

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL Monterey, California



THESIS

**THE SINO-RUSSIAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:
PROSPECTS AND IMPLICATIONS**

by

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June 2003

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.			
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE June 2003	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's Thesis	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE: The Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership: Prospects and Implications			5. FUNDING NUMBERS
6. AUTHOR(S) Serdar Amarsayhan			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			
9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A			10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.			
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A
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14. SUBJECT TERMS Russia, China, Strategic Partnership, Sino-Russian relations, Arms Trade, People's Liberation Army			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 93
			16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UL

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**THE SINO-RUSSIAN STRATEGIC COOPERATION: PROSPECTS AND
IMPLICATIONS**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

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ABSTRACT

As economic, military and nuclear powers, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China remain two important players in world politics. Despite warmer relations today, Russia and China still do not trust each other and their current partnership is just a marriage of convenience. Three decades ago, relations between these nations were characterized by extreme hostility and suspicion. Confrontations that followed in subsequent years led analysts to believe that a major war between them was unavoidable. In the 1990s, however, Russia and China were able to overcome their differences and gradually improved their relations, culminating in a strategic partnership in 1996. Now they cooperate on a wide range of issues including political dialogue, energy infrastructure development, technology transfer, arms trade, and scientific, educational and cultural exchanges. Current cooperation helps Russia and China to deal with many issues, such as U.S. hegemonism, expansion of NATO, development of TMD and NMD systems, and the growing threat from radical Islam. Behind the summit diplomacy and high-level interactions, there are many issues that undermine good relations and challenge the partnership in the future; the nature of the partnership remains dubious, and Russia and China will not form a formal alliance. Russia and China are determined to reach their near term goals, and, therefore, the partnership will be sustained in the near future. Yet, because the long term goals of Russia and China are quite different, even the current relationship will eventually unravel.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis was thoroughly reviewed by academics and East Asian security affairs experts. Their reviews were helpful in their insights and suggestions. I studied the reviews with great care, and tried to make every change and addition that the reviewer sought. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Lyman Miller, U.S. Naval Post Graduate School, and Gaye Christoffersen, U.S. Naval Postgraduate School for their guidance and thoughtful insights.

I want to thank Jing-Dong Yuan, Monterey Institute of International Studies, for his academic advice and his dedication to help students in writing research papers.

I wish to express my special acknowledgement to Walan Chang, Captain, U.S. Air Force, for her support, recommendations and superb job in reviewing this thesis.

My thanks go to Michael Lee Huygen, a reference librarian, and the Dudley Knox library staff for providing me with excellent resources, helping me find necessary materials and sources, and opening doors.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

The People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation remain two of the world's largest nations from the point of view of territory and population. As permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and as economic, military and nuclear powers, their relations have always had a strong impact on regional and global politics. China and Russia have one of the longest land borders in the Eastern hemisphere, vast human and natural resources, and complementary national economies with great potential for trade and investment. Sino-Russian relations have not always been smooth, with sharp ups and downs during the past half-century. However, beginning in the late 1980s, the two nations have made steady efforts to normalize their relations, and during the 1990s they made progress toward a relationship of strategic coordination. In less than one decade, Russia and China elevated their relations through three stages:

- Treating each other as "friendly" nations after the emergence of the Russian Federation (RF) in January 1992;
- Building a "constructive partnership" in September 1994; and
- Establishing a "strategic cooperative partnership" in April 1996.

The development of this Sino-Russian partnership has been facilitated by certain factors in the emerging regional and global security environment. These factors include:

- Growing U.S. unilateralism in global politics;
- Increasing U.S. military power;
- Strengthening bilateral defense arrangements in East Asia;
- NATO's eastward enlargement; and
- U.S. withdrawal from the ABM treaty and its determination to proceed with TMD and NMD systems.

In addition, U.S. willingness to bypass the United Nations and its readiness to alienate major powers in defending its core interests--as demonstrated by U.S. military operations in Kosovo, the military campaign in Afghanistan, and the establishment of a

U.S. military presence in Central Asia--have strengthened Russia's and China's incentives to draw closer to each other politically and militarily.

In recent years the Sino-Russian strategic partnership has become a reality and a fact of international life. Today the two nations are in accord on a wide range of international and domestic issues, such as opposing a U.S. dominated "unipolar" world order, attempting to find multilateral approaches to resolving world and regional problems, conducting exchanges in the economic and military sphere, and developing energy infrastructure in Eurasia. Both recognize that any crisis in the region and the world is likely to affect their mutual interests.

Although Western analysts and observers have doubts about the sincerity of this bilateral relationship, Sino-Russian ties continue to strengthen. Sino-Russian cooperation meets the interests and needs of both sides and has shown its value practically and materially, particularly in the defense sphere.

