enough to prevent the deployment of nuclear weapons in DPRK (Cho, 2014). By producing a fundamentally different momentum in the regional security environment, the DPRK's nuclear weapons may escalate regional conflicts into higher level.

*Biological/Chemical Weapons*

Pyongyang maintains significant biological and chemical weapons capabilities. The DPRK is presumed to maintain active biological weapons programs although it is a participant in the Geneva Protocol and the BTWC (NTI, 2014). Due to the nature of the DPRK regime and biological weapons programs, it is difficult to verify the precise estimates on the DPRK's biological weapons programs (NTI, 2014). Nevertheless, the ROK's MND estimated that the DPRK currently possesses between 2500-5000 tons of biological weapons while equipped with independent production facilities (MND, 2014, p. 29).<sup>10</sup> As for chemical weapons, DPRK is one of five countries that have not aligned with the CWC while denying its possession (NTI, 2014). The MND estimated that DPRK's stockpile of chemical weapons agents ranges between 2,500 and 5,000 tons, which ranks the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest chemical weapons stockholder after the US and Russia (2010; NTI, 2014). In addition, Lieutenant General Michael Maples testified in the US Senate Armed Services Committee that "[DPRK's] chemical warfare capabilities probably include the ability to produce bulk quantities of nerve, blister, choking and blood agents" (Eckert, 2013). Unlike conventional weaponry, the possession of large stockpile itself may indicate high possibilities of actual implementation in conflicts.

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<sup>10</sup> According to Jane's Sentinel Security Assessments, the Korean People's Army (KPA) possesses various kinds of pathogen samples that include *Bacillus anthracis* (Anthrax), *Clostridium botulinum* (Botulism), *Vibrio cholera* (Cholera), Bunyaviridae Hantavirus (Korean Hemorrhagic Fever), *Yersinia pestis* (Justinianic Plague), Variola (Smallpox), *Salmonella typhi* (Typhoid Fever) and *Coquillettidia fuscopennata* (Yellow Fever) (as cited in nti.org, 2014, capabilities section, para. 2). Meanwhile, in 2004, General Leon LaPorte, then Commander of USFK, "testified that North Korea potentially had 21 biological agents," which exceeds the estimated by Jane's Sentinel Security Assessments (as cited in nti.org, 2014, capabilities section, para. 2).

However, the DPRK's bio/chemical weapons are of particular threat in densely populated Seoul metropolitan area, which is also close to the de-militarized zone (DMZ).<sup>11</sup> In 2004, the US General LaPorte affirmed that “[the DPRK] believes that these missile, chemical and biological weapons programs measurably contribute to its security from external threats and supplement their conventional military capabilities” (Gilmore, 2004). Also, because more than 70% of DPRK's ground forces are deployed within 90 miles of the DMZ “where they are capable of attacking with little tactical warning” (“Defense White Paper”, 2015; Gilmore, 2004), General Leod LaPorte acknowledged that DPRK's military “can deliver conventional or chemical weapons across the entire [Korean] peninsula” (Gilmore, 2004). Moreover, experts warned that the sharp increase of the bio/chemical weapons training in the DPRK may further signify the possibilities of translating into actual offensive threats to the ROK because the exercise primarily took offensive measures and tactics in a hypothetical situation (Asia Today, 2015). Therefore, the DPRK's biological/chemical weapons could potentially endanger more than 20 million Seoul metropolitan residents while incapacitating the ROK's capital and the rest of country.

#### *Delivery Systems:*

##### *Missiles*

Based on its targeting capabilities to the US cities, the DPRK's missiles program overcame the physical boundaries of geopolitics, which now directly involves the US in the Korean peninsula affairs. In the DPRK, the Strategic Rocket Forces (SRF) currently leads the

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<sup>11</sup> According to the World Population Review (WPR), in 2013, Seoul has a population of 10.44 million and a population density of about 17,000 people per square kilometer (45,000/square mile), and 25.64 million residents across the metropolitan area, which approximately accounts for a half of total population of ROK. Seoul is also a center of South Korean politics, economy and culture so that Seoul's functional paralysis could impact the overall South Korean society as well as its sovereignty.

missile program with equivalent bureaucratic status to the Navy and Air Force (“Military and Security”, 2014). Since the 1960s, the DPRK has developed its missile programs and currently possesses more than 1,000 missiles of varying capabilities, including ICBMs that could target the continental US (“North Korea’s Missile Programme”, 2014).<sup>12</sup> In December 2012, DPRK successfully tested *Unha*, the space launcher variant of *Taepodong-2*, and experts believe that it could draw Australia and the US within its range (“North Korea’s missile programme”, 2014). Concerning this issue, the US annual report to Congress (2013) acknowledged that DPRK’s *Taepodong-2* “could reach the United States if configured as ICBM.” Also, analysts cautioned the DPRK’s continuously improving missiles capabilities (Lewis & Schilling, 2013). Despite technical debates, the DPRK’s missiles of varying ranges and capabilities clearly strengthened its strategic posture vis-à-vis the US and the ROK while escalating the potential risk in East Asia.

Additionally, the DPRK’s recent missile development features the SLBMs, which may direct the attack towards the continental US (Jun, 2014). The official government channels, including the ROK government and the US Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), officially confirmed the recent development of the SLBMs (Gertz, 2015; Jun, 2014). Experts concluded that the SLBMs challenge the current US missile defense capabilities and could potentially endanger the US cities based on the increased mobility and intrinsic stealth functions of submarines (Gertz, 2015). Also, with the increased number of potential platforms, DPRK’s missile program would further complicate US and allied efforts to monitor a missile threat (Gertz, 2015). Irrespective of the ICBMs, the DPRK’s new SLBMs would fundamentally challenge

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<sup>12</sup> According to Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment (2011), DPRK has deployed over 600 short-range *Scud* missile variants, about 200 *Nodong* missiles, and fewer than intermediate-range 50 *Musudan* and *Taepodong* missiles” (“North Korea’s Missile Programme”, 2014).

the nature of ongoing threats from the DPRK by extending the attack platforms towards a vast maritime space.

#### *Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)*

The DPRK's unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) not only increased the number of bio/chemical weapons media but also improved the cost-efficiencies of the weapons transport to the ROK. The ROKA had recently found small North Korean UAVs in various locations of the ROK territory, which apparently evaded the US-ROK intelligence network (Yonhap News, 2014). However, according to North Korea analyst Joseph Bermudez Jr., the DPRK's UAV program started from the 1990s although the ROK's finding was recent discovery (Bermudez, 2014). Experts cautioned that the DPRK's unsophisticated UAVs are great military assets for the KPA due to its cost-efficient utilities, which still can penetrate the ROK's airspace ("Hanmi chupbomang [South Korea-U.S. intelligence network]", 2014). Unlike ground-fixed platforms, the DPRK's UAVs could challenge the ROK's air defense system and target capabilities.

#### *The tactical Chemical, Biological, Radioactive and Nuclear (CBRN) weapons backpack*

The DPRK's tactical CBRN weapons backpacks maximized the maneuverability of the WMDs to increase the mobility, diversification and synchronization of asymmetric warfare throughout large areas. Recently, South Korean media reported that KPA has distributed the tactical CBRN weapons backpacks among the special operations forces and in the Air Force Command (Asia Today, 2015).<sup>13</sup> The tactical backpacks were designed to carry out the CBRN weapons-based mass destruction operations at a large scale (Asia

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<sup>13</sup> The CBRN weapons are referred to as Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, and Nuclear weapons, which became a primary focus of DPRK's asymmetrical weapons system.

Today, 2015). Particularly, with the DPRK's heightened emphasis on the asymmetric warfare capabilities, the tactical weapons backpack could not only terrorize the ROK, but it could also intimidate neighboring countries to gain strategic benefits.

### *Cyber Warfare*

Regardless of the DPRK's cyber capabilities, the nature of cyber warfare is inherently conducive to the conflict escalation. Since the 1980s, DPRK has systematically developed both espionage and disruptive/destructive technologies under the lead of the General Reconnaissance Bureau (Murauskaite, 2014; Yoo & Kim, 2015). According to the MND's analysis, the DPRK's cyberwar program purports to hamper its military operations and psychologically and physically paralyze the ROK ("White Paper", 2015, p. 24). The DPRK has 10,000 personnel-sized cyber armies and operates the overseas cyber-attack forces in a disguised employment at IT firms in China (Ahn, Y., 2014; Yoo & Kim, 2015). However, by the nature of cyber warfare, the DPRK's cyber armies could create more than a damaging impact of cyber strikes and challenge the enemy's retaliation due to its near absence of cyber infrastructure.<sup>14</sup> Strategically, the DPRK focuses on the cost-effective cyberwar capabilities, which causes greater damage through disruptive/destructive cyber strikes than launching conventional missile strikes with little consequence and retaliation (Murauskaite, 2014; Peterson, 2014). "A cyber arsenal offers [DPRK] a cheaper way of developing global military reach, in contrast to the enormous political costs of its nuclear pursuits, and the price tag attached to WMD technology" (Murauskaite, 2014). The DPRK's

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<sup>14</sup> By nature, cyber warfare could produce secondary side effects problems. In the cyber domain, the difficulties are identifying the perpetrator and measuring an extent of retaliations. Mis-identification could potentially involve a third party into the conflict (Murauskaite, 2014).

intentions behind the cyber warfare capabilities are therefore not only to paralyze the ROK but also to extend Pyongyang's offensive measures beyond the geographic limitations.

### **Conventional Weaponry**

Despite the aging equipment and lack of strategic priority, DPRK's conventional weaponry still remains superior to the ROK's. Traditionally, the analysis of South Korean military experts, including a former Defense Minister, demonstrates that the ROK's military level is at 80 percent of the DPRK's military capacities (as cited in Kim, S., 2014, *gukbangbi* [Defense budget] section, para. 10). Meanwhile, the DPRK military's tactical posture centers around the Korean People's Army (KPA) due to its direct confrontation against the ROK with strategic emphasis on the Special Operations Forces (SOF) ("Military and Security", 2014, p. 10). However, the Korean People's Navy (KPN)'s intrinsic vulnerability comes from geographic separation of its naval forces, which hinders strategic cooperation.

On the ground, the KPA's potential has exceeded the ROK Army (ROKA)'s capacities based on its large quantity. According to the ROK's *2014 Defense White Paper* (2015), the KPA's conventional ground forces outnumber the ROK's two-fold in the comprehensive measure.<sup>15</sup> The KPA's MBTs significantly increased the maneuverability of the field troops while enhancing basic protection. Additionally, the KPA's artillery could deliver a heavy bombardment on Seoul at the earliest stage of the conflict (Kim, S., 2013). Despite lack of 3<sup>rd</sup> generation MBTs, the DPRK advanced its tank capacities through continuous deployment of new MBTs (Kim, E. J., 2013). Because of the strategic importance, the KPA's

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<sup>15</sup> According to ROK's 2014 Defense White Paper (2015, p. 239), the DPRK has 4,300 tanks, 2,500 Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicles (AIFVs), 5,600 multiple/rocket launchers, 5,600 units of field artillery with total 13,000 artillery guns. In comparison, the ROK has 2,400 tanks, 2,700 AIFVs, 200 multiple/rocket launchers, and 5,600 units of field artillery.

quantitative conventional forces are one of critical threats to the ROK even though not easily recognized.

Instead of comprehensive modernization program, the KPN and the Korean People's Air Force (KPAF) focused on maximizing the strategic utility of amphibious assault equipment. In the quantity basis, the DPRK has the second largest submarine units in the world after the US ("Military Balance", 2015). The KPN's *Sang-O* class midget submarines are strategically important in infiltrating ROK's coastlines as one of primary transports for the special operations forces (Mizokami, 2014). The 260 landing crafts are also designed to infiltrate and transport the special operations forces deep into ROK's maritime territory ("Military Balance", 2015). Moreover, the KPAF has 820 warplanes that outnumber the ROK Air Force (ROKAF) of which the majority of F-4 *Phantom* and F-5 *Eagle* main jet fighters would soon retire due to the aging equipment ("Military Balance", 2015).<sup>16</sup> Despite the marginal disadvantages in quality, the DPRK military's decisive quantitative superiority is of particular concern because it can easily numb the ROK's security nerves.

Particularly, among the conventional forces, the Special Operations Forces (SOFs) are a major component of the DPRK's asymmetric capabilities (Kim, S., 2013, Special Forces section, para. 4). The MND estimated the SOFs personnel reach at approximately 200,000, which far exceeds the ROK's Marine Corps units by ten times ("White Paper", 2015). The fundamental mission of the SOFs is to carry out deep-strike infiltrations during the wartime, serving primary purposes for various transport equipment of the KPA ("Military and Security", 2014). Strategically, the SOFs discourage the US and ROK from initiating

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<sup>16</sup> According to the 2014 Defense White Paper (2015, p. 239), the ROK has approximately 400 jet fighters, which accounts for ½ of the KPAF.

major aggression by paralyzing ROK's primary infrastructure (Kim, S., 2013). Analysts claimed that the aging conventional equipment actually prompts the use of guerilla warfare in the DPRK and thereby incorporates the SOFs as a fundamental component of the DPRK's military (Kim, S., 2013). Essentially, while the other asymmetric weapons can only devastate the ROK, the SOFs' strategic use is actually to invade and control the ROK and therefore becomes most threatening forces in the event of actual conflict as an existential threat. Overall, the DPRK's conventional forces have overwhelming capacities against the ROK despite the conventional underestimation.

### **Defense Economics**

As a main constraint of the KPA, the DPRK's economic deterioration influenced many analysts to refute the feasibilities of enduring warfare, while affirming high potential for limited provocations. The rationale behind this perspective is that despite the infamous Military-First policy, the DPRK's inefficiently organized economy has hampered not only the economic growth but also the military potential of KPA. Recently, coupled with inherent economic stagnation, U.N. sanctions have further restrained the KPA's development. Furthermore, a total war today is based on economic and social infrastructure to sustain resource-consuming costly operations (Lee, J., 2014). Subsequently, the conventional understanding concluded that ROK's military must be superior to DPRK's because of bigger defense budget and larger scale of economy.

However, the nominal comparison of both countries' military expenditures is erroneous because it overlooks the political and economic context of DPRK that maximizes cost-effective use of defense budget. Consisting of civilian and munitions economies, the duality of DPRK's economic system is premised upon the state-owned means of production,

including physical capitals and natural resources (Kim, P., 2013). With the average wages considered, this further implies that the labor expenses could be virtually waived from considering the actual costs within the defense budget (Kim, S., 2015). Overall, DPRK's peculiar domestic context omitted a large part of general expenses and lowered the total cost of weapons acquisitions, which ultimately concentrated the budget into enhancing the equipment and facilities (Kim, S., 2015). Irrespective of credibility of Pyongyang's statistics, the lack of contextual knowledge about the DPRK's internal regime prompted the underestimation of its military expenditure.

By contrast, ROK's defense budget is more comprehensive, encompassing military employee benefits, general operational costs and additional costs for weapons acquisition (Kim, P., 2013). Accordingly, the Ministry of National Defense spent 70 percent of the defense budget for the salaries and operational costs while investing a 30 percent, or 10.5 billion dollars, on advancing equipment (Kim, C., 2014). Considering the economic and political context of both countries, the ROK's costs of weapons acquisitions exceed by average three times more than the DPRK, which makes the DPRK's estimated military expenditure of 5-8-9.8 billion dollars greater than the ROK's (Kim, S., 2015). Therefore, the numerical comparison of military expenditures not only distorts the reality but also numbs the security concerns because the DPRK's defense budget is more cost-efficient than the ROK's in terms of actual defense growth.

The DPRK's diplomatic platforms have also established the "official unofficial routes" to feed its military-industrial complex. Despite the U.N. sanctions, the ROK-DPRK joint industrial facilities in Kaesong legitimately avoided the censorship under the guidance of the ROK government's separation-of-politics-and-economics principle (Kim, J., 2014).

However, Kaesong industrial complex has been a primary source of financial assets for the DPRK regime that accelerated the militarization. According to the Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS, 2014), the DPRK has earned 400 million dollars from the ROK in the past 10 years, and its profit reached 70 million dollars in 2014 through Kaesong industrial complex (Kim, J., 2014). Nevertheless, the ROK's justification only reflected its ultimate mission for the national reunification (Kim, J., 2014). Furthermore, the DPRK's suggestion for the bilateral talks to Japan was nothing more than a gimme-money gesture that allured Tokyo, which recently suffered from diplomatic recessions with the PRC and the ROK. In the bilateral talks, Japan essentially eliminated the efficacies of the U.N. sanctions by agreeing (Ahn, J., 2014; Ha, 2015): 1) to lift restrictions on the passenger traffic, including the prohibition of entry for the DPRK citizens, 2) to remove obligatory rules for reporting out-bound remittance of over 3 million yen and out-bound movement of more than a hundred thousand yen from Japan, and 3) to withdraw from prohibiting port entry for the DPRK-flagged ships in Japan. Japan's recent deregulation essentially fostered the DPRK's internal espionage activities in Japan, associated with Chongryon, which has traditionally backed Pyongyang with financial assets.<sup>17</sup> Japan and the ROK have harbored the DPRK's limping economy by deliberately dismantling the efficacies of the UN sanctions and sustained the costly military developments for Pyongyang.

Furthermore, the DPRK's illicit trade activities nourished its weapons and technology developments despite the U.N. sanctions. In 2014, the panel of United Nations experts "has found that [DPRK] makes increasing use of multiple and tiered circumvention

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<sup>17</sup> Chongryon is a pro-Pyongyang organization, primarily consist of Zainichi Koreans who remained in Japan after the WWII. Recently, the Chongryong's headquarter, which traditionally served as a de facto embassy of the DPRK in Japan, became bankrupted. However, Pyongyang demanded Tokyo for assistance, and Chongryon could avoid the termination of its operations. (Ahn, J., 2014)

techniques” (Pearson, 2014). Its report confirmed that DPRK’s overseas embassies and foreign-based firms aided the state-run illegal trade, ranging from the ivory, counterfeiting, drug smuggling to the arms (Pearson, 2014; Snyder, 2014; Russell, 2014; Young, 2014). Fundamentally, the DPRK debilitated the UN sanctions by employing sophisticated financial countermeasures and its overseas network to mask its illicit trade (Pearson, 2014). Therefore, the obscurities of the DPRK’s unofficial gains from the illegal trade further hindered the analysts’ accurate understanding of the DPRK’s defense economics and ultimately grew pessimistic views towards its full-fledged warfare capabilities. In comprehensive terms, the DPRK’s economic deterioration is not relevant to the potential outbreak of enduring warfare in the Korean peninsula while only leading the ROK to underestimate the DPRK’s capacities.

### **Overview**

The DPRK is a serious and immediate threat, which not only destabilizes East Asia but would also prompt a global scale conflict. The DPRK’s asymmetric weapons have the capacities to undermine the regional security environment and destroy substantial human capital based on the devastating offensive measures. Despite the imprudent underestimation, the DPRK’s conventional forces is still superior to the ROK’s. The superficial analysis of the DPRK’s military has unwittingly advanced Pyongyang’s strategic posture vis-à-vis the US and its allies. Most significantly, the DPRK’s SOFs are the primary component of its comprehensive reunification strategy for the actual invasion. Nevertheless, most essentially, the DPRK’s constitutional and political objective still remains inherently hostile to the ROK and conducive to igniting multilateral conflicts in

East Asia. Thus, the DPRK's military threats and consequential risks are dominant in East Asia's security environment.

## **Section II: Current Capabilities of the US and its allies**

### **Weapons of Mass Destruction Capabilities**

#### *Nuclear Weapons Capabilities*

The United States leads the world in nuclear weapons capabilities. The US has an arsenal of 4,802 nuclear warheads and many more that are retired and planned to be dismantled. As of October 2014, the US had 1,642 strategic warheads deployed on 794 delivery systems. The US is party to the NPT as a nuclear weapons state, and also ratified the New START Treaty in 2010 with Russia that requires both countries to decrease their nuclear weapons arsenals to 1,550 deployed strategic warheads and 700 deployed strategic delivery vehicles. The US has also taken steps to encourage limitations on the proliferation of nuclear technologies through joining several export control organizations including the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee (NTI, United States country profile overview, para. 1-3).

Japan does not have any weapons of mass destruction development programs or delivery systems as a product of the 1947 Constitution. The island nation's history of having nuclear weapons used against them has spurred support of numerous nonproliferation treaties, some of which include the NPT in 1976, and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1997. Japan also advocates for its "Three Non-Nuclear Principles" to not possess, produce, or permit nuclear weapons to enter the country. However, it is expected that Japan "has the technical capability to produce such weapons [of mass destruction and their delivery systems] in a short period of time" if the Japanese

so desired (NTI, Japan country profile overview, para. 1-3). Regional threats, especially from the DPRK, do spark recurring debate on Japan's stance on nuclear weapons, but it is not likely that Japan would initiate an administrative change regarding nuclear weapons. Japan's National Defense Program Guidelines promoted Japan's support of nuclear disarmament and US extended deterrence multiple times over the years (NTI, Japan country profile overview, para. 1-3).

The ROK is also committed to a similar nonproliferation goal of encouraging a "nuclear-free Korean peninsula." In 1991, the ROK's leadership also made a declaration that echoed strongly Japan's commitment: to not "manufacture, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons (NTI, Japan country profile overview, para. 2-3). The ROK had a nuclear weapons program in the 1950s, but discontinued it under pressure from the US in the 1970s. In addition to being party to the NPT, the ROK is also a signatory to the CTBT, and the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee. Official statements say that the defense of the ROK does not require US deployment of tactical nuclear weapons. There is some internal support by a few Korean leaders and the public that the ROK should develop their own nuclear weapons in order to stand up to the DPRK (NTI, South Korea country profile overview, para. 2-6). The creation of a nuclear weapons program in the ROK would certainly alter the security environment of the region, with the chances of increasing tensions in relations with the DPRK or the incentive for a Japanese nuclear program as well.

#### *Delivery Systems Capabilities*

The United States has sophisticated liquid-fueled and solid-fueled ballistic missiles. The US deploys 449 LGM-30G Minutemen III nuclear tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles, 240 UGM-133A Trident II D-5 SLBMs on 14 Ohio-class nuclear powered ballistic

missile submarines, 11 B-2A bombers capable of carrying up to 16 nuclear bombs and 78 B-52H Stratoforce bombers that are capable of carrying up to 20 AGM-86B nuclear tipped ALCM. The INF that the US signed with the Soviet Union required the destruction of all IRBMs and MRBMs. The INF also restricts the US of possessing any cruise missiles between the ranges of 500 and 5,500 kilometers. In 2010, the US also retired the nuclear-tipped naval Tomahawk sea-launched cruise missiles.

The US's missile defense systems are mainly in early stages of design and development and receive significant amounts of investment. The current leading missile defense system is the PAC-3 patriot system, which has not had reliable results in its use in the 2003 Iraq war. The systems are hit-to-kill interceptors designed to intercept missiles at the boost, midcourse, and terminal phases. The US has activated two batteries with 48 Terminal High Altitude Area Defense interceptors, 26 ships with the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense system, and 30 Ground Based Midcourse Defense interceptors at various silos (NTI, United States country profile overview, para. 12).

Japan does not have a ballistic missile development program, but does have missile defense capabilities. "Japan is one of the most active partners with the United States in the field of missile defense" (NTI, Japan country profile overview, para. 12). Japan has expressed support of increased cooperation with the United States on development of missile defense systems. Currently Japan has deployed a multi-layered missile defense system that includes the Aegis BMD sea-based midcourse missile defense, and the Patriot Advanced Capabilities-3 ground-based terminal-phase missile defense (NTI, Japan country profile overview).

The ROK faces a more serious threat from the DPRK and has some missile capabilities. The ROK purchased 220 300km-range Army Tactical Missile Systems from the US in 2004. In the past five years, the ROK has wanted to extend the range of their missiles in order to counter the DPRK's Nodong missile, but the US blocked the extension in 2011 out of concern about the increasingly tense environment. An 800km range was agreed upon in 2012 that also allows the ROK to correlate the size of payloads to a decrease in the range of short-range missiles. The ROK's successful space launch of a rocket in 2013 raises the possibility that the country may have the technology required for long range ballistic missiles to deliver weapons of mass destruction. The MND also asked for 70.2 trillion won, or 13.7% of the total budget in 2013 for a greater missile defense program, which includes ballistic and cruise missiles, "multi-purpose commercial satellites," and high altitude drones.

### *Biological Weapons Capabilities*

The United States and its allies in East Asia do not possess or support production of biological weapons, although they may have at one point. From 1943 to 1969, the United States developed an extensive biological weapons program that included a large arsenal of weaponized anti-human agents and anti-agricultural agents. During his term, President Nixon renounced biological weapons and ratified the BTWC in 1972 and in the following years the United States destroyed its entire 40,000-liter arsenal. The US currently supports countering threats posed by biological weapons and obstructing the misuse of science (NTI, United States country profile overview, para. 10-11).

Before WWII, Japan had a biological warfare program that it researched and employed against the PRC but after the war the Japanese government stopped the program.

Japan became party to the BTWC in 1972 and since then been an active supporter (NTI, Japan country profile overview, para. 8).

The ROK never had any kind of biological weapons program, neither offensive nor defensive, and is also party to the BTWC. In the past decade, the ROK's National Defense White Papers have expressed a need for a defense BW program, but no progress on research has been mentioned since (NTI, South Korea country profile overview, para. 8).

In the case of a confrontation, the US, Japan, and the ROK all do not currently possess biological weapons and would not be willing to use biological weapons under the provisions of the BTWC.

#### *Chemical Weapons Capabilities*

In the past, the US did develop and employ chemical weapons. After its birth in 1918, under pressure from chemical attacks during WWI and WWII, the United States' Chemical Warfare Service produced and used chemical weapons. During WWII, President Franklin Roosevelt operated under a no-first use policy and did not employ chemical weapons. Development of chemical weapons was continued on a fluctuating level dependent on the incumbent administration and public opinion. The US ratified the CWC in 1997 and agreed to destroy all chemical weapons arsenals. The United States, Russia, and Libya received extensions to the CWC requirement that all stockpiles be destroyed by 2007, but none of the three have met the extended deadline (NTI, United States country profile overview, para. 10-11).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Six out of the nine US disposal facilities have disposed of 90% or 28,000 metric tons of its chemical-warfare agents and have been closed, and the final facilities plan to destroy their chemical weapons and close by 2023 ((NTI, United States country profile overview, para. 10-11).

Japan has possessed and used chemical weapons since 1917, and produced five to seven million munitions of phosgene, mustard, lewisite, hydrogen cyanide, and diphenylcyanoarsine agents. Much of these chemical weapons were abandoned in China after Japan invaded in 1937. After WWII, Japan signed and ratified the CWC and promised to not produce any chemical weapons. The cleanup being undertaken by Japan and the PRC of the munitions left in the PRC is still slow going and costly (NTI, Japan country profile overview, para. 9-11).

The ROK has also ratified the CWC, and completed destruction of its several thousands of metric tons of chemical warfare agents by July 2008. Although the ROK was required to declare its chemical weapons stockpile, the ROK government has “maintained a high level of secrecy regarding its previous chemical weapons activities” (NTI, South Korea country profile overview, para. 9-10).

The United States, Japan, and the ROK have all ratified the CWC and pledged or concluded complete destruction of chemical weapons. In the East Asia region, US security interests fall mainly into nuclear deterrence capabilities, missile capabilities, and conventional weaponry power projection over other forms of weapons of mass destruction.

#### *US and Allies' Cyber/Space Warfare Capabilities*

In 2014, the US has been developing new cyber and space capabilities. The US's Cyber Command directs the US Army Cyber Command, the Fleet Cyber Command (the US 10th Fleet) and the 24th Air Force who provide naval, land, and air forces with cyber capabilities. As of March 2012, the US cyber command had 937 personnel, and the service cyber staff had over 12,000 personnel. The 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance articulated a need for examination of developing asymmetric cyber espionage and attack capabilities

against that US. The ROK has a Cyber Warfare Command Center that was established in 2010 and has over 200 personnel (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 259). The ROK is also now developing offensive cyber capabilities in order to counter the North Korean cyber-attack threats. The ROK will train 400 new cyber personnel to have a total of close to 1,000 cyber troops (Keck, 2014). The Japanese government has sought cyber-attack deterrents since the cyber threat to the nation became clearer in 2011. As of 2013, Japan has planned to collaborate with the US for counterattack technology (The Japan Times, 2013). In March 2012, the Japanese Ministry of Economics, Trade, and Industry (METI) worked with eight Japanese electronics companies to create the Control System Security Center, a technology research association that aims to improve tech security. In a meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry and Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Fumio Kishida the two nations expressed interest in improving “the collective cyber defense” branch of the US-Japan alliance. Japan’s development of secure technology for control systems and promotion of global standardization of control system security would benefit both countries in creating stronger cyber defense capabilities.

The US possesses considerable space technology, and Japan and the ROK’s capabilities are nowhere near as developed, both countries have begun to take steps towards indigenous space programs and equipment. As of 2014, the US has 115 satellites total; 36 satellites for communications; 32 satellites for navigation, positioning, and timing (mainly NAVSTAR Block IIR/IIRM); 6 meteorology and oceanography satellites; 11 satellites for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; 22 satellites for ELINT and SIGINT; one Space Based Surveillance System satellite; and 6 early warning satellites (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 181). Japan’s space capabilities consist of 4 satellites for

intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 250). The ROK’s space agency, the Korea Aerospace Research Institute aims to improve the Korea Space Launch Vehicle rocket, participate in international space exploration initiatives, continue to train astronauts, and develop a lunar orbiter and lander spacecraft (Global Space Programs, South Korea Section).

## **Conventional Weaponry Comparisons**

### *Preview*

In East Asia, dynamic geopolitical environment prompted technology-based military expansions in each country and thereby escalated security challenges for the US in the region. Alongside technology, the PRC and Russia’s military modernization programs have fundamentally increased efficiency and effectiveness in their combat capabilities by reshaping the structures and organizations (Tiezzi, 2014; Gibbons-Neff, 2015). Also, the division of the Korean peninsula prompted the DPRK to continually invest in the military sector irrespective of its limping economy. Nevertheless, the regional military expansions are still by no means comparable to the US current capabilities and well-balanced by Japan and the ROK. Meanwhile, fostering security relations between Japan and the ROK remains vital for the US to overcome strategic disadvantages. The comparison most essentially reveals that irrespective of the conventional and asymmetric weapons capabilities, each country’s strategic objectives would ultimately determine the potential risk and should be the primary compass with which to guide the security strategies in East Asia.

## **Security Perceptions and Strategies of the PRC, Russia and the DPRK**

The PRC’s primary strategies include: 1) bolstering regional influence and 2) stabilizing the internal society. Concerning the international security, the PRC’s A2/AD

strategy is the fundamental framework for the PRC's military and most relevant to the security environment in East Asia. While the PRC's strategy does not have inherently hostile measures towards the US and neighboring countries, the competition-provoking or rivalry-minded policies, such as the Air-Sea Battle (ASB) concept would only escalate the tensions (Etzioni, 2013; Forbes, 2015). Furthermore, the ASB concept tended to discard the broader implications of the A2/AD in the PRC's economy and politics, which is therefore only conducive to create miscalculations and conflicts between two countries (Kazianis, 2013; Keck, 2014b). Nevertheless, the A2/AD strategy not only manifested the PRC's intentions to deter the US rebalance to Asia, but it also implicitly revealed the primary source of its insecurity—the growing influence of the US (Keck, 2014b).<sup>19</sup> Thus, most promising is to develop regular multilateral diplomatic channels amongst the PRC, the US and the US allies that can bolster shared understanding of the regional security environment.

Russia ultimately aims to build a Soviet-era global leadership stature in the world politics (Trenin, 2007, p.35). Moscow's recent shifts to East Asia therefore testified to its political aim and would further develop, fully-fledged, in all directions. Correspondingly, Russia's military reforms would physically sustain Moscow's geostrategic posture and expect to carry out operations with efficiencies in East Asia. The Russian military's overall inefficiencies nevertheless would not lead to a direct confrontation. Rather, Russia's current strategies and the region's security environment are conducive to create limited conflicts or modifications of current alliance system through its proxies—namely the DPRK or Japan,

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<sup>19</sup> The ASB is integral to the US Department of Defense's strategic mission "to project power and sustain operations in the global commons during peacetime or crisis" (Air-Sea Battle Office, 2013). However, critics argued that ASB could escalate the hostilities between the US and the PRC due to the PRC mainland striking capabilities (Etzioni, 2013).

which deliberately avoids direct frictions with the US and advances Russia’s global stature.

The DPRK’s constitutional missions are explicitly stipulated and repeated: that the DPRK would complete the communization and reunification of the Korean peninsula as a top priority of the regime and society. Accordingly, the DPRK’s Military-First policy has garnered the significant developments for the military throughout all dimensions of its society. Thus, despite the economic deterioration, the DPRK’s military is still fully capable of sustaining enduring conflicts against the ROK. Strategically, the DPRK’s significant asymmetrical weapons assets could be of great utilities in acquiring physical and incorporeal capitals through diplomatic channels. Therefore, suggested peace negotiations would only deteriorate the current security environment and the US strategic posture vis-à-vis the DPRK, but it also unwittingly benefits the DPRK’s military developments.

**Military Strength Comparison**

**Overall and Economic Background**

	RUS	PRC	DPRK	ROK	JPN	USA
Population (million)	142.5	1,362.8	24.7	49.0	127.3	316.7
GDP (trillion)	2.21	10.4	-	1.26	5.15	16.2
Military Expenditure (millions) <sup>20</sup>	87,837	188,460	Approx. 8,500~11,000 <sup>21</sup>	33,937	48,604	640,221
Share of GDP	4.1%	2%	-	2.8%	1%	3.8%

(“SIPRI”, 2014; “Military Balance”, 2015; “2014 Defense White Paper”, 2015; “Defense of Japan”, 2014) <sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Figures are in USD, in current prices, converted at the exchange rate for the given year. The expenditures of the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation are SIPRI estimates. According to SIPRI, North Korean authorities reported the figures, but since there is no credible exchange rate between the North Korean won and the US dollar, the figure cannot be provided (“Military Expenditure,” 2013, footnotes).

<sup>21</sup> DPRK’s unofficial defense expenditure spans approximately 1/3-1/4 of ROK’s while its official budget only accounts for 1/33 of ROK’s (Kim, S., 2015).

<sup>22</sup> The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)’s data provides more comprehensive measures on the military expenditures of each state than the Institute of International and Strategic Studies (IISS)’s Military Balance.

Each country's population and size of gross domestic product (GDP) are integral part to the comprehensive military potential, which contributes to increase the immanent latency of the military power. In this respect, the PRC's latent military potential exceeds any other state and contributes to the overall growth of its military in recent years. However, except for the US and the DPRK, the shared concern amongst the regional states is the aging population and consequential downgrading of latent military potential in the near future ("World Population", 2013). Overall, the aging population would be the most pressing concern except for the US in East Asia.

Meanwhile, the military expenditure in share of GDP reveals the level and extent of each state's dedication to its overall security. In other words, it is a primary criterion, indicative of each state's overall militarization that supports the politics, society, economies and diplomacies in relations to other measures. According to the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* data from 2011 to 2013 (2014), Russia's military expenditure in share of GDP has been accelerated from 3.7% to 4.1 %, which reflects Moscow's recent military modernization efforts. Concerning the DPRK, experts estimated its military expenditure amounted to 27% in 2003 (Kim, P., 2013).<sup>23</sup> Not surprisingly, the DPRK's military budget revealed the most threatening figure amongst the regional states. But despite its military growth, the PRC's military budget does not appear aggressive compared to the others. Still, it is noteworthy of considering the PRC's overall GDP expansion, which impacts the proportionate growth of the military expenditure. Overall, Russia and the DPRK's military expenditures disclosed the state-level interests in comprehensive

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<sup>23</sup> This figure is listed in share of Gross National Income (GNI) in purchasing power parity (PPP), which is a major alternative to GDP (Kim, P., 2013).

militarization in their societies while the PRC’s latent military potential still remains relevant to the overall security environment.

**Manpower and Special Operations Forces (SOFs)**

	RUS	PRC	DPRK <sup>24</sup>	ROK	JPN	USA
Manpower (active)	771,000	2,333,000	1,190,000	655,000	247,150	1,492,200 <sup>25</sup> (135,000 in the Asia-Pacific)
Army	230,000	1,600,000	1,020,000	522,000	151,050	586,000
Navy	130,000	235,000	60,000	68,000	45,500	327,700
Air Force	148,000	398,000	110,000	65,000	47,100	337,250
Special Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia 111,000 (Strategic Deterrent Forces: 80,000; Airborne: 32,000; and Special Operations Forces: 1,000)</li> <li>• The PRC Strategic Missile Forces: 100,000; the Marine Corps is integral to the PLAN, consisting of 10,000 personnel.</li> <li>• The DPRK’s SOFs amount to approximately 200,000, estimated by the MND.</li> <li>• The ROK’s marines (27,000 personnel) are integral to the Navy.</li> <li>• Japan’s SDF does not have offensive attack force units by constitutional restrictions.</li> <li>• The US marines: 191,150 (24,000 in the Asia-Pacific region)</li> </ul>					

(“Military Balance”, 2015; “2014 Defense White Paper”, 2015; “Defense of Japan”, 2014)

The size of military personnel could be the most fundamental compass with which to comprehend each state’s overall size of military in conventional forces. Particularly, the size of the SOFs may represent the actual aggression level in offensive measures, which contrasts to the defensive posture for pure defense purposes. Most visible is the DPRK’s SOFs, which exists for the invasion of the ROK. Meanwhile, Russia’s Strategic Deterrent Forces include SRF Troops and Long-Range Aviation Command as well as strategic submarine units. The pressing role for Russia Strategic Deterrent Forces appeared to be carrying out efficient attack coverage throughout its vast territory. In terms of the SOFs, the

<sup>24</sup> South Korea’s Defense White Paper 2014 numbered the DPRK’s Special Operations Forces at around 200,000 while the reserve forces are total 7.7 million, which accounts for 30% of total population in North Korea (“Defense White Paper”, 2015, pp. 25, 28).

<sup>25</sup> This figure includes the US Coast Guard

US and its allies would not have effective operations capabilities due to the lack of the overall personnel available in the Asia-Pacific region.

### *Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR)*

Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR) is a unified command underneath both the US Pacific Command (PACOM), as well as under the USFK. SOCKOR is the only theater special operations command in which the US and the host nation's special operations forces are "institutionally organized for combined operations." SOCKOR's four main priorities are to "establish scalable C2 for armistice, crisis, war; target asymmetrical threats; establish force posture and C2 structures to support a combined response to crisis; and enhance Alliance Special Armed Forces (SOF) capability and participation as global SOF Partners." SOCKOR is a vital part of special operations activities in the region. SOCKOR is regarded as the "cornerstone" of the US power in defending the East Asia region, with the joint purpose of planning and conducting special operations in the Korean Theater of Operations (KTO). In times of armistice, crisis, and war, SOCKOR and the ROK Army Special Warfare Command (SWC) are organized to act together. The two forces often train together, preparing for missions that go beyond the scope of general purpose forces (GPF). SOF personnel often spend years participating in mission-specific training, language training, cross-cultural communication skills, and foreign culture immersion in order to gain a deeper cultural insight into their specialized regions. The advantages SOCKOR has in intelligence, sophisticated communication, and technology give the US a highly skilled force to use in critical times (Special Operations Command Korea, 2015).

### **On the Ground**

	RUS	PRC	DPRK	ROK	JPN	USA
Main Battle Tank	2,600 (900) <sup>26</sup>	6,540 (640)	3,500+ (900)	2,414 (1,564)	688 (380)	2,785 (3,500 more in store)
Light Tank		750	560+		-	-
Armored Personnel Carrier	6,000+	5,020	2,500+	2,790	790	29,268 (8,000 more in store)
Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicle	5,125+	3,850	-	340	68	4,559 (2,000 more in store)
Artillery (Self-Propelled)	4,180+ (1,500)	13,178+ (2,280)	21,100+ (8,500) <sup>27</sup>	11,038+ (1,353+)	1,777 (160)	7,429 (969) <sup>28</sup>
Multiple Rocket Launcher	850+	1,872+	5,100	185	99	1,205
Aircraft	-	8	-	-	9	218
Helicopters (Attack)	296+ (44 in EMD)	839 (150)	20	481 (60)	440 (114)	4,345 (892)

(“Military Balance”, 2015; “2014 Defense White Paper”, 2015; “Defense of Japan”, 2014)

### 3G MBT/ATK helicopters

Because of the DPRK, current security condition in the Korean peninsula necessitates large ground forces based on a MBT and artillery. In 2014, the ROK’s military development has therefore primarily centered on MBT and armored infantry fighting vehicles (AIFV) (“Military Balance”, 2015, p.300).<sup>29</sup> Generally, the DPRK’s MBTs are twice larger than the ROK’s in terms of number of available units.<sup>30</sup> In qualitative comparison,

<sup>26</sup> This figure excludes the 17,500 MBTs in store that includes 3,200 third generation tanks.

<sup>27</sup> This figure represents the combined numbers of the self-propelled and towed artillery.

<sup>28</sup> 500 more in store (“Military Balance”, 2015)

<sup>29</sup> ROKA expects the delivery of total 297 K-2s, South Korea’s modern MBT, and approximately 500 K-21s, indigenous AIFVs of South Korea, in the upcoming years (“Military Balance”, 2015, p.300).