Both China and Russia are uncomfortable with the unfettered exercise of power by the United States and its allies. China feels particularly vulnerable to the growing potential of U.S. military actions, concerns which were heightened by the United States' war with Iraq and the potential for an attack against North Korea because of its current violations of international nuclear agreements. The PRC fears that the United States could undermine Beijing's strategic objectives and national interests. Beijing is determined to strengthen the communist regime's legitimacy, defend national sovereignty, and preserve the territorial integrity of China. Washington is engaged in accelerating its pursuit of national missile defense, making innovations in its nuclear weapons policy, and increasing the defense budget with the intent of addressing the transformation of U.S. military power in the twenty-first century.¹

Despite being a significant development, the Sino-Russian strategic partnership has been largely neglected and generally analyzed for its impact in relation to the United States. This thesis aims both to describe the history of Sino-Russian relations and to explain the motives behind the Sino-Russian rapprochement.

The main body of this thesis is divided into six sections. Chapter One provides readers with an overview of history of Sino-Russian relations including the first contact between the Chinese and Russians, Russia's expansion to the east, Tsarist Russia's policy toward China, bilateral treaties, and important events in Sino-Russian relations. Chapter Two describes changes in the international environment and the formation of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership. Chapter Three addresses critical issues in Sino-Russian relations and barriers to creating a Sino-Russian political-military alliance. Chapter Four examines Sino-Russian military cooperation and Beijing's attempts to modernize the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Chapter Five deals with the status of Taiwan and the disputed islands in the South China Sea. Chapter Six will discuss foreign policy issues of mutual interest to Russia and China. The conclusion examines Sino-Russian relations in general. This thesis argues that the current Sino-Russian rapprochement serves China's interests by fulfilling energy needs, elevating the country's technological base, and modernizing the PLA. Since the PLA will serve as an enforcement tool of Chinese foreign policy, Sino-Russian military cooperation must be monitored closely.

Due to the broad spectrum of Sino-Russian relations, this thesis will focus specifically on the following the research questions:

B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Primary: What are the underlying intentions and motives of the PRC and the RF in this recent rapprochement as compared to public declarations?
2. Secondary: Will the PRC and the RF further develop the Sino-Russian strategic partnership into a political-military alliance? How will Sino-Russian military cooperation affect China's strategy to achieve foreign policy and security goals?

C. THESIS STATEMENT

The People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation proclaim that "there is not a single irritant in our relations and our relations are developing dynamically and

¹ Jonathan D. Pollack, "Chinese security in the Post-11 September World: Implications for Asia and the

positively.”² The Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership is based upon a mutual need to offset challenges in the international environment, improve the domestic economy and technological base, create a peaceful environment in border areas, and preserve sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, the Sino-Russian strategic partnership will not develop into a Sino-Russian political-military alliance due to differences in national interests that exist between the two countries.

The main area of the partnership, Sino-Russian military cooperation, is intended to transform the People’s Liberation Army into a modern, strong and integrated fighting force capable of defeating Taiwan, dominating the disputed islands in the South China Sea, preventing U.S. military intervention in a possible Taiwan conflict, and reducing U.S. influence in the region.

Pacific” Asia-Pacific Review Vol.9, No.2, 2002 p. 8

² V.Putin’s statement at a meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan in April 2001
<http://www.ortv.ru>

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first significant contacts between the Chinese and the Russians occurred in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when the Mongols, after conquering China, expanded westward to what is now Eastern Europe, subjugating Kiev's Russia and other Slavic states. The Mongols dominated both Russia and China. As the Mongol empire started to disintegrate, important changes occurred in both China and Russia. In the mid-fourteenth century, the Mongols left China and the Chinese established the Ming dynasty, which proceeded to restore control over domains traditionally considered part of the Chinese empire. The Russians won independence from Mongol rule in the 15th century and created a new Russian empire, which greatly expanded eastward during the ensuing centuries.³ In the seventeenth century, the Ming dynasty, after a period of decline, was replaced by the Manchu dynasty-the Qing. The Manchus were foreigners, and they too proceeded to restore control over the Chinese empire. At about the same time, Russian explorers, traders, and adventurers probing eastward began to have significant direct contact with the Chinese. Friction and tensions were inevitable, and by the 1680s several military clashes had forced the rulers of China and Russia to negotiate a settlement. China's first treaty with Russia, the 1689 Treaty of Nerchinsk, defined a portion of their common border and opened the way for increased trade and political contact.⁴

The subsequent history of Sino-Russian relations is a broad and complicated topic, but can be divided into following five phases:

A. FIRST PHASE: THE PERIOD OF "UNEQUAL" TREATIES

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Western powers competed for colonies and wealth. Tsarist Russia, too, began to adopt an expansionist policy in the Far East, encouraged by the deteriorating situation of China's last dynasty and by the increasing activities of the Western powers in China. Russian Tsar Nicholas I appointed Nikolai Muraveyev as the governor-general of Eastern Siberia and tasked him to explore