<sup>30</sup> In the *Defense White Paper* 2015 (p. 239), the MND numbered the KPA’s main battle tanks at around 4,300, far exceeding the Institute of International and Strategic Studies (IISS)’s estimates (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 262). By contrast, South Korea’s main battle tanks count far behind its counterparts’ with total 2,414 units (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 264).

while the ROK's 3<sup>rd</sup> generation MBTs outnumber the DPRK's, the KPA has also deployed 900 new MBTs since 2005 and has even threatened the ROK's technical superiority on the ground (Kim, E. J., 2013). The ROK strategically purchased the US AH-64E *Apache Guardian* attack helicopters to facilitate anti-tank warfare and overcome a numerical inferiority, but there would be a strategic void until the scheduled delivery in the late 2016 ("Military Balance", 2015, p. 300). Nevertheless, despite its technical superiority, the ROK cannot certainly assure its overall preponderant capacities over the DPRK.

### **Artillery**

In artillery, not only the DPRK's self-propelled guns and multiple rocket launchers (MRL) outnumber the ROK's by twofold, but it also has strategic advantages in the initial stage of operations ("Military Balance", 2015, pp. 262, 264). The 170 mm *Koksan* self-propelled howitzer could initially carry out a destructive shelling in Seoul metropolitan area because of its long-range coverage (Mizokami, 2014). Also, because these howitzers are garrisoned inside the caves, close air support cannot easily interrupt the DPRK's powerful long-range shelling (Mizokami, 2014). The data disclosed that the ROK's advanced technology and capital have not gained competent military resources to completely thwart the DPRK, and show that the ROK remains relatively vulnerable to the hostile provocations from the DPRK.

### **On the Water**

	RUS (EMD) <sup>31</sup>	PRC <sup>32</sup>	DPRK	ROK <sup>33</sup>	JPN	USA
Principal surface combatants	35 (9 in EMD)	72	3	23	47	105
Submarine (Strategic /Tactical)	59 (12/47) (22 in EMD; str. 3 and tac. 19)	70 (4/66)	72 (-/72)	23 (-/23)	18 (-/18)	73 (14 / 59)
Aircraft Carrier	1	1	-	-	2 <sup>34</sup>	10
Cruiser	6 (1 in EMD)	-	-	3	2	22
Destroyer	18 (8 in EMD)	17	-	6	34	62
Frigate	10	54	3	14	9	11
Patrol and Coastal Combatant	84 (23 in EMD)	223+	382	116	6	55
Principal Amphibious Ship	-	3	-	1	-	31
Landing Ship	20 (4 in EMD)	85	10	4	3	-
Landing Craft	25 (2 in EMD)	153	257	41	20	245
Logistics and Support Ship	626	211	23	24	82	71
Aircraft	198 (60 in EMD)	332	-	16	78	1,947

<sup>31</sup> Russia's Eastern Military District ("Military Balance", 2015).

<sup>32</sup> The PLAN has Marine Corps branch that is composed of 10,000 personnel with 73 light tanks, 152 amphibious infantry fighting vehicles (AIFV) and 40+ self-propelled artillery ("Military Balance", 2015).

<sup>33</sup> The ROKN has Marine Corps branch that is composed of 27,000 personnel with 100 main battle tanks and 166 assault amphibious vehicles.

<sup>34</sup> This figure is Japan MSDF's Hyuga-class helicopter carriers with potential runway function for aircrafts.

Helicopter	185	103+	-	42	150	735
# of Vessels (Total Tonnage)	EMD: 240 (600,000 tons)	890 (1,423,000 tons)	650 (101,000 tons)	190 (195,000 tons)	139 (453,000 tons)	20 (347,000) <sup>35</sup>

(“Military Balance”, 2015; “2014 Defense White Paper”, 2015; “Defense of Japan”, 2014)

## Aircraft Carriers

The PRC’s ex-soviet aircraft carrier *Liaoning* signified both growing potent and expansive blue-water navy ambition of PLAN in the Western Pacific (Beckhusen, 2014). According to the recent news report, the PRC is building two more aircraft carriers along with a helicopter carrier for amphibious assault while ultimately aiming for four aircraft carriers in total (Austin, 2015, “Truth about China’s aircraft carriers”, para. 1). However, experts did not acknowledge that the PRC’s aircraft carrier program would challenge the US maritime security due to its lack of the carrier and force protection technologies (Beckhusen, 2014; Ross, 2009, Bottom lines section, para. 1). Recently, the *Liaoning* appeared to experience engine failures and steam explosion during its sea trials (Beckhusen, 2014; Kazianis, 2014). Aside from technological issues, the PRC’s aircraft carrier program reflects its naval nationalism because the PRC’s energy trade via maritime trade route only accounts for 10% of the total (Ross, 2011). Thus, despite growing potent, the PRC’s aircraft carriers do not have aggressive motives and capabilities to threaten the US national security in the Western Pacific.

Furthermore, the US Navy’s continuous naval equipment developments would counter challenges in maritime security. The US Navy is currently building two *Gerald Ford*-class super aircraft carriers with expected delivery by 2016 (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 55). The *Gerald Ford*-class aircraft carrier is the world’s largest by far and equipped with

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<sup>35</sup> This figure is the U.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet.

most advanced technologies (“Gerald R. Ford Class”, n.d.). Additionally, Japan’s Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) already has two *Hyuga*-class helicopter carriers and is expected to receive two *Izumo*-class helicopter carriers, which could potentially serve as an aircraft carrier (Keck, 2013; Keck, 2014a; “Military Balance”, 2015, p. 300).<sup>36</sup> Unlike the conventional conjectures, the PRC’s naval power would not challenge the maritime security in East Asia based on its capacities.

### **Submarine**

In East Asia, the submarines are of great strategic concerns for the US and its allies in maintaining the maritime security. Currently, Russia’s Eastern Military District has 22 submarines with 3 strategic submarines, and the PLAN has total 70 submarines with 4 strategic submarines (“Military Balance”, 2015, pp. 195, 239).<sup>37</sup> The DPRK has 72 tactical submarines for amphibious assault uses (“Military Balance”, 2015, p. 262; “White Paper”, 2015). Among tactical submarines, five Russian submarines are equipped with guided missiles and five are nuclear-powered attack submarines, and 65 PLAN submarines have guided missiles (“Military Balance”, 2015, pp. 195, 239). By contrast, the Submarine Force of the US Pacific Fleet has total 41 nuclear submarines (“COMSUPAC submarines”, 2014). Nevertheless, of those, only three *Los Angeles*-class attack submarines are stationed in Guam (“COMSUPAC submarines”, 2014).<sup>38</sup> The ROK currently has 23 units and Japan has 18 units, but their functions are limited to tactical uses despite advanced equipment (“Military

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<sup>36</sup> MSDF’s new *Izumo*-class helicopter destroyer is, unlike its official title, even larger than Italian *Cavour*, Spanish *Principe de Asturias* and some other light aircraft carriers. However, due to political reasons, the *Izumo*-class ships are referred to as helicopter carrier, or even helicopter destroyer, in Japan (“*Izumo* class”, para. 3).

<sup>37</sup> Strategic submarines could be utilized for strategic purposes when equipped with nuclear ballistic missiles (“The Role of Submarines”, 2010).

<sup>38</sup> Of those, 8 are *Ohio*-class ballistic missile nuclear-powered submarines (SSBN) and 2 are *Ohio*-class guided-missile nuclear-powered submarines (SSGN), which are all stationed at Bangor naval base in Washington State (“COMSUPAC submarines, 2014).

Balance”, 2015). Clandestine underwater operations could inflict an extensive damage to the US and its allies because submarine is an important strategic asset based on its operational stealth and endurance capabilities (“The Role of Submarines”, 2010).

**In Airspace**

	RUS	PRC	DPRK	ROK	JPN	USA
Combat capable aircraft	1,201 (297 in EMD)	2,239	563	571	552	1,410
Bomber	141	106	80	-	-	137
Fighter and Attack (4 <sup>TH</sup> gen.)	980 (581) (247 in EMD; 4 <sup>th</sup> gen. 49)	1535+ (473)	483 (18)	488 (244)	353 (293)	1,686 (1,526)
Transport	432 (22 in EMD)	325+	217	38	64	410
ISR	86 (28 in EMD)	-	-	24	17	82
Airborne Early Warning and Control	22	8+	-	4	17	32
Tanker	15	11	-	-	4	212
Training	198	950	215+	189	245	1,133
Helicopter (ATK)	912 (104 in EMD)	50+	302	152+	51	151

(“Military Balance”, 2015; “2014 Defense White Paper”, 2015; “Defense of Japan”, 2014)

**Jet fighter/Airborne Early Warning and Control System (AEW&C)/Tanker aircraft**

In the airspace, rapid growth of PLAAF could be the most destabilizing force in the region. The PRC’s advanced 4<sup>th</sup> generation jet fighters consist of Chengdu J-10, Shenyang J-11, and Su-27 *flanker* with total 473 in service (“Military Balance”, 2015). PLAAF also has a significant number of conventional jet fighters (“Military Balance”, 2015). On the other hand, the ASDF has total 293 jet fighters that range from Boeing F-15J to an indigenous Mitsubishi F-2A (Waldron, 2013). The ROK’s air force has a limited strategic utility due to its confrontation with the DPRK. The USPACOM deployed 150 aircrafts in Japan and South

Korea, but this does not outnumber PLAAF's numerical superiority ("Defense White Paper", 2014; "Military Balance", 2015, p. 53). Nevertheless, experts claim that despite the PRC's numerical superiority, Japan "has a significant edge" in airspace because of its "network-centric warfare" capacities (Kopp, 2014; Waldron, 2013, "In Focus", para. 6).<sup>39</sup>

Essentially, the PRC's technical disadvantages in the airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) systems and its lack of tankers corroded its overall aerial security capacities. Initially, the PRC's ineffectual AEW&C systems hindered its situational operations in the contested waters, which require networking techniques far away from the mainland control center over the duration of time (Waldron, 2013, para. 10). Japan has 17 airborne early warning and control aircrafts of both 4 long-range Boeing E-767s and 13 mid-range Northrop E-2C *Hawkeyes* while China's 7 KJ-2000s have not been tested yet (Waldron, 2013, para. 13). Therefore, the PLAAF's jet fighters would be bound by ground controlled interception (CGI), and their overall combat capacities would be much less effective than Japan's Air Self-Defense Force (Waldron, 2013, para. 14). The PRC's other technical drawback comes from tankers. While Japan's four Boeing KC-767s made their jet fighters more efficient and sustainable during operations, the PRC has only limited experience of using its H-6 tankers (Waldron, 2013, para. 12). This significantly limits PLAAF's operation range and sustainable operations in the air.

In the Korean peninsula, the ROK's 4<sup>th</sup> generation aircrafts gained aerial supremacy against the DPRK. Despite apparent equality in total units, the ROK's 4<sup>th</sup> generation aircrafts, such as Boeing F-15K *Eagles* and Lockheed Martin F-16 *Fighting Falcons*, provide

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<sup>39</sup> Network-centric warfare connotes a decisive paradigm of modern aerial warfare based on "the introduction of networking techniques into warfighting systems" (Air Power Australia, 2005).

a combat superiority in the air as well as in ground attack support (“Military Balance”, 2015). Also, the DPRK’s economic stagnation has impeded a further development of its aged air force equipment and made only loopholes in the aerial defense (Laurence, 2012). Additionally, Russia’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Force and Air Defense Command does not appear to be capable enough to destabilize the regional security without assistance from other military districts. Thus, there is no defining risk that could undermine the aerial security in East Asia.

### **Overview: Conclusive Analysis**

Despite the region’s military growth, the US can still remain secure based on its overall superiority over other countries in East Asia and its military alliance with Japan and the ROK. However, a numerical comparison does not provide a solid grasp or true depth of the security reality because actual military confrontations are not fully reliant upon the capacities while highly susceptible to a wide spectrum of variables. Furthermore, the possession of such weaponry does not mean actual use; rather, it only signifies the latent potential. Military provocations are therefore ultimately contingent upon the intentions. Consequently, the comparative evaluation should be dependent upon understanding the objective and strategies of the political entities. In sum, the visible superiority of the US military would ensure the absence of existential threats, or even modest-level of threats, directed toward the US, provided that the current alliance system and geostrategic partnership are averse to modifications or significant deteriorations. Nevertheless, essential is to bolster Japan-ROK bilateral relations in order to improve the efficacies of collective security efforts in East Asia.

### **Potential Risk within the US allies: Memory Wars between Japan and ROK<sup>40</sup>**

The Abe administration recently embarked on constitutional revision of article nine, which has constrained developing militaristic posture of the JSDF (Kato, 2014).<sup>41</sup> Japan's militarization consequently alarmed the PRC and ROK as much as it did to its own citizens and further deteriorated relations with the ROK. However, the Abe administration's militarization policy was also a threatening sign for the US not only because it dismantled the regional security and cracked the efficiencies of the US allies in East Asia, but also because the concealed jingoistic rationale of this policy would potentially spawn security risks out of the US capabilities.

Most visibly, the deteriorated Japan-ROK relations would hamper the efficient cooperation among the US and its allies in coping with security challenges in East Asia (Chanlett-Avery, Manyin, Reinhart, Nelson & Williams, 2015). The region is currently experiencing various shifts of security strategies and partnership:

- 1) The PRC and ROK framed the Free Trade Agreement and would further expand their rapport beyond economic realm.
- 2) The DPRK reached out to Russia and Japan and gained economic resources to further develop its military capabilities and strategic posture.
- 3) Russia, with planned joint military drills, would further encroach into East Asia with military measures.

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<sup>40</sup> The term, "memory war," originated from Fukuoka's work in 2011.

<sup>41</sup> In the postwar period, Japan's security identity was fundamentally built upon the anti-militaristic principle. Japan's interpretation of wartime history was that militaristic leaders, or the state, ensnared the nation and people into the atrocities and aggression of the imperialism. Consequently, the self-perception of victimhood developed and still retains the pacifist norm in the society. (Dower, 2012, pp. 130-1)

4) Japan established the détente with Russia and made geostrategic rapprochement with the DPRK.

5) The PRC would continue to strengthen its A2/AD strategy while fostering its regional influence beyond borders and economic measures.

Accordingly, current geopolitical environment requires allied approaches towards security based on the multilateral-basis common understanding of the challenges because individual strategies could heighten the uncertainties.

However, the task for the US is quite challenging: the antagonism was intrinsically ingrained into the South Korean national identity, and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)'s historical perception rather praised its "pan-Asiatic" efforts during WWII while denying the sole responsibility of wartime aggression (Olsen, 2008).<sup>4243</sup> The Abe administration and LDP's essential problem is that its erroneous perception of wartime history provokes a misguided resentment from the PRC and ROK against the Japanese nation, while invoking domestic controversies as well. Nevertheless, Japan and ROK's mutual alienation would not only dissipate the existing resources but also complicate and destabilize the security by provoking neighboring countries in East Asia. Thus, the

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<sup>42</sup> The ROK's national identity has resisted to developing pragmatic security relations with Japan by fundamentally subsuming anti-Japanese sentiment. Historically, Koreans perceived immediate danger from China, which retained hegemonic cultural and political influence throughout East Asia for centuries. Consequently, the Korean national pride was based upon the management of remaining intact as a nation-state, coping with constant pressures from China for long period of time. However, Japan's imperial aggression severely damaged the Koreans' national pride especially since Koreans had perceived Japan as a beneficiary of the early Korean culture. Thus, the historical context spawned the anti-Japanese sentiment and required the Korean national identity to be formed in contrast to that of Japan and China (Olsen, 2008, p. 7-8).

<sup>43</sup> In Japan, LDP still retains its hegemonic power in domestic politics beyond the 1995 system during which it had dominated the politics. LDP's political heritage stemmed from traditional ruling elites who formed the leadership during WWII. The binational (US-Japan) efforts to sanitize Japan's war crimes kept the traditional elitist bureaucracy in Japan. LDP's jingoistic claims included that the wartime aggression was intended to liberate Asia from Western imperialism and communism. In addition, it claimed that the overall circumstances and the world order of the time forced the entire nations into brutality and it is therefore not fair to single out Japan. It is just an extension of victor's justice imposed by the Allies during the postwar interrogation. (Dower, 2012, pp. 112-35)

necessities for Japan-ROK rapprochement are dire for the US in countering existing challenges despite fundamental difficulties.

Furthermore, although not explicit, the revision of article nine could reorient and develop the SDF posture in ways, and to the extent, in which Japan impairs the current efficacies of the US-Japan alliance and creates conflict direct towards the US national interest. With budget sequestration and increasing security burdens, the US government demanded increased role, or budget, from Japan for regional security (The Department of Defense [DoD], 2014; Vosse, Dripte and Blechinger-Talcott, 2014). Coupled with increasing global threats, the rearmament appeared compelling and inevitable for Japan (Matthews, 2003; Midford, 2011).<sup>44</sup> However, the constitutional revision substantially relates to the historical perception of the wartime context, and Prime Minister Abe's militarization is fundamentally based upon the jingoistic interpretation of its wartime history. Unlike Japanese general public, the LDP's wartime historical perspective was built into the benevolent fascist ideology by which the conservative politicians and bureaucrats have argued Japan's wartime efforts as "inescapable and altruistic holy war" (Dower, 2012, pp. 112-31). The LDP's victimhood of itself derived from the victor's justice of the Allies and the world order that drove everyone into a brutality (Dower, 2012, pp. 112-23). Also, the LDP leadership tended to dismiss the public opinion, when differed from its own, in guiding

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<sup>44</sup> Some suggested that shifts in Japan's new security identity derived from changing security environment and corresponding public opinion (Matthews, 2003). However, various studies and analyses found that Japanese public still opposes to the current militarization policy as well as the Prime Minister's Yasukuni Shrine visits, while fundamentally remaining hostile to extending a role for the JSDF (Glosserman & Kang, 2014; Vosse, Dripte & Blechinger-Talcott, 2014; Midford, 2011). Furthermore, analysts claimed that the increasing support for constitutional revision did not necessarily signify identity shift, but it merely reflected a desire to codify the principles of existing security identity in response to increased security challenges throughout the world (Oros, 2008, pp. 7-8). Interestingly, studies also found that the narratives of Japanese history textbooks do not dictate the audience's perception of history (reception), rejecting the monolithic wartime perspective in Japan (Fukuoka, 2011).

the national development (Midford, 2011).<sup>45</sup> Because of this, the elitist LDP leadership, despite the opposition from the public, may develop outcomes that go beyond the reach of the US soft-power, which would easily involve neighboring issues and evolve into a spiral of international conflicts just as the outbreak of the WWI in 1914. Essentially, the Abe administration's militarization policy would destabilize the regional security and thereby produce complex scenarios for the US because current alliance system does not ensure stable relationship for tomorrow.

### **Conclusive Analysis of the Current Capabilities**

Regarding the comprehensive defense posture, the US still maintains a visible superiority over the PRC, Russia and the DPRK. The PRC's military is not inherently hostile to the region's security atmosphere, but its increasing military potential should caution the neighboring countries, particularly Russia and Japan. The PRC's defensive measures would hardly cause destabilization, unless by miscommunication. Russia's military modernization has also gradually garnered the growing potential of the Russian military and helped its military expansion towards the Far East. However, despite the lack of overall capacities, Russia's aggressive foreign policy portended the possibilities of involving offensive measures of conventional weapons and the WMDs in potential conflicts. Additionally, the DPRK's symmetric and conventional weapons capabilities are great concerns for the ROK's existence and the security order in East Asia, while concurrently challenging the US national security. Without having to surpass the US military might, the essential threats of the DPRK's military ultimately come from its offensive nature towards the ROK and the US.

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<sup>45</sup> Midford argued (2011) that Japan's elitist bureaucracy has sometimes dismissed the public opinion partly due to overriding responsibility of guiding the public and self-indulgent smug leadership (p.3).

The DPRK's asymmetric weapons that range from nuclear weapons to cyber warfare are therefore threatening to the region's stability. The highly offensive measures of the DPRK's SOFs, including the potential invasion of the ROK, are of particular threat. Therefore, the primary concern in the region's security environment lies in the US commitments to Japan and the ROK.

Nevertheless, the evolving strategies in the ROK and Japan complicated the security atmosphere and fractured the US security efforts in East Asia. Initially, the ROK's strategic hedging towards the PRC in an attempt to mitigate the inter-Korean conflicts shaped the intra-regional relations complex. The ROK's decision to prioritize diplomatic channels over military development subsequently made both the US and the ROK vulnerable to the dynamic security challenges in the Korean peninsula. Moreover, with corresponding weapons acquisitions, Japan's militarization policy is intrinsically disposed to destabilize the security status quo in East Asia. Japan's strategic shift towards Russia and the DPRK actually could give rise to the possibility of triangular strategic ties among the three states. Therefore, most pragmatic concerns for the US national security reside in Japan-ROK bilateral relations. The internal context of Japan and the ROK revealed the misguided representation of each other, which has been ingrained into both societies. However, the security cooperation between Japan and the ROK remains essential to the US security conditions because it not only mitigates regional military miscalculations but also maximizes the allied cooperation to enhance the intra-regional relations.

In East Asia, the security environment experiences turbulent currents of evolving strategies and weapons developments. Contrary to conventional opinion, PRC's comprehensive military developments and the WMDs should not be of significant concern

to the US and the region's security. On the other hand, the shifting strategies of Russia, the DPRK and Japan fundamentally challenged the status quo and invoke concerns for the US. Overall, the DPRK's aggression could be only visible threat, directed towards the US national security. Nevertheless, except for the DPRK's nuclear weapons, the US is not subject to a serious security challenge from others, although still liable to the provocations that would arise from shifting strategies and partnership.

## **Conclusion**

In reconsideration of the US military bases located in the ROK and Japan, the most pressing concerns of the US lie in the security interests in East Asia, an increasingly complex and changing environment. In order to evaluate the options for the region, the US must assess the shifting balance of the East Asian countries and the US stance on emerging issues and possible threats to the security of the US homeland and allies.

The rise of the PRC and its increase in political, economic, military, and diplomatic power is concerning to the US due to the PRC's lack of transparency, but currently does not pose a critical threat to US security and the stability of the region. The PRC's internally directed goals do not directly provoke a clash of interests between the PRC and the US, and ultimately, the military capabilities of the US remain superior to the PLA's military growth and advances in the extreme case of confrontation. Russia's rebalance to Asia has caused a significant shift in the political environment. While Russia's national security objectives and capabilities do not pose an existential threat to the security of the US and its allies in East Asia, Russia's strategic and diplomatic developments in line with the goal to return the country to Soviet era world status has the potential to destabilize the region's security environment. In spite of Russia's military modernization efforts, the country's military

capabilities in East Asia remain inferior to the US military. The DPRK's nuclear program, asymmetric warfare capabilities, national goals and political rhetoric regarding reunification are the greatest immediate threat to regional stability and security and the US's security responsibilities to defend the ROK and Japan.

The nature of these security threats posed by the DRPK and Russia in the East Asia region require maintenance of a physical US military presence through the military bases, but allow for a reassessment of the military structures in place in the ROK and Japan. In regards to the PRC, the best option to approach the issues in the region is not through intimidation and increasing military power projection in East Asia to counter the growing military capacities, but to encourage dialogue and cooperation with the PRC. To counter the growing threats posed by the DPRK and Russia, the US should build-up allies' military power and increase cooperation between Japan and the ROK to foster a more collaborative security environment.

## Chapter 3

# US Economic Security

Helen Lim

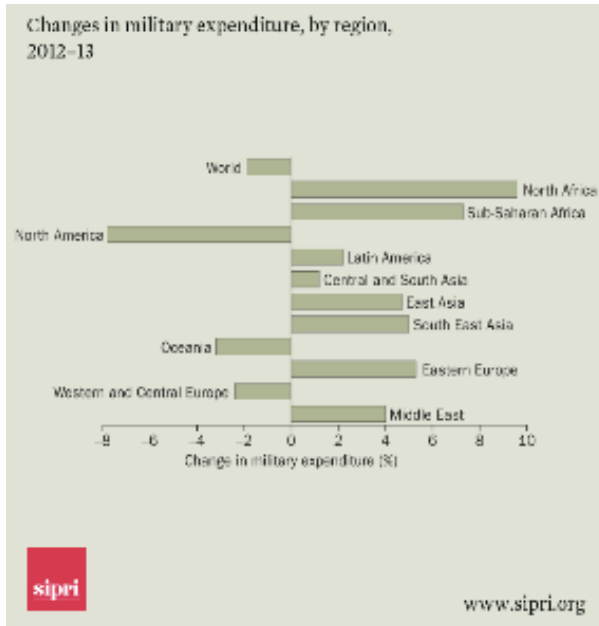
The purpose of this chapter is to re-examine and re-evaluate the Obama Administration's "Rebalance to Asia" policy and whether that policy is salient in dealing with tension in East Asia, given the rise in the PRC's economic and energy power. This paper will also make concrete policy recommendations on how to engage economically in East Asia, particularly with regard to the PRC. The PRC's scramble for resources has further exacerbated tensions in the region since the PRC enhanced its military defense system. In addition, emergence of the PRC's Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Free Trade Area Agreement of the Asia-Pacific-21 (FTAAP-21) intensified economic competition with the US. The US should strengthen economic ties with the PRC by joining the PRC-led AIIB and FTAAP and encouraging the PRC to join the TPP. Additionally, the US should lead the multinational talks over the DPRK's nuclear program and energy competition, and move toward reducing US military troops in East Asia in order to enhance US economic and military security.

## Introduction

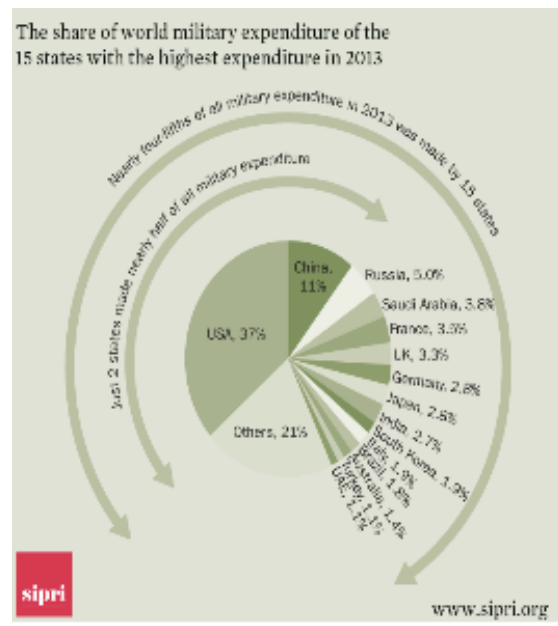
Strengthening US economic security will help the US maintain its regional power position reducing tensions in East Asia, especially with the PRC. This is a critical area for the US since it has been plagued by threats of the DPRK's continuous nuclear weapon experiments and the PRC's rapid economic growth. The US must improve its economic relations with non-allied countries, particularly with the PRC, as its power and influence over East Asia is only increasing.

Unlike the US, Japan and the ROK are 'developmental states,' or late-industrialized states with reconstructed national economic reforms formed by the state's governance that influences military spending. According to the RAND Corporation (2014), countries with high economic growth tend to receive a higher number of outside threats. This in turn sparks a boost in military expenditure. However, in the case of developmental states, states tend to prioritize increasing economic power rather than political or military power.

The PRC increases military spending with its economic growth, which is perceived as a potential threat to neighboring countries. Japan does not already have a regularly functioning military, so their increase in defense spending is not caused by immediate need, so much as the PRC's increasing military might. The concept of a 'developmental state' provides a framework in which to understand how a country might handle military spending, as well as how a government justifies acquiring energy resources by building state-owned firms.



**Figure 3.1.** Military expenditure in East Asia  
 Source: SIPRI



**Figure 3.2.** Share of World Military Expenditures  
 Source: SIPRI

Figure 3.1 indicates that military spending in East Asia has increased in 2012-2013 by about 5%, while Figure 3.2 indicates that the PRC is the second highest military-spending nation (US 37%, PRC 11%). SIPRI also indicates that the PRC increased military spending by 170% since 2004, while GDP grew by about 140%. At the same time, Japan and the ROK have been suffering from declining economic power and did not significantly increase military spending until 2014. Japan began increasing its military spending after their economic reform, which included raising consumption tax from 5% to 7% in 2014 and 2015, after recognizing security threats posed by the PRC and others. With escalating military expenditures and tensions in East Asia, the US must do what it can to promote stability in the region.

One of the major factors that contribute to the PRC’s increasing military expenditures is the PRC’s economic and military cooperation with non-US-allied countries such as the DPRK and Russia. The PRC seeks to cooperate militarily with these countries

but also does not want to be outspent. Additionally, the PRC is ignoring obligations written in paragraph 1 (a), (b), and (c) of Article 298 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS) and increasing their military spending, in turn causing Japan and Vietnam to increase their military expenditures: “The increase [of military expenditures in Asia and Oceania] is mostly accounted for by a 7.4 per cent increase by the PRC, whose [total military] spending reached an estimated \$188 billion. Territorial disputes with the PRC are driving military spending increases in countries such as the Philippines and Vietnam” (SIPRI, 2014). Most importantly, Japan’s increase in its military budget for 2015 signifies a deepening tension between Japan and the PRC, especially since Prime Minister Abe proposed a proactive pacifism policy which would allow Japan to go to war if threatened. The Obama Administration responded that the US would stand by Japan and respect the long-standing treaty that obligates the US to defend Japan from outside threats (Washington Post, 2014). Although the US is obligated uphold this treaty, as a global stakeholder, it is also obligated to protect East Asia from regional instability. Paradoxically, the PRC and Japan’s increased military spending deters the other from aggression, which enhances US economic and military security.

Along with economic security, energy security cannot be ignored when evaluating East Asian relations and its military power. The PRC works strategically with resource-rich Mongolia and the DPRK so to meet the resource demand. While the PRC is expanding their search for resources to neighboring Mongolia, Russia is doing the same. Chinese-Russian competition for resources such as coal has called upon the US to be a mediator for any potential issues the competition might create. This ‘third neighboring policy’ obligates the

US to mediate any conflict that might arise between the PRC or Russia regarding Mongolia's resources.

Now is the time for the US to use previously successful strategies to develop US – PRC relations, such as the Nixon Doctrine and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's 'strategic patience.' To recover the loss that came from cutting ties with the PRC, Nixon decided to withdraw US military troops from Korea. This was a rapprochement, which helped the US and the PRC to resume political-economic cooperation.

Clinton's 'strategic patience' aimed to lead multinational talks on the DPRK's nuclear disarmament. Previously, the Obama administration's 'strategic impatience' and containment on the PRC strengthened PRC-DPRK relations.

Strengthening US-PRC relations to push for DPRK's nuclear disarmament will be mutually beneficial. Continuing bilateral economic competition between the US and the PRC will eventually create the opposite effect: no economic ties between two countries like what occurred in the 1950-1970s. The US must acknowledge that the most important thing for the US is maintaining 'regional stability' in Asia and improving the US economy, not containing the PRC.

### **US Interests: Rebalancing Power**

The Obama Administration's new policy 'Pivot 2.0' aims to 'embed' the US as a Pacific power, not solely with regard to military power, but also in terms of political and economic influence. The US and the PRC are inextricably linked, particularly in two sectors: economics and energy. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) report, "China's Economic Rise: History, Trends, Challenges and Implications for the United States (2014)" says that the PRC's growing economic power has made it a critical and influential player on

the global stage on a number of issues important to US interests, such as global economic cooperation, climate change, nuclear proliferation, and DPRK aggression. David Shambaugh argues that such economic power should make the PRC more responsible in the international community. However, the US also needs to take responsibility for East Asia's stability as a way to persuade the PRC to also act responsibly. In doing this, the US and the PRC will form a stronger relationship.

In addition, the DPRK's nuclear deployment has threatened to derail a major goal of US military troops in East Asia: maintaining the stability of the region by providing military security. In fact, the US's previous policies over the DPRK were partially successful in that the ROK's financial support to the DPRK helped reduce tensions and increased economic cooperation. For example, the two Koreas have maintained the Kaesong Industrial Complex since 2002. However, the ROK eventually subordinated conversation on the DPRK's nuclear program to focus instead on the Sunshine Policy. The Six Party Talks also worked for the denuclearization of the DPRK; however, the DPRK ended up withdrawing from the talks.

Even now, economic cooperation between the US and the DPRK is non-existent. It has been this way since the US negotiated with the DPRK to allow international monitoring on its nuclear program in exchange for nutritional assistance through the "Leap Day" Deal of 2012. However, the DPRK unexpectedly launched its 'earth observation satellite,' which effectively derailed the Leap Day Deal.

This taught the Obama Administration that funding assistance such as energy, food and denuclearization assistance was not as useful a negotiating tool as they had hoped. The Obama Administration learned that strategic patience would do little, if anything, to improve US-DPRK relations. This failure shed light on the importance of the PRC's

relationship with the DPRK. The US needs to create a space for the PRC to speak out and push the DPRK into dismantling all nuclear programs, with the use of further international meetings.

The US must maintain and improve economic relations with the PRC so to allow for the possibility of US involvement in the DPRK denuclearization process. Thus, the Obama Administration must strategically generate a dialogue with non-allied countries such as the DPRK and Russia about the DPRK's nuclear disarmament and energy security.

### **The PRC's Scramble for Resources May Drive East Asia into War**

The PRC's scramble for resources in the South and East China Seas have raised threat perceptions of neighboring countries, which also claim sovereignty of the islands. The PRC's purpose in going after resources such as oil, natural gas and hydrocarbon is to foster economic and military power.

The most problematic areas in the South and East China Seas are the EEZs, which are historically disputed and also regulated by UNCLOS. The PRC does not adhere to UNCLOS regulations and instead continues to extract potential resources in the EEZ. Because neighboring countries' demand for resources in the EEZ is so high, they see the PRC's involvement as a major threat. This puts the US in a potentially sticky spot, due to its obligation to protect the security of neighboring countries.

#### *EEZ*

EEZs in the East and South China Sea (*United Nations, Part V, Exclusive Economic Zone*) are potential flash points for conflict. Therefore, the PRC has started to boost its military power and create defense systems such as Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ). In response, the US has increased surveillance over Chinese fishing vessels. Because of the

rich resources in the EEZs, both the PRC and Japan are interested in the development of oil and natural gas and the extraction of hydrocarbon resources, especially since hydrocarbon resources are necessary to build up nuclear power. The EEZ's resources are also attractive to new nations, because the South China Sea among the richest oil fields in the world, containing about 30 to 70% of a hundred million units of natural gas deposits with 150 thousand tons of fish (sohunews.com, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific). To prevent any extreme competition over these areas, international organizations such as UNCLOS created access restrictions; however, they did not directly prevent the PRC from moving forward anyway.

Conflicts between the PRC and Japan regarding the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are ongoing: "Japan accused the PRC of halting exports of rare earth minerals after a territorial spat in 2010 a charge Beijing denied—causing a commodities crisis for resource-dependent Japan" (Council of Foreign Relations, "China's Maritime Disputes"). The PRC embargoed rare earth exports to Japan, and protests targeting Japanese businesses in the PRC erupted. Japan's restricted access to required energy resources became the root of its re-militarization decision. However, the PRC also has its eye on coal in Mongolia, a country which the PRC has vital political-economic relations with.

#### *The PRC's 'Re-Engagement Policies' in Mongolia and DPRK*

The PRC policy on coal has strengthened economic relations between the PRC and Russia, but hurt Japan and the ROK. The PRC and Russia have easy access to resources in Mongolia, but other nations have restricted access. The PRC and Russia have a complicated resource relationship, however. They had controversial debates on obtaining Australia's resources previously, (Foreign Affairs 2005) but are now working to fix relations through

the ‘Transit Mongol Conference’ in which Mongolia offered Russia and the PRC an opportunity to meet with each other. There, the PRC and Russia announced that they would help contribute to land-linking Mongolia by building a pipeline. This will also help make Mongolia more accessible to other nations.

Mongolia used to have strong historical ties with both countries; Russia and Mongolia cooperated for over 60 years, but after the fall of Soviet Union, Russia stopped buying coal from Mongolia, although it has continued to export oil to Mongolia (76% of its gasoline and diesel fuel and electric power from Russia, *Deutsche Welle*).

Mongolia began to cooperate with the PRC, concerned that the PRC would come to dominate their energy reserves, as it was previously occupied by the PRC during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. At the time, the PRC’s percentage of imported natural resources reached 90%. The China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation (Sinopec Limited) has invested massive sums of money in building facilities to produce coal, even more than what they earn from current coal reserves. This, however, reveals their confidence in the increasing value of coal.

The energy competition in Mongolia between Russia and the PRC could lead to the US stepping in and defending Mongolia, which, will contribute to the US’ increasing power in the Asia rebalance. Additionally, Mongolia and the US established a partnership in 2004. While receiving help from the US in their transition to democracy, Mongolia created the ‘third neighbor’ policy (NBR, 2012) because it feared the PRC would take over Mongolia-based mines (19 million of coal into the PRC in 2012, possibly reached 15 million mt in 2013, Plat-year to \$218.6 million last year, the smallest amount since 2010. Despite the drop, anthracite accounted for 39.8 % [s1] of the DPRK’s total exports to PRC in 2014. This

implies the possibility that their secret trades improved relations and increased military cooperation; Their increasing economic and military cooperation with Russia can be dangerous to US security as Northeast Asia under their pressure will bar the US from having as much of an influence as they would like.

Mongolia's third neighbor policy also reduces environmental damage that the PRC had caused mines in Mongolia. According to the *Xinhua News Agency* (2011), Mongolia closed about 205 non-coal mines (including mines of iron ore and rare earth) and suspended operations of another 136 mines for violating safety rules and not obtaining mining licenses. The PRC's imports of Mongolia's resources have supported Mongolia's prosperity. However, fixing the PRC's environmental damage to the plants in Mongolia is expected to be very expensive: "overexploitation might damage the vulnerable ecology of Inner Mongolia and weaken its role as a natural barrier to prevent sandstorms and desertification from spreading across northern China." In addition to these closures, Mongolia also closed the PRC's key coal artery, Tsagaan Khad on the Mongolian side of the border with the PRC (Platts, 2013). Those closures of the PRC's mines might cause the PRC to hunt for the other resources or coal reserves in the other nations. The US could consider economic sanctions in response to how the PRC's scrambling for Mongolia's resources may intensify the relations with Russia and the other countries, as the US seeks to dampen potential geopolitical conflicts, which might lead to war.

On the other hand, the DPRK's secret trade with the PRC over mineral resources is risky for US security because it could end up supporting the DPRK and the PRC's economic and military cooperation with no transparency. In a deal to provide mineral resources to the PRC, the DPRK received a massive amount of oil and gas supplies (about 80,000 to 100,000

aviation fuel) from the PRC in 2014. It has contributed to the DPRK's military drills to be resumed after the DPRK suffered from a lack of aviation fuels, especially during the winter (Joongang Daily, 2015). Previously, the PRC used to export crude oil to the DPRK; however, according to the official data based on Chinese trade statistics and compiled by the Beijing unit of the Korea Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (2014), the percentage of petroleum exports increased, but crude oil, was counted as 'zero' in 2014. In addition, *Yonhap News (2014)* also reported that anthracite exports to the PRC are down in 2014. The DPRK's exports of iron ore to the PRC plunged by 25.7 % on-year to \$218.6 million last year, the smallest amount since 2010. Despite the drop, anthracite accounted for 39.8 % [s1] of DPRK's total exports to PRC in 2014. This implies the possibility that their secret trades resulted in improved relations and increase military cooperation; their increasing economic and military cooperation with Russia can be very powerful and dangerous to US security; US would find it increasingly difficult to influence East Asia affairs in such a state.

It is also important to recognize that the PRC's declining trade with the DPRK was a part of agreement with the US. However, the PRC's resumption of trade with the DPRK increased the potential that the DPRK would not cooperate with the US or change their hostile attitude toward other neighboring countries, particularly US-allied countries. It may, however, become apparent that the DPRK cannot survive without the PRC.

### **Building a New Form of Economic Bloc in East Asia**

To promote economic cooperation between the US and the PRC, the US should use two approaches: join a Chinese-led economic organization or agreement, and encourage the PRC to join the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) by offering to increase the PRC's role in US-led economic organizations such as the World Bank. This would ensure the

future existence of an economic order based on liberal rules of trade. Hence, the US must use these steps and create a united economic bloc in East Asia. Such a bloc would derive from both the TPP and FTAAP; the first step to creating this economic regime is the inclusion of the US and the PRC in the two trade agreements discussed.

### *TPP*

If the US were to develop the TPP by taking into account previous lessons such as the KORUS FTA and invite the PRC and the ROK to join the TPP, the TPP can help to establish US power in global economics. The TPP's two main objectives are: 1. Developing domestic manufacturing firms, and 2. the national export initiative. The US' exports to the PRC have decreased from 23.76% in 2000 to 14.2% in 2013. The US' purchasing power parity per GDP is expected to rise, and in turn, increase US exports. This is why the Obama Administration has pushed for the TPP with the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), which would help the administration to make a quick decision on trade but would prohibit any revision later on. The TPP and TPA are still controversial in Congress, but many pundits have argued that the TPP is likely to pass under a Republican-controlled Congress. With the endless positive outcomes the treaty promises the US, it is not hard to understand why. In his article "Success of TPP is a National Security Necessity" in the *Asahi* Wishbum, Retired US Army General David Petraeus points out positive promises of the TPP by stating, "the consequences for Washington getting the TPP right are huge, opening some of the world's fastest-growing markets to more US exports, improving American competitiveness, growing the global middle class, and fostering the prosperous, open and rules-based Asia that is in everyone's interests" (*The Asahi Shimbun*, 2014).