³ Doak A. Barnett "China and the Major Powers in East Asia" p. 21

⁴ Ibid pp.21-22

the vast areas in the East and define border areas with China. With his administrative center at Irkutsk, Muraveyev was given considerable freedom of action. He firmly believed Russia's future lay in the East.⁵ Acting as a personal agent of Tsar Nicholas I, he took full advantage of his opportunities. In 1854, during the Crimean War, he organized a series of military expeditions that proceeded down the Amur river and founded Cossack settlements in the Far East. The Russians justified these operations by announcing that they were directed against Great Britain and France, who both threatened Russia's interests in the Far East and the Pacific. Muraveyev was asked by the Russian naval ministry to investigate the possibility of establishing an ice-free port on the Sea of Okhotsk. The following year, he sent Captain Nevelskoi, his senior naval officer, to explore the coast of Siberia as far south as the mouth of the Amur. Captain Nevelskoi reconnoitered harbours and anchorages at several points down the coast as far as the Korean frontier, and founded the port of Nikolayevsk, named after his Tsar. The Chinese paid little attention to these activities which appeared to be of minimal consequence.⁶

In the 1850s and 1860s, China was in a state of chaos caused by the Nian and Taiping rebellions, as well as foreign pressures. This was an opportune moment for Russia to force territorial concessions from China. While Beijing was preoccupied with the Taiping Rebellion and war against Great Britain and France, Muraveyev concluded the Treaty of Aigun (Ai Hui) with the Chinese authorities in 1858. According to this treaty, the left bank of the Amur River was confirmed as Russian territory, while the territory east of the Ussuri River was to be administered jointly. Thus the whole Pacific coast north of Korea, up to the Bering Straits and Alaska, became part of the Russian Tsar's territory. Simultaneously with the negotiations at Aigun, the Russians succeeded in concluding a Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce and Navigation at Tianjin, which placed Russia on the same footing as Western powers regarding the opening of seven ports to foreign commerce, and the exercise of consular jurisdiction.⁷

In 1860, the Russians took advantage of the Anglo-French occupation of Beijing. While posing as mediators they managed to sign the Convention of Beijing with the Qing

⁵ Tai Sung An "The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute" p. 33

⁶ J.V. Davidson "Russia and China: From the Huns to Mao-Tse-tung" p. 79

⁷ Ibid p. 80

court. This treaty confirmed all that had been gained by Muraveyev, with the addition of the maritime area east the of Ussuri River should be ceded to Russia as well.

Moreover, by 1860, the area that is now called Xinjiang, was of increasing interest to the expanding empires of both Russia and Great Britain. “The Russians in particular, encroaching steadily southward and southeast across the Kirghiz and Kazakh steppe, were about to take over Western or Russian Turkestan with its cotton production and its strategic access to the northern fringes of British India.”⁸ However, through military and diplomatic efforts, Beijing was able to forestall the foreign influence on its northwest territory. In the nineteenth century, China not only lost some territory to Russia, but its northern frontier became exposed to penetration by Russian influence.

Beijing considers the documents drawn up at Aigun, Tianjin and Beijing to be the first “unequal treaties” concluded between the Chinese and Russian governments. Indeed, from that point until the establishment of a communist regime in November 1917, Russia’s treatment of China was similar to that of other western powers. Thus Russia

- Forced China to abandon its idea of superiority and accept status as an equal state;
- Acquired concessions for residence and trade in the Treaty Ports of Tianjin, and Hankow;
- Enjoyed extra-territorial privileges for its subjects.

While the western nations were, however, mainly concerned with central and southern China, Russia considered Manchuria and the northern provinces as its special sphere of interest.⁹

B. SECOND PHASE: RECOGNITION OF COMMUNIST RUSSIA

In the beginning of the twentieth century important events occurred both in China and Russia. As a result of the foreign pressure and domestic turbulence, the Qing

⁸ John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischaur, and Albert M. Craig “East Asia: Tradition and transformation” p. 600

⁹ J.V. Davidson-Houston “Russia and China: From the Huns to Mao Tse-tung” p.81

Dynasty came to an end in 1911. In Russia, the First World War, the Tsar's autocratic rule and economic disaster laid the foundation for serious transformation. Revolution was inevitable in Russia. In 1917, two different revolutions took place in Russia:

- March 1917-The “bourgeois-democratic” revolution led to the establishment of the provisional government; communists played only a small role in this revolution.
- November 1917-The Bolshevik revolution, which the Bolsheviks themselves called “proletarian.” Without the support of the peasant masses (a large part of whom were in the army), this revolution would not have been possible, but the Bolsheviks, who claimed to be the representatives of the proletariat, were truly the leaders.¹⁰

Soon after coming to power, the new Communist regime of Russia started to make efforts to normalize its relations with China. After establishing the Russian People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (Narkomindel) under Leon Trotsky, the Russians held discussions with Chinese Minister Liu Jingren with the aim of reaching agreement on procedures for liquidating the old “unequal treaty” arrangements and provisions directed against China.¹¹ The Narkomindel, in December, dismissed tsarist diplomats from their posts in China and appointed new representatives. The Bolshevik authority attempted at the same time to send consular representatives into Xinjiang. Beijing, however, refused to accept the new appointments, instead maintaining relations with tsarist minister and consular officials who had been posted in China. Only in 1921 did the Chinese government withdraw its recognition from the tsarist diplomatic and consular representatives and accept the Bolshevik mission under Ignatius Yurin for talks.