De-facto, the US seeks to achieve an integration of East Asian economies and improve regional stability via the TPP. Hence, the US has asked the PRC and the ROK to sign onto the TPP last year when Obama visited the PRC, the PRC and the ROK have said that they are 'positively' considering to join into the TPP, but have not done so to date. The US should encourage the PRC to join the TPP. Such a scenario would provide many benefits to the region. A cohesive regional economic regime would have two main benefits, which are not mutually exclusive.

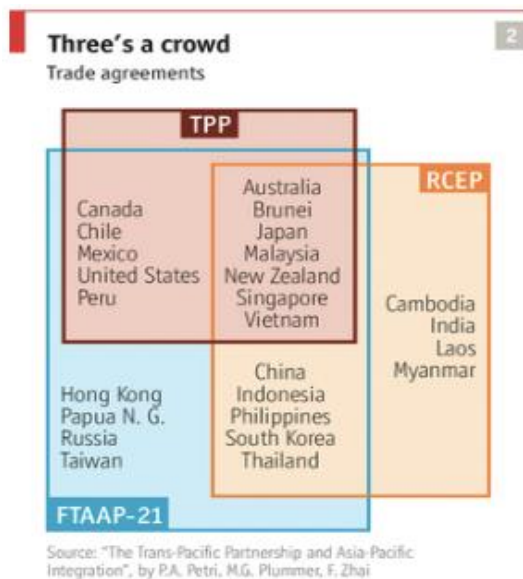
First, a region wide trade bloc would improve security conditions, by linking the region's economies to each other. The European project, easing Franco-German tensions via the linkage of crucial economic sectors is an historical proof that closer trade relations reduces conflict amongst states. The New American Security Project, a progressive think-tank, has pointed out that the TPP would improve the Asian Pacific security environment by creating the sense that the US is committed to the stability of the region (Day, 2014). Hence, although it might not be the most obvious benefit of the TPP, regional security assurances that it will provide are crucial positive developments for the region. Second, The PRC signing onto the American led TPP would provide further evidence that the rise of the PRC does not threaten the Western led world order that is based on liberalism. The US and the PRC signing onto the same trade agreements will ensure that two competing economic blocs are not formed in the region. Hence, this scenario would strengthen the US led economic global order; it would do so by promoting liberal trade in Asia, reducing protectionism, and nudging crucial international actors further towards market oriented economies, protecting intellectual property, and most importantly uniting the Asia Pacific region under one economic regime.

The PRC's resistance thus far to joining the TPP should be viewed as a missed opportunity in the US, as the PRC is also the largest trading partner with the US in East Asia. The US must manage to include the PRC in the TPP while maintaining the treaty's high standards. The PRC's concern regarding the TPP is centered on two arguments. The first is that worry that the US would repeat the vicious cycle of the US and Japan's dominance over the economic order, previously through the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB). More broadly, such voices in the PRC view the TPP as an effort of the US and its allies to 'contain China'. Such worries are not rooted from reality. As Mireya Sofis of the Brookings Institute explains in her article "The Containment Fallacy: China and the TPP," "the TPP concept is expansive: it aims to eventually develop an Asia-Pacific wide platform of economic integration, not to draw lines encircling China", further, Sofis continues to point out that the PRC is currently seeking two separate trade deals with Japan concluding that "The 'us versus them' dynamic of security alliances is not really applicable to free trade agreements" (Solis 2013). Hence, the 'containment' argument is flawed, and should not be a hurdle for the TPP. Another fear is the conditionality the treaty imposes, including expectations that would require the PRC to undergo fast domestic economic reforms. Such worries should not be overhyped though, if the PRC joined the negotiations, the pace of reforms could be settled on; it is important to note that the pace of reforms is a worry that many participant states share (Gordon, 2014). Further, as Andrew Sheng and Xiao Xeng argue in their op-ed for *Project Syndicate* "Chian's Duel Track Challenge", the PRC's recent economic downturn proves that economic reform is needed in the PRC, specifically one regarding state owned enterprises which the TPP demands (Geng, 2015). Hence, the

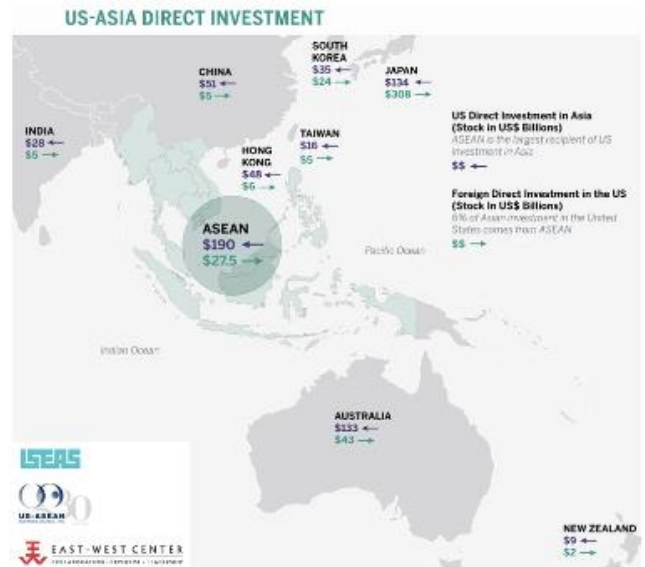
conditionality of the TPP could nudge the PRC into some needed domestic reform by providing economic carrots for the crucial market reforms.

It is clear that getting the PRC to sign onto the TPP is not impossible, and the fruits such an historic achievement would bear are countless. The CCP has been inconsistent with its rhetoric on the TPP, and by no means vehemently rejects joining the treaty. The US should make it clear that it strives to include the PRC in the treaty, and ensure that it is a part of the current economic global order.

In addition, the US expects the TPP will create a trade diversion effect, which would differentiate the prices of goods and services in trading with TPP members and non-members, and mostly likely create more distance between the US and the PRC. In order to offset this, the US should strongly appeal to the economic advantages proved by the TPP trade diversion effect to the PRC, and possibly join the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP) in order to reduce the gap between the two countries.



**Figure 3.3.** Trade Agreements  
Source: *The Economist*



**Figure 3.4.** US-Asia Direct Investment  
Source: *East-West Center*

*PRC response to the TPP: FTAAP*

To complement the PRC joining the TPP, the US should consider joining the PRC-led FTAAP and evaluate the possibility that the FTAAP can merge into a bigger economic framework with the TPP. The APEC Business Advisory Council in 2004 before the TPP, and in 2014 first introduced the FTAAP, the FTAPP-21 roadmap evidences the PRC has moved the agreement forward. This may initially have a spaghetti bowl effect, making the multilateral rules over various free trade agreements, and reexamining the influence of FTAAP on Asian economies.

Although FTAAP is prominent and expected to increase trade effectively, it is not certain whether APEC can overcome income gaps and cultural differences to integrate all Asia-Pacific economics. Unlike the European Union (EU), the lack of common cultural and historical ties has delayed FTAAP. However, the TPP, RCEP (regional FTAs led by ASEAN) and mega-FTAs can help APEC member countries make FTAAP effective. Although the FTAAP and TPP have different focuses, it is undeniable that they are related. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), led by ASEAN nations, the TPP and mega-FTAs will be the catalysts that increase the efficacy of regional trade. Since the TPP and FTAAP have common ASEAN member countries, it could be easier to merge them into creating a bigger multinational free trade agreement. This way, the US-PRC can stop the unnecessary TPP vs. FTAAP competition and move forward towards a united economic bloc that will benefit the PRC, the US, the Asia Pacific, and the global economy.

*The PRC's World Bank: Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)*

The PRC's AIIB is often perceived as 'undermining US economic power' because of its possibility of reconstructing the global order and discontinuing Bretton Woods

organizations. The US perceives the AIIB as the PRC's political tool, not only in the global economy but also in the energy market (*Time*, 2014). The AIIB's first loan was made to fund a Pan-Asian Gas Pipeline which connects to Joint Development Areas in the South China Sea. This loan made the 'first step toward creating a larger energy network' in Asia and helped the PRC avoid territorial disputes (Grenatec 2015). By inviting Japan and other nations having energy disputes into the AIIB's next projects, the US can support the PRC's multilateral energy cooperation and integrate East Asian countries. The Bilateral Investment Treaty also can be helpful in fostering US-PRC economic relations along with the AIIB.

#### *Bilateral Investment Treaty*

The Bilateral Investment Treaty is significant to improving US-PRC economic and military relations. At the 2013 US-PRC Strategic and Economic Dialogue, the US and the PRC agreed to restart negotiations but also to enhance bilateral cooperation through media such as the Strategic Security Dialogue (SSD) (US Department of State, 2013), which is intended to provide a space in which the US and the PRC can discuss security issues and establish a cooperative security group. The US can potentially reduce troops in East Asia while cooperating with the PRC through the SSD.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The US should lead economic and energy security talks by increasing energy trade, but not by distributing aid, as the US learned from the failure of the Leap Day Deal in 2012. Rather than providing direct aid, the US should seek ways such as fostering the DPRK's education or training English teachers who would be willing to teach English as a form of soft power influence.

The US should be a part of the PRC-led Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and support its funding a new project. Intensifying economic cooperation would reduce risk and strengthen the US' own economic security. By encouraging the PRC to join the TPP, the US can help the PRC to reduce tensions in the EEZ and find solutions with Japan and Vietnam, and prevent any possible energy competition in East Asia, such as Mongolia. If the energy competition intensifies and raises any tension in East Asia, economic sanctions on the PRC may be considered.

If the US joins the AIIB, the US could establish a new form of ASEAN +4, Association of Southeast Asian countries with the PRC, ROK, Japan and the US. ASEAN is also an important trading partner with the US, as some ASEAN countries participate in both the TPP and the FTAAP. Many ASEAN state countries have long historical relationships with the PRC, and some of them, such as Vietnam, still have conflicts in the EEZ with the PRC. Thus, integrating ASEAN economies would help merge the FTAAP and the TPP together. Merging the two would reduce the complexity of regulations over Asian economics; however, it would also be helpful in re-affirming the US' position in the FTAAP and other related agreements.

The US should strengthen its own economic security by intensifying economic cooperation and reducing any risks that would make East Asia unstable. It would be beneficial to be a part of the PRC-led AIIB and support its funding of new energy project. By encouraging the PRC to use the AIIB to do so, the US can help the PRC to reduce tensions in the EEZ and make compromises with Japan and Vietnam.

Although the PRC's increasing power in international economics and politics incentivized greater US involvement in East Asian affairs. This paper concludes that the US can still be the architect of Economic-Military security in East Asia.

## Chapter 4

# Building a Pragmatic Coalition in American Politics

Shahar Golan

This chapter will look into the constraints that US domestic politics pose to the proposed policy reforms. A plethora of interest groups including ethnic lobbies and business communities, as well as political ideology and foreign policy outlook, pose constraints to American action in the Asia Pacific. This report will draw on academic work, publications of think tanks, actions of interest groups, public opinion surveys, and statements of influential US foreign policy thinkers to assess and predict how opposition to a policy rethink will manifest. The report concludes that the opponents of the reforms will perceive current legislation as soft on China and not harsh enough on North Korea. After explaining the complications that US domestic politics pose, the paper will prospect areas of healthy support in the US. It will show how it is possible to create coalitions of support for the proposed reforms by utilizing American domestic preoccupation with the Middle East, the foreign policy outlook of 2016 candidates, interest groups, and existing calls for reforms in the US today.

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### **The China Factor**

In recent times China has become one of the most contentious issues regarding American foreign policy. Out of all issues concerning East Asia, China generates the greatest political attention in the US; American politicians frequently use the China card in foreign policy debate, especially during campaigns. The rethink of the military bases will provide ammunition for critics of the administration who will try to spin the reform as soft on the PRC. In his book *US-Chinese Relations: Perilous Past, Pragmatic Present*, Robert Sutter, an acclaimed China expert, describes the political environment of the US regarding China policy as “an atmosphere of suspicion and cynicism in American domestic politics over China policy,” setting the stage “for often bitter and debilitating fights in US domestic

politics over China policy in ensuing years that on balance are seen not to serve the overall national interests of the United States” (Sutter, 2013, p.81). Sutter’s observations show that electoral needs in the US often cause candidates to use harsher rhetoric and actions against the PRC than they believe are beneficial for the US.

While many scholars have argued that administrations will ultimately favor pragmatic forward-moving relationships with the PRC, aspiring presidents have not been shy of criticism of the PRC leading up to presidential elections. This portrays how political maneuvering is needed to pursue policies that could be perceived as warm towards the PRC. Because of these domestic hurdles, US history has proven a pattern of presidents pursuing forward-moving, pragmatic relations with the PRC after a campaign of harsh rhetoric pointed at the Asian state.

Ronald Reagan, who ended complicating arm sales to Taiwan in order to improve relations with the PRC, criticized Carter’s handling of Taiwan, claiming that he was not friendly enough to the island (Sutter, p.80). Democrats have also utilized harsh rhetoric pointed at the PRC during campaigns only to change course after getting elected. In their article *“The China Card: Playing Politics with Sino-American Relations”* Peter Trubowitz and Jungkun Seo explained that once resuming office, after a campaign in which Bill Clinton took a harsh stance against China he “quickly reversed course, jettisoning his anti-China campaign rhetoric and devising a political formula to make it easier for Beijing to qualify for MFN approval by Congress. Later, Clinton took the lead in backing China’s entry into the World Trade Organization by granting China permanent normal trade relations in 2000” (Trubowitz & Seo, 2012, 210). In the most recent American presidential election the pattern seemed to persist. The Obama-Romney foreign policy debate at times seemed like a

competition on who could orate fiercer rhetoric towards the PRC. Following the debate, writing for 'Foreign Affairs' the historian of American foreign policy David Milne argued in "Pragmatism or What?: the future of US foreign policy", that Romney and Obama held similar pragmatic foreign policy stances. Milne concludes that,

After arguing that he [Mitt] had to use rhetoric that would appeal the Tea Party: Romney and Obama are in fact both results-oriented pragmatists whose similarities outweigh their differences. And this, of course, is a source of angst to the base of both parties. (Milne, 2012, p.936)

He added that "if Romney does win the election in November, neo-conservatives are likely to find his administration as unwelcoming as Wilsonians have found Obama's" (Milne, p.949). This pattern of harsh rhetoric regarding US-China relations that is often contradictory to the interest of the US and not necessarily aligned with the candidates desired policy, seems certain to continue. Hence, although the rethink of the military bases is clearly in the US' national interest, future candidates might attempt to manipulate the rethink in order to utilize the China card.

Once freed of political constraints, Sutter notes that American administrations from both sides of the political spectrum tend to pursue forward developments commonly viewing "domestic American influences ... as obstacles to the administration's objectives in fostering cooperative relations with China and broader international interests" (Shambaugh, p.104). In fact, to avoid the trouble of fighting domestic forces, Sutter also argues that "the president, his administration at times impose discipline, secrecy, or other means in order to carry out foreign policy while keeping domestic American influences at arm's length" (Shambaugh, p.103).

Sutter evaluates that unlike the executive branch, "the US Congress is much more open to and dependent on domestic American constituencies" (Shambaugh, p.103).

Therefore, a more consistent fight against the reforms is likely to occur in both chambers of the legislative branch. Congress' dependence on American constituencies causes it to be much more responsive to the interests of certain lobbying groups and public opinion. For example, the 'pro-Taiwan' lobby always has a stake in policy regarding US-China relations for fairly obvious reasons; likewise, some interest groups will attempt to influence policy in regards to topics that are not necessarily visibly correlated to their issue of concern. Colin Dueck (2010) explains this phenomena in his book *Hard Line: The Republican Party and US Foreign Policy since World War II* by arguing that "electoral coalitions in the United States come together across a broad range of issue, many of which have nothing to do with international relations at all;" this analysis brings to light how the reforms could draw criticisms from a coalition of interest groups, some not directly related to security (p.301).

As this section alluded to earlier, the most likely source of opposition to reform will come from the Taiwan lobby. Sutter, as well as many other experts, have claimed that Taiwan is "the most sensitive and complex issue regarding US-China relations", and while Taiwan manages to maintain support in the US due to Taiwan-interest lobby members of Congress, this complicates US policy towards the ROC (Sutter, p.138). In his Foreign Affairs article "Diplomacy Ink: the influence of lobbies on US foreign policy," John Newhouse (2009) claims that "for years, the lobby that promoted Taiwanese interests, known simply as the China lobby, was the superpower of lobbies representing foreign causes in the United States" (p.90). The lobby, with its strong hold on Congress, has previously managed to complicate the US' pursuit of improved relations with the PRC. For example, the State Department legal adviser during Carter's administration, when commentating on the Taiwan Relations Act, said, "We were not as Taiwan-oriented as the Senate Foreign

Relations committee” attributing that to “[a] lot of provisions that were cranked into the bill once it got there were... Taiwan-favoring positions.” (Tucker, 2011, p.119). In more recent times, with the aid of the Taiwan lobby, “many in Congress and among the Republican presidential aspirants criticized President Obama’s decision not to sell F-16 Fighters despite strong requests from Taiwan’s president” (Tucker, 2011, p.252).

In its pursuit of cooler measures towards the PRC, the Taiwan lobby could find an ally in labor unions in the US. Labor unions that fight for workers’ rights in the US see the ‘world factory’—the PRC—as an adversary to their cause. Sutter notes this can be seen in “think tanks associated with organized labor in the United States [that] have tended to call for tougher policies against perceived unfair Chinese trade and economic policies” (Shambaugh, p.122). A security deal that is set to improve US-China relations will be seen as a source of improvement in trade between the two states. Although they are not natural stakeholders on a debate about national security, labor unions are likely to lobby Congress against reforms alongside the Taiwan lobby.

Another factor that one cannot dodge when debating American foreign policy or US-China relations in particular is political ideology. Dueck explains that electoral needs caused the Republican Party “by the time of the Korean War to become more hawkish than Democrats—a position they have never relinquished”, and concludes that “today as before, a hawkish American nationalism forms the center of gravity of the Republican Party, especially in its conservative base, when it comes to foreign policy issues” (Dueck, p.307). Focusing specifically on the China debate, Peter Heyes Gries (2014) argues in his book *“The Politics of American Foreign Policy: how ideology divides liberals and conservative over foreign affairs”* that “Conservatives desire a tougher China Policy than liberals do... because

on average they maintain much more negative attitudes towards communist countries in general and the Chinese government in particular” (n.p.). Meanwhile, when regarding the other political opposition, Gries infers that “the anti-China advocacy of Big Labor has likely counteracted the greater liberal warmth towards China within the Democratic Party” (n.p.). It becomes revealed that a clear divergence between general attitudes of Republican and Democrat voters when it comes to China, with the former preferring cooler relations. Therefore the rethink of the military bases is likely to be spun as soft on China, especially in conservative circles, and used to berate Democrats for caving to Chinese aggression.

Finally, another constraint regarding the PRC is general American public opinion towards the East Asian country. Sutter explains that “American Public opinion remains more negative than positive regarding the policies and practices of China, but it is not in a position, as it was in the aftermath of the Tiananmen crackdown, to prompt serious negative change in American China policy”( Shambaugh, p.117). While public opinion in the US regarding the PRC has soften since the early 1990’s, the general distaste for Chinese actions lead politicians to pursue populist rhetoric at times in order to appease public sentiment. Sutter points that this can be seen in the media that “reflected trends in American public opinion in demonstrating a continuing tendency to highlight the negative implication of Chinese developments for American interests and values” (Shambaugh, p.118). While American public opinion, as Sutter points out, is not a position to strongly affect American actions towards the PRC, it could provide further motivation for politicians to use harsh rhetoric against the PRC.

In sum, the greatest domestic constraint for the rethink of the military bases is going to be the debate regarding the PRC. Interests groups lobbying for better US—ROC relations

and labor unions; politicians with conservative outlooks; Presidential hopefuls; and the American media and public opinion promise to create some roadblocks for the rethink of US military bases in the Pacific.

### **The North Korea Factor**

While it should not generate the same amount of domestic friction as the China debate, reforms regarding the security apparatus in East Asia will generate some backlash in American domestic policies as going easy on the DPRK. This backlash could likely arrive from Congress, and be based on political ideology.

In their article “Congress and US-DPRK Relations: The Role of the Entrepreneur”, Terrence Roehrig and Lara A. Wessel (2011) infer how Congress has effected past American foreign policy toward the DPRK. The article explains that congress frequently attempts to steer action towards the DPRK in a different direction then the administration seeks it to go. They infer that “the institution and individual members have done much to oppose or complicate administration efforts and have provided some specific policy recommendations to replace administration initiatives, yet leading a complicated policy area such as North Korea has been a difficult task” (Roehrig & Wessel, 2011, 106). Roehrig goes onto explain that alongside alternative policy routes congress members are able to influence US-DPRK interactions by withholding funding through the ‘power of the purse’, and pursuing individual visits (that have become less common in recent years because of increase provocation by the DPRK).

Many de-facto political actors are voicing alternative policy today that is more hawkish towards the DPRK, for the most part from the political right wing. The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think-tank that has strong influence in congress, has repeatedly

made the argument that “North Korea is a state sponsor of terrorism: We should designate them accordingly. Obama officials have stated on the record that the DPRK counterfeits US currency: We have never made a formal charge”, such vehement calls to place the DPRK on the list of state sponsors of terrorism are grounded on the belief, stated in this Heritage Foundation policy memo, “if we don’t get back to hurting them, they will keep on hurting us” (Bromund, 2015, n.p.). Similar echoes can be found in the American Enterprise Institute, another conservative think-tank, as it suggests, “The Obama administration must also drop the wishful thinking deriving from the Bush era that China will somehow put pressure on Pyongyang to rein in its destructive behavior.... Recent calls by former chief American negotiator Christopher Hill for a “strategic reengagement” with Beijing over the DPRK thus promise to lead the US down the same path of wishful thinking and being tactically outmaneuvered.” (Austin, 2015). Meanwhile the liberal American Security Project reflects far greater optimism for negotiations and soft power, suggesting “that there is a role that public diplomacy can play in North Korea to catalyze social change and advance US foreign policy objectives... properly directed outreach as a component of a coordinated overall smart power strategy may be able to help catalyze change.”(Mull, 2013, n.p.). Policy circles are proposing alternate options, with a clear divergence based on American political identification. This debate will only increase with the rethink of the military bases, and will highlight the different takes liberals and conservative generally hold towards the DPRK. The administration should expect members of congress to attack the reforms and use think-tank publications to propose alternate policy.

Gries eloquently describes the fundamental factor in American attitudes towards the DPRK, he states that “surveys have consistently revealed that Americans feel coolest

toward communist countries like North Korea and China” (n.p.). Focusing on divergence of opinion in the US, he claims “conservatives desire a tougher policy toward North Korea than liberals do in large part because they feel cooler towards communist countries and hence North Korea” (Gries, n.p.). This argument, evidenced in different media outlet portrayals of recent events, is crucial to understanding the sources of backlash to the rethink of the bases. These news articles provide an account of how liberals and conservatives in the US feel towards the DPRK specifically and Communism in general.

Obama’s ending of the embargo on Cuba provided an interesting case study for Gries’s conclusion that conservatives are cooler towards communist courtiers. Responding to the recent opening to Cuba, Ana Quintana (2015) of the Heritage Foundation voiced her opposition stating that “President Obama’s new Cuba policy has been heavily criticized and rightfully so,” insisting that “Congress must make sure that US policy continues to support civil society groups on the island that uphold US values and are unaffiliated with the Castro regime and its communist ideology” (n.p.). In contrast, there are analysts who argue that complete embargos have not proven successful. Nicholas Kristof (2014) argues for the lifting of the embargo because he believes that people traveling across countries spread ideas that combat leftist sentiment (n.p.). This phenomenon can reform non-inclusive political and economic regimes better than hawkish policies (n.p.). He begins his article with criticism for the hawks in politics, recounting, “When I hear hawks denouncing President Obama for resolving to establish diplomatic relations with Cuba and ease the embargo, I don’t understand the logic. Is their argument that our policy didn’t work for the first half-century but maybe will work after 100 years?;” he proceeds to call for “hordes of

them [American tourists in Cuba], giggling at ancient cars held together with duct tape, or comparing salaries with Cubans” (n.p.).

The divergence of opinion between Kristof and Quintana regarding policies towards communist Cuba is consistent with the argument that liberals are warmer towards communist states. This assessment can be seen in other recent events as well. On the same day the embargo on Cuba ‘ended,’ another communist regime, the DPRK and the Sony hacking saga, dominated headlines and grabbed US attention. While criticizing the DPRK’s hacking into Sony and calling for a response to it from the Obama administration, Jonathan D. Pollack (2014), writing for the left-of-center Brookings Institute, remarks that “Sony’s decision to produce a film about a US-sponsored scheme to assassinate the DPRK’s leader, Kim Jong-un, was remarkably foolish; President Obama acknowledged as much” (n.p.). Writing for the conservative Weekly Standard Blog, William Kristol (2014) had a drastically different tone in his response to the Sony Affair:

The surrender to North Korea is a historical moment. It's far more significant than President Obama's announcement the same day of his opening toward Cuba. That is merely another sign of an administration's strategically weak and morally rudderless foreign policy. The capitulation to North Korea could be—unless we reverse course in a fundamental way—a signpost in a collapse of civilizational courage. (n.p.)

Reports following the hacking scandal in the Washington Post quoted a senior American diplomat saying “we want to test if they [North Korean regime] have an interest in resuming negotiations”, and a proposition for Pyongyang to postpone missile tests if the US cancelled joint exercise with the ROK; this prompted varying responses in conservative and liberal media outlets (Fified, 2015, n.p.). An op-ed in the Wall Street Journal claimed that,

The last time the Administration made a diplomatic overture... North responded with a ballistic missile launch ... That is all the more reason for the ... [US to] adopt a policy of regime change through coercive financial sanctions, support for North

Korean refugees and dissidents, and enhanced deterrence on the Korean peninsula.  
(Review & Outlook, 2015)

Meanwhile, an editorial in the NYT objected to the rejectionist attitude displayed in the Wall Street Journal, arguing, “It’s hard to understand what America would lose by testing the North’s intentions once again, especially as China may be ready to be a more responsible partner in finding a solution” (The Editorial Board, 2015, n.p.). These varying views and calls to action show that political ideology is a factor in Americans stances towards the DPRK, and portrays that Gries’s assertion is visible in media debates in the most recent of times.

From the above analysis regarding Congressional actions, think-tank proposals, and media opinions in the US toward the DPRK, it is clear that it is a topic of controversy in US domestic politics. The analysis leads to the conclusion that Republican policy makers are likely to attack the administration, framing the rethink as not harsh enough on the DPRK.

### **Coalitions for the Future of US Policy Rethink**

This section will discuss the actors and events in domestic American politics that can provide help to push through the rethink of the military bases. The prospect section will begin by looking at different lobbying groups to see how a coalition for the rethink of the military bases could be established. Following this, the paper will bring to light external events that can boost the likelihood of the reforms.

Earlier it was established that American politics are based on creating coalitions, potentially including actors that are not visibly interested in the issue. Therefore, even if they are not based upon lobbies that regularly deal with security, a myriad of interest groups would have indirect interests to support a crucial rethink of US military bases in Japan and ROK.

*Troop realignment in Okinawa*

There is some support in the US for the reduction of American troops in Japan, specifically redeploying the Marines stationed in Okinawa. This was seen in

A nonpartisan congressional committee [that] was set up in May 2010 to identify defense spending cuts. ... [It] unambiguously stated 'we don't need marines in Okinawa. They're a hangover from a war that ended sixty-five years ago'. ... [It] agreed that military spending had to be drastically cut and that one way to do it was by reducing US forces bases overseas. (McCormack & Norimatsu, 2012, p.201)

Another group of senators, Carl Levin (D-MI), John McCain (R-AZ), and Jim Webb (D-VA) issued a joint statement in 2011 calling the current US plans unrealistic, and calling to end all future base construction on Okinawa (John McCain press release, 2011, n.p.). The senators instead proposed a rethink of the military bases in the Asia Pacific that would reduce the American footprint in the region (McCormack & Normiatsu, 2012, p.203). Echoing these influential thinkers advocating a redeployment of ground troops in the region, Marine Corps General Jones, who until 2010 was Obama's national security adviser, joined the list of influential voices supporting troop realignment by remarking that "it really did not matter where the Marines were", refuting the myth that Marines stationed in Okinawa were critical to regional and global deterrence (McCormack & Normiatsu, p.204). Furthermore, Joseph Nye, one of the leading Asian experts in the US and a vehement supporter of strong deterrence against the PRC in the region, recently suggested in an op-ed for Project Syndicate that the US must rethink its military apparatus in the region. Nye urged the US to take into account the blowback from local populations, "particularly on the island of Okinawa" (Nye, 2014).

*Increased role of allies*

Allies assuming a larger role in regional security is another reform that has seen substantial support in recent years amongst policy circles in the US. Complementary to the rethink of troops in the region and the reduction of forces in Okinawa, these reforms have gained substantial support in recent years amongst policy circles. From both sides of the political spectrum in the US, albeit for different reasons, influential voices have called for US allies to be more active in regional security in the Asia Pacific. For politicians in the US in general, perhaps the greatest reason to support this thinking is, as Dueck points out “the general public...tends to be rather skeptical about arguments for US military intervention, and prefers working with allies not so much for idealistic reasons as to limit the burden on Americans” (Dueck, p.321). Supporting Dueck’s claims while focusing on Asia in particular Robert Kelly (2014), in his article “The ‘Pivot’ and its Problems: American Foreign Policy in Northeast Asia”, he states “Pushing expenses onto them [Asian Allies] is a path of low resistance for American decision-makers seeking to retain both hegemony in the Pacific and the welfare state at home” (Kelly, 2014, p.495). McCormack in further adding to this debate, attributes this line of thinking to former secretary of defense Robert Gates, arguing that as he “began to speak of an end to US land forces involvement in distant wars, the advantages of substituting Japanese for American forces in regional (or perhaps global) interventions must seem attractive in Washington” (McCormack & Normaitso, p.208), this assertion shows a clear support for the reduction of American footprint in the region.

The arguments of these academics show that there is support in the US for American allies increasing their share of the burden in regional security. This line of thinking is also visible in writing more directly correlated to policy circles. While the left and the right in American politics support this goal, they have different reasoning to support it. The

American Security Project in “10 Key National Security Challenges for 2015” stated, “our strategy of large scale on-the-ground longer-term action and stability operations has left indigenous populations feeling alienated and destabilized local politics settlements,” arguing that a more multilateral approach could better serve American interests (Hamill, 2015 n.p.). The hardline conservative Foreign Policy Initiative calls for stronger security cooperation as well, basing its policy proposal on the need to create strong opposition to China in the region (2014, n.p.). In his Project Syndicate op-ed, Nye, whose grand status makes his voice an influential one in Washington policy circles, has remarked that the “expected revisions to Japan’s defense framework are a positive development”, providing further opportunity and urgency for the US and Japan...[to] rethink the structure of their alliance” (2014, n.p.). In sync with calls for US allies assuming a larger security role, many leading think tanks in the US have in recent years called for improved security cooperation between ROK and Japan (Carafano, 2015; & Rowberry, 2014). This policy recommendation is also included in this proposal. The above academics, think-tank fellows, government officials, and other distinguished voices in American politics prove that there is support in the US for a security mechanism in the region in which American allies play a larger role.

### *Business Community*

Although the business community is not directly involved in security matters, majority American business leaders favor pragmatic relations with the PRC. The US ability to maintain stability in the region and increase cooperation with China is likely to improve trade conditions. As Sutter points out, in the American business community

[The] prevailing sentiment is to sustain stability in the Chinese business environments which has proven advantageous for many American companies that invest, manufacture, and trade in China. The drive for stability often causes

American business interests to place differences and disputes with China in second place as they lobby American officials in Washington. (Shambaugh, p.118)

The role the business community plays in US-Sino relations could be seen during Clinton's presidency when "US business pressures pushed Clinton to intervene in May 1994 to reverse existing policy and allow for unimpeded US renewal of MFN status for China" (Shambaugh, 2013, 120). It is true that on the edges of the political spectrum in the US, hardline liberals and conservatives prefer tougher acts towards the PRC, but these lines of thought are a minority in comparison to those favoring policy that maintains good trade relations between the world's two largest economies. Rethinks of the military bases promise to improve trade relations in the region, and such economic perks are a source of massive mainstream support. The powerful lobbying of the business community can supply a counterweight to those, especially in Republican circles, arguing for less friendly ties with the PRC.

#### *Weakened Taiwan Lobby*

Another boost for the feasibility of the reforms in US politics is the decrease in power of the Taiwan lobby. As politics on the island have grown divided on relations with the PRC, its ability to lobby in the US has decreased. Sutter explains that

...any congressional interest in pressing the Bush administration to increase support for Taiwan despite China's objections seemed offset by the turbulent political situation in Taiwan in the last years of the administration of President Chen- Shui-bian and the fracturing of the Taiwan lobby in Washington as a result of partisan and divisive politics in Taiwan. (Sutter, p.142)

This is a situation that still persists today. Further, following the Tiananmen Square incident China has begun to lobby in the US for its interests. Finally, Obama has recently shown his ability to take on strong ethnic lobbies, in the last stretch of his presidency.

Shlomo Ban Ami, writing in Project Syndicate, remarks that "perhaps his [Obama's] effort

to change America's Cuba policy – which means challenging the highly disciplined lobby opposing the rule of Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl – will show the way;” Ben Ami here alludes to a precedent for the last crucial stretch of the Obama presidency (Ben-Ami, 2015). That translates into not allowing strong interests groups to prevent the administration from establishing its foreign policy legacy.

In sum, Obama could build a coalition in US politics to support the rethink of the military bases. This coalition would be based on massive support from the business community, that favors positive trade relations with China; existing calls amongst politicians for a rethink of American security apparatus in East Asia today; a visible support in the US for American allies assuming a larger security burden; and the weakening of the Taiwan lobby.

### **Looking Ahead: Future Factors and the Promise for Rethink**

#### *The Middle East*

Since the Pivot to Asia was announced in 2011 it is hard to say that the US has been able to shift its attention from the Middle East. The US has reauthorized airstrikes in Iraq and Syria; it is negotiating a nuclear deal with Iran; it attempted to reach a political settlement in Syria, and while that failed and US military action was rejected it managed to transfer chemical weapons out of the war-torn state; once again the US attempted to mediate a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority; it is leading the coalition in the fight the against the Islamic State; and US ground troops are still in nearby Afghanistan. It becomes clear that the Middle East does not seem like a region that the US can withdraw from. From Libya to Pakistan, and through Yemen, Syria and Iraq, the region is at turmoil. With the aftermath of the 2011 Arab uprisings still rattling the region, a

combination of weak states, non-state actors, regional powers attempting to assert their influence, and attempts to proliferate nuclear weapons have turned the region into a security nightmare requiring global and superpower attention. Hence, the public debate in the US has remained largely on the Middle East when it comes to foreign policy.

The dominance of the Middle East on American public discourse on US foreign policy was seen in the lead up to the 2012 election. As Kelly points out, “the 2012 debates of the Republican primary and presidential election scarcely touched on Asia other than the reliably populist theme that China is cheating. The Middle East continues to dominate” (Kelly, p.493). During the 2012 presidential debate, Romney stated that nuclear Iran is the greatest security threat to the US while Obama listed terrorism, both threats strongly associated with the Middle East (Migdal, 2014, n.p.). The claims of these politicians is in tune with opinion polls, which indicate that while “the public’s reaction to the progress of the DPRK’s nuclear program has been relatively mild, recent polls show that up to 64% of the US public favors military strikes to end the Iranian nuclear program” (Mead, 2011, p.42). Simply put, the Middle East instills the most fear in citizens of the US.

Besides the Middle East’s seemingly endless capability to dominate headlines, Kelly’s article brings to mind another reason for the comparative lack of American interest in the affairs of the Asia Pacific. Luce (2012) explains “there is no similar cultural, intellectual, linguistic, or religious connection to Asia that will sell the pivot to a US public wary of more wars and interventions” (Kelly, p.594). Kelly infers that one of the consequences for the lack of cultural connection is that “our [American] actions in the Pacific will not be swayed by the equivalent of the Israel lobby; Protestant evangelicals will care less about the Pacific Rim than about the fate of the Holy Land.’ Asia does not activate

or mobilize these ‘Jacksonian-Christianist’ voters” (Kelly, p.494). This lack of cultural connection and powerful ideological lobbying reduces tension in American politics regarding East Asia. It is certain that the Middle East will continue to dominate newspaper covers in the years to come; therefore it promises to maintain its control in the US public debate regarding world affairs. The Middle East’s ability to grab the world’s attention reduces US domestic constraints to the rethink of the military bases.

A prevalent example of the sideline position East Asia often takes in American domestic debate was at show in the press surrounding the confirmation hearing of defense secretary nominee Ashton Carter. The day after the hearing, the headlines on The Hill website’s were: ‘ISIS killing takes spotlight at Pentagon chief’s confirmation hearing’; ‘Obama’s Pentagon pick worried about Iranian influence in Iraq’; ‘Defense nominee would rethink Yemen strategy against al Qaeda’; and in a divergence from the Middle East ‘Defense nominee ‘inclined’ to arm Ukrainian military’. On the same day the Wall Street Journal article covering the hearing focused some attention on Ukraine, focused mostly on the Middle East, and only gave a brief mention of Asia in its last sentence. The only criticism in WSJ, which does not tend to shy on condemnation of the current administration, was from Sen. John McCain, the new chairman of the Senate Armed Service Committee, criticizing the “president’s national-security priorities and questioned the current military strategy in the Middle East” ( Nissenbaum, 2015, n.p.). Further evidence of the peripheral position East Asia tends to occupy in security debates was at show during the 2015 Munich Security Conference. In his speech at the conference Secretary of State John Kerry discussed challenges to the world order, signaling out violent extremism, sourcing groups

operating in the ‘arc of instability’, and Russian aggression in Ukraine; the words ‘China’, ‘North Korea’, or even ‘Asia’ did not appear in his remarks.

This dominance of the Middle East on public debate will help the president push through with the reform, as the turbulent region will dominate public attention on foreign affairs. As academics have pointed out, the US public feels less connected to East Asia; public opinion has also displayed that they are more afraid of threats from the Middle East; and recent events prove that the US media, and policy circles pay less attention to East Asia than to Ukraine and the Middle East.

### *Hillary Factor*

The outlook for the upcoming presidential election in the US also reduces American domestic constraints to the reforms. That is due to two factors, the first being the ‘Hillary factor’, referring to the likely Democratic nominee for the presidency, and the second is the situation in the Republican Party.

As it was earlier explained by Sutter, domestic forces in the US “rather than driving US policy toward China in a strongly negative direction,...are more likely to serve as a drag slowing and impeding possible improvements in US relations with China”; this assertion can apply to the Asia Pacific as a region (Shambaugh, p.115). Hence, Obama could push through the rethink of the bases. Obama also does not have to worry about getting re-elected and can act without a worry for his political future. With that said though, the president does not want to leave his party overly exposed to criticism in 2016. As Trubowitz & Seo (2012) explain,

Generalizing from our earlier work and from theories of wedge politics in American politics, we argue that foreign policy setbacks create strategic opportunities for the party out of power to put the president and his party on the political defensive. Leaders are especially prone to play what we call ‘the China card’ in response to

setbacks in Sino-American relations— policies that the public deems to be misguided and wrongheaded. (p.190)

The rethink of the military bases could provide some space for the Republican Party to spin the new security arrangement as being soft on the PRC. The ‘Hillary factor’ is going to drastically complicate these attacks and free Obama of worries for the future of his party, and therefore plays a crucial role in reducing the president’s political obstacles as he improves the security of the US.

As a recent Washington Post op-ed bluntly pointed out, “If Hillary Clinton wants the nomination — and there’s no indication to the contrary — she can have it” (Robinson, 2015, n.p.). Hillary’s nomination will make it very difficult for the Republican Party to attack the Democrats for going soft on China by spinning the rethink of the military bases to seem that way. The former First Lady’s reputation in foreign policy circles is difficult to challenge. She recently distanced herself from Obama’s foreign policy generally, from Asia policy specifically, and is perceived as a foreign policy hawk. In the New York Times review of her book *Hard Choices*, Michiko Kakutani (2014) stated that “Mrs. Clinton’s views are perceived as often more hawkish than Mr. Obama’s” (n.p.). Another book review in The Guardian also articulated opinions attuned with the New York Times article and public perception, stating “she comes across as consistently hawkish, pushing Obama to take stronger action” (Runicman, 2014, n.p.). Many in the defense establishment including former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates have praised Clinton for her diplomatic skills. Her experience in foreign relations and her perception as a foreign policy hawk will challenge Republicans as they look ahead towards the upcoming presidential elections. Accusations of a foreign policy rethink favoring soft policies on the PRC and the DPRK will most likely fall flat for the Republican Party against this seasoned diplomat.