Sino-Russian relations were greatly influenced by Lenin and other Russian communists leaders and two important events occurred at that time: First, Russia encouraged socialist revolutions in other countries including China. For this reason, Lenin established the Third International of the Communist Party (the Comintern) in 1919, and its first congress was held in Moscow in March that year. The delegates issued

¹⁰ Klaus Mehnert “Peking and Moscow” p. 151

¹¹ Edmund Clubb “China and Russia: The Great game” p. 161

“a manifesto to the “proletarians of the whole world,” in which they praised the Soviet form of government, urged other Communist parties to fight strongly against non-Communist labor movements, and expressed their support for all colonial peoples struggling against imperialist powers, including the Chinese seeking to resist Japanese encroachments.”¹² Second, Russia helped to found a Communist Party of China. Before the second Comintern congress met, Lenin dispatched two Comintern agents, Grigori Voitinsky and Yang Mingzhai, to China to investigate local conditions and explore the possibility of setting up a communist party.¹³ The Comintern agents succeeded in establishing contacts with Chinese Marxists and gave them directions and techniques to set up a political organization from the uncoordinated mixture of socialist groups that existed in China at that time, which later became the Chinese Communist Party.

In the 1920s and 1930s the Soviet Union, through its Comintern advisers, participated in making many of the Chinese Communist Party’s most important policy decisions and played a major role in appointing the leaders and determining the party’s revolutionary strategy.¹⁴ At the same time it also conducted diplomatic relations with the Chinese Nationalist Party.

Establishing friendly relations with China was essential to the Soviet Union for political and security reasons. In East Asia, the greatest danger to the newly established Soviet Union lay with Imperial Japan. A strong, anti-communist society, Japan had already defeated Russia in the war of 1904-1905 and was now becoming the dominant force in Manchuria, on the Soviet Union’s southern frontier. In Europe, Adolf Hitler seized power in Germany, creating a threat on the western frontier. Stalin was concerned above all about the Soviet Union’s defense on two fronts--against Germany in Europe and against Japan in the Far East. The Soviet Union’s objective was to make China an ally against Japan, and therefore, in the early years of Sino-Japanese war, Stalin gave the Chinese Nationalists important military support. Thus Moscow

- Appointed its military officers to China as advisers;
- Negotiated skillfully with Nationalists and the CCP and succeeded in joining

¹² Jonathan D. Spence “The Search for Modern China” p. 308

¹³ Ibid p.309

¹⁴ Doak A. Barnett, “China and the Major Powers in East Asia” p. 23

them in the struggle against the Japanese.

- Helped establish a new military academy under the Soviet model; and
- Sent its fighter pilots to China as volunteers.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, preoccupied by the events in Europe, the Soviet Union slowed down its aid to China and even withdrew its volunteer pilots. The German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 and the subsequent war effectively terminated Soviet military aid and other resources until the war in Europe was over.¹⁵

In the period from the end of WWII until the Communist victory in China in 1949, the Soviet Union continued supporting the Chinese Communists. When the Soviets occupied Manchuria at the end of the war, the Chinese Communists moved major elements of their forces there, and the Soviets gave them substantial aid, turning over large amounts of captured Japanese military materiel. This timely assistance was of critical importance to the Chinese Communists. It helped them to defeat the Nationalists in Manchuria, which then became a primary base for their nationwide military campaigns.¹⁶

C. THIRD PHASE: HONEYMOON PERIOD

When the Chinese Communists won their struggle and established a new national regime in October 1949, both they and the Soviets moved rapidly to establish new and unprecedentedly close ties between the two countries. Despite some strains caused by the history of unequal treaties, xenophobia and previous Soviet support of the Chinese Nationalists, new Chinese leaders saw obvious advantages in forging close ties with the Soviet Union. These ties were also fostered by the following factors:

- The emergence of the Cold War in Europe;
- The U.S.-Japan alliance in East Asia;
- The U.S. nuclear monopoly;
- The U.S. links to Taiwan;
- Shared communist ideology; and

¹⁵ Jonathan Spence, "The Search for Modern China" p. 443

¹⁶ Doak A. Barnett "China and the Major Powers in East Asia" p. 24

- The Soviet Union's initial economic success.

Immediately after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Chinese Communist leaders publicly endorsed the Soviet view of a bipolar world dominated by an intense struggle between the socialist and capitalist camps. In 1949, Mao dramatically announced his "lean to one side" policy and rejected any "middle road," committing China strongly to an alignment with the Soviet Union.¹⁷

On February 14th, 1950, just four months after the establishment of the PRC, the two countries signed a Treaty on Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance that was directed against Japan as well as the United States. The treaty was a military pact that obligated Moscow and Beijing to cooperate in resisting aggression on the part of Japan or any country collaborating with Japan, meaning the United States. It became the basis for extensive Sino-Soviet military cooperation, including the assignment of thousands of Soviet advisers to Chinese military units, large-scale transfer of advanced Soviet military technology to the People's Liberation Army (PLA), the training of Chinese officers at Soviet military academies, and the deployment of Soviet pilots and aircraft in support of Chinese involvement in the Korean War.¹⁸

In the early years of the PRC's existence, one of the first tasks for the Chinese communists was restructuring the economy. They could handle rural problems, but had almost no experience in administering large urban areas and developing modern industry. Although Western businesses existed in China by the time of the communist takeover, Mao rejected the idea of collaborating with Western countries and began to orient the nation's economy toward the Communist model.¹⁹ Chinese leaders accepted Soviet economic experience as the development model for China and based their programs on Soviet advice and aid. Thousands of Soviet technical advisers came to China to help with factory building, industrial planning, hydroelectric power development, railway network expansion, and even urban architecture that clashed with China's urban landscape.²⁰

¹⁷ Doak A. Barnett, "China and the Major Powers in East Asia" p. 25

¹⁸ Steven I. Levine, "Some Reflections on the Russian-Chinese Strategic Partnership" p. 3

¹⁹ Doak A. Barnett, "China and the Major Powers in East Asia" p. 27

²⁰ Jonathan Spence, "The Search for Modern China" p. 517

In the 1950s, China and the Soviet Union, in spite of many differences, maintained a posture of “monolithic unity.” This can be explained by two considerations:

- a. *Security*. Although the Soviet Union defeated Germany and Japan with the help of the Allies in WWII, it was still a new and inexperienced regime facing a hostile international environment. China was still weak and vulnerable. So both countries needed each other to deter the United States.
- b. *Economic*. Economic ties were also important for China and the Soviet Union. Both countries were isolated from the West and were experiencing economic difficulties. Despite these difficulties, bilateral trade was established where Russia provided China with technical aid, industrial equipment and machinery, and in return would receive Chinese raw materials, agricultural products and items of light industry. Thus, “from 1952 through 1955, roughly 55 percent of China’s annual foreign trade was with the Soviet Union and another 20 percent with other Communist countries.”²¹

The 1950s were the period of closest collaboration between China and the Soviet Union in the political, economic, cultural, educational, and social arenas. The Soviets helped the Chinese to establish a communist regime, develop foreign and domestic policies, reorganize its economy, train national cadres, and conduct cultural and scientific exchanges.

D. FORTH PHASE: HOSTILITIES

Initial strains in Sino-Soviet relations emerged during Mao Zedong’s first visit to the Soviet Union in December, 1949. During his meeting with Stalin, Mao asked the Russians to assist in training China’s air force, creating a Chinese navy, recovering Taiwan, and developing the national economy. But all he gained was a security treaty and \$300 million in credits to be paid in installments over five successive years.²²

²¹ Doak A. Barnett “China and the Major Powers in East Asia” pp. 26-27

²² Jonathan Spence “The Search for Modern China” p. 499

The open rift between the two countries did not develop until the second half of the decade. The dispute developed gradually, and numerous factors aggravated it, but the following issues were the crucial ones:

1. *Attack on Stalin.* Khrushchev's de-Stalinization speech in 1956 had a tremendous impact on Sino-Russian relations. Beijing's leaders were surprised and shocked by the speech. They also were offended by the fact that Khrushchev had not consulted them, or even informed them of his intentions, beforehand. From the Chinese point of view, the attack on Stalin raised important ideological and political questions²³ and had far reaching implications for China and the entire Communist bloc and world movement.
2. *Dealing with the rest of the world.* A difference in the basic strategic outlook of China and the Soviet Union developed during 1957-59, when their respective national interests clashed. It first became evident at the Moscow conference of Communist parties in November 1957. While the Soviets argued for a relatively cautious strategy toward the noncommunist world, Mao, proclaiming that the "east winds prevail over the west winds," urged a more militant worldwide struggle.²⁴
3. *Abandoning the Soviet economic model.* Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders were concerned with the development of rural areas. In the fall of 1957, they began to push for more radical domestic policies in the agricultural sector. The government organized communes throughout China in the summer of 1958 and launched the Great Leap Forward later the same year.²⁵ This was a clear sign that the Chinese had modified the Soviet model.
4. *Khrushchev's détente.* Chinese and Soviet differences on many specific foreign policy issues, such as Soviet Union's close contact with India and Indonesia (which angered China) became apparent in 1958 and 1959. In order to improve Soviet-American relations, Khrushchev visited the United States September 15- 28, 1959. Beijing, which favored conflict, not détente, between