*Divided Republicans*

Alongside the Hillary factor, another complication in any future plan of the Republican Party to oppose Clinton is their party's vastly divided stances. First of all, unlike the Democrats, the Republicans have many possible front-runners in 2016, and their primaries are promising to be a tough battle. A recent New York Times article described the upcoming fight for the Republican nomination as "a crowded field of people who say they are considering running for president — including Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, former Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida, Senator Ted Cruz of Texas and the 2012 presidential nominee, Mitt Romney — has emerged. That means the party is expecting a bruising ideological battle for the nomination" (Chozick, 2015, n.p.). Although since the publication of the article, Mitt Romney has bowed out, the description continues to be relevant to the challenges facing the Republican Party.

Added to this contentious reality, there is also increasing plurality in top Republican's positions on foreign policy. While it has been established earlier in this report that since the Korean War the Republicans have managed to brand themselves as the more hawkish of the two parties, a different trend of conservatism is currently gaining momentum in the Republican Party. As Dueck points out in his book, "conservative anti interventionists have no doubt become a more visible national presence in recent years, producing some writing of high quality in venues such as Reason and the American Conservative" (Dueck, p.304). This raise of anti-interventionism can be seen most straightforwardly in aspiring presidential candidate Rand Paul. Kelly also observes a shift in the Republican Party's foreign policy asserting that "even within the GOP, there appears to be a small if growing constituency for military spending restraint," a call that contradicts

the Republican mainstream in the post WWII era (Kelly, p.497). While mainstream Republicans still present themselves as vehement hawks, the alternate policy positions present in this multipolar Republican primary a promise to provide an array of problematic foreign policy statements. These likely assertions are sure to haunt the eventual nominee of the GOP. This lack of consensus is a massive boost for the Democrats, and thus eases domestic pressures on the reforms.

Clinton, who has served as Secretary of State, Senator, and the First Lady, would be a difficult contender in the realm of foreign policy for a GOP candidate, even if that individual sailed through the primaries. The current political realities make the 'China' and 'North Korea' cards highly unlikely to improve the Republican standing. With the divided camp in the Republican Party, as well as Clinton's perceived relative hawkishness, attacking her for being soft on the PRC and the DPRK seems like a dangerous game to play for any aspiring Republican presidential candidate.

## **Conclusion**

Obama will be able to push through the rethink of the military bases. The administration can count on visible support for the redeployment of marines from Okinawa; strengthening our alliances in East Asia, in order to pass off some of the security burden, and decrease blowback from local populations; confidence building measures with China, greatly due to the prospect of greater trade; and continue the pivot to Asia. Although a few of the smaller reforms do not have such straightforward backing in influential circles in the US, the mainstream support for the reforms listed above will create a base coalition that can pass through the complete rethink. With that said, some in Congress will attempt to attack the president by spinning the reforms as weak actions caving into Chinese

aggression. In addition, the reforms will be scrutinized for not being tough enough on the DPRK. These attacks are likely to come from the interventionist far right and from the labor hard left, with the support of the Taiwan lobby, labor unions, certain media outlets and conservative think tanks. The administration will be able to use business groups; Americans yearn for a lesser burden of international security; politicians on both side of the aisle supporting troop redeployment; and a new equilibrium in the China lobby on Capitol to fend off these attacks. Other factors will also boost the administration's efforts to push through the needed reforms. The turbulent Middle East will continue to dominate the attention of the public, media, and policy circles; and the outlook for 2016 provides dire opportunity for the Republican Party to attack the reforms.

## Chapter 5

# US Defense Spending in Japan and the ROK: Cautionary Spending Areas

Aviva Reuben

This paper addresses the issues with US military expenditures in the Asia-Pacific Region in regards to the rebalance to Asia. This report is outlined by discussing military trends, which recently shifted upward for the US, whereas in the ROK and Japan their respective contributions have not kept up with US costs. Following this, the report then highlights main expenditure areas involving the rebalance and discusses oversight issues of Host Nation Support (HNS). The paper concludes with possible routes to reduce unnecessary spending with BRAC and a suggestion for active cooperation with the ROK and Japan.

## **Introduction**

The US rebalance to Asia involves a shift in focus in the region regarding current US military capabilities and economic competition as well those of its allies. Therefore, when discussing the rebalance, a look at the budget and causes for concern in spending are necessary. Expenditure constraints may prevent the full intentions and proposed plans from being realized due to the realities of effectively funding the shift to Asia as prioritized by the US Government. Therefore, this paper addresses possible reduction actions and their viability, such as supporting the 2016 proposed plan of BRAC, as well as improving oversight of cost estimates from the DoD. I argue that the US budget is not accounting for various costs in the shift to Asia due to a lack of proper financial estimation and host-country support. I discuss possible routes to take to either maintain or decrease spending in areas that may not directly reduce US spending in the ROK and Japan but will reduce unnecessary and unaccounted for expenditures elsewhere.

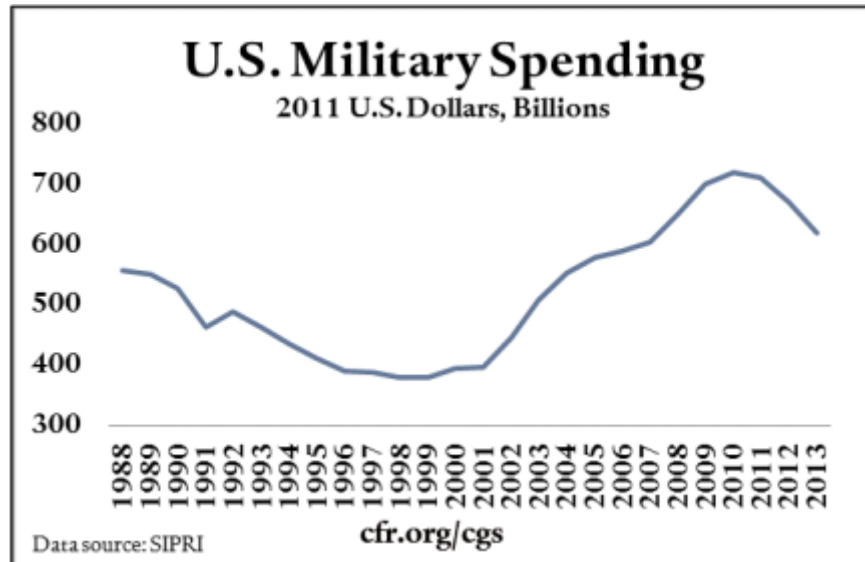
## **Trends in Military Budget**

This section highlights the trends of military spending of the US and its host countries, specifically, the ROK and Japan. In particular, the relationship of spending between these countries and the recent proposal of the FY 2016 budget lays a foundation to observe changing and strained aspects of US military spending in East Asia.

### *US Military Spending before 2016*

US Military Spending has decreased from 2010. The decrease reflects military spending worldwide and not specifically within the Asia-Pacific Region. A large part of this can be attributed to the changes in US involvement within the Middle East, where massive

spending began in 2001 and decreased around 2010. This overall trend is shown by SIPRI measures illustrated in Figure 5.1.

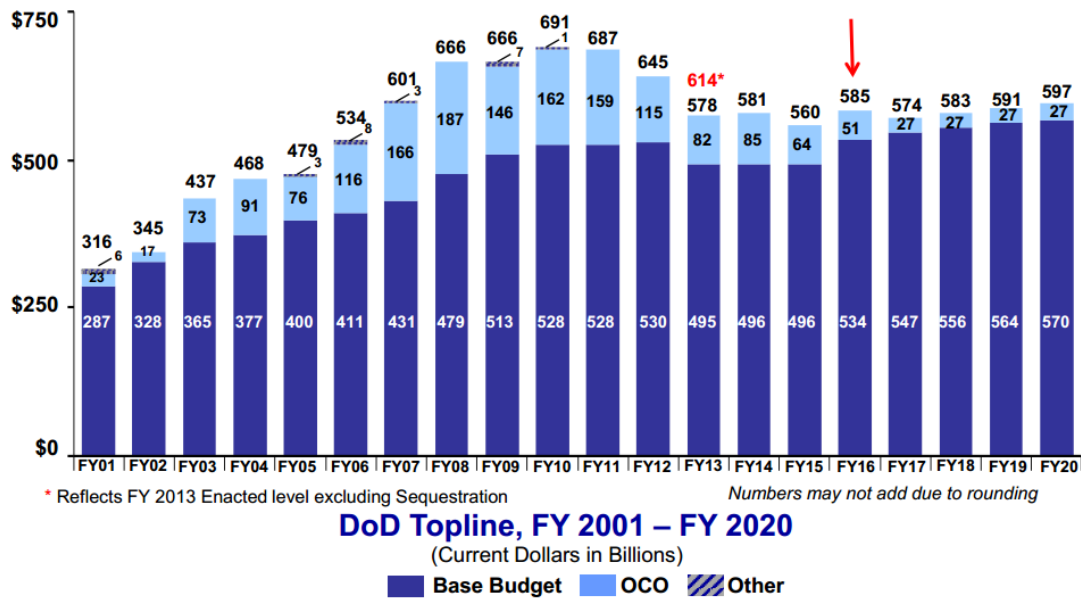


**Figure 5.1.** Trends in US Military Spending

*Source:* Council on Foreign Relations (Walker, 2014)

*Note:* Adjusted for inflation at 2011 constant dollars

Illustrations of the base budgets including projected budget plans seen in Figure 5.2 show that the actual numerical amounts of spending and the budget are not the same. Spending is usually a higher amount than what the budget originally estimates for. However, both spending and budget have a similar trend.



**Figure 5.2.** Defense Budget Projections

Source: Office of the Undersecretary of Defense.

Note: The 27 OCO amounts are a place holder.

In regard to where the expenditure goes, a 2011 report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) finds:

Of the approximately \$24.6 billion obligated by the services to support DOD’s posture in Asia from fiscal years 2006 through 2010, approximately \$18.7 billion (76%) was for operation and maintenance costs. The military services project that operation and maintenance funding requirements will continue at about \$2.9 billion annually for fiscal years 2011-2015. However...DOD has major posture transformation initiatives underway in the ROK, Japan, and Guam that could significantly impact estimates of these future costs” (GAO, p.36).

In sum, the main expenditure for the US in East Asia goes to operation and maintenance. This may be due to the fact that HNS, which is the contribution from the ROK and Japan to have a US military presence in their respective countries, cover other costs

such a general construction and lease arrangements. Therefore, the above numbers can represent a continuing cost but does not account for what HNS is offsetting, nor the recent construction and realignment of personnel and non-personnel in the region which is what the GAO refers to as “transformation initiatives” and will be discussed at length further in the report.

The 2013 Senate Report, “Inquiry Into US Costs and Allied Contributions to support the US Military Presence Overseas,” states that “the US spends more than \$10 billion a year to support our permanent military presence overseas... the cost of maintaining that presence in Germany, the ROK and Japan... makes up about 70% of that total ” (i). This is not the actual number because it does not include military personnel costs, or the costs of war in Afghanistan (Senate, i), but does tell us that the ROK and Japan are where a large sum of US costs are going even though the US receives HNS. As analyzed below, the HNS is not as stable as the budget currently accounts for, as costs are increasing for the US relative to contributions from the ROK and Japan.

#### *The FY2016 defense Budget and implications for Pacific Region*

The FY2016 Budget Proposal as shown in Figure 5.2 increases spending for the first time in five years. The increase in budget is not guaranteed because it is a proposal and Congress has yet to approve all the assertions made. However, the proposed shift towards a greater amount of defense spending reflects a desire to reduce pressurized budget reductions that were mentioned in the FY2014 Quadrennial Report, and attempts to completely set aside a constraining 2016 sequestration.

The Middle East is addressed more than in the previous Fiscal Year report, as is Europe due to ISIL and Ukraine, respectively, and overall budgetary spending in these

regions cannot fully be estimated due to their volatile nature and their immediate threat. There is a greater economic emphasis regarding the Asia-Pacific region in the report than the previous year, but overall focus remains to be security in the region. The following is an assertion made under the section 'Rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific Region' in the FY2016 Budget:

In pursuit of security cooperation, the Budget enhances and modernizes US defense relationships, posture, and capabilities with a focus on maritime security...To address security, development, and economic challenges, the Budget prioritizes advancing regional and country capabilities. These investments are critical to the Administration-wide effort to promote regional security and economic cooperation. (p.47)

This quote has potentially unstable implications. Increasing maritime security involves in particular the Navy and Marines in Okinawa and Guam for which not only is there an increased cost in that region but recently had a freeze on funding to the DOD in Guam, lifted only with a precautionary cap (Dumat-ol Daleno, 2014). Furthermore, prioritizing regional and country capabilities is needed to provide military strength but also might reflect lack of US awareness with how the ROK and Japan's respective contributions are allocated.

Even though this proposal found in the FY2016 budget seems to address the concerns of a previously constrained system as warned in the 2014 Quadrennial Report, there remain areas in overseas spending that need to be addressed in order to efficiently fund and maintain a stable US presence. Therefore, even though defense is receiving increased funding, it does not mean that the gap between estimations and actual cost is narrowing, and there are growing gaps in the budget that are not estimated for which will be detailed below.

*Japan and the ROK Contributions for Defense*

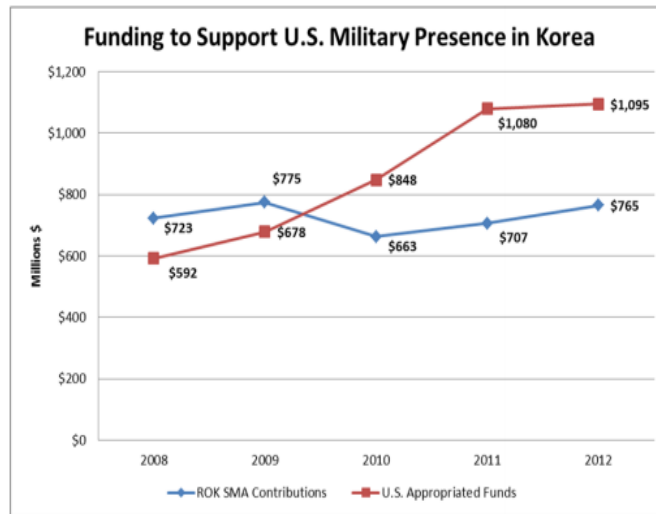
As per the agreement for the US to have military presence in the host countries of Japan and the ROK, the host countries are to provide contributions toward the US Forces. The methods of payment are not purely monetary, but can be in-kind contributions. These payments, as RAND clarifies, involve contributions such as land, equipment, utilities, infrastructure, and payment to local communities and contractors (p.135). The types of in-kind contributions can be further divided to include 'off-budget' or indirect support which involves the host country waiving fees, rent and damage claims (p.135). The different kinds of contributions illustrate the variety for which the host country and the US take support military bases.

The support by the ROK is set by a Special Measures Agreement (SMA) with the US. ROK defense spending, unlike US defense spending which adjusts each year, has a 5 year grouping in which the costs remain relatively constant when accounting for inflation. The most recent agreement, signed in 2014, states that "the contribution of the Republic of Korea for 2014 is ₩920 billion (approximately \$840 million). The 2015 through 2018 contributions shall be determined by increasing the contribution of the previous year by the inflation rate" (US Defense, Art. II, 2014). Although these contributions have increased from the previous SMA, they are not keeping up with the pace of US costs. The 2013 Report of Committee on Armed Services United States Senate, published the year before the current SMA was signed, finds:

South Korean SMA contributions are not keeping pace with the growth in US costs. For example, while the ROK's estimated SMA contributions grew by about \$42 million between 2008 and 2012 (from approximately \$723 million to \$765 million), US non-

personnel costs increased by more than \$500 million during the same period (\$592 million to nearly \$1.1 billion) (Senate, iii).

A graph illustrating the gap is provided on Figure 5.3. The SMA does not represent the total amount of contributions toward the US, which also can produce negative effects for the US, discussed later in the report.



**Figure 5.3.** Won to Dollar conversions using annual budget rates  
 Source: Senate Committee on Armed Services

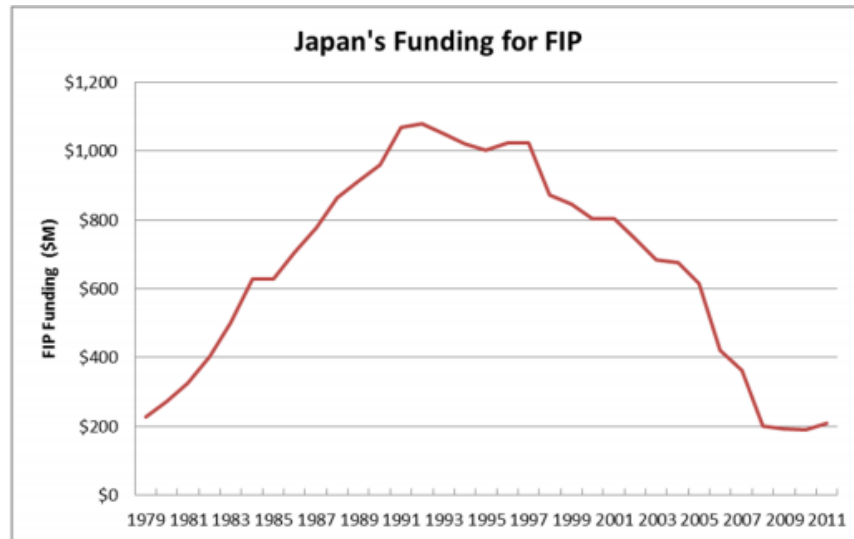
Japan, despite its robust relationship with the US, also shows trends similar to the ROK.

According to the GAO:

After peaking in 1999 (¥276 billion), funding from Japan has steadily declined. In 2010, the Government of Japan provided ¥187 billion in host-nation support –the lowest total since 1992... [US and Japan] agreed to maintain the 2010 levels of host-nation support for the next 5 years. Any increases... would therefore be borne by DOD. (p.40)

This means that not only is Japan providing fewer contributions but that any difference would be made up for by the US. Japan also divides its funding. It has a SMA agreement with the US, as well as what it calls a Facility Improvement Program (FIP), which is also decreasing in funds (See Figure 5.4). The FIP is supposed to cover whatever reductions are

made from the SMA, to “keep the level of Japanese Support constant” (Senate, p.42). Further information about the FIP is discussed in a later section.



**Figure 5.4.** Trends in Japanese FIP Funding

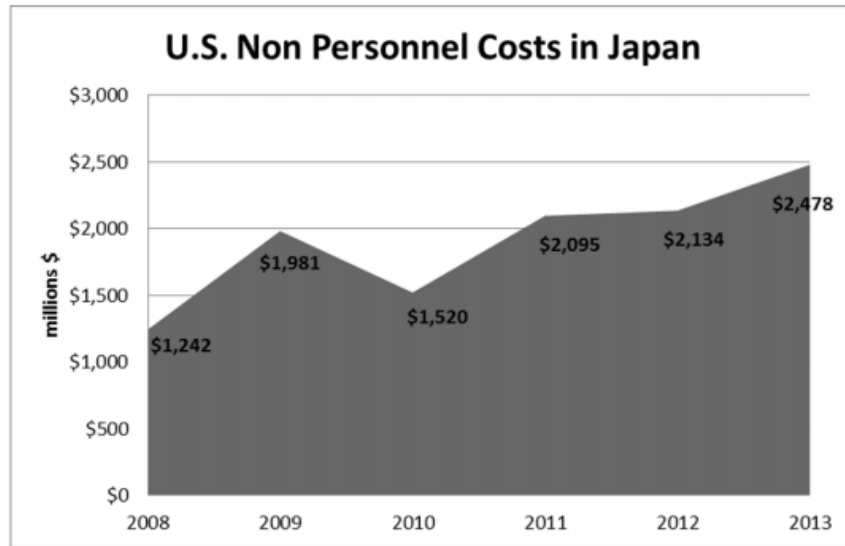
Source: Senate Committee on Armed Services

A clear example of the inability to offset US costs involves Japan’s support for US Utility Costs, as examined by the Senate Committee on Armed Services. Japanese contribution under the SMA has set caps for its Labor and Utility Sharing costs from 2011-2015. A Ministry of Defense document describing the SMA cost-sharing (2012) outlines:

Labor costs: The upper limit of the number of workers to be funded by Japan will be reduced in stages from 23,055 to 22,625. The adjustment will be phased in over the new SMA period. Utilities costs: The upper limit for utilities costs is set at ¥24.9 billion (approximately \$208 million) for each fiscal year. At the same time, the share of costs to be borne by Japan is reduced in stages from the current 76% (approximate) to 72% (approximate). The adjustment will be phased in over the new SMA period. (p.232)

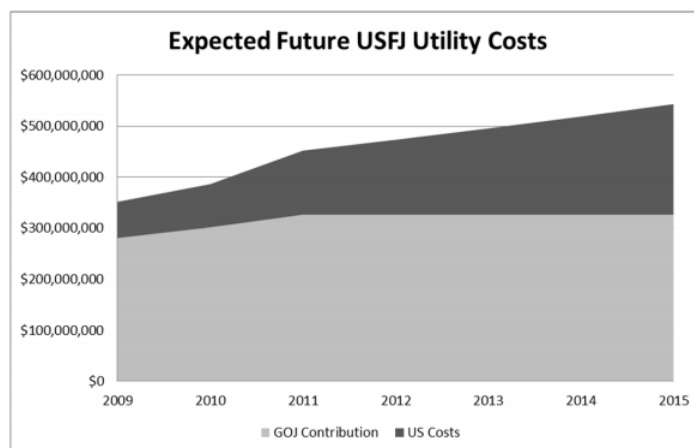
The proposed objective shows a decreasing amount of funds, to be compensated by the US and Japan’s FIP which as mentioned above has shown a decreasing trend. The Senate provides visual examples of the increasing US costs in Figures 5.5 and 5.6. Specifically, in regard to Figure 5.6, the Senate (2013) summarizes that “GOJ [Government of Japan]

sought to eliminate the utility cost sharing program in 2011 and that it is ‘highly probable’ GOJ will target utility cost sharing for reduction or elimination when the next SMA is negotiated” (p.44), from the information they received from US Forces Japan. Even though these are estimates, the predicted trend illustrates a rising share of the cost that the US will need to pay if it were to maintain the current presence it has in the ROK and Japan.



**Figure 5.5.** US Non-personnel costs in Japan

Source: Senate Committee on Armed Services



**Figure 5.6.** Estimated future USFJ Utility Costs

Source: Senate Committee on Armed Services

Note: Using 2011 Yen to Dollar exchange rate

## Current Expenditures in the ROK and Japan

This section covers where the current costs in regard to realignment are in the ROK and Japan. The greatest possible costs in the ROK come from the Yongsan Relocation Plan, the Land Partnership Plan (LPP) and Tour Normalization postures. In particular, focusing costs on fewer, bigger bases decreases the overall costs of maintenance and operations but the accompanying increase of personnel and their families and infrastructure are costs that the US may have to invest in more than they originally estimated. In Japan, there are no cost estimates of US basing in Guam, creating further possible expenditures for the US. Not only is the Marine Corps estimating more than the DoD [Department of Defense] but Japan has reduced its costs on Guam, which adds construction costs in addition to operational and maintenance.

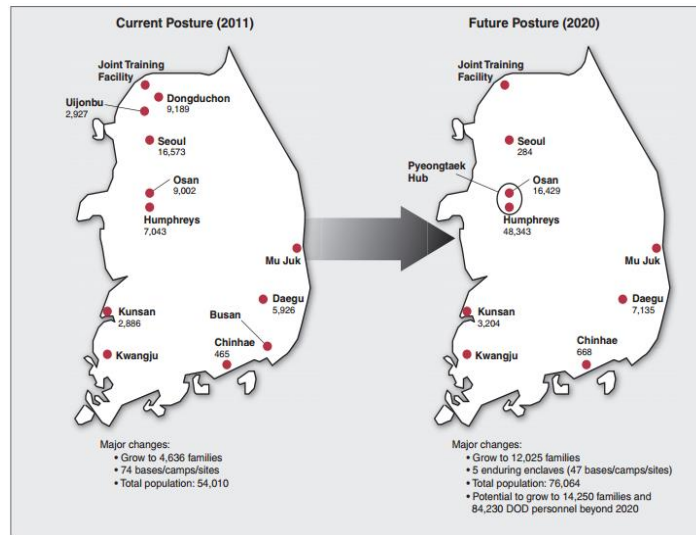
### *The ROK*

The Yongsan Relocation Plan (YRP), and the Land Partnership Plan are part of a broader Korea Relocation Plan to shift US forces south of Seoul, increasing US presence at Camp Humphrey's, mainly. Outlined in the USFK website:

Korea will get valuable and strategic land back into Korean controls to realize the plans for the Korea's long-term goals. US forces will consolidate into two hubs around Osan/Pyeongtaek and Daegu while improving efficiencies, moving out of the populated Korean cities and into less congested areas, reducing the intrusive nature of the military presence in the community. (USFK)

Figure 5.7 provides a visual understanding of the consolidation process that attempts to return valuable land in the metropolitan area to the ROK and move US presence to less populated areas. Figure 5.8 by the GAO, provides an estimate through 2016 as to how much both the US and the ROK must pay respectively, approximating a cost of \$10.7 billion to the US. However, in regards to Yongsan and LPP, the costs illustrated are only construction

costs. Maintenance and operational costs as usual fall on the US to shoulder and the SMA will not cover all of these costs.



**Figure 5.7.** Consolidation of Land back to the ROK  
 Source: Government Accountability Office

**Table 1: Summary of Estimated Costs of PACOM Posture Initiatives in South Korea Identified as of January 2011 (Billions of Dollars)**

Posture initiative <sup>a</sup>	Estimated costs		
	United States <sup>b</sup>	Korea	Total <sup>c</sup>
Yongsan Relocation Plan	\$2.0 <sup>d</sup>	6.3 <sup>d</sup>	\$8.3
Land Partnership Plan	3.4 <sup>d</sup>	0.6 <sup>d</sup>	4.0
28,500 U.S. troops in Korea	0.2 <sup>d</sup>		0.2
Tour normalization	5.1 <sup>e</sup>		5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10.7</b>	<b>\$6.9</b>	<b>\$17.6</b>

Source: GAO analysis of USFK and Army cost data.

<sup>a</sup>Each initiative has a different starting date. The Yongsan Relocation was agreed to in October 2004; Land Partnership Plan was agreed to in March 2002; the 28,500 troop level agreement was announced in 2008, and tour normalization was started in 2007. See narrative below for additional details.

<sup>b</sup>Cost estimates prepared by USFK officials assumed the use of Special Measures Agreement contributions to help defray costs of these initiatives to the United States. According to USFK and State Department officials, the United States and South Korea are currently consulting on the extent to which Special Measures Agreement contributions will be applied to these initiatives. Special Measures Agreement contributions are funds provided or expenditures borne by South Korea to help defray the cost of locating U.S. military personnel in South Korea. Currently, those contributions are used for a variety of purposes—for example, Special Measures Agreement contributions can be used to reduce construction costs for new facilities and for sustainment costs of current facilities.

<sup>c</sup>Because some components of the cost estimates were presented as totals over some of the time periods and were not broken out by year, we were not able to convert these costs into constant dollars.

<sup>d</sup>Costs estimated by USFK through 2016.

**Figure 5.8.** Estimated Costs for the US and the ROK  
 Source: Government Accountability Office

In addition to the overall costs for realigning the US presence, the personnel count will increase drastically, with the official number varying among sources. For this reason, it proves difficult for the US and the ROK to accurately estimate the facilities needed to

increase personnel and their dependents. At first, it may not seem as much of a change considering the plan will “maintain US military troop strength at 28,500 soldiers” (GAO, p.10). However, the approximate number of family members will drastically increase. This lack of estimation becomes problematic because the DoD and USFK cannot accurately allocate funds.

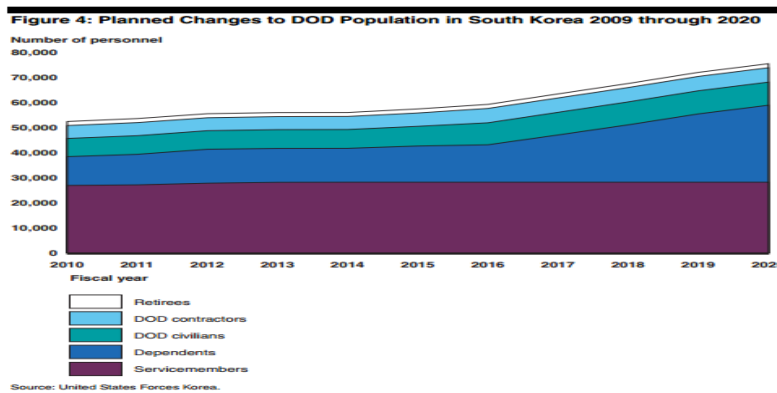
Family presence relates to tour normalization. With the proposed plan, if a service member were to come to the ROK for a 36 month period, they can be accompanied by family members and those members can stay in the ROK even when the service member is repositioned to a different location. However, the inability to afford the normalization was evidenced in 2012 where “USFK’s Commander said that the Department of Defense was ‘not able to afford Tour Normalization at this time’ (GAO, p.27). Whether ending at Phase I of the tour normalization that has yet to be fully realized, or seeking to continue to the next phases of Tour Normalization with more cooperation with the ROK, the fundamental problem of Tour Normalization remains a constraint to a realistic budget, even if it is to increase as proposed in FY2016. There are three issues raised against this posture. The first issue is summarized in the Senate’s Report, and is one of safety regarding the security of family members in the ROK when the US finds DRPK as an immediate threat (p.26).

Another issue involves the costs of the time span of tours itself. RAND asserts that there is a balance that is required in determining the time span for tour rotation for it to be cost-effective, and that longer, less frequent rotations are more cost-effective than shorter, more frequent ones. Thus it would seem because it is for 3 years, it should be more cost-effective than the 1 year that RAND analyzes. However, in the topic of tour normalization, a three-year span is too costly for reasons beyond just creating new facilities for families. The

GAO makes such a point in regards to training the Air Force. Because there is no proper facility or training grounds in the ROK unless it is shared with ROK forces, a three-year span would produce a “training deficiency” (p.20). To make up for this the air personnel would need to be transported to Alaska for re-training which adds to overall costs. Therefore, one can assume that these costs, however minor, can be avoided if the 3-year span was reduced. This is in addition to RAND’s findings that in regards to the Pacific, the costs for holding and maintaining an Air Force with the equipment is relatively higher to the other branches of the military. The costs of the Kunsan Air base and planned tour normalization have not been added to the estimate of the 2020 to 2050 costs (GAO, p.15). It is possible that a reduction in the amount of tour rotations may seem like it is not reflecting a strong support for the ROK. However a reduction seems best in a cost-benefit analysis and therefore it becomes about what priorities are in the region; in particular, if the Air base needs a longer tour normalization and family presence or even if the current Yongsan Plan and LPP need the long presence itself.

The third issue involves the actual costs of having family members there and increasing facilities around the bases. Although RAND has not completed a 3-year rotation assessment, the costs of bringing in dependents are great enough to cause concern. Figure 5.9 (labeled in the GAO’s documentation as Figure 4) illustrates the relative increase in personnel that is planned for the ROK through 2020. It estimates that the number dependents will continue to increase after 2016, when the Yongsan plan is estimated to be completed. It is difficult to estimate the costs of Yongsan. According to the GAO, “USFK officials have estimated that based on the 2020 implementation schedule, the cost to implement tour normalization for all services (including military construction, family

housing, personnel, and operation and maintenance costs) would be about \$5.1 billion from fiscal year 2012 through fiscal year 2020” and the numbers are estimated to increase from 2021 to 2050 (p.15). Not simply the costs of construction and maintenance but “one Army estimate indicates fully implementing tour normalization could increase education and medical costs by almost \$10 billion from 2012 through 2050” (GAO, p.39). Whether the ROK will continue to contribute at the current rate is unknown but with its contributions trending downwards and the uncertainty if SMA is to be used, and if the US wants an increasing accompaniment with its personnel, increasing costs need to be accounted for in the ROK.



**Figure 5.9. US DoD Population Projections in the ROK**  
 Source: Government Accountability Office

The Senate Report addresses the family housing at Camp Humphrey’s (which a full realignment of Yongsan and LPP rests on) in great detail. The Senate charts a “housing deficit.” Even with existing family housing, housing built with previous funds, and ROK funded housing, the camp is still 639 units short of the 1,324 required by the USFK (Figure 5.10). In order to make up for this deficit and not deplete Army funds further, the Humphreys Housing Opportunity Plan (HHOP) was created and would use funds from family allowances. The rents on these housing units increased from \$1000 to \$4,200 using

ROK funds as an offset. While the exact amount requested to fund the HHOP was reduced to \$3,900, the difference in rates for housing compared to the current \$1,600 housing allowance (at Camp Humphrey’s location) proves that the housing is not sustainable (p.31).

**Family Housing at Camp Humphreys**

<b>Source of On-Post Family Housing</b>	<b>Family Housing Units</b>
Existing Family Housing at Camp Humphreys	142
Family Housing Built With FY 2009 Appropriations	210
Family Housing Paid by South Korea under YRP	333
<b>Total Family Housing from identified sources</b>	<b>685</b>
<b>Family Housing “Required” by USFK</b>	<b>1,324</b>
<b>Family Housing Deficit</b>	<b>639</b>

**Figure 5.10.** Camp Humphrey’s Housing Deficit  
*Source:* Senate Committee on Armed Services

The ROK will not cover these increased costs even if they fall under the construction category, which is traditionally a host nation’s responsibility. The US therefore not only has the normal costs of operations and maintenance but construction costs as well. The 2013 Senate Report states:

In the YRP agreement, the ROK agreed to pay to build housing at Camp Humphreys to replace DOD *owned* housing at Yongsan Garrison [author’s emphasis]. However, most family housing at Yongsan is not owned by the US and the ROK is only obligated to fund the construction of 333 family housing units at Camp Humphreys. The US is responsible for the remainder. Other US forces will also be moving to Camp Humphreys under the LPP, increasing the demand for family housing. The cost of any family housing necessitated by the LPP is a US obligation (p.29).

They chart the estimated costs of housing alone to be a US cost of \$630 million (Figure 5.11). This is due to the significant difference between the Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) rental rate and that of the HHOP (Senate, p.30). The GAO asserts that even though this avoidance of burdening the US Army’s expenditures will reduce ‘construction-costs’ of the Army, it will be negated by increasing family housing allowance costs (GAO, p.39). With the private venture HHOP rental rate, there is an unsustainable family relocation process in regards to the ROK.

Long-Term HHOP Costs

Year	850 units @ OHA Rental Rate	850 units at HHOP Rental Rate	Cost Difference OHA vs. HHOP
2013	\$16,320,000	\$39,780,000	\$23,460,000
2014	\$16,809,600	\$40,973,400	\$24,163,800
2015	\$17,313,888	\$42,202,602	\$24,888,714
2016	\$17,833,305	\$43,468,680	\$25,635,375
2017	\$18,368,304	\$44,772,740	\$26,404,437
2018	\$18,919,353	\$46,115,923	\$27,196,570
2019	\$19,486,933	\$47,499,400	\$28,012,467
2020	\$20,071,541	\$48,924,382	\$28,852,841
2021	\$20,673,688	\$50,392,114	\$29,718,426
2022	\$21,293,898	\$51,903,877	\$30,609,979
2023	\$21,932,715	\$53,460,994	\$31,528,278
2024	\$22,590,697	\$55,064,823	\$32,474,127
2025	\$23,268,418	\$56,716,768	\$33,448,350
2026	\$23,966,470	\$58,418,271	\$34,451,801
2027	\$24,685,464	\$60,170,819	\$35,485,355
2028	\$25,426,028	\$61,975,944	\$36,549,916
2029	\$26,188,809	\$63,835,222	\$37,646,413
2030	\$26,974,473	\$65,750,279	\$38,775,805
2031	\$27,783,708	\$67,722,787	\$39,939,080
2032	\$28,617,219	\$69,754,471	\$41,137,252
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$438,524,512</b>	<b>\$1,068,903,497</b>	<b>\$630,378,986</b>

Figure 5.11. Estimated HHOP Costs

Source: Senate Committee on Armed Services

Figure 5.12 (RAND, p.227) shows that the average cost of civilian separation is greater than the cost of moving. It is difficult to find an absolute number of families that are staying or moving from the US or other bases. However, the argument remains that both these separation costs and the HHOP and tour rotation are burdened not only by an unconfirmed amount of dependents but the latter must also consider facilities that must be built and allowances to support it.

**Table 8.20**  
**Personnel-Related Closure and Realignment Cost Factors**

Factor	Between Overseas and United States	Within Overseas Region
Military move	\$7,424	\$5,575
Civilian move	\$7,424	\$5,575
Civilian separation	\$20,370	\$20,370
Program management	\$2,380	\$2,380

**Figure 5.12.** Closure and Realignment Personnel Costs

Source: RAND Corporation (Lostumbo, 2013)

*Japan*

The Realignment plan in Japan shifts approximately 7,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam. The issues with Guam in regards to cost estimation are discussed in the next section in more detail. However, it can be argued that early estimates are inaccurate and most likely underestimations. The GAO projects a higher cost than the \$8.6 billion figure estimated by the DoD, which the DoD is now reevaluating. Their analysis is shown on Figure 5.13, including other posture changes.

**Table 2: Summary of Estimated Costs of PACOM Posture Initiatives in Japan and Guam Identified as of January 2011 (Billions of Dollars)**

Posture initiative	Estimated costs <sup>a</sup>		
	United States	Japan	Total
<b>Japan</b>			
Carrier air wing ,moving from Atsugi to Iwakuni	Not yet estimated <sup>a</sup>	\$1.4 <sup>b</sup>	\$1.4
Camp Zama/ Sagama Depot	Not yet estimated <sup>a</sup>	0.3 <sup>b</sup>	0.3
Aviation training relocation	Not yet estimated <sup>a</sup>	0.3 <sup>b</sup>	0.3
Yokota Air Base and Air Space	Not yet estimated <sup>a</sup>	No costs estimate provided	
Okinawa consolidation	Not yet estimated <sup>a</sup>	4.2 <sup>b</sup>	4.2
Futenma Replacement Facility	Not yet estimated <sup>a</sup>	3.6 <sup>b</sup>	3.6
<b>Subtotal Japan</b>		<b>\$9.8</b>	<b>\$9.8</b>
<b>Guam</b>			
Roadmap agreement <sup>c</sup>	4.2	6.1	10.3
Additional requirements	7.1 <sup>d</sup>		7.1
<b>Subtotal Guam</b>	<b>\$11.3</b>	<b>\$6.1</b>	<b>\$17.4</b>
<b>Northern Mariana Islands Training Range</b>	<b>\$1.9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$1.9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13.2</b>	<b>\$15.9</b>	<b>\$29.1</b>

Source: GAO analysis of cost data provided by DOD officials.

**Figure 5.13.** Estimated Realignment Costs in Japan  
*Source:* Government Accountability Office

These are fixed costs. According to the 2006 Roadmap for the US and Japan as discussed by the GAO, the US will take on whatever costs that cannot be covered by Japan. As RAND emphasizes, this estimation needs to also take into account variable costs. Japan is paying for the fixed costs, which can relieve some pressure on the US. However as mentioned before, the contributions are declining relative to rising US costs in posture. Variable costs such as operations and maintenance traditionally fall under the US. Furthermore, a lot of the taxes and other benefits shared and offset by Japan might not be available in Guam as it is a US territory, unless there is an agreement made. The Senate Report finds that in 2012 Japan announced it was no longer willing to pay for \$3.29 billion of its agreed to payments for the shift to Guam. As a result, the current posture shifts prove that not only is there an increasing transition cost, but a large amount will be a US burden.

### **Gaps between US and Host Nation Oversight and Estimation**

The DoD has been criticized for its lack of accounting transparency and its prior estimation of future costs. There is also lack of transparency within the layers of the DoD and the forces in Japan and the ROK, as both countries move towards controlling where their contributions go without input from the US. This change may reflect a difference in US priorities and a future without the needed funding for a US presence in both countries.

#### *US and the ROK*

The costs of relocation are more than expected and the funding is not secured. As mentioned above, there is not an accurate estimate available on the amount of dependents arriving to the ROK. It is difficult to estimate the costs of Yongsan. Not only do estimates of

the number of arriving dependents vary among different sources, but the SMA as of now is not covering the Yongsan and LPP plans, which have separate funding.

There is first an issue with communication between the ROK and the US Army. The Senate's report states:

USFK construction projects built with ROK in-kind contributions are not reviewed by the Department of the Army, undergo limited review at US Pacific Command and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, and are not authorized by or even notified to Congress (Senate, iv).

This resulting lack of oversight is not to say that the USFK funding is not accurately allocated for, but the fact that Congress is not notified is concerning. Compared to the House of Representatives in regard to military funding, the Senate has been more cautious and critical. Therefore, the lack of oversight will become a problem if Congress finds the USFK projects unwarranted and stops construction, similar to what they did with Guam, which will be discussed later on.

A great amount of the oversight issues in the ROK are connected to the type of contributions the country gives to the US military presence. The first issue is in-kind payments. There are three categories under which SMA contributions fall: Labor Cost Sharing, Logistics Cost Sharing, and Republic of Korea Funded Construction (ROKFC). The Senate reports that the first is paid in cash for employee salaries. The second is in-kind, to pay for equipment, leases and facilities. The third, used for construction of USFK facilities, has become mostly in-kind (12% remains cash according to the SMA) since 2009. The USFK states, "the shift from cash to in-kind contributions was a result of the South Korean government's desire for more control over how the ROKFC contributions were spent and

which contractors were used” (Senate, p.22). The Senate Report further explains that out of the three categories, 40% of SMA funding by the USFK is allocated to ROKFC.

In-kind contributions can be problematic because any comparative benefits of using one contractor (or any alternatives to construction) over another, is not controlled by the US. Because remaining costs are to be paid for by the US, it concerning that “no Congressional authorization for YRP and the ROKFC-funded projects is required,” because only cash contributions are required to be reported to the DoD. Any reported in-kind funding is provided by the ROK, but the Senate Report makes no mention of these reports being required. Furthermore, the Senate Committee finds it alarming that the USFK reports received are in Korean and that reportedly the USFK do not translate the contracts and papers but rather extracts the cost figures (Senate, p.38). The ROK is providing funding, but the type of funding can be an area of concern when dealing with overseas expenditures.

Not all contributions fall under the SMA. For example, the labor cost sharing is not the only funding covering employee costs, and covers at the very most 71% of the USFK Korean workforce (RAND, p.151). Of greater concern is the relocation plan funding as it does not fall under the SMA. This area of required expenditure was highlighted earlier. The most recent SMA agreement describes the arrangement of overseeing funds. USFK is an active part of the allocations of the funding, especially with cash contributions and to some extent with the ROKFC. In general, SMA funding is a joint process between USFK and the ROK, requiring approval by US authorities (SMA). However, according to the Senate Report’s notes, “South Korean funding for the Yongsan Relocation Program and for South Korean obligations under the Land Partnership Plan are not part of the SMA” (Senate, iii). The concern then is that funds, whether in-kind or cash, are not required to be checked

because they are not under the SMA agreement. The Senate Report is concerned with the possible lack of oversight and US awareness over allocated funds that could be better used for prioritizing US base concerns. If the non-SMA funds are provided for in-kind, they may be less scrutinized because in-kind funds within SMA jurisdiction are not as reported. In particular this is a problem for the YRP and the LPP. A Stars and Stripes article “USFK Commander: Bases Consolidated By 2016” reported that deadlines for the full relocation and completion of the plan have been delayed and even though the ultimate deadline in the article is 2016, there is no real guarantee that the timeline is moving forward to meet that trajectory (Rabiroff, 2013).

Because a detailed account of in-kind contributions, especially regarding the relocation plans, are not reported to Congress and the DoD, it may appear that the US is receiving more funding than estimated. However, because it is not under US oversight, it is a possible blind spot for funding because the US cannot give precedence and cannot reallocate funds, nor will it be able to estimate the increasing costs for the US overseas since it is not known what exactly is going into the base presence. If the gap between US costs and ROK contributions continues to grow, the US will have to cover the ROK’s former contributions as well as current operations and maintenance and it is necessary to account for what those figures are.

### *US and Japan*

The first major accounting issue in Japan involves the shift towards Facility Improvement Program (FIP) contributions. Japan provides its contributions mainly through two structures, the SMA, and the FIP. The FIP as defined by the Senate, “is a

voluntary program under which Japan provides funding for US infrastructure and facilities in Japan” (Senate, 41). The SMA from 2011-2015 states:

The amount of the reductions in the labor costs and the utilities costs below the contributions of JFY2010...is to be added to FIP (Facilities Improvement Program: outside the coverage of the SMA) funding. The overall level of HNS is to be maintained at the current level (bearing in mind the budget of ¥188.1 billion, roughly \$1.57 billion, in the Japanese fiscal year 2010) over the new SMA period.

As previously shown, the current level of Japanese contributions, which has decreased from the past decade, would be maintained through the FIP. However, because the FIP is voluntary, there is no binding agreement for Japan to contribute, nor any agreement to maintain current levels other than a minimum cap. Therefore, there is a lack of US control over projects, some of which are projects the US may feel to be necessary. The Senate Report notes that the “FIP funds Japanese as well as US proposed projects” (Senate, p.46). The US has a list prioritizing where USFJ wants the funding to go, but it is ultimately Japan’s decision and as a result many of what the US deems as priorities are not funded. Also, 20% of the FIP is reserved for projects by the Government of Japan (Senate, p.46). This is not to say that Japan should have no control over where their money goes, but rather to highlight another area overseas in which the US will have increased operational costs.

Similar to the non-SMA funds in the ROK, the FIP also lacks transparency and communication between the US and Japan. In particular:

USFJ is not able to review construction contracts between GOJ and contractors that perform the work on US installations. According to USFJ, GOJ has consistently refused to provide copies of the bid documents or contracts that reflect the cost of the projects; as a result, the US is unable to verify amounts actually spent. (Senate, p.48)

This lack of oversight becomes an even greater problem when a significant portion of the estimated US costs in the region comes from the shift to Guam. Chanlett reports:

The initial estimate was for an expense of \$10.3 billion to move 8,000 Marines and their dependents to Guam, but the GAO reported that the actual costs would be more than double the DoD estimate at \$23.9 billion. The cost to the DoD for the latest plan, to move roughly 5,000 Marines and their dependents to Guam, has been estimated at \$8.6 billion. (Chanlett, 2014)

The lack of US oversight and inability to accurately estimate costs for Japanese contributions shows that there is no guaranteed estimate for Guam which caused a freeze in Guam spending. This freeze was eased recently in the Senate-House Bill FY2015 NDAA, and asked the DoD to clarify actual costs for the realignment (Carl Levin National Defense, 2015). The *Pacific Islands Report* “Lifting of Guam Funding Freeze Included in US Appropriations Bill” by the East-West Center further describes this easing and states that “the defense bill caps the cost of moving the Marines from Okinawa to Guam at \$8.7 Billion” (Dumat-ol Daleno, 2014). Whether the 8.7 billion is an initial fund to ease the build-up to Guam while still being cautious towards DoD’s lack of estimation, if this amount is only representing the 2015 fiscal year or if these funds are solely towards added construction, what the amount represents is not specified. This action of freezing reflects that US Congress was not satisfied with the lack of proper estimation of Guam and even with the current easing of funds, a consequence remains that the DoD has a budgetary cap.

However, if past estimations of Guam are to be used as precedent, the \$8.7 billion is not sufficient when taking into account the different figures found by the DoD, Japan and the Marines, respectively. Figure 5.13 illustrates the general lack of proper estimation that the US has had for Japan, and the already conservative estimation of costs in Guam totaled \$11.3 billion just for the US alone. Out of the \$11.3 billion for Guam, under ‘Additional Requirements,’ the \$7.1 billion is the amount estimated by the Marines but has not yet been “validated by the Department of Defense” (GAO, p.26). With an unsure cost estimate, and

the statement by Japan in 2012 removing its previously allocated funds, a question mark appears over the budget for Guam.

### **Easing the Transition Costs**

Before discussing possible ways to approach a manageable budget in East Asia, a clarification of the use of 'transition cost' is needed. Because the previously mentioned areas of concern come from realignment, many of the incurring costs are relatively recent and are not representative of currently standing operational and maintenance costs. The overall costs of the US to have presence in the ROK and Japan therefore do not properly account for the fixed costs of building bases. As a result, it is important to minimize unnecessary budget gaps so that even if the proposed 2016 fiscal budget can cover high transition costs, a sustainable outflow of expenditures to the Pacific Region can lead to a reliable presence there. Possible cost-reduction measures include supporting the suggested BRAC as discussed in the FY2016 proposed budget, and cooperation between the US and the ROK and Japan respectively to increase the transparency with the host nation contributions.

#### *BRAC*

BRAC aims to increase efficiency and reduce unnecessary costs. The current FY 2016 proposal mentions:

The Budget also reduces overhead and waste...proposing another round of BRAC to free resources currently consumed by maintaining unneeded facilities. The need to reduce unneeded facilities is so critical that, in the absence of authorization of a new round of BRAC, the Administration will pursue alternative options to reduce this wasteful spending (2016 Budget, p.50).

Last occurring in 2005, a round of BRAC in 2017 is necessary for a reduction of overall military operational costs. The BRAC will not be implemented to the bases in the ROK and

Japan due to the complex nature of HNS and current realignment strategies. However, a BRAC elsewhere, specifically in the US, is an approach that will not threaten the ability to maintain a presence in Asia. The last sentence of the proposal above can be interpreted to say that even with the anticipated rejection of BRAC, the DoD will push for cuts elsewhere with a similar purpose. The DoD supports a BRAC but Congress, unwilling to cut the revenue and job creation the bases provide, opposes it (Sisk, 2014). RAND research offers support to the Congressional opposition, finding that US bases at home per-person are relatively cheaper than that of those in Asia in regard to personnel and air force/navy presence. The actual process to implement BRAC is not cheap either, as “the 2005 BRAC commission originally estimated that it would cost the Pentagon \$21 billion to follow its recommendations. However, a GAO report said the real cost was about \$35.1 billion” (Sisk, 2014). Though BRAC costs are immense, any funds that go into maintenance of unnecessary facilities could be better used for maintenance in current and new facilities that reflect the worthwhile goal of repositioning resources to East Asia.

#### *Increased Cooperation, Increased Transparency*

A major problem that helped cause the recent freeze in Guam funding, and hampers the ability of the US to control the costs of realignment in the ROK and Japan is transparency. Of course, no matter which host country is providing monetary and in-kind support, a fully transparent funding system remains idealistic and difficult to attain. However, the consistent underestimation of costs and lack of US control over host nation contributions must be addressed. One possible recourse would be to improve cooperation between the US and the host countries, so that the goals of each would align. Increased cooperation could lead to Japan establishing a more independent military force with US

backing, could ease our budgetary pressures and allow for a refocus of HNS contributions towards pivotal projects, and provide for a more collaborative relationship so that the US can have some input with the ROK as to how non-SMA funds will be allocated.

### **Conclusion**

The rebalance to Asia requires an increase in military robustness but also a reassessment of the funding that makes a US presence possible. Through cost-sharing and other offsetting contributions, the ROK and Japan cover much what the US taxpayer would have to pay. In order to solidify our commitment to the region and our allies within it, and to ensure our presence is sustainable, we must account for the underlying gaps that become apparent through a critical look at the budget and actual defense spending. Additionally, enhanced cooperation and transparency in funding between the US and its East Asian allies further reduces budgetary pressures that have been partially alleviated by the proposed FY2016 policy, while increasing efficiency for all three nations and strengthening the US presence in an increasingly important region.

## Chapter 6

# The PRC and Russia's Take on US Military Bases in Japan and the ROK

Ji Guo

Many worry that US military bases in Northeast Asia may create unnecessary tension between the US and non-allied countries in the region. In this paper, the focus will be on the PRC and Russia's interests in the region, and how they view US bases in relation to those interests. The paper is divided into two main sections: the PRC and Russia. Each section will introduce and analyze interests from three aspects: political and diplomatic, economic, and security. The last section will recommend specific policies that will build confidence on diplomatic relationships, and in effect, reducing blowback.

## Introduction

US military bases in the ROK and Japan stir up an array of political/diplomatic, economic, and security issues in the PRC and Russia. However, they are not as contrary to US interests in the region as one might think, and that in fact, neither the PRC or Russia have sufficient motivation to take action against the bases. In this paper, I will make recommendation as to how the US may better relations with the PRC, reduce blowback, and maintain stability in the region.

### Section 1: PRC

#### *Political*

Looking back, the relationship between the US and the PRC have long been unstable and unreceptive to change. After the establishment of the PRC in 1949, the newly founded government actively participated in the Cold War with the Soviet Union. Anti-Americanism and anti-capitalism were important components of Chinese politics. The slogans that the PRC government used to propagandize anti-Americanism and to vilify the US were explicit and intense. In the Jie Fang Daily Newspaper, one of the most important political newspapers in the PRC, an article from November 16, 1950 read:

To hate and look down upon America is the only feeling that can reflect the lofty spirit of Chinese people. Everyone who loves our country must give up any illusion about imperialist America, and remove the fear toward this evil country as well. Moreover, the ethos that hate the US should be set in order to increase the confidence to defeat the US for Chinese people. (Yang, 1996, P. 236)

This kind of hostile policy lasted for over twenty years, until the late 1970s, when Deng Xiaoping's "open and reform" policy changed the nature of the relationship between the two countries. Under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, the hostility between the PRC and the US significantly diminished, and instead began displaying possibilities for cooperation.

As Deng pointed out: “internal reform and external openness is a long term national policy for PRC. Developing the US-PRC relationship is the necessary condition of insisting on this national policy. The direct motivation of the establishment of the US-PRC relations is to create a good international environment for PRC’s domestic development and the policy of reform and open” (Website of history of Chinese Communist Party, 2011). It is not hard to see that having normal and stable diplomatic relations with the US has been a part of the PRC’s developmental plan. Since then, US-PRC relations can be described as “precarious and stable”; the ideological differences and conflicts in certain situations still make this relationship difficult, but at the same time, the relationship has also been relatively stable. As Professor David M. Lampton of Johns Hopkins University stated in the book, *The US-China Relationship in the Post-WTO era*: “On the one hand, we could say that the relationship between the U. and the PRC is vulnerable, but from the other hand we also could see this relation is pretty adamant. Even as it faced serious challenges such as the event of “Tiananmen Square” in 1989 and the embassy bombing crisis in 1999, the relationship between the US and the PRC has lasted still” (Zhang & Sun, 2002, P. 51).

As the two largest powers in the world, a stable relationship between the US and the PRC will enhance the interests of both countries. Xi Jinping, the President of the PRC, also expressed this idea in his speech in the opening ceremony of The 6th Round of PRC-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED). He said that in his ideal version of the US-PRC relationship, stability would not be disrupted by one individual affair or specific statement (Xi, 2014). Nonetheless, the complexity of this precarious but stable relationship between the US and the PRC requires the US to be careful in how the bases in Northeast Asia are managed and framed.

*Economics*

There is no doubt that the economy is a significant factor in every move that the PRC makes. In 1978, the PRC administration shifted their working focus from a “struggle between classes” to the “development of productivity” (Website of History of Chinese Communism Party 2011). Since then, economic development has become the core national interest of PRC, especially now that after more than three decades of high speed economic growth, the PRC’s economy has begun to show signs of fatigue in recent years. In the opening speech of S&ED, Xi also said that the PRC needs a peaceful and stable external environment to pursue economic goals now, more than any other moment in the past. Additionally, the main economic players in Northeast Asia - the US, Japan, and the ROK - are the three largest economic partner countries in the world (Institute of World Economic and Politics Chinese Academic of Social Science, 2012). Therefore, maintaining stability in this region is PRC’s first concern. From this perspective, the existence of US military bases will not directly harm PRC interests and may even benefit the development of the Chinese economy and protect trade between the PRC and other countries in the region to some extent.

The presence of the US military in the region could help promote a stable environment that could prove beneficial to the PRC in various ways. The US military in the ROK helps to keep the situation in Korean peninsula in control. If the tensions between the ROK and the DPRK rise too high, the US military has leverage and power to act quickly, which could allow for a shorter conflict that aligns with the PRC’s primary goal of keeping a stable regional environment in which to continue economic growth. Furthermore, the US

military in the region provides even more of an incentive to promote communication among countries in Pacific region.

From a purely economic perspective, the PRC needs a stable environment in Northeast Asia, especially with/between Japan and the ROK to develop trade and other economic activities. The US military presence helps the PRC maintain a peaceful and stable environment that allows the country to pursue economic goals. In this respect, the PRC does not oppose the existence of military bases in Japan and the ROK.

### *Security*

As a rapidly rising power, the PRC's military expenses have increased annually, which makes Western countries anxious. The core national security interests of PRC include two main points: first, to prevent the development of schismatic power in Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang; and second, to protect the controversial islands and defend marine territorial rights from other countries. Territorial disputes and maritime rights are discussed more in depth elsewhere, so this section will focus mainly on the issue of Taiwan.

Taiwan is a sensitive topic between the US and the PRC. The first requirement that the PRC made for the US before building relations in 1972 was to cut all connections with Taiwan and stop intervening in Taiwanese affairs (Website of history of Chinese Communist Party). Additionally, in order to make sure that the US would not continue to assist Taiwan, the PRC had the US sign the Shanghai Communique, Joint Communique of the US and the PRC, and the Sino-US Joint Communiqué in 1972, 1979 and 1982 respectively. These Communiques requires the severing of all ties with Taiwan, recognition the PRC as the only legal government, and the reduction and eventual halt of arms sales to Taiwan. However, in reality, the US has not upheld this promise in its entirety, particular

regarding the weapon sales clause, which the PRC is unhappy about. In the latest national security white paper (2010), the PRC pointed out this problem explicitly: “The United States, in the defiance of the three Sino-US joint communiques, continues to sell weapons to Taiwan, severely impeding Sino-US relations and impairing the peaceful development of cross-Strait relations” (Ministry of National Defense, 2010). However, in order to keep their relationship with the US stable, the PRC has chosen to overlook this issue and continues to increase political and economic cooperation with US. However, because of the US attitude toward Taiwan, the PRC has viewed US military bases in the Pacific as threat to national security, especially in regards to the objective of the reunification of the mainland and Taiwan. In the article “Analysis of the Effect of Military Base in Okinawa in the US-Japan Relationship and the Rise of China,” scholar Wang Mengfei states his worry about the effect of US military bases in Okinawa in relation to Taiwan and the mainland. According to Wang, the US has a considerable Air Force in Okinawa Kadena Air Force Base, and the direct distance from there to Taiwan is only about 500 kilometers (300 miles). This means that it would only take the US Air Force about an hour to respond to emergency. Moreover, the reconnaissance plane that was shut down by the Chinese military in 2001 took off from the Kadena Air Force base (Wang, 2005). In addition, Zheng Yu expressed similar ideas in his book, *Cooperation and Competition: China, Russia and US in Central Asia*: “the US contained China through the issue of Taiwan by continuing to increase the extent of military cooperation with Taiwan, and deployed long-range missiles in Okinawa and Guam” (Zhuang Yu, 2007 P. 168). For diplomacy’s sake, the PRC government has not explicitly brought up the relationship between US military presence in the region and Taiwan, but government control scholars do not conceal the truth: the PRC sees the military bases in

Northeast Asia, particularly the base in Okinawa, as a threat. If the US decided to increase its footprint in that region, the PRC may become more vigilant and the tensions between the US and the PRC would increase.

However, despite of the issue of Taiwan, the PRC's general attitude towards US military power in Northeast Asia is relatively tolerant and moderate. The PRC has not specifically mentioned the US military bases in Asia in a white paper or other official documents. In 2005, the PRC's ambassador to Japan, Wang Yi, was asked about PRC government's views on the redeployment of the US and Japanese military to which he responded that it is an affair between the US and Japanese government, and that the PRC has no intention to intervene (Website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs). This emphasized that the PRC does not have an official position on the bases.

When PRC officers were questioned on their military expenditure, they always answered that the PRC is not a military-based country, the percentage of military expenditure compared to overall GDP is low, and PRC does not have any oversea military bases. This could imply that the PRC views oversea military bases as a sign of military expansion, but perhaps the best way to describe their stance is that they dislike but accept the bases. If the US decided to withdraw or redeploy the military, the PRC would be certainly happy, but in the more likely case that the US maintains the status quo (or a version of it), the PRC accepts it.

*Policy Recommendation: work to increase confidence regarding the US-PRC relationship, reduce blowback in NE Asia*

1. The US should pay close and active attention to Abe's remilitarization plan, and encourage Japan against rearmament measures that will create substantial unwanted antagonism in relations between Japan and the PRC.

The PRC is against Japan having a powerful military that might challenge its own power in the region, or gain advantage in the Diaoyu/Senkaku island dispute. By ensuring that Japan does not build up a powerful military (e.g. with nuclear capability), the US also sends the PRC the message that the US is taking PRC interests into account as well. In addition, monitoring Japan military buildup is also in the interests of the US: if a serious crisis arose between the PRC and Japan, the US would be obligated to defend Japan, and the costs of serious involvement in the resulting conflict is not ideal for US interests.

Moreover, Japan has yet to officially apologize to the PRC about the war massacres that they committed during WWII, (and has repeatedly taken back apologies to the ROK). A formal apology by Japan to the PRC has the potential to greatly reduce long-standing grievances and improve PRC relations with both Japan and the US.

One could argue that this policy might have the negative effect of undermining the US-Japan relationship. However, the likelihood that the US-Japan will actually be hurt by this policy is relatively low.

It is also in Japan's interests to respond to US interests and maintain a positive alliance. In 2014, the US was the largest economic partner of Japan. It is in the interest of the Japanese economy to cooperate and maintain positive relations with the US. Furthermore, Japan also needs US political support to build up its defense forces. Therefore, from both political and economic points, there is little incentive for Japan to decrease its closeness with the US. Most importantly, this policy recommendation would

not prevent Japan from remilitarizing. It merely keeps the remilitarization process moderate and acceptable to neighboring countries, reducing concerns of the PRC and maintaining Japan's alliances.

## 2. Reduce the military footprint in Northeast Asia

After Xi Jinping took presidency in 2013, things began to change. Anti-Americanism, supported by Xi's administration, rose in the PRC rapidly: "Xi Jinping praised a young blogger whose writing is best known here for its anti-American vitriol" (Wong, 2014). Furthermore, the PRC's education minister, Yuan Guiren, "has issued dire alarms about the threat of foreign ideas on the nation's college campuses, calling for a ban on textbooks that promote Western values and forbidding criticism of Communist Party's leadership in the classroom" (Levin, 2015). For now, this trend of anti-Americanism appears to be mostly domestic; however, it may come to influence diplomacy in the future. If the US reduced their military footprint in Northeast Asia, it could ease anti-American sentiment in the PRC.

Opponents could say that this policy will decrease the security of US interests in Northeast Asia. However, this statement is not necessarily true in this situation.

After more than 5 decades of high-speed development, the ROK has become one of three developed countries in Asia (with Japan and Singapore). The country's overall power and military capacity both increased dramatically (CHOE, 2011). Gradually reducing the military footprint in Northeast Asia will not expose US interests to danger. Some might argue that the development of the PRC is a threat to the US and its allies. In *Blowback*, Chalmers Johnson argues that the PRC is rising as an economic power, not as a military one (Johnson, 2004, Chapter 7). The PRC's military budget in 2014 was \$132 billion, only about

a quarter of the US military expenditure in the same year (\$526.8 billion) (Wong, 2014). At least for now, there is still a huge gap in military capacity between the US and the PRC.

### 3. Decrease arms sales and the level of military cooperation with Taiwan

As I mentioned in the section on national security, the Taiwan issue is the most crucial point of conflict between the PRC and the US. In the white paper of national security, the PRC expressed their dissatisfaction at the level of US involvement. Therefore, one way the US could drastically change its relationship with the PRC is to more closely uphold the promise the US made in three Communiqués. As long as there is military cooperation between the US and Taiwan, a truly friendly relationship between the US and the PRC is not visible.

Some people might worry that this policy could give PRC the chance to reunite Taiwan with mainland. However, this argument is not feasible. Generally, there are two methods that the PRC can adopt to reunite Taiwan: militarily and peacefully. Militarily is an unrealistic option. The PRC wants a peaceful and stable environment to develop the economy, and starting a war with Taiwan is not in their interests. Furthermore, if the PRC were to use military force against Taiwan, it would face serious sanctions, and the PRC will be isolated, both politically and economically.

The US could try for internal change of Taiwan or for diplomatic negotiations like the PRC did with Hong Kong. However, this method is not likely to be achieved either. After more than half a century of division, the difference between Taiwan and the mainland has become more and more dramatic. In 2014, Taiwan's local election, Kuomintang (K.M.T.), the pro-PRC party only won six of twenty-two spots, while the anti-PRC party, the Democratic Progressive Party, took thirteen, which set the largest difference between the

two parties since 1997 (Ramzy, 2014). It shows that from both political and cultural perspectives, the distance between the PRC and Taiwan is getting further and further. Thus, both military and peaceful methods are not feasible options for the PRC to take back Taiwan and therefore, the possibility that decreasing arms sales and the level of military cooperation with Taiwan will bring reunification is low.

## Conclusion

The PRC does not have strong enough motivations to intervene or react strongly to the US military presence in the ROK and Japan, based on their political and economic perspectives. Politically, the PRC wants to keep a peaceful and stable relationship with the US in order to focus on economic development. Economically, the presence of US power will help the PRC stabilize the region. However, if we consider national security, the PRC would like the US to reduce or redeploy their military in Northeast Asia because it could benefit the PRC on Taiwanese issues and territorial disputes with other US allies. So long as the Taiwan issue does not come between the US and the PRC, there is no reason that the bases will influence the US-PRC relationship.

Based on my research, I have made three policy recommendations to improve the relationship between the US and the PRC, as well as to reduce blowback:

1. Pay close attention to Abe's remilitarization plan to remilitarize the country, and prevent him from making too extreme a plan that would create unnecessary tension between Japan and the PRC.
2. Reduce the military footprint in Northeast Asia in general.
3. Decrease arms sales and the level of military cooperation with Taiwan

## Section 2: Russia

*Political*

The relationship between the US and Russia is unstable and easily affected by individual events. As the former Soviet Union, the fundamental clash in ideology makes the relationship between the US and Russia brittle and fragile. The Chinese international relations expert Zheng Yu, specializes in Russia and stated in his book: “in the mid-1990s, the conflict that created by east expansion of NATO ended the good but transitory relationship between new independent Russia and the US.... After 9.11, because of the cooperation in field of anti-terrorism, the relationship of two countries improved by a large amount” (Zheng Yu, 2007 P 167). However, we can see that any progress made in anti-terrorism cooperation was quickly ruined by the Ukraine crisis. Therefore, unlike the PRC, Russia has no motivation to tolerate any US action that might hurt Russia’s interests from a political perspective. However, Russia has never mentioned any concerns about the US military in the ROK and Japan. The main reason for this is that Russia does not have much interest in Northeast Asia except some bilateral island disputes with Japan. Compared to Northeast Asia, Russia has more of an interest in Central Asia. There are two reasons that Russia emphasizes Central Asia: first, in order to protect the interests of Russians who live in Central Asia countries. There are around ten million Russians who live in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Protecting these people is important for Russia. Second, Russia wants to promote the Russia dominated military integration plan in the Commonwealth of Independent States to prevent the penetration of the US in Central Asia (Zheng Yu, 2007 P.368 & 371).

From a political perspective, although the relationship between the US and Russia might be at the lowest point since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia still will not

oppose the presence of the US military bases in Northeast Asia. As a rational actor, Russia will predictably pay more attention to the region that it has more vested interests.

### *Economic*

Due to geographical reasons, Russia actively trades with Japan and the ROK (No.4 largest and No.8 largest) and they have become interdependent. Russia clearly has economic interests in Northeast Asia, especially Japan and the ROK. Economic sanctions against Russia are ongoing, Japan is one of the latest US allies to sanction Russia, and the ROK did not start to follow the US and other allies until now. Even Japan chose to follow the US to enact economic sanctions against Russia, but Prime Minister Abe kept the diplomatic door open to Russia and has not canceled the invitation to President Putin to visit Japan as well. Yoshiki Mine, a research director at the Canon Institute for Global Studies in Tokyo and former high-ranking Japanese diplomat said that “Japan is sending the message that we are not enthusiastic about these sanctions, Japan needs to share the same values as the West, but it also wants to keep an opening with Russia” (Fackler, 2014). As a result, Russia wants Japan to cancel sanctions and recover the trade with Japan, but this does not mean that Russia will be eager to see a large scale withdrawal or redeployment of the US troops in Japan and ROK immediately. Russia should have a clear idea that the key factor to determine the action of Japan and the ROK is not military bases but rather the extent of the US influence when these two countries make diplomatic decisions. However, the fact that Japan and the ROK are the close allies with the US will not change in the short term; therefore, in order to maintain economic interests and maintain trade with the ROK and Japan, the first thing that Russia will consider for now is not to make any official statements regarding US bases, but to negotiate with Japan to see if they will reconsider sanctions and

to continue trading with Russia and also to increase the extent of market interdependency with the ROK. Therefore, military bases in the ROK and Japan are not the biggest concern for Russia, and thus Russia does not have a strong preference on US military bases.

### *National security*

Unlike most countries in the world, Russia does not have an official national security white paper. However, Russia does have relevant official documents that focus on this topic. *Russia's National Security Strategy to 2020* issued in 2009 states Russia's national security strategy. In this document, clause No. 17 about Western military forces states: "A determining aspect of relations with NATO remains the fact that plans to extend the alliance's military infrastructure to Russia's borders, and attempts to endow NATO with global functions that go counter to norms of international law, are unacceptable to Russia". According to this, military bases in the Pacific area are not their main concern. Instead, Eastern Europe and Central Asia are bigger concerns about which they butt heads with the US and NATO. Moreover, in clause 11 indicates that Russia will pay more attention to "ownership of energy resources", including in the "Near East, the Barents Sea shelf and other parts of the Arctic, in the Caspian basin, and in Central Asia." Both of these clauses suggest that Russia does not view US military bases in Japan and the ROK as a huge threat to national security.

Therefore, from a security perspective, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, are Russia's main interests. Northeast Asian countries and the military bases in Japan and the ROK are not considered the primary threat from a national security perspective. Therefore, the possibility that Russia will negatively react if the US decides to make any changes in the military bases in countries in Northeast Asia is pretty low.

*Policy recommendation: reduce Russian blowback in the context of Northeast Asia*

1. Give Japan space to reconsider their decision about economic sanctions against Russia and stop the ROK to follow the trend of economic sanctions

Current economic sanctions has already huge impact on Russian economy. The ruble has devalued rapidly since sanctions were put in place, and this has affected the Russian economy as well. Historical evidence suggests that this kind of environment could lead to a centralized and militaristic regime. If this kind of political power emerges in Russia, it would greatly affect the security environment of the region, which does not align with US interests. Furthermore, both Japan and the ROK have displayed a willingness to continue trading with Russia, and if the US forces them to continue with economic sanctions toward Russia, their interests will be harmed and their closeness with the US from a diplomatic perspective might be hurt. Both of these results are not within US interests.

*Conclusion*

In the case of military bases in the ROK and Japan, Russia may not be the biggest obstacle. From a political perspective, although diplomatic relations between the US and Russia are not at their best, Russia has not expressed concern with military bases in Northeast Asia, and that they are instead focusing on Central Asia and Eastern Europe. From an economic perspective, Russia hopes to continue having economic interactions with Japan and the ROK. Whether or not the existence of US military bases in these countries is a small factor. Therefore, Russia interacts with Japan through a diplomatic channel to see if Japan will reconsider their decision and to continue to trade with them. From the perspective of national security, Russia does not view military bases in the ROK

and Japan as a serious security threat. They care more about NATO and countries and regions with “ownership of energy resources”.

In the most general and overarching sense, I recommend that in order to reduce blowback, the US should give Japan space to reconsider their decision about economic sanctions and to stop the ROK from going forward with economic sanctions against Russia.

## Chapter 7

# Conflict of Interest: The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands Dispute and its Implications for US Security in East Asia

Shiling Fan

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the case of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands to emphasize the importance of regional territorial integrity in considering a rethink of US military strategy in East Asia. Although the US may have no direct interest in maritime territorial disputes, the escalating involvement of the PRC, a state that the US has mixed relations with, and Japan, a long-time ally of the US, is an essential factor in determining the direction of US security policy in East Asia. The combination of symbolic and tactical importance of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and recent developments in the PRC and Japan show a high potential of escalation. Ultimately, this paper argues for an appropriate consideration of each state's cost-benefit calculus when conducting a rethink of US military bases and how to achieve national security goals.

## Introduction

The island and maritime disputes in Asian Pacific are regarded as one of the most serious issues that may cause large impact on diplomatic relations because these disputes directly relates to countries' sovereignty and economic interest. Suganuma (2000) states in his book "Claims to territory are among the most prominent sources of conflict between states" (p.1). Currently, the PRC, Japan, the ROK, Russia, and Southeast Asian countries are frequently involved in a number of maritime territorial disputes in the Asia Pacific region. These disputes are prominent sources of conflict between states, and as long as the United States remains focused and involved in East Asian affairs, proper consideration of this dimension of East Asian relations must be understood and calculated into US military policy in the region. The PRC and Japan disagree on the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and this will be the focal case study of this paper from which it gradually becomes clear that a rethink in US military policy will be necessary. On the one hand, the US needs to maintain economic cooperation with the PRC while simultaneously maintaining its promises to Japan and ROK under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation. This conflict of interest between US allies and non-allies can be a more critical point for the US to rethink the policy on military bases.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the case of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands to emphasize the importance of regional territorial integrity in considering a rethink of US military strategy in East Asia. The fate of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands more than any other territorial dispute in the region has heavy impacts on achieving US policy goals, notwithstanding direct US involvement. After a brief history of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute, the first section analyzes the reasons of why this island chain is important for the

PRC and Japan from geopolitical, economic, and strategic perspectives. The second part of the paper provides an update on factors that alter the volatility of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Island dispute. The third part provides specific policy recommendations to minimize potential for conflict escalation and protect the US and its allies.

### **History of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands**

Both the PRC and Japan declare they control the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. The White Paper by The State Council Affairs of the PRC (2012) states:

Diaoyu Dao and its affiliated islands are an inseparable part of the Chinese territory. Diaoyu Dao is China's inherent territory in all historical, geographical and legal terms, and China enjoys indisputable sovereignty over Diaoyu Dao. (State Council Affairs, "Forward")

The Japanese government also issued a statement about this island:

There is no doubt that the Senkaku Islands are clearly an inherent part of the territory of Japan, in light of historical facts and based upon international law. Indeed, the Senkaku Islands are under the valid control of Japan. There exists no issue of territorial sovereignty to be resolved concerning the Senkaku Islands. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MOFA] Japan, 2015, "Senkaku Islands")

What sets the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute apart from others is the unique clash of interests. This small island chain pits the PRC, a Communist state with often mixed relations with the US, and Japan, a long-time US ally, against each other for military, resource, and economic sovereignty of the area. Not only do the islands sit on one of the most active resource trading lanes in the world, it is also believed to hold billions of oils and minerals, further augmenting the strategic importance of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands.

One of the first mentions of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are in documents from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), where they were first found by "Chinese fishermen traveling to the Ryukyu/Neisei Island chain" (Emmers, 2010, p.48). The PRC insists that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were part of their coastal defense system in the 16th century, and

thus wrongly ceded through a series of unequal treaties following the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. The islands “were ceded to Japan, as part of Taiwan, under the Treaty of Shimonoseki” (Emmers, p.49). However, as the Allies, including the PRC, approached victory in WWII, these so-called ‘unequal treaties’ were reversed in 1943 with the Cairo Communiqué, stating that “since the beginning of the first World War in 1914... all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese...should be restored to the Republic of China” (par.4). The 1951 Treaty of San Francisco, which gave the US trusteeship over Japanese territories, also allocated “the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction” over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (Art. 3). These legal contradictions are a significant barrier in reaching compromise in this dispute, as they are parts of each party’s claim to the territory. The State Council of the People’s Republic of China in the 2012 White Paper on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands states, “Soon after [Japan seized Ryukyu], Japan began to act covertly to invade and occupy Diaoyu Dao and secretly ‘included’ Diaoyu Dao in its territory at the end of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895” (State Council Affairs, Sec. II “Japan Grabbed Diaoyu Dao”). In contrast, Japan counteracts the PRC’s claim, citing the same timeframe:

In 1895, after having carefully ascertained that there had been no trace of control over the Senkaku Islands by another state prior to that period, the Government of Japan incorporated the islands into the Japanese territory by lawful means under the international legal framework which existed at that time. (MOFA, 2014, “Situation of the Senkaku Islands)

A period of relative inactivity followed from the end of World War II until the discovery of natural resources in 1969, which prompted renewed interest in the area due to “increasing worldwide interest in maritime resources in the 1970’s” (Flavel, 2008, p. 268). It is interesting to note that at this time, “interest in the resource wealth of the area

was such that claims over maritime jurisdiction actually preceded sovereignty claims to the islands,” suggesting that the US control of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands at this time deterred the PRC from pursuing the sovereignty debate. (Manicom, 2014, p.43). In anticipation of the 1972 return of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, Japan began to test its new authority by denying oil rights to companies from Taiwan and South Korea and placing the Japanese Maritime Safety Agency in the surrounding area to keep fishermen at bay (Manicom, p.44). By the end of 1970, the largest and government own newspaper agency Renmin Ribao stated,

Taiwan Province and the islands appertaining thereto, including the Tiaoyu, Huangwei... and other islands, are China’s sacred territories. The resources of the sea-bed and subsoil of the seas around these islands and of the shallow seas adjacent to other parts of China all belong to China... we will never permit others to lay their hands on them... (Suganuma, p.133)

At this time on March 11<sup>th</sup> 1971, the Japanese government decided to suspend the oil development around the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Suganuma suggests that the US wanted to “prevent the oil dispute from affecting the détente between the PRC” and themselves, and “Japan had no choice but to go along” (Wiegand, p.100). Although not much was done during this time, the potential of natural resources continued to be a recurring incentive for the PRC to continue staking its claim and Japan to defend it, and continues to be relevant today.

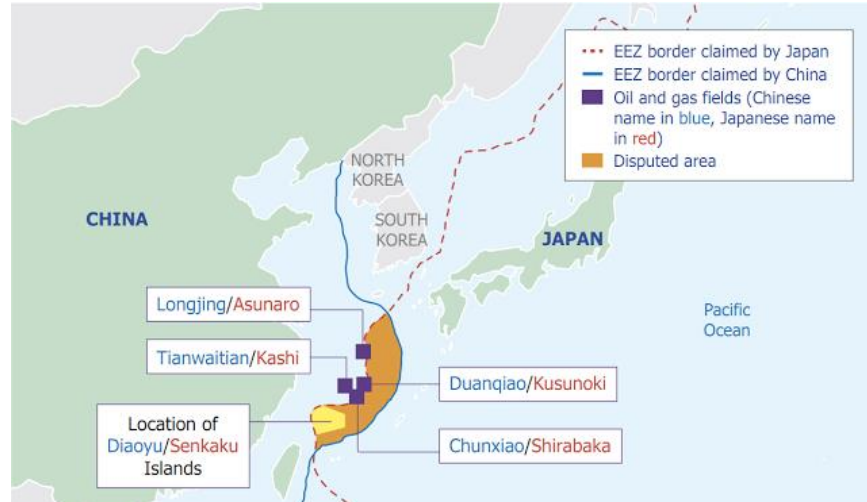
In more recent history, there has been a dangerous pattern of escalation and confrontation in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute. In February 2005, the Japanese placed a lighthouse on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. The lighthouse became a provocation, further polarizing the PRC and Japan while negatively affecting economic and diplomatic relations. In 2010, The Chinese fishing trawler *Minjinyu* 5179 collided with two Japanese

Guard Patrol boats in disputed waters near the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and the resulting arrests flared protests in the streets in China. This case not only resulted in diplomatic dispute between PRC and Japan, but also flared nationalist sentiment, further engraining the practical and conceptual value of the territory. Most recently, in 2012, Japan moved to buy the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands from a private Japanese owner, sparking outrage in China where “this move [of purchase] taken by the Japanese government constitutes a serious violation of Chinese territorial sovereignty. The Chinese government and people firmly oppose it and have strongly protested against the move” (State Council Affairs 2012, Introduction ) What the PRC expresses is a noted convergence of security issues the PRC, Japan, and the US needs to consider in light of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands: legal territory, state sovereignty, nationalism, and international relations.

This brief history of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands disputes captures the major factors that have the ability to determine the potential conflict of compromise. Differing historic claims are only augmented by the discoveries of natural resources. The following sections on the geopolitical, economic, and military importance of the islands will add on to the complexity of the issue.

### **Modern Importance of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands**

#### *Geopolitical Advantage*



**Figure 7.1.** Territorial EEZ Lines as Claimed by the PRC and Japan

Source: Oil Peak

The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are an uninhabited group of three rocks and five small islets located approximately 200 nautical miles (nmi) east of the PRC and 200 nmi southwest of Okinawa (see Map 1). Geographically, this small island chain covers very little, the largest island with an area of 4.3km<sup>2</sup> and the smallest being only 0.45km<sup>2</sup>. Manicom (2014) notes that there are both hard and soft reasons for a prolonged contest for sovereignty of these small rocks:

States may both have an interest in a material aspect of a disputed space, but for reasons of onshore resource wealth, or trade relationships with other states, may have a less acute need...Likewise, policymakers who have invested a great deal of their domestic credibility in the resolution of a symbolic political issue are more likely to take risks to ensure that comes to pass than policymakers who have not. (p.16)

The combination of natural resource, nationalist, political, and economic incentives buoy the PRC and Japan's efforts to exert control over the area. According to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS),

The exclusive economic zone is an area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea, subject to the specific legal regime established in this Part, under which the rights and jurisdiction of the coastal state and the rights and freedoms of other States are

governed by the relevant provisions of this convention. (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea [UNCLOS], Art. 55)

Furthermore, it's important to know that the EEZ can extend up to 200 nmi from the baseline. Japanese sovereignty over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands would result in an EEZ spanning halfway across the East China Sea from the shores of the Okinawa Islands, which would simultaneously benefit the US military base in Okinawa. This would pose a larger proximate threat to the PRC, and likewise vice versa. The overlapping of the EEZ may also cause to the overlapping of the military reaction, which will lead to more conflicts. If the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are under the sovereignty of the PRC, the PRC could take any military reaction if Japan takes some military actions on that area. Furthermore, as the PRC continues to expand their naval military capabilities, the extension of the EEZ will also threaten the US military base in Okinawa and the ROK since the EEZ ends close to these two US allies. Despite UNCLOS lending legal legitimacy to EEZs and creating potential for extending sovereign territory, it can serve as a barrier to compromise.