²³ Doak A. Barnett "China and the Major Powers in East Asia" p. 32

²⁴ Ibid pp. 32-34

²⁵ G.F. Hudson "The Sino-Soviet Dispute" p. 5

the Soviet Union and the United States, vehemently opposed his visit.²⁶ The Chinese feared that Soviet-American détente would compromise important Chinese interests in the Taiwan area and elsewhere.

5. *The Taiwan issue.* The Taiwan Strait crisis of 1958 was a key event that further separated China and the Soviet Union. Khrushchev made clear that he would not aid any offensive Chinese action to seize either the offshore islands (Quemoy) or Taiwan. Thus the Soviets refused to provide military support urgently requested by the Chinese during the crisis.
6. *Development of an atomic bomb.* The 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis helped precipitate a rift over another crucial issue, Soviet aid to the Chinese for the development of nuclear weapons. Limited collaboration between the two countries in the nuclear field had begun in the mid-1950s, when the Russians aided the Chinese in building their first nuclear reactor. Then in 1957, the Soviet Union agreed to help China build its own nuclear weapons. By 1958, however, Moscow began to have serious doubts about the wisdom of this policy, and the 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis heightened these doubts. Finally, in mid-1959, according to the Chinese, the Soviets “tore up” the 1957 nuclear agreement.²⁷
7. *Differences in ideology.* The publication of the article “Long live Leninism!” in the Chinese Communist Party’s theoretical journal “Red Flag” on April 16, 1960 was the start of the important and bitter stage of dispute.²⁸ The Chinese assault was a strong ideological condemnation of the Soviet Union for abandoning Leninist principles and basic Communist values. As a reaction to this assault, Moscow took concrete punitive action within a few months. In the summer of 1960 the Soviet Union declared its intention to recall all its 1,390 advisers and technical experts in China and carried it out in the fall.²⁹

Although this move had an extremely damaging economic impact on China,

²⁶ Edmund Clubb “China and Russia: The Great Game” p. 435

²⁷ Doak A. Barnett “China and the Major Powers in East Asia” p. 36

²⁸ G.F. Hudson “The Sino-Soviet Dispute” p. 78

²⁹ Jonathan Spence “Search for Modern China ” p. 558

the Soviet experts were never invited back. China proceeded systematically to repay all Soviet loans and to free Beijing of any indebtedness to Moscow.

8. *Border tension.* From 1960 onward, tensions increased between China and the Soviet Union along their 4500-mile long common border. In 1962, they reached a point of high tension when thousands of Kazakhs and Uighurs fled China for the Soviet Union. From 1965, the Russians began to build up their military forces near the border, and the Chinese responded in kind.
9. *The Cuban Missile Crisis.* This crisis greatly contributed to the Sino-Soviet conflict. Following the crisis, the Chinese accused the Russians of “adventurism” and “capitulationism” to the U.S. pressure. These accusations outraged Moscow and led to the Soviet Union’s backing of India during the Chinese-Indian border clashes in 1962.
10. *The Vietnam War.* During 1964-65 a new issue affected Sino-Soviet relations. As the United States became deeply involved in the Vietnam War, both Moscow and Beijing became increasingly concerned about the outcome. Moscow tried to press Beijing to initiate a “united action” to aid North Vietnam. But Beijing rejected Moscow’s efforts to establish cooperation.

Sino-Soviet relations reached a dangerous stage in 1969 when two serious military clashes took place on March 2nd and 15th, at Chenpao (Damansky) Island, in the Ussuri River. These incidents could have sparked a major war; however, both sides chose to draw back from the brink.³⁰ Nevertheless, tension continued at a high level thereafter. Further border clashes occurred; the most serious, in August, was at the Dzungarian Gate in Xinjiang. Later, both sides made attempts to reduce tensions; however, no significant developments occurred.

Hence, China and the Soviet Union regarded each other as one of their respective main rivals and the danger of a military confrontation escalating into a major war persisted throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

³⁰ Doak A. Barnett, “China and the Major Powers in East Asia” pp. 49-50

E. FIFTH PHASE: NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS

Normalization of the relationship between Moscow and Beijing was neither quick nor easy. When the USSR had signaled its interest in settling its costly conflict with China and establishing détente with China through dialogue as early as the 1970s, the latter adhered to the position that it would only agree to dialogue on the issue of territorial disputes. The dialogue for normalization of Sino-Soviet relations commenced after 1979, when China changed its position, expanding the scope of negotiation with the Soviets on matters beyond territorial disputes. The first stage in the process of normalization resulted in Mikhail Gorbachev's state visit to China in May 1989 and the summit meeting with Deng Xiaoping. This visit symbolized the end of the Cold War between the two Communist giants and became a turning point in the history of Sino-Soviet relations. Both sides made efforts to improve relations through political and military concessions. For instance, the former Soviet Union took three important steps to normalize its relations with the PRC. These steps included:

- Withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan;
- Withdrawal of Soviet forces from Mongolia;
- Withdrawal of Soviet-backed Vietnamese forces from Cambodia.