Of particular geopolitical importance is the role of Taiwan. The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were ceded as Taiwan's affiliated islands to Japan after the first Sino-Japanese War in 1895. The Treaty of Shimonoseki/Maguan states:

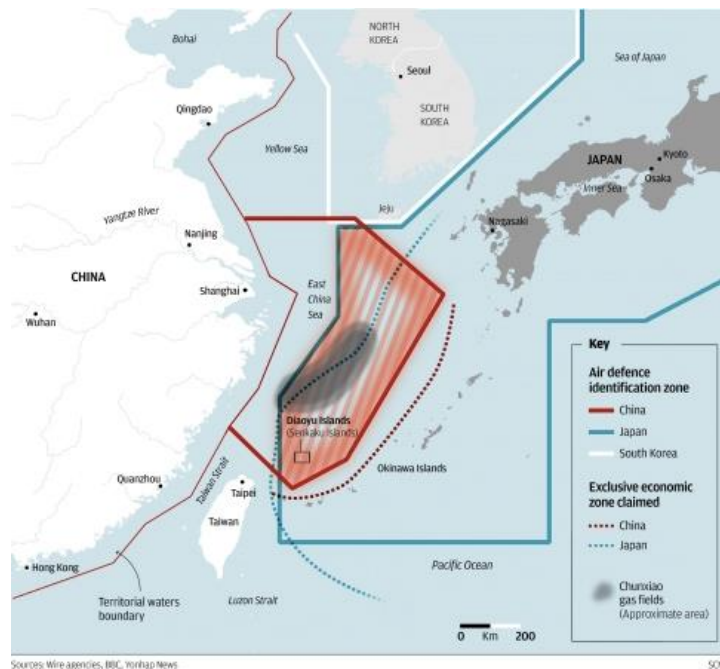
China ceded to Japan in perpetuity and full sovereignty the following territories, together with all fortifications, arsenals, and public property thereon: (b) the island of Formosa, together with all islands appertaining or belong to the said island of Formosa," which debatably included the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. (Treaty of Shimonoseki/Maguan, 1895, Art. 2)

After the emergence of the PRC and sovereignty issues pertaining to the legitimate Chinese government, Taiwan was voted out of the United Nations and replaced with the PRC in 1971. Later on, "The United States recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China, acknowledging the Chinese position that there

is but one China and Taiwan is part of China.” (US Department of State, 2015, par.1).

Taiwan gradually lost legitimacy as a state, being partitioned as a region in the West Pacific rather than a country acknowledged by the UN to have its own sovereignty according to international laws. The PRC had previously expressed sentiment that Taiwan is an overseas province of the PRC, and if indeed the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are under Taiwanese sovereignty as stated in the Treaty of Shimonoseki/Maguan, this would indicate that by extension, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands would be under the sovereignty of the PRC. Not only does this strengthen the PRC’s push for sovereignty, this would pose a massive security risk to the US’ Japanese ally as they would become geographically surrounded by the PRC. Consequentially, US security interests would be altered drastically, severely limiting US influence and creating further power imbalances in East Asia.

## ***Economic Worth***



**Figure 7.2.** ADIZs as Claimed by the PRC and Japan  
 Source: Wall Street Journal (Barnes, 2013)

This portion of the paper concerns the economic importance of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, and will in particular cover the island's importance in establishing EEZ and the effect of natural resources on national economies.

At the time of the discovery of natural resources in 1969, the PRC was changing the power landscape of the region, and political and military conflict over these valuable resources never materialized. According to the data given by the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), "the East China Sea has about 200 million barrels of oil in proved and probable reserves (2014, p.3). PRC sources also claim that "undiscovered resources can be as high as 70 to 160 billion barrels of oil for the entire East China Sea, mostly in the Okinawa trough" (EIA, 2014, p.3). Furthermore, the EIA also estimates that "East China Sea has between 1 and 2 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of proved and probable natural gas reserves" (EIA, 2014, p.3). By September 1970, "25,000 applications for drilling rights had been filed with the Ryukyu local government" (Emmers, p.57). Taiwan, Japan, the ROK, and the US all started to thinking about drilling in the area. On 23 December 1970, the Taipei Central Daily News reported,

The three countries of China (Taiwan), Japan, and ROK have already agreed to jointly develop the continental shelf, each country will establish a committee to research, explore and plan; the boundaries of the continental shelf discussed by the three countries include the vast area from the East China Sea to the Japan Sea, including Tiaoyutai. (Chung, 2004, Domestic Politics, p.33)

This was staunchly opposed by the PRC, who expressed disapproval at the nations that were trying to "grab our country's submarine resources" (Chung, p.33). The PRC asserted that the cooperation among these three countries and their interests on dividing natural resources are invalid. PRC was not only aware of Taiwan, the ROK and Japan's cooperation to drill the natural resource, but also aware that further cooperation of these three

countries would create a potential security threat to the future growth of the PRC. But with the economic “rise of China” and increased consumptions of fossil fuels, the search for oil and natural gases became a larger priority and thus pushed the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute to the forefront. Joint development ventures were considered since the discovery of the vast natural resources, but distrust and disagreements have blocked further cooperation. Japan believes that in order for joint development to occur, the PRC must stop its current operations and drill in an area closer to the Japanese-claimed median line; in contrast, the PRC believes drilling occurs in the overlap areas of PRC-Japan median lines (see Map 2) (Guo, 2010, p.6-7). While the mutual want for natural resources may have a deterrent effect on potential conflict, conceptual differences may require the US to prepare for heightened tensions over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands.

Trade flows on water in this region are substantial, with about 15% of crude oil shipments from the Strait of Malacca passing through the East China Sea, while the overall route stretching from the Strait of Malacca to the Strait of Taiwan houses about a third of the world’s global crude oil trade (EIA, 2013, “Global Trade”). In addition, over half of the world’s NLG shipments flow through these areas with half of this heading to Japan through the East China Sea (EIA, 2013, “Crude Oil”). The combination of the PRC and Japan’s dependency on natural resources combined with rights associated UNCLOS Article 55 makes the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands a highly lucrative addition to any country’s maritime territory. Profit-making schemes, such as tariffs or taxes on passing transport could bolster government wealth. The PRC in particular would have greater access to the natural resources it needs for continued rapid economic growth and would further extend its economic prowess in the region. Japan, in the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear plant

disaster, would reduce costs associated with importing NLG's and have an impact on their stagnate economy.

Considering the historical duration of this particular territorial dispute, it should be noted that “in spite of the fact that the island dispute remains unresolved, both parties have found it a convenient strategy to shelve final resolution attempts rather than to risk the rupture of vastly more consequential common strategic and economic relations” (Koo, Cold Politics, p.228). In the case of China, because the PRC relies heavily on economic growth to maintain domestic legitimacy and control, it therefore makes rational sense for the sovereignty issue to give way to economic interests. Fravel (2008) proposes that additionally, “Japan’s alliance with the United States, which includes the defense of areas under the administration of Japan” and Japan as a business source of foreign investment and technology increase the PRC’s incentive to maintain reliable economic relations (Strong Borders, p.272). Japan, being the current administrator of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, stands to lose more than the PRC in the case of a military confrontation. Shinzo Abe, who ran on the promise of increasing Japan’s military strength, has little choice but to fulfill his promise and continue a hard line towards the PRC in territorial disputes, greatly reducing opportunities for bilateral talks regarding the sovereignty issue. As a result, the sovereignty issue has made way for renewed economic ties and implies the establishment of a positive relationship between economic relations and conflict over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. This can be seen in the PRC-Japan trade statistics before and after Japan’s attempt to purchase the islands in 2012. At the time of the protest, Japanese exports to the PRC decreased by 26%, but in only a year later Japanese exports returned to their original pre-protest levels (Katz, “Why Chinese-Japanese Economic,” 2013).

*Strategic Military Worth*

Following an economic analysis, this section will briefly analyze how the island chain achieves the military strategic interests of the PRC and Japan and potential resulting security threats.

In November of 2004, a Chinese nuclear-powered submarine was detected near Guam, Taiwan, and Japan, within waters under Japanese jurisdiction. Later, Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force issued warnings against the submarine and went on emergency alert. Although this resulted in the submarine's retreat and Tokyo's protests against Beijing's violation, the willing use of military equipment reveals each country's strategic value of the territory. Article 19 in UNCLOS clarifies the meaning of innocent passage, stating that "the passage of a foreign ship shall be considered to be prejudicial to the peace, good order or security of the coastal State if in the territorial sea it engages in...the launching, landing, or taking on board of any military device" (UNCLOS, Art. 19, sec. f). This indicates two things, the first being that an extension of either the PRC or Japan's sovereign territory would expand military advantage. In addition,

The East China Sea is home to potentially vast hydrocarbon resources that could improve energy security for both claimants...control of the East China Sea would confer a significant military advantage because it would enhance the ability to disrupt SLOCs and project power ashore. (Manicom, p. 29)

Most of the PRC naval bases face the East China Sea, and the PRC's first warfare carrier is located at its base in Qingdao, located 523 nmi from Okinawa. This feature would extend the PRC's major training area of Liaoning into the East China Sea from the Yellow Sea, bringing military conflict closer to Japanese coasts. Conversely, if Japan claimed sovereignty over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, the EEZ will be half way across the East China Sea from the baselines on the shores of the Okinawa Islands; this would also benefit

the US military base in Okinawa as well as increase the area of Japan's maritime sovereignty.

The second issue Article 19 hints at but does not address for the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute is the overlaps of EEZs. An overlap of the EEZ means the overlapping of the military reaction, which will lead to more conflicts. The PRC mentioned EEZ zones in the 1992 Maritime Law, stating that their EEZ in the East China Sea "are just short of 100 miles north-northeast of the northern tip of the island of Taiwan" (Chung, p.31). If the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are under the sovereignty of the PRC, the PRC could take any military action or reaction to conflicts with Japan or Taiwan. Furthermore, as the PRC continues to expand their naval power, the extension of the EEZ will also threaten the US military base in Okinawa and the ROK since the EEZ near these two bases. Conflicting claims in the EEZ also brought about incidents between the PRC and the US. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001, a US E-P3 electronic surveillance aircraft and a Chinese jet fighter collided in midair some 110 km southeast of Hainan. This incident resulted in Beijing's harshly criticizing the US military for encroaching on their maritime territory, while the US asserted that it was free under law to send military units to the area. But despite the military clashes that have occurred, it would be in neither state's interest to escalate the situation militarily. Yang Bojiang in the *China Daily* comments,

If the China-Japan relationship breaks down, neither can afford to bear the strategic cost. To break through the stalemate in relations and push bilateral ties back onto a positive track, the key in the near term is to enhance cooperation, reduce confrontation, and properly handle the issues in bilateral relations. ("Why Chinese-Japanese Economic Relations are Improving, 2013)

The implication is that mutual knowledge of their dependent relations on the other are enough to deter a military confrontation as opposed to incentivize talks regarding

sovereignty of the islands. While this may hold both parties at bay, the risk of confrontation continues to loom and without policy precautions could post a threat to US security and interest in the region.

### **Barriers to Compromise: Military Expansion, UNCLOS, and the Pacifist Constitution**

#### *The PRC's Military Expansion*

As former sections implied, the PRC's rising military and economic power make the PRC's statements and actions in the dispute more overt. The development of the PRC's naval power, although steadily grown through a long period of time, has accelerated due to multiple clashes and events related to territorial disputes. Because the PRC's territorial concerns range beyond the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, the PRC's naval development is perceived by Japan as a military challenge and by the US as an attempt to reduce foreign influence.

In an address to the People's Liberation Army delegation to the 10<sup>th</sup> National People's congress, Chinese president Hu Jintao proclaimed, "We should actively explore new ways and new methods for combining military with civilian production...economically and in science and technology" (Erickson, Goldsten, and Lord, 2009, p.344). Over the course of the PRC's rule, the Chinese shipbuilding industry grew by exponential amounts. "Prior to 1995 China did not have a building dock large enough to construct", however, by 2010 a range of private shipyards have arisen and could account for nearly 50% of Chinese ship production (Erickson et al., p.344). This growth can be attributed to multiple factors, not limited to asserting legitimacy as a global presence and a reaction to the collective memory

of “national humiliation.”<sup>46</sup> Although the PRC lacks military transparency, budgets for military spending reveal a substantial increase. A news report by the state-owned Xinhua News reported in 2014 that the defense budget would be raised to \$132 billion, and 12.2% increase from the previous year which had only increased by 10.7% previously (“China defense budget,” 2014). The years of increased defense budgets have begun materializing in the PRC’s buildup of maritime military capabilities. On 25 September 2012, the first aircraft carrier Liaoning was officially commissioned by the PLA Navy, and signs from Chinese social media in early February 2015 indicate the PRC’s plans to boost their maritime power (“Second aircraft carrier,” 2015, n.p.).

The correlation between the buildup of naval capabilities parallels the PRC’s more initiative approach to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, notably so after Xi Jinping became the chairman of PRC. On November 23, 2013, the PRC established an ADIZ over a significant area of the East China Sea. The ADIZ will regulate both aircraft intentionally and not intentionally entering sovereign airspace; this can be interpreted as “an expansion of China’s attempt to exert legal and administrative control over the Senkaku Islands,” and the regulations will apply to all “air threat and unidentified flying object from the sea” (Hsu, p.2). The establishment of ADIZ also pushes Japan and the US towards a more aggressive and militaristic stance towards the territorial dispute. In escalating the dispute through more overt control tactics, it becomes more and more likely that:

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<sup>46</sup> For the purposes of this paper, national humiliation is defined as “powerful collective memories, whether real or concocted, can be at the root of conflicts, prejudice, nationalism, and cultural identities” [Wang, Z. (2008, December). National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China. *International Studies Quarterly*, 52: 783-806. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/29734264.pdf?acceptTC=true>. Cited p. 785].

On one hand, the East China Sea is likely to be the medium through which Sino-Japanese military rivalry will be played out. Both countries have become more active naval powers...Following [tensions in early 2000's], Japanese ocean specialists, combined with the media, embarked on a lobbying campaign designed to reform Japan's legal institutions with reference to its ocean domain. (Manicom, p.29)

The situation of mutual escalation increases the risk of military clashes for both the US and Japan. Because the ADIZ does not make clear its defensive emergency measures and the rules of engagement, naval, air force, and coast guard operational miscalculations in the region become more likely; this is compounded by already existing tensions between the PRC and its neighbors (Hsu, 2014). The choice of the PRC to escalate the crisis by increasing military involvement threatens has further complicated PRC-Japan relations, thus creating more barriers to compromise on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute.

### *UNCLOS*

UNCLOS was written with the purpose of establishing “a legal order for the seas and oceans which will facilitate international communication” and peaceful use of oceans and seas while regulating environmental conservation (UNCLOS, 1982, Preamble). While the purpose of this international agreement is clear, the specific articles leave much space for interpretation. For example, in reflection of Article 55 which addresses the establishment of EEZs,

The Convention states the ‘the exclusive economic zone shall not extend beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured.’ This is a problem in relatively small bodies of water less than 400 miles across where there could be substantial overlap between the EEZs of two or more countries. For example, the East China Sea is only 360 miles across at its very widest point. (Harry, p.666)

This discrepancy raises several issues, most pertinent being that the EEZs supposedly generated by UNCLOS would undoubtedly encroach onto other landmasses, in particular

the Taiwanese coast, which falls within the 200 nautical mile zone. Not only would this create a security issue, it would set a dangerous precedent that will give countries the legal backing to justify situations of encroaching on maritime sovereignty.

But before the question of EEZ can be addressed, the legal definition of what merits an EEZ must be mended. In the case of the Senkaku-Diaoyu Islands and Article 121, the issue becomes clear. Article 121 of UNCLOS stipulates the following:

1) An island is a naturally formed area of land, surrounded by water, which is above water at high tide. 2) Except as provided for...the territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf of an island are determined in accordance with the provisions of this Convention applicable to other land territory. 3) Rocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive economic zone or continental shelf. (Art. 121)

Throughout UNCLOS there is no state definition of a rock nor are there clear divisions between a rock and an island beyond what is stated and implied in Article 121 (3). Hong (2012) points out a series of questions, such as “Is the difference [between islands and rocks] to be founded in size and the geological substance?...What does it take for a rock to sustain human habitation or have economic life of its own? (UNCLOS and Ocean Dispute Settlement,” p.51). Whether or not the Senkaku-Diaoyu Islands meet the UNCLOS definition of islands continues to be a question. While the PRC and Japan make the mutual assumption that these small islets and rocks are considered islands, in accordance to the requirements set forth in Article 121 (3), the history of the Senkaku-Diaoyu Islands does not recount long-term human habitation, nor does it show past sustainability of “economic life” beyond the fishing that occurs around its waters (Wiegand, 2011, p.107). In the case of a sovereignty settlement, the question of EEZs will be raised, especially with the economic implications the formation of an EEZ in this lucrative zone would be. The vague language

throughout this international agreement leaves much up to interpretation and provides a limited framework for resolving ambiguities.

The PRC's imposition of the ADIZ over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands serves as a tangible example of the divisive nature of UNCLOS. An ADIZ differs from an EEZ in the sense that it extends to rights of the sovereign states to regular and protect national security interests in addition to regulating economic activity that occurs within the zone (Hsu, p.2). In this way, the PRC projects its military and legal legitimacy in the area in direct confrontation to Japan. Although an ADIZ is not illegal, it is not extensively covered in UNCLOS and falls outside the economic responsibilities set forth in Article 21.1 (h). In the "laws and regulations of the coastal State relating to innocent passage," it dictates little on the economic responsibilities of the sovereign state and there is no mention of use of military in regulating territorial seas during peacetime (UNCLOS, Art. 21). The PRC had also expressed that foreign presence, both intentional and unintentional, must be subject to their rules in their ADIZ. In contrast Article 19 defines innocent passage in sovereign waters as "not prejudicial to the peace, good order of security of the coastal state" and goes on to define specific activities illegal to make in territorial waters (UNCLOS, Art. 19). But due to the PRC's inclusion of non-intentional ships, there is the blurring between the legal role of a sovereign state in territorial waters and the legal obligations of ships to ensure innocent passage. It becomes clear that the ambiguity in UNCLOS opens more doors for interpretation and thus more opportunities for dispute.

#### *Japan's Push for Constitutional Reform*

Japan's pacifist clause in their constitution is on the brink of change, and the implications of such a change would have an impact on the current status quo of the

Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands but have implications on the military balance in East Asia. Article 9 of the Japanese constitution states that “the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes” (The Constitution of Japan, 1947, Chapter II). Many Japanese have equated the renouncement of war with the inability to possess offensive weapons capabilities. But possessing and acting only in self-defense capabilities sorely undermines the weight and scope of international conflicts Japan can be involved in. The era of former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi is widely accredited to have ushered in a historically-unapologetic but cooperative policy posture, pointing to an overall movement of increased Japanese assertiveness towards territorial disputes, particularly in three areas: legal authority over activities in disputed waters, limiting use of force for institutions protecting Japan’s maritime territory, and exerting the will of Japan’s politicians (Maricom, p.167).

The rise of Shinzo Abe follows Koizumi’s posture of creating a more internationally-active and independent Japan. Using the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute as an example, Japan sees a necessity to counter the growing Chinese military and decrease military dependence on the US, who has no direct incentive to become militarily involved. Japan perceives the international community to consider them a satellite of the US, a sentiment clearly expressed in 2006 when the DPRK’s Foreign Ministry ridiculed their unessential role in the Six-Party Talks (Varma, 2007, p.67). As *The Guardian* elaborates in early February 2014,

[Abe] wants Japan to play a greater role in international peacekeeping and step up its defense posture, mainly because of potential military threats that Japan sees from China and North Korea. As China’s influence rises and that of the United States fades in the region, Japan is trying to expand its defense alliance outside its ‘cornerstone’ ties with Washington and has signed defense agreements with several

other countries, including Britain and Australia. (“Japan considers constitutional changes,” n.p.)

On a policy front, the US has wanted to foster a stronger Japanese ally since the Reagan administration, but the political alliance between the two governments is delicate as Japan begins to assert itself and alter the political landscape of East Asia (Aslin, 2015, par. 11). Abe’s call to alter the pacifist clause of Japan’s constitution will pose new challenges to finding middle ground in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute. Japan’s relations with neighbors have been at an all-time low, affected by Abe’s threat to rescind their official apology for war atrocities and soured relations with China over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, but, as Michael Auslin (2015) aptly states, “we cannot expect relations between Japan and its neighbors to get any better, especially the more Abe and the Japanese government decide to move forward with reforms that they consider to be Japan’s best interest from a security perspective” (“Japan’s Hard Power Play,” par.8). In the case of an amended constitution, a Japanese military development with offensive strike capabilities would flank the PRC with another formidable and US-aligned neighbor, a development that may push the PRC to take even more aggressive actions in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute. A more equipped ally would have limited benefits for the US; while the US would no longer need to invest as much military personnel in the region, the US would become less relevant to the political power balance in East Asia.

### **Opposing Interests: The US’ Policy Dilemma**

While the US has no official position on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute, the US has openly expressed support for peaceful resolutions to the conflict. The US has an invested interest in both the PRC and Japan, and escalation of conflict between the two states would put the US in a precarious security situation.

Spurred on by Deng Xiaoping's "open door policy" in 1978, intensified and mutually-dependent economic relations between US and PRC became one of the reasons that the US gave this statement: "We do not take a position on the ultimate sovereignty of these islands," Kurt Campbell, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, told a US Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee (Eckert, 2012, n.p.). On November 29, 2012, the US Senate approved an amendment to National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 stating an acknowledgment of the administration of Japan over the Senkaku Islands, the US remains committed under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security to respond to any armed attack in the territories under the administration of Japan, and has urged all parties to take steps to prevent incidents and manage disagreements through peaceful means (2013, Sec 1286). It becomes clear that the US distinguishes between sovereignty and legal administration, therefore avoiding any direct involvement while simultaneously endorsing the Japanese position as lawful and correct.

The main security priority in regards to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands is maintaining mutually cooperative and beneficial relations with the PRC and Japan. In 2014, the US Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) recognized the risk of countries who are building military and security capabilities in East Asia, particularly in the context of territorial disputes. Recognizing the PRC's role in particular, the US evaluated that the lack of transparency of military capabilities and intentions and rapid modernization increases the risk of "reversing the trends of rising regional peace, stability, and prosperity" (QDR, 2014, "Regional Trends"). This indicates the increased necessity for trust-building and soft power measures and rethinking US military posture towards the PRC.

The US must support its friends and allies in the region against China's increasingly hostile behavior. We must help facilitate a collaborative process to resolve these

disputes. There is no other issue in the Asia-Pacific region more worrisome than the rising tensions we are seeing as a result of China's efforts to coercively change and destabilize the regional status quo. (113 Congress, "Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific)

This is why the US posture and relations with Japan is essential towards security strategy in East Asia. US-Japan relations are indispensable in rebalancing the growing Chinese presence in the region, and not only must the US engage in both the PRC and Japan, but also assist facilitating direct talks relation-building tactics.

**Action Items: Minimize Confrontation, Maximize Cooperation**

The US must push to prevent the escalation of the current disputes and to reach multiple security interests in the East Asia region. A military dispute stemming from unresolved territorial issues would prove counterproductive to US interests in maintaining strong economic ties with the PRC and strengthening the Japanese ally. The territorial disputes are one of the most promising situations to rebalance the power structure in East Asia. The following are recommendations for the US military bases in the ROK and Japan: Refrain from positions on territorial disputes, The US can reduce troops numbers in Japan and the ROK in order to present the potential to not involved in disputes. However, the US should help the ROK and Japan enhance their military power to balance the rising China. Ratify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in order to normalize the US role in international on Islands/Maritime Disputes.

Limit arms sales to Taiwan to avoid the PRC's perceived direct involvement in the Taiwan issue and stay aligned with US policy towards the China sovereignty debate. However, the US should send more arms to Japan and the ROK and improve the relations between Japan and Taiwan.

Enhance economic cooperation with the PRC but not militarily: intensifying economic relations serve as trust-building tactics, and will build fluid transparency on military modernization.

Provide more natural resource assistance to Japan and ROK in order to reduce the reliability of Japan and the ROK's resources demand from Russia and PRC.

Encourage the states that had disputes over the EEZ to start compromise with each other by starting an East China Sea Caucus.

**Conclusion:**

After analyzing of reasons and consequences of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Island disputes and other major disputes between US ally country and non-ally country, it becomes clear that this regional conflict must factor in to US rethink of military base policy. Secretary of State John Kerry delivered a speech on August 2014, clarifying that “the United States of America takes no position on questions of sovereignty in the South and East China Sea...we care about behavior. We firmly oppose the use of intimidation and coercion or force to assert a territorial claim by anyone in the region” (US Department of State, 2014, n.p.)

A brief historical recount of the island's various turnovers, followed by analysis of its geopolitical, economic, and strategic importance to the party countries revealed the complexities of the conflict that the US must take into consideration when reformulating policy, focusing especially on Japanese interests and motivations in the region. The rethink must also take into consideration the trends of development surrounding the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, especially with the PRC's rapid military build-up and Japan's issues with its pacifist constitution. Legal considerations motivating both party's claims, specifically UNCLOS, are essentially flawed as the documents fail to clarify certain concepts

essential to resolve the dispute. While the US may not be able to dictate the PRC and Japan's actions in the East China Sea, specific actions can be taken to minimize the potential for conflict escalation and protect US interests and its allies, and are suggested in this paper.

The US may have no direct advantages or disadvantages to the outcome of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute, but especially when territorial sovereignty may affect the power balance, economic strength, and national security of all countries in East Asia, the consequences may force the US to change national security priorities to minimize costs rather than maximize gains. A US policy rethink now serves to protect long-term security interests in East Asia and ensure the future of international cooperation.

## Chapter 8

# The Non-US View of US Bases in Japan and the ROK

Jay-Kwon Park

This paper will seek to understand the domestic perspective on the US military bases and its presence in the host countries of the ROK and Japan. With a brief historical summarization for context, understanding contemporary public opinion in both countries must also take into account the current political environment in both the ROK and Japan and what it means for any efforts the US might take in changing or relocating its bases. Additionally the paper will address the benefits and drawbacks of a US military presence from the perspective of local populations, the environmental issues involved in US military bases as well as the potential of a more cooperative relationship between the ROK and Japan.

**Introduction:**

Since the end of World War II, the US has stationed its military forces in parts of the ROK and Japan to support their national defense and security and to increase deterrence against the spread of Communism. The overseas presence of the US forces in ROK and Japan has assisted these two countries but at the same time, created controversial issues and problems. Within the past fifteen years, issues with the US military presence in these two countries has risen to the surface. The US military has not only provided aid but also increased the level of anti-Americanism in ROK and Japan. To prevent possible blowback caused by the presence of the US forces in these two countries, knowing what has happened in the past and events that are currently happening is important. Also, recognizing how the host countries think about the SOFA signed between them and the US is necessary. Revision of SOFA in more lenient way is necessary to all three countries for hardening their alliances. In order to reveal their perspectives, this essay will consist of the non-US perspectives in regard to the presence of the US military bases in Korea and Japan.

**History***Republic of Korea*

The US and its military have been the ROK's most powerful and beneficial ally since the mid-20th century. In 1945 the ROK was emancipated from Japan's occupancy after Japan surrendered to the Allied forces. Soon after, US forces landed in Korea. Five years later in 1950, the Korean Peninsula once again became a hotbed for conflict when the DPRK invaded the ROK. To curtail the influence of the Soviet Union and the feared domino effect any spread of communism could have in the region, the US once again sent its troops to

Korea along with other United Nations allied forces. After the Korean War ended, the US kept its troop in the ROK under UN command to aid the ROK in rebuilding from the conflict.

### *Japan*

After Japan's unconditional surrender, the WWII Allied forces established an occupational government headed by the US, except for Okinawa which was under greater US jurisdiction. Due to the threat of the nearby Soviet Union and the necessity for an ally in the region, the US established a head base at Fuchu Air Station in Japan in 1957. The strategy for Japan following WWII became known as the Yoshida Doctrine, in which the US would provide security for Japan to allow the reconstruction of its domestic economy to be the Japanese government's primary focus. This was solidified in the 1960 US-Japan security treaty and the Japanese Constitution (Berger, p.59). Previously signed in 1951 and revised in 1960, the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security allowed the US military forces to be stationed in Japan permanently. Contained in the newly enacted Japanese Constitution was Article 9, prohibiting Japan to build its own military. The US has served as its defense mechanism ever since (Matloff, 1973).

### **Public Opinion: Non-US views on the presence of the US military in ROK and Japan**

#### *Republic of Korea*

The relationships the ROK has with the DPRK and the US have always been the two primary factors affecting public opinion in the ROK on its US military presence. As the temperament of both relationships change, so too does public opinion towards the US military presence.

Without the support of the US, the ROK may never have existed in the first place. Unsurprisingly, the US military presence has meant a great deal. With scars from the

Korean War still present, the ROK successfully modernized in the decades that followed utilizing aid and support from the US. From the end of the war to the early 1990s, having a critical view against the US and its military presence in ROK was hugely unpopular. During that time, anti-American views were interpreted as being pro-communist and pro-DPRK (Lee, Jung, Jung, 2005). Those who were considered communist or pro-communist were imprisoned or even executed, and thus few expressed enmity towards the US. However, beginning in the late 1990s, as the nation's democracy and economy stabilized, the public began to more freely express their views and question the necessity of the US military presence. Then, in the early 2000s there were two groundbreaking events that fueled greater public questioning of and opposition to the US military presence in the ROK.

Following the Inter-Korean Summit in 2000, the relationship between the ROK and DPRK seemed to have improved. Along with the summit talks, things like planned meetings for families that had been separated between the north and south had greatly improved the general mood surrounding the two countries' relationship, and the general public started to question the usefulness the US military had as a deterrent against war with the DPRK (Lee, Jung, Jung, 2005). To those in the ROK in favor of Korean reunification, the US military was no longer seen as 'shield' or a 'deterrent,' but an obstacle to improving the relationship between the two Koreas.

Further scrutiny came a couple of years later when two teenagers were hit and killed by a US army tank. The public soon became aware of the vague legal language in the SOFA between the ROK and US that hindered Korean investigation of the incident. During this time, anti-Americanism peaked and nationwide protests against the US military presence were staged (Lee, Jung, Jung, 2005).

The ROK public is well aware of the contribution a US military presence has for their country. The US supported the ROK following WWII and in the Korean War, provides a nuclear umbrella, and so on. However, as crimes committed by US soldiers have risen from 191 incidents in 2007 to 377 incidents in 2010, so too has opposition towards the US military presence and the US-ROK SOFA (Lee, 2011). In most of the major cases, ROK police were barred from investigating since they did not have the right to conduct the first investigation as per the current SOFA. Furthermore, even though the SOFA gives the ROK the right to primary jurisdiction, this right must be ceded to the US if the US requests to have primary jurisdiction (Lee, 2011). The ROK and the US agreed to revise the SOFA back in 2002, but the revisions were unsubstantial.

The presence of the US military is a double-edged sword for the ROK. Koreans are aware that US forces are necessary if the DPRK were to invade. But whatever protection against possible invasion the US provides for offers little consolation whenever crimes like these are committed by US military personnel. Anti-American sentiment and calls for the withdrawal of US military forces have significantly increased since the 1990s. However, emerging threats like the economic and military expansion of the PRC, a more volatile DPRK, and the unparalleled security provided by the US defense system are still reason enough for the ROK public to support having a US presence. In a poll, 53% of the participants answered that ROK should keep and focus on its alliance with the US (Lee, 2006).

### *Japan*

Opinion toward the US military in Japan is polarized. On political and national security issues, the Japanese government and those living in mainland Japan favor a US

military presence. However, most of the US military bases in Japan are not located in mainland Japan – they are concentrated in Okinawa. While it makes up only 0.6% of Japan’s land surface, about three-quarters of all US military bases in Japan are located in Okinawa. According to one poll, 66% of Japanese citizens questioned held favorable views towards the US (Pew, 2010). Although the majority has a favorable impression, Okinawa itself is a hotbed of anti-Americanism. Ever since the US bases were built there, Okinawans have fought to repel them from their islands. Okinawans’ anger toward the US military presence and toward the Japanese government cannot be understood without knowledge of their history with the US. During the Battle of Okinawa in 1945, about one quarter of the Okinawan population was either killed by US military or forced to commit suicide by the Japanese. Following the battle and after the war ended, Okinawa under direct US control until 1972 when it was officially returned to the Japanese government as its own prefecture. The occupation of Okinawa was different than that of mainland Japan, and as such the relationship the US has with Okinawa is different from the rest of the country. Whereas the Occupation Government of Allies headed by the US sought to “work through Japan’s existing government,” US control of Okinawa was more authoritarian (Huffman p.110).

How Okinawans think and feel about the US military presence in their prefecture is totally different from the Japanese government. Okinawans are strongly against the US military bases in their islands while the Japanese government steadily supports them. For Okinawans, the bases are not only a reminder of WWII but also of the way the Japanese government has treated Okinawa as its subject state with policies that do not integrate the Okinawans’ own voice.

Several major incidents involving the US military have fueled Okinawan support for the withdrawal of US bases from Okinawa. US Soldiers were accused of raping Japanese civilians in both 1995 and 2002. Like the crimes in the ROK, because of the SOFA agreement between Japan and the US, the Japanese government could not fully investigate (Yoon, 2014). From these two incidents, anti-Americanism in Japan, particularly in Okinawa, peaked. Furthermore, a 2004 crash of a US military helicopter onto a local university led to Okinawan protests. Recently, what has driven anti-Americanism in Okinawa was Prime Minister Abe's decision to relocate a military base in Okinawa despite local opposition. An Okinawan mayor stated that he would not allow the relocation of the Futenma base to the Henoko area and reject any further construction of the US bases in Okinawa, but his voice was neglected and he was excluded from meeting with Prime Minister Abe. After this decision was made, Okinawans expanded their protests to be against the Abe government in addition to the local presence of US military.

### **National Politics within the ROK and Japan**

#### *Republic of Korea*

Currently ROK politics is split into two major parties: the New Frontier Party (Saenuri Party) and the New Politics Alliance for Democracy (Saejeongchi minju yeonhap). The conservative party favors US military presence in the ROK and works to strengthen the alliance with the US. They argue that the presence of the US military is necessary because it provides that most effective deterrent against the DPRK. In contrast, the New Politics Alliance for Democracy is critical of the US military presence. They argue that the US bases will only encourage the DPRK to enhance its military capability and provoke it into a more

aggressive position. Due to recent provocations by North Korea the South Korean public has shifted towards the conservative security perspective.

These two parties had been quarrelling over every issue they could since the ROK was established, but the US military presence has been a particularly divisive issue. Every 15<sup>th</sup> of September (the date US forces landed in Incheon under the 'Operation Chromite' led by General MacArthur), the parties would feud over the statue commemorating the general. The conservative party reasons that the ROK only exists because of US support, and without MacArthur, the entire peninsula could have fallen under communist control. On the other hand, the progressive party argues that the statute should be removed because if not for MacArthur and his troops landing in Incheon in the first place, Korea might still be unified (Kim, 2015). Debate over the US military presence might dampen with the end of the progressive party, and if the ROK and the US can come up with a solution or agreement that satisfies both countries, domestic opposition to the bases would become that much less important in the political agenda.

### *Japan*

In Japanese politics, it is the mainland versus Okinawa. Some Okinawans don't even consider themselves Japanese, but as 'Okinawan' first and foremost. The ruling party of the Japanese government is the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). In a recent election, Onaga Takeshi was elected as a mayor in Okinawa. Even though he is a part of the LDP, Takeshi opposes the Abe government. A major reason he was elected was because he promised to work against the relocation of the US military bases to different areas in Okinawa. Okinawans, tired of being neglected by the Japanese government, were quick to reward these promises and voted him into office. As mayor, he made a statement and sent a letter

to the government in mainland Japan stating that he would not allow the relocation of the Futenma military base to Henoko area. “My victory clearly shows prefectural residents’ will not to let the base be built. I’d like to convey the message to the governments of Japan and the US,” he said in an interview (Fifield, 2014). This directly opposed Prime Minister Abe and the ruling LDP who had already signed on a contract with the US on for the relocation of the Futenma base. Onaga stated that he will reinvestigate if the agreement between Japan and the US had any political or environmental problems and that he would stop the building of new military bases in Henoko.

The Futenma base was planned to relocate to Henoko, in the city of Nago, where Mayor Inamine stood by Mayor Onaga and opposed the relocation of Futenma base to Henoko. However he was overpowered by a former Okinawan mayor who backed the Abe government. Inamine stated that “the mayor of Nago is opposed to Henoko and [the new governor] is opposed. For the US and Japan, Okinawa used to be split on the base issue. But once Onaga is elected, we will be united” (Fifield, 2014). Because of Okinawa’s recent hostility towards the Abe administration, Onaga was not able to meet Abe or any other of his officials. The total lack of support for Onaga by the Abe government only exacerbated Okinawan resentment for Abe and the US bases. In response, Prime Minister Abe decided to cut down budget support to Okinawa.

Going further than mere opposition to the Abe government is the revival of the “Ryukyu Independence Movement,” which refers to Okinawa’s history as a sovereign entity known as the Ryukyu Kingdom. Those who support it want full independence for Okinawa from Japan. And while this may be unlikely, any political schism between Okinawa and the rest of Japan is critical to Japan’s interests in claiming the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, which

are currently part of Okinawa. Thus, the Okinawan political situation not only affects the US and Japan, but also has implications for the PRC who claim ownership over the disputed islands (Joo, 2013). Whether the independence movement is an immediate threat to the stability of Japan or is an evolving statement Okinawans are making to their country's government, the political sentiments of Okinawa and resulting actions that inhibit a stable political environment for US military bases reflect the necessity to take the region's opinion into consideration when moving forward.

### **The Impact of the US Military Presence in Economy & National Security**

To both the ROK and Japan, the debate over the US military presence is centered around security and economic issues. The security benefits provided by a US military presence are easily understood. But less obvious is the economic benefit provided by the US military presence. If the US were to leave either country, a significant portion of the ROK or Japanese budget would then have to go towards defense spending in the absence of US forces.

#### *Republic of Korea:*

The ROK agrees that keeping the US military bases is in many ways better for its economy and national security than if they were to leave.

The weapons, fighter planes, and tanks provided by the US military are very effective and very expensive. However, this is not the only value the ROK government sees in the US military presence. The difference in the amount of money spent on national defense between the two countries is astronomical. The monetary value of the US War Reserve Stocks Ammunition (WRSA) alone is equal to what the ROK would budget for 30 years' worth of training soldiers (Oh, 2003). The US also has U-2 planes which are crucial

for the ROK to keep an eye on DPRK. Although it costs \$1.2 million per flight, it still the most cost effective way to run reconnaissance on the DPRK since the ROK does not have any other means of aerial reconnaissance nor any reconnaissance satellites, all of which requires the type of budget and technological ability that the ROK simply doesn't have (Oh, 2003).

Apart from security issues, the presence of the US military is crucial for the ROK's economy. Foreign investment is a vital part of the ROK economy. For foreign investors to be confident in the ROK, the DPRK cannot pose too great of a threat. And without the deterrent against the DPRK provided by the US military, foreign investment in the ROK could suffer a major cut. According to a study conducted by the ROK government, times when anti-Americanism was high and the public opinion leaned towards withdrawing the US military from ROK, investors pulled out their investment from the ROK (Oh, 2003). The two biggest factors that lead to a decrease in foreign investment were the nuclear threats from the DPRK and anti-US protests. For an economy hugely dependent on foreign investment, national security becomes ever more important to ensure investors that there is no risk of conflict and by extension no risk to their investment.

### *Japan*

As a vital component to the Yoshida Doctrine, the presence of military bases has proved to be economically beneficial for Japan. Traditionally Japan has kept military spending to be worth only 1% of its GNP, which ensured "freeing the economy from the burdens of heavy military spending" (Huffman p.114). Even as rearmament is becomes more of a possibility for Japan under Prime Minister Abe, the burden of funding a security

blanket like the one the US provides remains to be a significant hurdle to overcome if Japan is to be militarily independent.

The current Japanese government under Prime Minister Abe believes that the presence of the US military bases in Okinawa is crucial for both security and economic issues, but Okinawans do not think the presence of the US military contributes to the local economy of Okinawa in a positive way. The GDP for Okinawa is half of that of mainland Japan and Okinawa's unemployment rate is twice as high as that of mainland Japan (Takazato, n.d.). Tourism and agriculture are the two main drivers of Okinawa's economy. With more than 20% of Okinawan land being used by the US military, Okinawans see a significant portion of land that could be used to generate income but instead is out of their control entirely. The Japanese government say that the presence of the US military bases provide jobs to local Okinawans. However, revenue coming from the US bases has been steadily decreasing. In 1972, 15% of the total revenue for Okinawa was made from US military related jobs. However, similar research conducted in 2004 found that the revenue from the US military made up only 5% of the Okinawan total (Takazato, n.d.). Historically the Japanese government provided Okinawans with additional economic support for hosting the bases with their land. However, after Takeshi Onaga and other Okinawans fought against Abe's decision to relocate Futenma base to Henoko, Abe responded with a major budget cut towards Okinawa, which hurts the Okinawan economy.