In addition, the start of border talks and subsequent troop reduction in the border areas removed a key obstacle to bilateral negotiations.³¹

In 1991, however, tensions in Sino-Soviet relations flared again. The issues that led to the escalation were

1. The Chinese government's positive attitude toward the August 1991 coup by the conservative elements of the Gorbachev administration;
2. The Western-influenced Soviet criticism of China's human rights violations; and
3. The Soviet Union's move to establish formal relations with Taiwan.³²

In December 1991, the Soviet Union disintegrated into 15 independent republics and Russia succeeded it as a member of the UN Security Council. China swiftly

³¹ Sherman Garnett, "Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership" *The Washington Quarterly* Autumn 2001 p.43

³² Lee Nam-ju, "From Partnership to Alliance? The development of Sino-Soviet Relations" pp. 56-57

proclaimed diplomatic recognition of Russia and expressed its willingness to improve relations with Russia. Russia became more cautious about the issues of human rights and Taiwan, and soon after, Sino-Russian relations significantly improved.

The normalization of relations led to reciprocal high-level visits. At the 1992 summit meeting in China, Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin issued a joint statement stating that neither would interfere in the domestic affairs of the other, that both would stand against hegemonism, and that neither would strike the other first with nuclear weapons. Furthermore, progress in Sino-Russian relations included expansion of economic, scientific, cultural and military exchanges. Factors for maintaining normal and friendly relations between China and Russia included:

1. Mutual respect. Russia reaffirmed that
 - a. There is only one China;
 - b. The government of the PRC is the sole legal representative of China;
 - c. Taiwan is a part of China;
 - d. Russia will never establish official relations with Taiwan.
2. Shared views on an increasing number of international issues in light of the challenge from the United States and its allies. Russia, deeply disappointed by the low level of Western aid and by the fierce Western competition over spheres of influence in the newly independent states, in 1993 switched to a “two-headed eagle” policy, pursuing relations with both Western and Asian countries. Especially after 1995, under heavy pressure from NATO’s U.S.-led eastward expansion, Russia attached greater importance to its relations with China, India and other Asian countries. Meanwhile China faced U.S. pressure on human rights violations, interference on the Taiwan issue and the threat of containment. Naturally, the two nations sympathized, supported and cooperated with each other on many international issues. They agreed extensively on the post-Cold War situation. Both believed that the world was evolving from a bipolar structure to a multi-polar one. Neither could accept a unipolar world. Both were willing to contribute their share to the establishment of a new, equitable and reasonable international order in which no single country dominated any others. In addition, both opposed the re-emergence of

hegemony and power politics and the resurgence of Cold-War thinking. This factor provided a solid political foundation for rapprochement.

3. Economic cooperation. Russia and China have great potential for economic cooperation. China is a large country with rich human resources, a large market with considerable potential and a good agricultural and industrial base. But it is relatively lacking in natural resources, including oil, natural gas, water, forest and arable land, and it is relatively weak in the high technology arena. Russia is a large country with rich natural resources and an industry with great potential, and it is very strong in some high-technology areas but weak in light industry and agriculture. In addition, Russia has a relative lack of labor resources in relation to its large territory. Naturally, the two nations can help and cooperate to their mutual benefit. All these factors laid a foundation for China and Russia to develop their relations into the next phase.

III. THE SINO-RUSSIAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The Sino-Soviet conflict lasted for several decades and left a deep mark in history. Many observers were so invested in the Sino-Soviet conflict that they failed to notice signs of Sino-Soviet rapprochement until the process was almost complete. The two sides have largely settled, avoided, or waived potential friction points. This approach has led to a somewhat lopsided relationship, with defense relations dwarfing other forms of economic interaction. Similarly, interaction between the two countries' leaders has been far more robust than contact between the two societies at large. Nevertheless, this kind of relationship has worked to establish and expand the Sino-Russian strategic partnership in later years. Sources of friction would be easier to address as a result of the rapprochement strategy and the subsequent strengthening of bilateral ties.³³ Some analysts believe that the Russian-Chinese "strategic relationship" has been crafted, to a large extent, with the intent of seeking to influence the foreign policy behavior of the United States.