### **Environmental Concerns Aroused by the US Military in ROK and Japan**

Environmental degradation by the US military has been a hot issue in both the ROK and Japan since the first US bases were built. This is compounded by the way the SOFAs allow the US to escape the economic burden caused by environmental degradation, which

further ignites calls to revise the SOFA between the US and the ROK and Japan in each country.

### *Republic of Korea*

Environmental problems caused by the US military bases have been issued several times both by the ROK public and government. Environmental degradation has been caused from accidents like oil spills and from other incidents which pollute local waters. Between 1991 and 2011, 47 environmental contamination incidents were reported. The ROK was not able to investigate quickly enough or in some cases investigated at all on many of the incidents because the US did not allow Korean investigators to enter US bases. Of those 47 reported incidents, 29 were related to an oil spill, seven were unauthorized discharging of waste into water streams, five related to illegal water reclamation, three involved soil pollution, and three cited under 'other' reasons. A few of these incidents were large enough to enrage the ROK public on a wide scale (Greenkorea.org, 2012).

In 2001, an oil spill was reported in Seoul. The City of Seoul, USFK, and the Ministry of Environment established an investigation team and they found that the oil spill was from the Camp Yongsan. The spilt oil was found to be JP-8, a type of fuel used in the US military bases. However, the USFK neglected this result of the investigation and stated that the US was not responsible for paying the costs of purifying the polluted water stream. As a result, the City of Seoul was forced to pay for purifying its water stream and later claimed the expense from the ROK government. The government then blamed the expense on the US government but even now, after more than ten years, the ROK government has not been reimbursed even though the SOFA requires it (Jung, 2007).

A decade later in 2011, anti-Americanism rose and people were protesting against the US military, demanding the truth about a reclamation of defoliant in 1978. The ROK government was not able to investigate or gather enough information on whether or not the US actually did reclaim defoliant because the US did not provide any information and would not do so 30 years later. After this became a public issue, the ROK government reinvestigated the use of defoliant by the US military and found that more defoliant was used at the DMZ than what the US Ministry of Defense has reported. The ROK government then asked the US government for the truth, but the only answer it got back was that the data was no longer available (Greenkorea, 2012).

In 2014, the ROK and the US agreed on returning the lands where the US bases were built. During these negotiations, the environmental problems became an issue after it was determined that the estimated cost to clean up the returned land was astronomical. The SOFA states that the US must return the land it had used in at least the same environmental condition it had inherited in. Although the ROK government found that the environmental status of the land these bases occupied to be significantly worse off, the US claimed that the level of pollution wasn't critical and was not responsible for purification of the land. The ROK government denied the return of the land by delaying its return date, and is still negotiating with the US on fairly dividing the economic burden of cleaning it up.

### *Japan*

In constructing military bases on large amounts of previously undeveloped land, environmental degradation is unavoidable. Okinawa, once an island full of endangered species and known for its rich biodiversity, was adversely affected by the construction of military bases. Pollution-related incidents involving the US and its bases have occurred

time and time again. Since the bases were built. After 1972, frequent oil spills from the US military bases were reported but the US did not take any countermeasures to prevent further pollution or to purify ongoing pollution.

From things like combat training that includes bombing and maintenance of aircrafts and military facilities, Okinawa has had to suffer from frequent oil and chemical spills. Recently the relocating of the Futenma base to Henoko sparked environmental concerns both old and new. A Congressional Research Service (CRS) report states that the construction of the Futenma base passed all the standards and requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and land reclamation permit (Yoshikawa, 2014). However, many scientists, NGOs and Okinawan residents heavily criticized the standards and claimed that the results were flawed. They argue that the statistics are inaccurate and that the EIA did not conduct thorough enough research on the issue to allow for the relocation of the Futenma base. The Japanese government's EIA that approved the relocation of the Futenma base was also heavily criticized. Some EIA officials even called the findings one of the worst EIA's in the history of its implementation (Shimazu, n.d.). There are three main environmental issues raised in Okinawa regarding the relocation of the Futenma base.

First, according to Japanese national environmental standards, the coastal area off Henoko is categorized by the Okinawan Government's as highly important to conserve (Shimazu, n.d.). Such important wilderness should be strictly protected by law and conserved but even still Prime Minister Abe is forcing the relocation of the Futenma base despite the environmental harm it will do (Yoshikawa, 2014).

Second, Henoko is well known for its dugong population, a critically endangered species. Okinawa is one of the biggest dugong habitats in Asia and Henoko provides the largest habitat in Okinawa. There is simply no way for the relocation of the Futenma base to occur and for it to not negatively impact the dugong's habitat (Kearn, 2015). Despite this, the Japanese government's EIA stated that the construction of new bases would not affect the dugongs and its habitat (Yoshikawa, 2014).

Third, the relocation requires Japan to use about twenty-one million cubic meters of sand and rock for reclamation purposes. It not only pollutes the Henoko area where reclamation is planned but the rest of Japan as well. Japan will have to transport rock and sand from all over the country along its railroads and waterways, and during this transportation there will be significant soil and air pollution. Also, this transportation will devastate Okinawa's biodiversity in a different sense as well. It could also possibly introduce invasive species that are not native to Okinawa (Yoshikawa, 2014).

Because of its negative environmental consequences, Okinawans and mayor Onaga Takeshi oppose the relocation of the Futenma base to Henoko. They are also protesting for the US government to revise the SOFA so that the Japanese government and environmental groups can actually investigate the US bases in Okinawa. However, the US agreed has stated that it will still force relocation of the Futenma base with the support from the Japanese government. Because of this decision and minimal revision in SOFA agreements, Okinawans have continued to fight against the government and the US military bases.

### **ROK-JP Cooperation vs US Military Presence in ROK-JP**

Despite the cooperation of Japan and the ROK in certain areas of business and military, a complicated history between the two nations creates serious obstacles for

effective diplomatic cooperation. Throughout history, the ROK has been occupied by Japan and been made to suffer from suppressive policies imposed towards Koreans. Even after emancipation, the ROK and Japan collided in many issues. Among these, the islet dispute is the most discussed (Hess, Warden, 2014).

A recent dispute on islets called Dokdo / Takeshima has frustrated both the ROK and Japan. They both claim the right to these islets. According to the ROK, these islets have long been their territory. However, the Japanese government has started to claim that it belongs to their own territory. Most historical evidence points to the islets having long been a part of Korea, Japan still claims the rights to the islets. According to the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "In the early 1900s, residents of the islands of Shimane Prefecture called for a stable situation to conduct their sea lion hunting business. The Japanese government incorporated Takeshima into Shimane Prefecture in January 1905, following by a Cabinet decision. By doing so, the Japanese government reaffirmed its sovereignty over Takeshima" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). The Japanese government argues that the Treaty of San Francisco signed in 1951 does not specify the islets as ROK territory and therefore should be under the control of Japan (Price, 2001). Currently, these islets are occupied by the ROK naval police, and both the ROK and Japan are lobbying for their side in the US. This situation should concern the US because it is a dispute among two of its most important allies.

The strained relationship between the ROK and Japan and their ongoing disputes has an effect on their economies. Recently, the ROK and Japan decided not to extend a currency swap agreement contract. The Japanese government and the ROK government both stated that they would agree to extend the contract only if the other asks for an

extension. But because asking for extension is seen as asking for a favor to one another, neither country asked for the renewal of the contract even though it would benefit both countries (Obe, Jun, 2015).

Though the impact would be great, counting on any ROK-Japan cooperation seems unrealistic. Instead of finding a way to make the ROK and Japan cooperate, easing anti-Americanism in ROK and Japan by revising SOFA agreements would be a much easier and attainable option to take. Both Japan and the ROK realize that the benefits of having a US military presence outweigh the drawbacks, but the current SOFAs are a huge part of the problems the public in each country has with the US presence. If the US were to revise its SOFA in a more lenient way and withdraw unnecessary units from both countries, the level of anti-Americanism would decrease significantly which would strengthen the alliances among them.

## **Conclusion**

The US has already experienced blowback from its policy towards the Middle East and learned that the damage can be critical. To prevent future blowback, the US should be more lenient on its policy towards ROK and Japan. Due to problems caused by the US military bases within them, the level of anti-Americanism in both nations rose. In examining the ROK and Japan, one of the biggest issues contributing to the rise of anti-Americanism is the unfairness of the SOFA agreements. If the US updates the SOFA, reflecting the ROK and Japan's voices, it would not only ease anti-Americanism in them but also result in strengthening the alliance among the three countries. A stronger alliance not only positively impacts their national security and their economy but also the US and its allies' ability to rebalance in the region and having more impact in the Pacific.

## Chapter 9

# SOFA Between East Asian Allies

Dilpreet Kaur

This paper will seek to analyze the importance of SOFA with regard to the security agreement the US has reached with the ROK and Japan, and to examine the controversies that have occurred in both countries and the domestic responses to them. Particularly, I will look into the historical creation of the SOFA of Japan and ROK in order to analyze the reason why a revision is needed. The paper seeks to understand whether it is important to retain domestic support of local citizens and if this can be achieved through the modification of the current SOFAs.

## **ROK SOFA History**

In order to understand the creation of the SOFA, it is critical to understand the Korean historical backdrop. In the early 1900s Korea was forcefully annexed into the Japanese empire (Jung, p.1107). Japan retained control of Korea until the end of World War II, after which it begrudgingly relinquished sovereignty to the allied forces (Jung, p.1107). After WWII, Korea was split into two, the Soviet Union being the benefactor of the DPRK while the US extended its influence, values, and military capital to the ROK in the South (Jung, p.1107). This division was created along the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel and the peninsula was split between the communist north and democratic south (Jung, p.1107). The ROK is created with the support of the United Nations, and is officially titled, the Republic of Korea. After this time, the US had troops stationed in the area in order to prevent the spread of communism to the ROK. In the event that a crime was enacted by an American service member, exclusive criminal jurisdiction was granted to the US (Jung, p.1108). Due to the temporary nature of deployment of US troops, the agreement was terminated in 1949 once the US service members had returned home (Jung, p.1108). The withdrawal of troops was short lived as the US again deployed its forces to assist the ROK with the advent of the Korean War in 1950 (Jung, p.1108). This time, a SOFA was installed to add a legal framework to the security agreement (Jung, p.1109). When the SOFA was drafted the objectives and concerns of the US government was of preeminent consideration during negotiations with the ROK government (Jung, p.1109). The ROK needed the support the US military could provide and, as a result, was very accommodating in these talks. On July 27, 1953, at the end of the war, an Armistice Agreement was created between the DPRK and the ROK for a ceasefire (Jung, p.1109). Despite the agreement, the threat from the DPRK

was plausible and persistent. The US entered into the Mutual Defense Treaty to establish permanent military bases in the ROK in order to ensure stability in such a volatile region (Jung, p.1109). At this time a SOFA was agreed upon between the US and the ROK to address legal issues and security in the Korean Peninsula.

In theory, the purpose of a SOFA is to “clarify and stabilize the legal status of Foreign Service members” (Jung, p.1114). The respective countries would agree upon terms that would be mutually acceptable, but the ROK SOFA agreement is not a mutual agreement. The reason for this inequality arises from the domestic situation of the ROK during the Korean War and its aftermath. During the Korean War, the ROK desperately needed the support of the US in order to deal with the DPRK (Jung, p.1109). The US bases in the ROK provided security against the perceived imminent threat of the DPRK. The vast military resources that the US possessed were critical to combat the threat posed by the DPRK. Dependence on the US created a differentiation in power structure that allowed for the more powerful US to have more leverage in the drafting of the SOFA.

It is important to consider that SOFAs are not rigid settlements; the host country can use its leverage to implement amendments to the agreement. In the case of the ROK, its SOFA has been modified twice since its creation. The first revision of the ROK SOFA occurred in 1991, with a second revision occurring in 2001 (Jung, p.1112). The significance of the 2001 revision was its revised sentiment regarding ROK jurisdiction over US military forces. The revisal of the agreement was able to ease some of the public tension, but there remains room for revision. Japan has also expressed a desire for change within its SOFA. An experience of subordination exists for both states, and the Japanese island of Okinawa has sought to reverse similar clauses in its agreement.

## Okinawa History

Japan entered WWII in 1937 with the invasion of Manchuria and the start of the second Sino-Japanese War. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, the US was dragged into the conflict. The Japanese were forced to surrender on September 2, 1945, to the allied powers, who then began a period of occupation (Adam, p.720). Although this occupation occurred under the bureaucratic umbrella of the Allied Forces, the primary control was extended to US forces. During this occupation, the US sought to ensure that the Japanese would not have the ability to resume its colonial endeavors in China and the Korean Peninsula. In the creation of the new Japanese constitution, Article 9 was conceived in order to prevent the rearmament of Japan (Kato, 2014). This clause is of particular importance because it establishes the US obligation to protect Japan in the event of an external attack. Military bases were then created for the US to honor its commitment, as well as advancing its own interests in the Asian sphere and to provide strategic support in the case of conflict. This occupation concluded in 1952 but the presence of US military capital and personnel would remain well into the 21st century.

For the US, Okinawa is the location of strategic military bases in East Asia and the Pacific Ocean. This weight of housing the US military bases is acutely felt in everyday Okinawan life:

The US military is omnipresent. The constant nuisance of the test firing of weapons and low-flying military aircraft is coupled with incidents of pollution and injuries to Okinawan civilians that result from many bases being situated in or near densely populated areas (Masamichi, p.264)

Mainland Japan benefits from the security afforded by these bases without sensing their consistent presence like the Okinawans do. Addressing the frustrations of the Okinawans should be a priority for the governments of both Japan and the US.

### **Japanese SOFA**

The creation of the Japanese SOFA was due to the perception of differentiation in methods of seeking justice. The US pushed for agreements to protect its service members due to the differences in of the American and Japanese judicial systems. In particular, the method of questioning a suspect in Japan is very different than in the US. Japanese police can request an individual to voluntarily submit oneself to a police station for questioning, and the police may use physical force to ‘persuade’ a suspect (Adam, p.726). In the Japanese Code of Criminal Procedure, there is no limit to the length of interrogation when a suspect voluntarily submits oneself to interrogation. The Japanese police may also request a warrant for a detention of a subject for questioning (Adam, p.726). In cases where a request is made, nearly 100% of the time the judge will honor the request. Once the police have obtained a warrant they are able to question a suspect for up to ten days from the writ of detention. Upon requests from the Japanese police, extensions can be made to the detention of suspect and one can be held under Japanese custody for up to 23 days without formal charges (Adam, p.272). The problem of these prolonged detentions is that a coerced confession becomes more likely. This confession will subsequently be used in the trial process (Adam, p.727). Another problem arises in the fact that even if a suspect invokes the right to remain silent, he or she doesn’t have the ability to leave the interrogation room or to stop the questioning itself. A suspect also has no right to a legal attorney during this interrogation process (Adam, p.729). In the US judicial system, one has the right to remain

silent during questioning as well as the right to an attorney. The differences in the judicial process invites potential abuse toward US service members tried in Japanese courts, which may harbor anti-American bias.

The legal system is not the only point of differentiation; cultural aspects also come into play. The Japanese people prioritize the integrity and well-being of its society, with the individual giving way for the whole. This attitude is integrated into the juridical system. The aim is to rehabilitate and reintegrate criminals back into society once convicted for a non-serious crime, in order to minimize the prospect of disruption in the future. In essence, the Japanese judicial system is a crime-control model rather than the due-process model of justice that the US follows (Adam, p.730). The Japanese model of justice places particular importance in social stability rather than individual freedoms (Adam, p.731). A majority of US troops stationed in the region have temporary assignments and thus little incentive to integrate into Japanese society.

The system of approaching justice in Japan is clearly different from that of the US. In order to best protect the interests of the US and its troops overseas, protections like the ones afforded by a SOFA are needed. But these safeguards are often perceived as unfair and unequal by the domestic populations and can cause tension between the stationed military presence and local populace.

### **Japan SOFA Controversy**

Due to the location of US military bases, conflicts arise primarily in Okinawa. Tension between US military forces and the citizens of the Okinawa prefecture have been high since the end occupation in 1972, but one particular case brought them to a boiling point. The case that garnered national attention and scrutiny in Japan was the rape of a 12-

year old schoolgirl by three US servicemen. The US servicemen accused of the rape were Marines Rodrico Harp and Kendrick Ledet as well as a Navy Seaman Marcus Gill all originated from the Camp Hansen Marine Base (Watanabe, 1995). On September 4, the Harp, Ledet and Gill as well as an unnamed fourth US service member left the base during their time off base, Gill proposed the idea of rape, and at this time the unnamed US service member asked to be dropped off (Watanabe, 1995). Although Harp and Ledet propositioned paying for sex, Gill insisted on rape because he was broke and that 'paid sex was no fun' (Watanabe, 1995). The men approached a young Japanese schoolgirl walking home and Ledet flung her into the backseat of the car. At this time, Harp taped the mouth and eyes of the young girl and Gill proceeded to rape her (Watanabe, 1995). Ledet and Harp claimed that although they abducted the girl, they didn't rape her (Watanabe, 1995). Once the service members were finished, they threw her out of the car and drove away.

This case had a profound impact on the residents of Okinawa. Naturally they were outraged, particularly due to the fact that US service members perpetrated the crime. At the time, paragraph 5c in Article 17 of the SOFA agreement stated that the "US is obliged to hand over criminal suspects only after they have been indicted" (Adam, 1996). When the Japanese police requested custody, the motion was denied by US military police (Adam, 1996). The decision to deny the request infuriated local residence and only supported their claims of the SOFA putting "American military above the law, making it more difficult for Japanese police to apprehend them" (Adam, 1996). The inequality between the agreements leads for the public to perceive that the concerns of the Okinawans to be less significant than the national interests of the US.

The nature of the crime and its brutality enraged Okinawan residents and they demanded a closure of the Marine Corps Air Station (Masamichi, p.264). After the 1995 rape, there was a rise in anti-American sentiment with the election of Governor Ota Masahide. Governor Masahide sought to reduce the anger and to return the land used by the US military to its rightful owners (Masamichi, p.264). The case remains that Okinawans feel as though they are second-class citizens. On October 21, 1995, 85,000 Okinawans turned out to protest against the US military bases, which they view as hotbeds for violence. In particular Okinawans were seeking revision of the SOFA that allows for the Japanese police to gain more access to US service members who are accused of committing crimes.

### **ROK SOFA controversy**

Within the ROK tensions have risen due to perception that there is a lack of equality existing in the SOFA established between the US and ROK governments. One particular case that ignited anti-American sentiment was the incident that occurred on the Yangju highway in which two young Korean girls were killed.

The case involved Hyo-Sun and Mi-Seon, two 14-year-old Korean girls who were hit by an US armored vehicle. On June 13, 2002, Hyo-Sun met up with her friend Mi-Seon in order to celebrate her birthday (Myeong-seon, 2012). The two girls were going join their friend, Yeong-Mi who owned a restaurant a 30-minute walk along Rural Road 56 (Myeong-seon, 2012). Two US armored vehicles were also headed along Rural Road 56 to the Deokdo Village training site from Mugeon village (Myeong-seon, 2012). The vehicles were driving alongside each other, taking up enough space to cover the shoulder of the two-lane road (Myeong-seon, 2012). Hyo-Sun and Mi-Seon were hit by one of the armored vehicles

at roughly 10:45 am while ascending on an uphill road. The girls were crushed by the military vehicle, and killed instantly.

Outrage in the Korean community led to anti-American demonstrations. The perceived recklessness of the incident by the US soldiers also fueled the anger of the Korean public. There was a perception by some of the protesters was that the troops had deliberately killed the girls (US soldiers charged for Korean deaths, 2002). To the Korean public, the death of the two girls event highlighted the perceived danger of the US military bases.

The US service members responsible for the death of the two girls belonged to the 8<sup>th</sup> US Army 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry division. Sergeant Mark Walker was the driver of the armored vehicle and Sergeant Fernando Nino was the track commander. Both men were charged with negligent homicide for “negligently failing to ensure safe operation of the vehicle” (US soldiers charged for Korean deaths, 2002). In November of 2002, a court martial decision concludes that Sergeant Walker and Sergeant Nino were not guilty of negligent homicide (Jung, p.1104).

The US gave compensation to the families of Kyo-Sun and Mi-Seon, but the gesture was not able to subdue Korean indignation. The anger was rooted in the SOFA agreement and the perception that “an element of unfairness in the SOFA was largely responsible for what they thought was an unfair verdict” (US soldiers charged for Korean deaths, 2002). These soldiers were protected by the US-ROK SOFA, which delegates judicial authority to the US. When service members commit an infraction against the civilian population during the fulfillment of “official duty.”

The parents of Hyo-Sun and Mi-Seon called for a revision of the SOFA, in particular the ‘official duty’ of soldiers. In the cases that US personnel are conducting military exercises, “South Korea has no jurisdiction over US military personnel involved in accidents while on duty” (US soldiers charged for Korean deaths, 2002). Jurisdiction issues are a key point of conflict for the ROK regarding its SOFA. When the incident occurred, the ROK Ministry of Justice requested a waiver of the exclusive jurisdiction of the US for crimes committed during official duty, which was rejected by the US authorities (Jung, p.1104). Instances like this case bring into focus the limited jurisdiction that the ROK authorities have when attempting to access individuals in an investigation.

Concern pertaining to the current SOFA stems from the provisions afforded to criminals (Jung, p.1120). Article 22 was a particular point of contention and was revised during a modification of SOFA in 2001. Article 22 states that “custody should remain with US military authorities until the completion of all judicial proceeding and until Korea requested the transfer of custody” (Jung, p.1121). During the revision, the US agreed upon terms that allowed for greater access to the ROK authorities. Yet this provision only applies to 12 specific categories of serious crime, such as rape or murder (Jung, p.112). If a crime of a lesser degree has been committed, the US is under no obligation to transfer custody of a subject. The Korean public would like to see an expansion of access to individuals who commit crimes.

#### Japan Domestic Sentiment of SOFA

Although there is clear anti-American sentiment in Okinawa, the attitude on mainland Japan and Tokyo is starkly different. The attitude of legislatures in Tokyo is that “US troops will be tolerated as long as they do not interfere with the home territory”. Tokyo

and the rest of mainland Japan benefits from the security of the US bases, yet suffer none of the abuses.

As shown earlier, the negative attitude towards US military presence is clearly felt in Okinawa. Okinawa is the poorest prefecture in the country, and its residents feel that their interests have been sacrificed for the national interests of mainland Japan. A case which exemplifies the matter between the Okinawa and Tokyo is the creation of a heliport in Okinawa. An initiative to create a sea-based heliport facility was proposed in November of 1996. The heliport facility would accommodate 60 fighter planes, a 780,000 sq. ft. runway and have the capability to accommodate vertical takeoff fighter planes (Masamichi, p.265). The facility was to be in Nago, located in the North East coast of Okinawa located and was to be paid for by Japan (Masamichi, p.265). Estimates of the cost ranged from ¥400 billion to ¥1 trillion (Masamichi, p.265). Initially, the city of Nago rejected the proposal to allow the construction of these facilities; it was eventually passed through the SACO 'Final Report on Futenma Air Station'.

The Okinawans responded to this proposal with mass demonstrations. Strong resistance against the construction of the bases was displayed during the preliminary surveys for the facility (Masamichi, p.265). A survey of Okinawans confirmed the sentiment towards the construction of the facilities (Masamichi, p.266). 78% of Okinawans supported removing the base from their prefecture (Masamichi, p.264). During the protests, Okinawans picketed during the preliminary survey with slogans such as "Life is more important than money and wealth" (Masamichi, p.264).

In order to thwart the construction of the heliport facility, a referendum was submitted with the signatures of more than half of the eligible voters of Nago. Tokyo in particular had

interests in ensuring the creation of the facility, and urged Nago's citizens to vote yes to allow for the construction of the bases by stressing its benefits (Masamichi, p.264). The Japanese government also sent local Japanese Self-Defense forces to lobby on its behalf. Nago citizens mobilized to raise awareness about environmental degradation. In the end, the referendum concluded with a 53% of voters opposing the creation of the facility and only 45% supporting it (Masamichi, p.264). Despite the clear opposition to the creation of this facility, the mayor of Nago endorsed the creation of the heliport facility, despite the displayed anger of Nago residents.

Cases such as in Nago represent the clear differences from Okinawa and mainland Japan. Okinawans who must reside alongside the bases feel the impact much more than those who are distant from the conflict. Addressing these issues is critical to the national security of the US to ensure the strategic access to these bases.

### **ROK Domestic Sentiment of SOFA**

Within the ROK, there are two particular problems the domestic population sees with the SOFA agreement. There is a perception that "South Korean law enforcement officials do not have enough power to prosecute service members suspected of crimes, and that the number of crimes committed by service members is increasing" (Slavin, 2011). Although these problems are persistent, they are not as a hot button issues as in Japan. Due to the location and differences in history of Okinawa and Japan, there is clear opposition to the US Military. In ROK, there is less pressure since the bases are located within the main part of the country and are perceived to be a problem affecting greater Korean society rather than a particular region. Unlike the case of Okinawa and Tokyo, the US military

bases in the ROK are located within mainland ROK. The pressures that exist in the case of Okinawa and Tokyo are not present in the case of ROK.

### **Philippines US Bases Case Study**

By examining the history of US bases in the Philippines, the importance of local civilian support can be ascertained. The military bases were established during the US colonial rule from 1899 to 1946 (Apostol, 2012). The two military bases located in Philippines were the largest outposts of the US military; Clark Air Force Base and Subic Naval Base (Apostol, 2012). The key issue at hand is the actual contribution of these military bases to the economy of the Philippines

There was a significant benefit to the military bases in the Philippines. The military bases in the Philippines were some of the largest employers in the region, second only to the government of the Philippines (William, p.316). Not only did the jobs the military bases provided have inherent benefits, but they also allowed the Filipino workers acquire technical training (William, p.316).

The aim of modifying the SOFA between Japan and the ROK is to avoid a situation such as the Philippines in which the US military was asked to remove the bases. As the international gaze shifts to the east with the rise of the PRC and ROK, as well as established international actors such as Japan, it's critical for the US to retain the bases. The US bases provide strategic areas to operate as well as ensure security in the region.

Although the Philippines compelled the US to withdraw from the country, US forces have recently been invited back into the country. In order to address the rising power of the nearby PRC, the Philippines has made up to five military bases available to the US with ships, aircraft, troops and equipment available for use (Mogato, 2014). The US has also

requested access to the military bases it previously used before the withdrawal including Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Force Base (Mogato, 2014). This military agreement will include maritime security and humanitarian assistance to the Philippines for the next ten years (Mogato, 2014). Although once forced to withdraw, imminent security threats allowed for the return of US military bases to the Philippines.

In the cases of Japan and the ROK, the case of the Philippines represents hope if the US military is forced to withdraw from the region. If the pressure remains high enough, the US will be welcomed with open arms. But a problem that arises is the power vacuum that a US withdrawal would create. In the time of the Philippine withdrawal, no clear threat existed in the region. But in the case of the ROK and Japan, the DPRK is a real and imminent threat across the border. A conflict initiated by the DPRK could destabilize the entire region. In order to retain the military bases and security in East Asia, the US would need to rally domestic support. Through the revision of SOFA, the US is able to achieve its goal and ensure the long-term security of East Asia.

## **Conclusion**

The case for retaining the military bases remains clear. With the rising economic power of the PRC and the imminent threat of an unstable DPRK, it is apparent the need for strategic military bases in the region. The bases in Japan have longstanding infrastructure and in a strategic location with vital proximity to the PRC. The military base in the ROK is critical to combat the threat of the DPRK. In order to retain these bases, domestic support is critical. With domestic support, the US is able to conduct military exercises without protest or controversy. Revision of these agreements would allow for an increase in support from the local residences and ease in conducting military operations and training through the

adjustment of the SOFA between the US and Japan and the US and the ROK, we can reduce the blowback from the military bases and ensure the long-term presence of the US.

## Chapter 10

# Addressing Abuses: the Call for Reciprocity in non-NATO SOFAs

Tyler Knudson

If the US is to make any revisions to its SOFAs with the ROK and/or Japan, it is critical to understand not only the background of each SOFA but also its intended purpose.

Perhaps more important, if revisions are to be in an effort to appease domestic concerns and frustrations with the current SOFAs then the current language of the SOFAs and the issues with it must be addressed, as well as the feasibility of revising a SOFA and the benefits it provides the US in doing so. This paper seeks to address what the issues currently with the US SOFAs with the ROK and Japan and the reasons the US ought to revise them.

## **Introduction**

Through an examination of the existing international order in the 21st century, it becomes apparent that it is currently inconceivable for the US and its Asian allies to propose a uniform dismantlement of US military bases in Japan and the ROK. The instability of the DPRK regime, an uncertainty pertaining to the “rise of the PRC,” and its intentions and role in the Asian sphere, all contribute to a complex economic, political and security climate. This development has both legitimized a foreign military presence in East Asia while also stimulating a discourse of reform. SOFAs establish a legal framework and code of conduct for Foreign Service members in host countries, which reduces harm to local populations while supplying confidence to acting members whose duties are often riddled with anxiety. However, these agreements are not infallible, as implicit language within these SOFAs has afforded confusion and a space for abuse by acting service members, bureaucrats and their respective governments. In order to quell anti-American sentiment in the region, this being of strategic value to the US military, it is important to acknowledge the history of SOFAs, confront the notion that complete reciprocity exists between host and guest nation in Asia, their ability to renegotiate terms, while also striving to inject more explicit sentiment into these SOFAs.

## **History of SOFA**

The 20th century was characterized by a plague of conflict, which consumed millions of lives, while leaving rural areas ravaged, and cities in ruin. Military alliances drew “friendly combatants” to foreign country sides and each respective state was compelled to negotiate sovereignty and the legal jurisdiction of forward-stationed, military agents. Synthesis of the “Law of Flag” occurred as a result, a proclamation, which

established that “fighting forces were not subject to the host nation’s jurisdiction” (Norman, p.731). Conception of some sort of framework was paramount if the involved parties were to reduce and navigate the convolution that a multilateral military alliance presents. The “Law of Flag,” a unique conception of its time, managed to supply a basic parameter of legality for participating states by establishing the sending nation’s entitlement to the demonstration of sovereignty. However, this legal standard would only suffice for a limited duration of time, the aftermath of World War II would present a new world order which challenged the existing mechanics. The US, a rising hegemon, would commit resources globally in an attempt sustain Western values and stability, this new commitment would require a more explicit document delineating the protections of soldiers and civilians alike.

Now “the voluntary acceptance by a host nation of large, foreign land forces on a permanent basis is a new historical development, unique to the twentieth century” (Norman, p.731). Containment of the Soviet Union was of preeminent concern for the US and its allied nations following the last world war. The viable, proposed solution to this threat was for the US to send young soldiers and sailors abroad. Foreign, government officials, from these war-torn areas, consented to such stationing as they were weary of the vulnerability of their populace to the advance of the Eastern bloc and susceptibility to such ideologies as communism. This threat served as the endorsed narrative, which would substantiate the considerable presence of alien bodies in host countries. April 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, imbued with the defense provisions that the Treaty of Brussels had set forth in 1948, was conceived and sought to address and oppose the ambitions of the Soviet Union. At the time of NATO’s initial conception there were 12

member states, this military alliance would invite the military capital of the US to Europe and consequently require the structure that a SOFA could provide. Participating states would consent to a multilateral NATO SOFA, ratified by the Senate on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1970, and it was to be installed and arranged to best serve the individual member and the organization as a whole.

Ultimately, “SOFAs are agreements entered into by two or more states that delineate the explicit legal rights and obligations of military forces present in foreign countries” (McConnel, p.168). SOFAs are not a mutual defense agreement, rather, they comprehensively frame the experience of servicemen while abroad (e.g. legal rights, taxation, appropriate display of uniform, etc.). They are most often complementary to another type of strategic or military agreement, such as NATO, and they encapsulate efforts made to minimize friction between soldiers and civilians, military bureaucrats and state officials. Though nuances may exist between bilateral SOFAs, a pillar of “legal reciprocity” is championed; each party is to make a concerted effort to acknowledge the sovereignty established within these agreements. What had been accomplished with the advent of NATO and its SOFA was the formation of an international, militaristic entity, which could enable the forward deployment of US troops by acquiring consent of a host country through the explicit citing of expectations. The SOFA model, a malleable template, would soon become the playbook for US military operations beyond Europe.

“The extensive post-war use of SOFAs grew out of America’s dramatic postwar rise as a hegemonic power” (Raustiala, 2009). While reveling in a state of unprecedented, economic affluence, the US was prepared to advance its own agenda through the satisfaction of military obligations it had made with aligned nations. The competency of US

armed forces during the last world war proved to be a catalyzing incentive for states humoring an alternate, security strategy; cooperative initiatives were crafted and extended by Asian governments. The articles of a multilateral NATO-SOFA had so adroitly handled troop affairs in host countries that they were readily considered by the US government for installment in East Asian countries. Vanquished Axis powers such as Japan soon became the acquiescent hosts of considerable US military installment and personnel, even Japanese territory in the Korean peninsula, was to serve as a staging ground for Western interests. These states would require their very own SOFAs but would these agreements necessarily take the same shape.

The power vacuum that was present in the region, following the conclusion of World War II, inspired anxiety in Washington, Tokyo, and Seoul. Occupation of Japan, by Allied Forces, followed its unconditional surrender on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1945; the US would enter into a mutual defense treaty with the ROK in the wake of the Korean War. Communism was identified as a legitimate threat to the existing orders of these states and the US was prepared to meet it. Non-NATO SOFAs were enacted in Tokyo June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1960 and in Seoul July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1966. The US government committed a considerable amount of human and technological capital to East Asia in order to promote stability and Western values in the region.

As a result, an unprecedented US military body emerged in the Pacific; US military installations had now taken root across the globe. "At the end of the Cold War, the US maintained permanent SOFAs with approximately 40 countries. As of 2006 the number has grown to more than 90." (Pyo, p.40). But not all of these SOFAs were created equal; non-NATO SOFAs were established as comprehensive, non-reciprocal agreements which in

essence dwarfs the jurisdictional authority of one party, the host country. Without the pillar of reciprocity, skepticism swelled with regards to the host country's ability to maintain its sovereignty. Why is it then would a nation consent to a non-reciprocal SOFA? One might consider this a likely position for Japan to assume, considering its humble defeat during World War II, but why then would the ROK?

“Non-NATO member States have agreed to these agreements in part, because of a concern over the spread of communism and the desire to have US forces stated into their country to mitigate that perceived threat” (McConnel, p.171). It was undoubtedly the modest military appendage of these Asian states, which, upon review, rationalized the surrender of the pillar of “reciprocity” within their own SOFA. Consider how Article 9 of Japan's new constitution forbade the existence of a formal military while the fledgling ROK state clamored to meet its security needs following the Korean War- an alternate solution was necessary. The US had thwarted the effort of a considerable fascist regime in Europe and it was believed that its military capacity could retard the further spread of communism in East Asia. Having this understanding, these two Asian states accepted droves of US soldiers and contributed to the furnishing of their military bases. The accepted non-NATO SOFAs, which complimented this arrangement, reflected the conditions of East Asia in the 20th century and the priorities of both parties.

However, now that the perceived threat of communism has subsided in the 21st century, the peoples of the ROK and the islanders of Okinawa have become increasingly dissatisfied with their SOFAs. The parties are frustrated with their “second-class” categorization and after enduring countless episodes of robbery, rape and murder by military agents, are insisting on more explicit language within the document to ensure their

safety and rights. Inaccessible crime scenes, subjectivity in court rulings, the elusive obtainment of justice are just a few of the consequences that have emerged from non-NATO SOFAs implicit, non-reciprocal nature. The modern non-NATO SOFA requires considerable attention from the governments of the US, Japan and the ROK; negotiations are in order to maximize military benefit while reducing civilian harm.

### **Language of a SOFA**

A contentious aspect of SOFAs in Japan and the ROK are the articles, which dictate the primary criminal and disciplinary jurisdiction with regards to acting service members and their dependents. “SOFAs may include many provisions, but the most addressed is which country may exercise criminal jurisdiction of US personnel” (Mason, 2012). Japan and the ROK “share jurisdiction,” with the US meaning that an “agreement establishes how the domestic civil and criminal laws are applied to US personnel while serving in a foreign country” (Mason, 2012). An agreement is met after an assessment of the current security climate and is only enacted after each state has consented to the proposed terms. Article 17 of the US-Japan SOFA enunciates which party is to receive “primary right to exercise jurisdiction” in the following instances:

The military authorities of the US shall have the primary right to exercise jurisdiction over members of the US armed forces or the civilian component in relation to: (i) offenses solely against the person or property or security of the US or offenses solely against the person or property of another member of the US armed forces (ii) offenses arising out of any act or omission done in the performance of official duty. (US-Japan SOFA)

The clause of the aforementioned article, which warrants considerable attention, is that which frames the “official duty” of acting military agents. The US-ROK SOFA harbors the same language verbatim; Article 22 of that agreement delegates authority to the US when an armed forces member commits an offense while performing their “official duty.” With

regards to the non-NATO SOFAs genesis, these terms were initially deemed satisfactory; however, the use of implicit language within these articles has afforded the space for abuse and subjectivity.

US soldiers carrying out their “official duty” over the last several decades have regrettably committed various offenses against the host, civilian population and have then exploited certain clauses in the non-NATO SOFA for protection. As it stands, Articles 17 and 12 of the US-Japan/ROK SOFA have delegated the judicial process exclusively to the US and its court martial; US military agents do not have to appear before a host nation court if the crime was enacted in performance of their duty. However, is “a bored sentry taking a potshot at a passing train with lethal results,” still entitled to the protections afforded them by these agreements, is a “pilot who misjudged his efforts to buzz a cyclist at the end of the runway and sliced her in half instead” exonerated of wrongdoing (Jones, 2013)? These are just a few of the disturbing episodes, which have captured local news headlines over the last 50 years, episodes that have incensed the populations of the ROK and Okinawa. Ongoing crime has compromised the existing non-NATO SOFA framework while catalyzing calls for reform. What sort of behavior must be considered as a departure from one’s “official duty?”

Growing public concern in such places as Okinawa is that the occupational mentality of these armed forces has degraded, that the military values, which have previously inhibited abuse of position, no longer inspire restraint in the field. Consider the marine serving in Japan, done up in military fatigues, who “chased civilians around in a jeep while shooting at them with a flare gun,” (Jones, 2013) this episode exemplifies the issue. The call for a re-examination of non-NATO SOFAs has never been louder. The ability and

competency of the US SOFAs are measured by the order and justice they are able to uphold; it can be argued that harmony has been illusory in the region. The lengthy and often futile attempts at prosecution of US service members or their dependents, following filed police reports, is alarming. Fleeing victimizers can retreat to their respective military base where they can be concealed, consulted or removed entirely while awaiting a military court martial. “Delays built into the system were often used as opportunities to transfer American suspects back to the US, where they were beyond the reach of Japanese authorities” (Johnson, p.44). There even exists an Agreed Minutes to the US-Japan SOFA, which has exacerbated the “uphill” process of criminal prosecution. The Agreed Minutes, a single facet of the comprehensive agreement, reads as follows:

The Japanese authorities will normally not exercise the right of search, seizure, or inspection with respect to any persons or property within the facilities and area in use by and guarded under the authority of the US armed forces or with respect to property of the US armed forces wherever situated, except in cases where the competent authorities of the US armed forces consent to such search, seizure, or inspection by the Japanese authorities of such persons or properties. (McConnel, p.171)

These Agreed Minutes reduce the capacities of Japanese criminal authority to the mercy or whim of a military bureaucracy. A criminal actor, who is protected under a SOFA through his service, can essentially “disappear” within a military base; the military bureaucracy will then retain this individual as their offense occurred while in performance of their “official duty.” “Under Article 17, paragraph 5© of the 1960 treaty, the US is obliged to hand over criminal suspects only after they have been indicted” (Norman, p.723). This has proven immensely problematic for the investigative authority as indictment may require some time before coming into fruition. “Indeed, there is nothing to stop the offender from being put on a US plane out of the country;” criminals are and can be “spirited away” out of Japan.

Compounded with paragraph five of Article 17, the Agreed Minutes could be considered as contributing to an essence of extraterritoriality in the region. This is problematic for the US as it attempts to curtail quasi-neo-imperial accusations in hopes of promoting more cooperation within the Asian sphere.

In the case of *Wilson v. Girard* (1957), the Supreme Court had established that “a sovereign nation has exclusive jurisdiction to punish offenses against laws committed within its borders, unless it expressly or impliedly consents to surrender its jurisdiction” (Mason, 2012). Now states like Japan had initially consented to surrender such jurisdiction, regarding these service members, decades ago, with an understanding that existing US military discipline would persist and that an implicit cooperation with the US would streamline the administration of justice. However, the frequency of rape and murder crimes, particularly those incidents occurring while the acting party was “on duty,” is indicative of space for improvement. Additionally, a host state would never consent to waiving of jurisdiction if it meant that justice could not be supplied to their peoples. Now the initial rationale for Article 12 of the ROK SOFA or Article 17 of the Japanese SOFA is evident upon the dichotomization of sending and receiving state’s legal apparatus. Injections of these clauses into these agreements were imperative if an American soldier’s legal rights, afforded to him at home, were to be upheld abroad. These were vital additions to a SOFA if the US were to enjoy the voluntary participation of its soldiers to engage in efforts across the globe; who would commit to such a task if they felt they were subject to discriminatory practice or process by the host state? However, belligerent conduct, stemming from boredom or bravado (as was the case with the jeep or airplane episode), does not exemplify the fulfillment of “official duty,” thusly calling into question whether

that person's ability to claim the protection of the aforementioned clause should be sustained.

Continued extension of this protection, to parties acting inappropriately, has led some to believe that that individual is in essence acting above the law via a "loophole" found in these SOFAs. Some Asian critics have even asserted that their non-NATO SOFA was conceived with such ambiguity in mind. This climate stands to completely undermine any amicability or spirit of camaraderie that the US has laboriously cultivated between itself and its allied nations. Though it may not be strategically feasible to subject service members to the law of the land, it is feasible to extend an explicit, legal definition of "official duty." An initiative to conceive the parameters of "official duty" could be fulfilled with the use of minimal resources and it would reflect the US commitment to a fair and prosperous relationship with its East Asian allies. In order to preserve the integrity of the US military's image and to ensure the sovereignty and justice of Japanese and Korean civilians, non-NATO SOFAs must be imbued with more explicit language. Further perpetuation of the notion of empire and the hardened hearts of the local population are what the US stands to lose. Non-NATO SOFAs must be scrutinized further if a solution is to be met.

Jurisdiction with regards to "official duty" was not the only claim that states like Japan and the ROK had waived, the right to a crime scene and the immediate rights to the perpetrators of those crimes have also been surrendered. As it has been established, justice has become particularly elusive in such places as Okinawa; the spirit of indignation has continued to dominate the public's rhetoric. When local criminal authority pursues investigation following a violent episode, SOFA deficiencies are further revealed and the origin of anti-American sentiment in these areas can thusly be ascertained.

Now the failure to deliver justice is in part a failure to perform a criminal investigation at the local level. An episode that exemplifies this sentiment occurred a little over a decade ago near Futenma Air Base. August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2004, a US army helicopter plummeted from the sky and slammed into the side of Okinawa International University, catalyzing one of the “most intense anti-base movements since the 1995 rape of the 12-year old Okinawan girl by three US servicemen.” (Yoshio, 2004). This matter was provocative not only as it affected the lives of Japan’s youth but as it was also reflective on the non-reciprocal aspect of the non-NATO SOFAs. The Okinawan people suffered the bulk of this accident, and to add insult to their injury, they were unable to access the site of the crash following the accident. Military troops and US investigators occupied the affected vicinity immediately after the crash; efforts made by local, Japanese authority were retarded. Only after considerable petitioning by Japanese investigators was “sympathetic consideration” extended by acting US military bureaucrats. This gesture was pseudo-benevolent. When the crime scene tape had been lifted, the Okinawan investigative branch discovered that the hull of the helicopter had been removed, no traces remaining, “even surface dirt had been removed with a shovel” (McConnel, p.168). Suspicion has consequently been augmented in the region, the purge of the accident site by US forces occurred without consideration for the victims seeking answers. SOFAs “should be a reciprocal agreement and the US should amend the Agreed Minutes of the US-Japan SOFA to allow a joint effort in investigating and securing off-base military accident sites” (McConnel, p.173).

As it stands now, the Okinawan criminal authority and the disenfranchised populace that they represent, must still endure considerable hurdles, a consequence of the US SOFAs, as

they navigate their daily duties and lives. The inability of criminal authority to provide justice to Okinawans, who have suffered an abuse, challenges Japanese sovereignty and has been linked to experience of the pre-Meiji Era extraterritoriality.

‘Extraterritoriality,’ [is] one of the historically most offensive aspects of Western imperialism in East Asia. From the time the US got it written into its treaty with China following the Opium War of 1839-42 (yes, it was an American invention) ‘extrality’ as it was informally called, meant that if a European, American, or Japanese committed a crime in China (or today in Japan or Korea if he or she is a member of, married to, or the child of a member of the American armed forces), that foreigner would be turned over to his or her own consular officials, rather than being tried under the laws of the country in which the crime occurred. (Johnson, p.43)

During the late 19th century, the US and other Western powers began to project their influence onto East Asia, often without a formal occupation. Through coercive, unfair treaties, trade could be facilitated with indifferent parties while Western citizens enjoyed immunity from the local law, which was often deemed “barbaric.” “Extraterritoriality was, in short, a strategy to manage and minimize legal difference” (Raustiala, p.21). As a result of its implementation, a generation of Asians stomached decades of violence and crime without a measure of justice.

Now, the world order, which had previously facilitated empires and overt extraterritoriality, has been retired, though some perpetuate a discourse, which asserts that contemporary SOFAs can serve as a guise for “neo-extraterritoriality.” “SOFAs, capitulations, and the effects doctrine all illustrate a central point. Over the course of US history the practice of extraterritoriality has shifted form not function” (Raustiala, p.23). Today’s US SOFAs are no longer applied to any and all Americans, there exists stipulations; today, barbaric sentiment is no longer applied to Asian law, the ROK and Japanese government are capable of prosecuting Westerners. Though the practice of

extraterritoriality has certainly “shifted,” the spirit of this practice persists through the use of implicit language in SOFAs. For an American soldier the “official duty” clause embedded in a SOFA is perceived as an opportunity, a privilege, and a right, for the sexually abused Okinawan, for the dead Korean, “official duty” is ill-defined, a scapegoat, and/or a reincarnation of extraterritoriality. It is a legacy of subordination, which has contributed to sensitivity in the region; a failure to prosecute foreign bodies challenges the future these people have envisioned for themselves.

### **Leverage of Home country to amend SOFA**

An important assessment to make while scrutinizing a SOFA is just how capable the respective host country is at successfully renegotiating the terms of these agreements. As threats to regional and global security expire or evolve, a legal framework should adjust effectively in order to competently serve the parties involved. With the break of the 21st century, Japan and the ROK are no longer weary of the “tide of communism.” Island disputes, the rise of the PRC, the prospect of a combative DPRK are just a few of East Asia’s contemporary concerns and they should be held at the forefront while considering the reconfiguration of current non-NATO SOFAs. The outstanding US military presence on the island of Okinawa was a product of an agreement established in the 1960s, the political, economic, and security climate of that time was immensely different. It would seem now that negotiation capabilities of communities, which harbor military capital and personnel, are ineffective, failing to summon favorable conditions that address today’s issues.

In early October 2013, US Secretary of State John Kerry and US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel met with Japan’s Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida in order to collectively assess just how effective the current SOFA was at sating military objectives while

minimizing disruption to the community. “Before the meeting, governors from 14 prefectures where US military bases are located submitted a list of proposed revisions. Unfortunately their requests were not included in the high level talks.” (Revising Status of Forces Agreement, 2013). The divide between the interests of mainland Japan and Okinawa has widened since Okinawa’s designation as primary host site for US military operations. Complete dismissal of prefectural propositions has become characteristic of such meetings between the bureaucrats of Tokyo and White House representatives.

After the 1995 rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl, a similar initiative was undertaken to present proposals for amendment. The Special Action Committee on Okinawa was formed that same year to promote solidarity on the island, mobilizing a populace to present a collected and informed case against the Futenma military bases and the SOFA, which governs it. The Special Action committee had proposed amendments to the SOFA but as they were not binding the US was not “obligated to implement” (McConnel, p.172).

It has been a priority of this task force to repurpose/refashion military bases and operations in Japan and the ROK and the reasons for this initiative does exist beyond benevolence. A host country’s leverage in negotiations pertaining to joint-security measures and arrangements contributes to their experience of reciprocity and subsequent satisfaction. Amendments have been made to the SOFAs with the ROK and Japan; however, it has been observed that further reconfiguration has proved futile. Even if non-NATO SOFAs are to be maintained as non-reciprocal agreements, the failure to provide even a sincere ear to these requests or proposals, made by the people and their representatives, will undoubtedly prove problematic in the future. “It is only a matter of time until the small nations of East Asia get tired of American bullying and find a suitable leader to create an

anti-American coalition” (Johnson, p.227). This sort of blowback would undoubtedly hinder cooperation and or further expansion in the region.

### **Amending SOFAs**

Undoubtedly, frustration with the US stems from a poor performance of its military and its accompanying security policy. “In December 2002, the Pew Research Center conducted a survey of national attitudes in forty-two countries. A stunning 44% of South Koreans were found to hold unfavorable views of the US” (Johnson, p.xx). Naturally, no single force is impervious from the rogue conduct of a single member, from mishap or from a failure, and it would be naïve to believe that there exists a single measure or policy that could ensure the complete support of a receiving nation. The US has undoubtedly afforded the ROK and Japan much peace by deploying its military capital to their respective states, these efforts do not go unnoticed. However, there exists room for improvement. It is certainly within the means of Washington and the bureaucrats of Tokyo or Seoul to negotiate some terms, which have proven inadequate.

“Many critics have regarded the SOFA as an expression of unequal relationships between Korea and the US” (Jung/Hwang, p.1105). Addressing criticism is undoubtedly the first step at reconciliation. The US should be willing to participate in amendment discourse, to some specified capacity, while considering the future implications of continued non-reciprocity in non-NATO SOFAs. In the near future, the Special Action Committee on Okinawa “could demand reciprocity on the basis of the desire to be recognized and treated by the US and its NATO allies,” (Norman, pp.738-39) and it would reduce blowback for the US to consider their plight. A pillar of reciprocity in non-NATO SOFAs could entail fair access to crime scenes and expedited access to perpetrators. “It is counterproductive for

the US to demand greater equality in military responsibility, yet hang on to the unequal policy of non-reciprocal SOFAs” (Norman, p.739). The US commitment to reciprocity could also be established by a more resolute effort to incorporate the proposals of prefectures into higher-level talks. Fair and equal sentiment can be extended to the nations of Japan and the ROK alike, their historical experience of subordination perhaps rendering them even more sensitive to non-reciprocal aspects of their agreements.

The US does not stand to lose anything by articulating, explicitly, when a person’s duty has commenced or by identifying what sort of behavior consists of a departure from that duty. A comprehensive, legal definition of “official duty,” holds military personnel more accountable, frames their service better, enabling them to act with more confidence, while addressing claims made by a host country’s populace that forward stationed troops are above the law. It would be radical to propose the deletion or insertion of any article already existing within these non-NATO SOFAs; however, it is far for more palpable, for both parties, to establish more explicit parameters within their bilateral agreements. A satisfied host government and populace will enable immediate US efforts in the Asian sphere while ensuring the future staging of Western interests, an invaluable opportunity as this country makes its “rebalance to Asia.”

## Chapter 11

# The Philippines Precedent and its Application to US Bases in Japan and the ROK

Taehee Kim

This paper will discuss the US bases in the Philippines, the reasons why the bases were forced out of the country, and why the forces are returning. This set a precedent that the US can learn from and apply to how policies and strategies regarding US bases in the ROK and Japan are constructed. I will evaluate the similarities and differences between what happened in the Philippines and what is currently happening in the ROK and Japan, and make recommendations based off of them.

## **Introduction**

US military forces are returning to the Philippines after the two countries agreed to a 10-year pact maintaining US military presence in 2014. This comes after the dramatic decision by the Philippines senate in 1991 to shut down US bases in the Philippines completely. The expulsion, and then the return, of US bases both prompted by the Philippines government itself, provides a very telling precedent and framework in which other US military installations in the Northeast Asian region can be evaluated. This paper assesses the viability and implications of US military bases in the ROK and Japan through the US experience in the Philippines.

## **Historical Background**

### *Spanish-American War of 1898*

The relationship between the Philippines and the United States began with the US intervention in the Spanish-controlled Philippines during the Spanish-American War of 1898. The Battle of Manila Bay, the first major engagement of the war, was one of the most decisive naval battles in history and marked the end of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines. On June 12, 1898, the revolutionary government of the Philippines officially declared its independence with the First Philippine Congress and drafted the Political Constitution of 1899, a new and basic law of the First Philippine Republic (Diokno, 1988, p. 1). However, in December of 1898, Spain ceded the country to the US under the Treaty of Paris as a result of US victory in the Spanish-American War. Thus began the “American Era” of Philippines history.

Despite the efforts of Filipino revolutionaries to gain independence for the First Philippine Republic, the US refused to recognize the nation’s own sovereign. In 1899, the

Philippine-American War broke out. Many Filipinos saw this war as a continuation of their struggle for independence that began in 1896 with the Philippine Revolution. The war lasted until 1902 with US victory. The war and occupation by the US deeply affected the culture of the country; there were between 34,000 to 220,000 Filipino casualties, the introduction of English as the official language, and the disestablishment of the Spanish-established Roman Catholic Church.

*The Illusion of Independence and the Mutual Defense Treaty*

From the beginning of US colonial rule of the Philippines, the US government defined their colonial mission as tutelage, preparing the Philippines for eventual independence, defining not whether but rather how and when the Philippines would be granted sovereignty (Dolan, 1991, n.p.).

In 1899, President McKinley appointed the First Philippine Commission to investigate the islands and make recommendations. They reported aspirations for independence, but unpreparedness for it. A Second Philippine Commission in 1900 granted legislative and limited executive powers. This allowed for slow but important progress in the Philippines, and led to the Philippine Organic Act of 1902, which established a legislature composed of a lower house, which would be popularly elected, and an upper house, appointed by the US President. The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 officially granted independence after ten years, but World War II intervened, bringing an era Japanese occupation between 1941 and 1945. Finally, in 1946, the US officially granted independence to the Philippines with the Treaty of Manila.

The US and the Philippines established a Military Bases Agreement in 1947, which gave the US the right to use Subic Bay Naval Base and Clark Air Base. This agreement

granted the US the right to maintain military facilities in the Philippines for 99 years, and to “expand such bases, to exchange such bases for other bases, or relinquish rights to bases, as any of such exigencies may be required by military necessity” (Gregor & Aganon, 1987, p.6-7). The military facilities occupied more than 65,000 hectares of land in the Philippines, including Subic Bay Naval Base, Clark Air Base, San Miguel Naval Communications Station, Wallace Air Station, and John Hay Air Force Base (1990, p.1).

In 1951, the US and the Philippines signed the Mutual Defense Treaty, which dictated that they would defend each other in case of attack by an external party (Mason, 2008, p.13). The Philippine government remained favorable towards the treaty, and especially during the Cold War, when this alliance proved instrumental in deterring the spread of Soviet communism in Asia.

#### *Public Sentiment, anti-Americanism*

The public, however, felt very differently than those in the government. The bases were tangible reminders of American colonization and continued influence over the Philippines. Many felt that the bases impeded upon their sovereignty and as a result of this growing anti-American sentiment, protests broke out from time to time. They demanded answers to touchy questions like “what level of financial compensation should the Philippines receive for the bases; which country should have legal jurisdiction over Americans off-base or Filipinos on-base; and even which country's flag should fly over the bases” (Chang, 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, others felt “slighted by the fact that the US imposed tougher terms on the Philippines, its former colony and current ally, than it did on the Japanese, the former enemy, to acquire bases in Japan” (Chang, 2013, 1).

The late 1980s and early 1990s were an especially complicated time for US-Philippine relations. The Military Bases Agreement was set to expire, and talks between Manila and Washington dragged on. Finally, a treaty was hammered out that the US would lease its main bases in the Philippines for another ten years, but when presented to the Philippine Senate for ratification, it was voted down. One senator expressed, “For me, it’s a new beginning of our history as a free people” (Wallace, 1991, p. 2). Senator Agapito Aquino agreed: “It is a vote for a truly sovereign and independent Philippine nation. It is a vote to end a political adolescence tied to the purse strings of America – a crippling dependence” (Shenon, 1991, p.1).

Hurried along by the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, which left a thick layer of wet ash over the Clark Air Base, the 94-year military presence in the Philippines came to a close.

#### *Post-base Era*

Because the Philippines had heavily relied upon US military presence, its own military, particularly its external defense capabilities, had deteriorated. As a result, the country was left with few options when the PRC began to take advantage of this power vacuum, installing permanent infrastructure in the Philippine-claimed Spratly Islands. The PRC’s rapidly expanding and modernizing defense capabilities in the late 1990s alarmed the Philippines, and consequently the Philippines began reassessing the need for US military presence on Philippine lands. This led to the two countries entering into a SOFA agreement in 1993. The agreement was subsequently extended several times in 1994 and 1995 (2008, p. 14), and in February of 1998, the US and the Philippines signed a bilateral Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) that substituted for the SOFA despite continuing opposition from Philippine nationalists. The VFA allowed US forces to reenter the

Philippines to conduct joint exercises, thus allowed for greater cooperation between the two governments.

The 9/11 attacks fast-tracked the restoration of the US-Philippine security relationship even further. The Philippines face domestic security threats from various Muslim insurgencies in Manila with ties to Al-Qaeda. Abu Sayyaf, for example, pursued its goal of establishing an independent Islamic state from the Philippines, conducting assassinations and kidnappings. The US sent forces to assist the Philippines combat such groups and in 2002, The Mutual Logistics Support Agreement was signed, which gave the US military logistic support, supplies, and services from the Philippines, like operations support, storage services for equipment and weapons, and the use of Philippine facilities (Woolf, 2013, n.p.).

Although there were, and still are, many in the Philippines who still oppose the return of US forces, the two countries began to discuss the Increased Rotational Presence (IRP) agreement in 2013. Sorreta (2013) expressed,

While we acknowledge this as another milestone in our long - standing strategic partnership with the US in both diplomacy and national defense, we will come to the negotiating table guided by the Philippine Constitution, utmost respect for sovereignty, and mutuality of benefits in any approved activity and deployment of equipment. (Republic of the Philippines Department of Self-Defense, 2013, 1)

This agreement will further implement the terms and conditions of the Mutual Defense Treaty, as well as the Visiting Forces Agreement. In 2014, the Philippines and the US agreed to the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), a 10-year pact for the use of military bases, when President Obama visited the Philippines.

### **Implications of the US Military Presence in the Philippines**

#### *Political*

US military presence brought both positive and negative consequences for the Filipino people. Education and democracy for the Filipino people were built up due to US involvement. The public educational system in the Philippines is one of the legacies of US occupation in the Philippines.

The spread of people's organizations during the Marcos dictatorship has become one of the most distinguishing political features in the Philippines (Lutz, 2009, p.145). Anti-base organizations, such as the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, worked to sway public opinion against US military bases by providing pamphlets and reports. They organized presentations in different regions of the country in order to educate the public about the negative aspects of US military bases. Government officials began participating in these organizations as well. The Nuclear-Free Philippines Coalition (NFPC) for instance, fought to end operations of the controversial nuclear power plant built by the Marcos dictatorship.

The NFPC also lobbied and pressured the Senate to reject the renewal of the military bases agreement in 1991. In addition to arguing that US military presence was the same as colonialism, the NFPC argued that the bases polluted the environment, bringing evidence of toxic and hazardous waste dumped in and around the bases. By revealing this information to the public, the organization became the national center for anti-foreign military access and bases conversion issues (Lutz, 2009, p.149). Lutz argues that the NFPC served as a useful foundation for people's organizations and NGOs that were created later oppose the restoration of US military bases and the presence of military forces as it encouraged further studies into tensions in the engagement of social movements (p.176).

*Economic*

The presence of military bases encouraged economic development. The US military had been at the Clark Air Base for over ninety years by the time they left. Over 20,000 Americans lived on the base at one time, and there were several hundred families living near the base. Angeles City, near Clark Air Base, had many bars, nightclubs, and restaurants specifically for American service people (Anderegg, 2005, n.p.). The employees of the US bases worked as clerks, secretaries, and administrative employees in almost every office. In the Philippines as whole, 68,000 Filipinos were directly employed by the US, and more than a third were full-time employees of the US facilities in 1987 when the bases were in full operation. (Ateneo de Manila University, 1988, p.31).

Since the closing of the 262-square-mile base Subic Naval Base, which is approximately the size of Singapore, it has played an important economic role. It has become a special economic zone with low taxes and duty-free imports established to attract investors. The former base, now called Subic Bay Freeport, exhibits a large airport, a huge deep-water port, more than 1,000 industrial buildings and offices, and an oil depot (Baker, 2004, p. 129). Additionally, the former base has also become a popular tourist attraction because of the natural environment and the American legacy of the previous military base. Some of the more than 1,800 air-conditioned houses with several recreational facilities, including movie theaters, golf course, and gymnasiums, in neighborhoods have converted into tourist accommodations (Baker, 2004, p.129). According to government data, approximately 90,000 people work there. Many of the jobs today are low-wage service jobs compared to those offered when Subic Naval Base still functioned. These jobs provided a higher pay, benefits and technical training. A woman whose father was an employee in the US Navy's Ship Repair Facility for more than a decade

recounted, “We were four children and all of us were able to go to college because of the US Navy...We were sad when they left. There are no opportunities like that anymore” (Whaley, 2013, n.p.).

On the other hand, Cha (2007) argues that not all of the Filipinos had shared expectations about the development of their communities. Regardless of the communities around the Subic and Clark Bases, the residents of both Olongapo and Angeles, the host cities of the two bases, were critical of the transfer because their biggest concern was that they would not benefit from the development of Subic and Clark. The base conversion produced many job opportunities, but they were limited to young applicants who had higher educational or technical-level training or connections with higher officials, rather than the general population.

### *Environmental*

When the US left the bases in the Philippines, they left behind toxic waste and a flurry of environmental problems locals were forced to deal with in subsequent years. According to a report by the General Accounting Office in 1992, the Navy pumped 3.75 million gallons of untreated sewage a day into local fishing and swimming waters at Subic Bay (Tritten, 2010, n.p.). Chemical and heavy metal wastes were discharged into the air, water and ground. The result of over 90 years of contamination was a result of a lack of standards and regulation, and as a result, the government had to evacuate about 20,000 people from the area. Many began showing signs of illness, such as stomach pain and skin problems, as a result of drilling and planting food crops near what should have been declared uninhabitable land. Children were born with neurological problems, brain damage, and birth defects because of mercury poisoning, especially among the families that

lived on Clark for five or more years. According to Philippine authorities, hundreds of Filipinos were poisoned and died as a result of toxic waste at and near the bases (Baker, 2004, p.130).

The cleanup cost was estimated to be approximately \$12 to \$15 million for each site (Bayoneto, 1994, p.112). However, US negotiators and politicians were not willing to pay what the Philippine government was asking. According to Baker (2004), the Pentagon denied the problem and refused to pay by claiming that they are under no legal obligation (p. 130,).

### *Social and Military Conflicts*

Another hot issue with US military presence was the disregard for human rights, especially those of women and children. Concerns from the local Filipino community included an increase in prostitution, trafficking, and drugs.

In 2006, four US Marines were accused of raping a Filipina woman. This incident generated international media coverage and fueled anti-American sentiment in the Philippines, and was the first serious test of the VFA. The victim made claims against four Marines, but only one of the men was sentenced. He was sentenced for 40 years in prison by a judge of the regional trial court, but never served time. He was confined in the US Embassy in Manila, and was later acquitted. Similarly, a US Marine was involved in a crime in October 2014. The US Marine was charged with murder in the death of a Filipino transgender woman after picking her up in a bar. The accused Marine also remained in US custody.

This pattern of community-military interaction serves heavy damage on US soft power in the region. Although political and economic relations with the local governments

are what allows the bases to remain, grassroots sentiment serves as a method to defame and delegitimize US claims for the necessity of the bases.

### **Philippines-US Relations since Withdrawal**

US military presence in the Philippines is notably different compared to before withdrawal. The VFA, explained above, states that the government of the Philippines will facilitate the admission of US personnel and their departure from the Philippines in connection with activities covered by this agreement. In addition, the US military authorities have the right to exercise within the Philippines all criminal and disciplinary jurisdiction.

The EDCA, Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement signed April 2014, allows American forces temporary access to military camps. With the EDCA, the Philippines hope to strengthen their voice in the Spratly Islands dispute in the South China Sea.

The key US security interests in Southeast Asia include maintaining freedom of navigation, enhancing free trade and investment, and monitoring the rise of a competing regional hegemon. The US maintained and strengthened their alliance with the Philippines because of its strategic location as the gate from the Pacific and East Asia to the Indian Ocean and the Middle East. (Park, 2011, p.276).

In April of 2014, the US and the Philippines signed the EDCA, which allows US forces temporary access to limited military camps: we “share an understanding for the US not to establish a permanent military presence or base in the territory of the Philippines” (EDCA, 2007, “Preamble”). The Preamble later concludes, “All United States’ access to and use of facilities and areas will be at the invitation of the Philippines and with full respect for the Philippines Constitution and Philippine laws.” (Thayer, 2014, p.1). In addition to this, the

US agreed to respect Philippine environmental, health, and safety laws and standards. The US would not release any hazardous waste intentionally and agreed to take action to contain and address environmental contamination (Thayer, 2014, 1).

Through the EDCA, the Philippines hope to strengthen their voice in the South China Sea as the threat of Chinese territorial expansion has been increasing. For example, the Philippines have counterclaims to the PRC's claim to the Spratly Islands. The PRC has previously occupied, and regularly disputes the EEZ claimed by the Philippines (Park, 2011, p.274). It is important for the US to maintain a good relationship with the Philippines because of its location as the gate from the Pacific and East Asia to the Indian Ocean and the Middle East (Park, 2011, p.276).

In September 2014, the US and the Philippines held joint military drills with more than 100 Filipino and US marines for 11 days at Subic Bay. The annual joint exercises between the two countries are conducted as part of the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty (Whaley, 2014, n.p.). With this deeper cooperation with the US, the Philippines hope the presence of US naval troops in the South China Sea will help enhance and strengthen the stability in the region (Park, 2011, p.273).

### **Comparison with US Bases in the ROK and Japan**

There are many similarities between the controversy that surrounds US bases in the Philippines and that that surrounds the bases in the ROK and Japan. The original reason why the bases were created in all three of these countries is similar, and none were withdrawn after the Cold War. Anti-Americanism is a feature of all three of these countries, fueled in large part by military crime/human rights abuses and unaccountability. The Philippines, the ROK, and Japan all have ongoing territorial disputes with the PRC, which

has been a major reason in support of maintaining a US military presence. The one major difference between US bases in the Philippines and US bases in the ROK and Japan is obvious: the Philippines forced US troops out of the country. This can be taken as a cautionary tale for the US: how can the US prevent the same thing from happening in the ROK and Japan?

### *Crime*

In 2002, two middle school students were walking along a street, and were struck and killed by a US armored vehicle. However, the US refused requests by the ROK government to hand over the US soldiers who had been driving the vehicle, and they were ultimately never held accountable. This provoked hostility toward the US military and fueled discontent with SOFA, which allowed the US to keep the suspects in its own custody. As a result, South Koreans began protesting against the US military presence, South Koreans started to become much more cognizant of the unequal relationship between the ROK and the US. Japan has also experienced similar incidents. In the 1995 Okinawa rape incident, rented a van and kidnapped a 12-year old Japanese girl, who they beat and raped. Also in this case, the US refused to turn the soldiers responsible over to Japanese authorities until after they had been indicted. These incidents in both the ROK and Japan not only fueled anti-American sentiment by local populations, but also a flurry of debate about the SOFA agreements that allowed this to happen.

### *Security*

The Philippines, like the ROK and Japan, have ongoing territorial disputes with the PRC. In addition to this security threat, the ROK has also faced chronic security threats from the DPRK regarding nuclear weapons and persisting provocations since its division. It is

important to not only the Philippines, but also to the ROK and Japan to maintain a strategic partnership with the US to protect themselves against these threats.

The Philippines were initially against US military presence, but the ROK opposed the withdrawal of the US forces because of its unstable national security and confrontation with the DPRK. Unlike the DPRK's threats, the Philippines did not experience direct foreign military threats outside the country (Lew and Kim, 2005, p. 72). The Philippine government from 1992 to 1998 was more in favor of Americans than the previous ones. In contrast, the ROK government between 1998 and 2009 followed more independent policies from the US government in comparison to previous conservative administrations as the two progressive Presidents, Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, followed reconcilable positions and policies towards the DPRK (Park, 2011, p. 269). Even though the ROK government launched a reconciliatory policy for peaceful coexistence in the Korean Peninsula called the Sunshine Policy towards the DPRK from 1998 until 2007, the country was not prepared well enough to defend itself against unexpected attacks of the DPRK.

The Japanese government, on the other hand, has long faced protest by the Okinawan population against the presence of US bases. The schism between the Okinawan government and the national government has gotten in the way of progress in Okinawa (e.g. relocation of bases).

### *Recommendations*

1. Revise SOFA to hold US military members accountable to their actions: anti-American sentiment is unavoidable between host countries and foreign military, yet the ROK, Japan, and the US can reduce it by reforming policy with an acceptable definition of "official duty" with in SOFA. This can deal with the behavior of soldiers

and eventually bring responsibility and cooperation of US military with the locals by minimizing the anti-US discontent. This will also lead to a win-win situation and a symbiotic relationship with improved US forces' responsible image and satisfaction among South Koreans and the Japanese.

2. Similar to the above recommendation, have US soldiers undergo more comprehensive and sensitive cultural training to increase their understanding and appreciation of local cultures and populations. This will reduce crime, thereby decreasing anti-American sentiment.
3. Assure US commitment to the protection of both the ROK and Japan's national security, while making US military operations more efficient, and thus requiring less forces.

### **Prospects of Relocation US Forces in the ROK**

US forces are working on the Yongsan Relocation Program in order to move out of the populated metropolitan area near Seoul. As the ROK government indicated, the relocation can help to reduce the footprint of US forces on the Korean peninsula. Camp Humphreys, located in Pyeongtaek 55 miles south of Seoul, will grow from 1,210 acres to 3,538 acres, and from 10,000 to 36,000 in population growth. Total estimated construction will cost \$10.7 billion and includes housing, medical, educational, and recreational facilities for 24,000 troops (Arthur & Hardy, 2014). The relocation plan was originally scheduled in 2008, postponed to 2012, and postponed again to 2016, due to the slow construction of new facilities in Pyeongtaek and South Korean protests in regard to financial difficulties in paying relocation costs. This financial burden brought economic concerns because the cost of maintaining US troops has been rising regularly. The ROK provided an additional \$765

million in funding in 2012 under a burden-sharing agreement with the US. The original estimated cost was over \$10 billion and the ROK was to contribute \$4 billion of this. However, this number has since gone up (Manyin, Nikitin, Chanlett-Avery, Cooper & Rinehart, 2014).

Similarly, local Filipinos were concerned when the withdrawal of US troops was confirmed. Some argued that the withdrawal of US bases would force the Philippines to stand on its own feet, while others claimed that the nation's economy is resilient enough to handle the blow (Baker, 2004, p.129). Regardless of the pessimistic concerns, the former naval base actually offered the country more than they had realized, and ended up bringing US military troops back.

South Koreans are also concerned that the relocation of the US military will hurt the local economy. The local economies and governments that developed the US bases are heavily dependent upon military installations and communities. If a host town, which relies heavily upon capital flow by the troops, loses its main consumers and markets, it will struggle economically. In a different sense, there are conflicts among local governments because of the differential financial support by the national government. Seoul will receive the entirety of financial support from the government, while other regions, including Dongducheon and Uijeongbu that are less developed, will receive less aid.

The Philippines case study reveals that although ultimately, US troops returned to the Philippines, change is possible. The Philippines and the US revised their agreements, and made the US more of a guest, than a pseudo-colonial power in the Philippines. We learned that moving US bases can help to decrease the US military footprint in a host country, but must be done carefully and while collaborating with the local and national

governments. The Philippines have much more access to the Agreed Locations where US forces operate, and the US agreed to respect the environment, health, and safety of the Philippines. With revised agreements between ROK and the US, such as the revision of SOFA, similar positive outcomes may be expected.

### **Conclusion**

In April 2014, President Obama confirmed US commitment to the ROK and Japan by continuing the “rebalance” towards Asia. The withdrawal of US troops from the Philippines and the new agreement between the Philippines and the US to redeploy has impacted the Philippines economically, socially, and environmentally. The expulsion, and then the return, of US bases both prompted by the Philippines government itself, provides a very telling precedent and framework in which other US military installations in the ROK and Japan can be evaluated. To successfully implement the US rebalance to Asia, bases in the ROK and Japan must remain stable. However, in order to do this, a number of things must be adjusted to make the bases sustainable and productive, as well as to avoid blowback.

# Executive Summary

Sean Wagnon

## Developments

In the 2015 US National Security Strategy, The Obama Administration outlines the intention to push forward with its “rebalance to Asia” strategy. According to the administration, as nearly half of all growth in the next five years is to come from Asia (National Security Strategy, 2015), the US has vital economic and security interests in the region. The strategy cites a positive correlation between national, regional, and economic security and an increased US presence in Asia. As such, the strategy asserts that US interests in the region must be supported by a sustainable and indefinite US military infrastructure. Despite the likelihood of an increased involvement in the war against ISIL and the potential for arms sales to Ukraine, US long-term strategy is largely focused on Asia. Yet, the current US military fixture in Asia—located primarily in Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK)—poses historical, cultural, environmental, security, and budgetary challenges to the “rebalance” strategy. Established following the Second World War and maintained as Cold War deterrents, US military facilities in East Asia have had to respond to a constantly evolving regional security environment with largely reactionary, rather than proactive, guidelines. To accommodate this administration’s long-term vision, a fundamental strategic and tactical reanalysis is necessary to identify and address adequacy and feasibility concerns.

The goal of this task force is to identify methods in which to increase regional security and stability for the US and its allies, and to reduce blowback against US presence and policies. This report seeks to engage in a “rethink” of the US’ military presence in East Asia given new developments, strategies, and security dynamics by analyzing security

relationships, threat assessments, US and allied capabilities, economic and cultural concerns, and potential for blowback against an increased US presence and concurrent policies. Essentially, this report questions whether the current US military infrastructure in East Asia can appropriately and sustainably support changing security dynamics and facilitate a strategic “rebalance to Asia” while minimizing unintended consequences harmful to US interests and that of its allies. Based on this report’s research and analysis, we have concluded that the current US military infrastructure in East Asia is unsustainable and cannot adequately or efficiently respond to modern security concerns, nor can it support the administration’s “rebalance” strategy without key policy changes.

## **Recommendations**

### *Diplomatic*

In an effort to reduce demands on the US military in East Asia, this task force recommends an increased role for diplomatic avenues in satisfying US security agendas. This will better enable US forces to respond to regional security concerns, dilemmas, and crises, and effectively minimize regional threat levels.

### *Encourage the PRC to join TPP negotiations, TPA passage is a priority*

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) represents the most ambitious and promising measure to ensure long-term US engagement in Asia. It is essential for US economic and security interests in the region that the TPP negotiations are successful. To ensure the success of TPP, Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) needs to pass Congressional approval, which under a Republican-controlled Congress, may be likely. Perhaps most importantly,

the PRC should be encouraged to join TPP. Contrary to popular conjecture, TPP is not an effort to contain or marginalize China, and, as a member of APEC, it retains the ability to join TPP negotiations. Accession to the TPP by the PRC would require it to adhere to stricter liberalization standards including rules on SOEs, intellectual property, and labor; US firms and consumers stand to benefit significantly from improvements in the economic relationship through standardized trade rules (one such benefit is its potential to shrink the US current accounts deficit). Deeper economic integration and engagement will successively incorporate the PRC within the current world order, discouraging the development of an alternative economic order excluding the US. Ultimately, the TPP promotes interconnectivity and, in the long-term, will reduce the need for a large US military presence by increasing the costs of regional conflict.

*Discourage the revision of the Japanese Constitution, while encouraging a build-up of Japan's Self-Defense Force*

On February 12th, Prime Minister Abe of Japan, following the killing of Japanese citizens by ISIL, urged parliament to revise the pacifist Japanese Constitution. Though it is unlikely Abe will acquire the two-thirds majority necessary to amend Article 9, a coalition is forming and could galvanize anti-terror sentiment towards this end. Inter-allied cooperation and engagement with the PRC are complicated by the threat of a Japanese constitutional revision. The US should publicly discourage any changes to the current constitution, while promoting the build-up of the Japan Self-Defense Forces to offset a US presence in the region.

*Work with Beijing to create an independent Northeast Asian Cooperative Security Forum*

The possibility of misunderstanding or missed signals generates an unstable security environment. Given the level of tension between the DPRK and the ROK/US/Japan alliances and regional territorial disputes with the potential to engulf the region in war, creating a forum through which all regional actors have the ability to discuss security issues or concerns decreases the likelihood of accidental conflict. This report identifies transparency and cooperation deficiencies that the proposed security forum would work to resolve. Parties invited to attend will include high level representatives from the US, PRC, ROK, DPRK, Russia, and Japan. This is not intended to be a forum exclusively for denuclearization talks, but could be utilized to create a pathway to their resumption. The US will likely face some domestic political resistance to this level of diplomatic engagement with the DPRK without the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the DPRK, yet the six-party talks offer precedence for this level of engagement. Additionally, there appears to be a growing desire to resolve long-standing conflicts with other nations among US citizens such as those with Iran and Cuba. The DPRK itself may or may not attend the forum, but the invitation will display to US allies and non-allies its commitment to resolve disputes diplomatically.

*Ratify UNCLOS*

Though it acknowledges its provisions as the international standard, the US has yet to ratify the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Despite participation in negotiations and recommendations for ratification from all high-ranking members of the US military, secretaries of state, and most members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the US

Senate has continually rebuffed calls for its passage; its opponents argue that its passage will reduce US sovereignty and defense capacity. There is no indication that this is true, as the US already acknowledges and abides by its provisions as the international standard. As the PRC pushes the boundaries of the Conventions in the East and South China Seas, and maritime disputes rise as potential conflict points, a commitment by the US to support UNCLOS gives it a superior position for calling out others for violating its provisions.

### *Military*

Though diplomatic and economic instruments are the recommended means of securing US interests in East Asia, a robust and dynamic military presence must remain as a tertiary contingency to ensure regional security and stability. To maintain a sustainable military presence in East Asia, this task force recommends the following policies:

#### *Push through BRAC to reduce spending*

Among the greatest concerns with this administration's "Rebalance to Asia" strategy is the defense budget. Maintaining US forces in East Asia is becoming increasingly dubious as allied contributions to regional bases declines in relation to increasing costs. The "rebalance" strategy will require even further increases in costs for US forces in East Asia. The US defense budget is swollen from unnecessary spending, particularly from the presence of unneeded military facilities within the US. Approving the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) as stated in the FY2016 proposed budget would free up much needed funds to facilitate this administration's desired strategy. Although this policy has feasibility

concerns due to Congressional opposition (members are unlikely to vote to close bases in their districts), it is essential in order to fund regional security requirements.

### *Expand cultural training of US military members*

At the center of many offenses of US service members against local populations is a lack of cultural understanding or appreciation. Education has repeatedly shown to be among the greatest deterrents for racial or sexual violence. As it is, the US military requires service members deploying to the ROK or Japan to undergo cultural training among its theater required training. This training consists of a video and a series of online modules one has to complete in order to print a certificate as evidence of completion. There is no requirement to actively engage in the learning process, only to click through the information to reach the certificate screen. The result is a military force ill-equipped to properly serve in its respective theater, resulting in a higher incidence of conflict with potential for blowback against a US presence. Utilizing savings from BRAC and contributions from host nations, theater required cultural education should be conducted by members of the host nations in a two-week long classroom setting. Additionally, cultural education should be added to basic military requirements (BMR) education, including testable content on advancement exams, to incentivize independent study of host-nation culture by military members.

### *Redeploy non-essential US Marine forces from Okinawa to Guam*

According to this report's threat analysis, it is unnecessary to maintain a large US Marine Corps force in either the ROK or Japan. Immediate military action against any

potential regional threats would be answered initially by air, sea, and special forces; the regional threat level and response analysis shows that the current size of the US Marine Corps in East Asia is unnecessary and should be moved to a secondary response position in Guam. This recommendation has been attempted, but due to a lack of transparency in its execution it was terminated. To guarantee its success, this process should be partially funded by host nations and implemented with budgetary transparency.

### *Modify SOFA agreements*

Much of the blowback against US regional forces is due to what some in the ROK and Japan believe to be a new form of extraterritoriality: non-reciprocal Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA). US military service members have at times exploited ambiguous language to avoid or minimize the application of justice for criminal offenses against host nation citizens. Most offenders cite the “official duty” section of the SOFA as a way to escape host country jurisdiction and sometimes overall justice. Host nation reactions to these offenses have generated significant political and social opposition to a continued US presence in East Asia. To preserve a sustainable US military infrastructure in the region, the US-ROK and the US-Japan SOFA should be modified to include a definition of “official duty” such as the following:

Official Duty is defined in this capacity as the carrying out of the mission and interests of the United States as a representative of the US Armed Forces in accordance with lawful orders (as defined by UCMJ Article 92.1), regulations, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Unlawful acts, or acts in gross violation of

orders (general or direct), regulations, or the Uniform Code of Military Justice are not covered under official duty.

Additionally, restrictions to crime scenes imposed by the US against local law enforcements (including restrictions outside of SOFA parameters) exacerbate the issue. The US should allow for greater cooperation in investigations and untampered access to crime scenes for local law enforcement officials.

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