A. DECISION-MAKING

Russian attempts for rapprochement with China have been ill-conceived and too insistent. Because the various approaches to China do not coincide with particular Russian political groups and parties, analysis is difficult. One can often find differing opinions regarding China among the members of a given Russian political party. Conversely, bitter rivals from opposing political camps can often agree on China policy even when they cannot find common ground on any other issue.

China became the central focus of Russia's Asia policy in the 1990s, when President Yeltsin opted for a foreign policy balancing the East against the West. The idea was Russia would continue to develop relations with the West, but would pay equal attention to its interests in Asia and the Middle East. Although Yeltsin announced this policy shift in 1992, it was not until January 1996--when Evgenii Primakov, former chief of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service and an Asia expert, became Russian prime

³³ Sherman Garnett, "Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership" *The Washington Quarterly* 2001 p. 42

minister, replacing Andrei Kozyrev, one of the early proponents of Russia's pro-Western orientation--that the change in Russia's foreign policy orientation was implemented consistently.³⁴

The State Duma was another proponent of closer relations with China and had some influence on the leadership. Here, especially in the mid-1990s, the influence of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation was very strong. The Duma's Committee on Foreign Relations has always been actively China-friendly, and its influence on foreign policy decision-making was reportedly significant.

Another group that favored an alliance with China was Russia's traditional heavy and military industry. The Russo-Chinese partnership was built mostly on Russian transfers of arms, weapons systems and military technology to the PRC. These transfers are seen by Russia as serving both economic and political goals. From 1991-96, Russia sold China \$1 billion in arms, but in 1997 this figure doubled, reaching \$2 billion. Currently, Russia plans to sell \$20 billion worth of arms and technologies between 2000 and 2004.

President Putin's foreign policy appears to be an extension of Primakov's legacy. According to the Russian foreign policy concept, Russia pledged to work toward the establishment of a multi-polar system of international relations that better fulfilled the diverse interests of the major powers, such as Russia and China, and countered the destabilizing consequences of American unilateralism.

Russian approaches to China might have been dictated by a simple consideration. The conventional wisdom was that if Russia were to bandwagon against China, Moscow could find itself in a situation worse than a partnership with Beijing. Russia, which currently finds it extremely difficult to deal with a handful of Chechen separatists, would be drawn into conflict with a nation whose population far outnumbers it and whose economy already surpasses Russia's twelve to fifteen times over.³⁵

Although at present the idea of a Moscow-Beijing security alliance has not officially been put forward by either country, there are reports that the idea's domestic

³⁴ Elizabeth Wishnick, "One Asia Policy Or Two? Moscow and the Russian Far East Debate Russia's engagement in Asia" NBR Analysis Vol.13, No.1 March 2002 p. 5

³⁵ Alexander Lukin, "Russia's Image of China and Russian-Chinese Relations" p. 7

supporters continuously pressure the Russian government to form a closer alliance with China. The idea of an alliance is popular among various influential groups in Russia: communists and communist sympathizers, non-communist nationalists, and pro-Chinese liberals. Many pro-Chinese researchers work at the Institute of the Far East of the Russian Academy of Sciences, a major Russian research center focused on China, Japan and Korea.

On the other hand, there are three principal groups in Russia who identify China as a threat: pro-Westerners, those who fear Chinese expansionism, and radical nationalists. According to pro-Westerners' view, China was playing the "Russian card" exclusively for its own interests in order to pressure Taiwan and enter the WTO with the U.S. assistance. They explain that China was Russia's direct competitor in the struggle for attracting Western investment to developing markets.

The strongest and most hostile group to China in Russia is the radical nationalists. Although most nationalists see China as a prospective partner in an anti-Western alliance, for the most radical nationalists, China is too westernized. While China has always been a geopolitical threat, it is currently a part of a process of hostile encirclement. The Russian Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) leader, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, is very much a proponent of this point of view. He said, "Today Russia has two main adversaries — the USA and China, who want to destroy us."³⁶ The radical nationalist view represented the opinion of the Russian ruling elite in the very first years after the collapse of the Soviet Union (1992-1993). At present, the positions of pro-westerners and radical nationalists have little influence on policy making, and their representatives are unlikely to find themselves in positions of power in the foreseeable future. However, it still pushes the government towards a more cautious policy on some sensitive issues such as Chinese immigration and arms sales.³⁷

In China, the current normal ties were developed and sustained under Russianized Chinese leaders. These leaders, such as Jiang Zemin, Li Peng, and Qian Qichen, received education in the Soviet Union, spoke the language, and knew the culture. Unlike Mao, who never felt comfortable with Russians, the Chinese third generation leaders

³⁶ V. G. Gelbras, "Aziatsko-Tikhookeanskiy region: problemy ekonomicheskoy bezopasnosti Rossii" p. 43

³⁷ Alexander Lukin, 'Russia's Image of China and Russian-Chinese Relations' p. 11-12

understood Russians and could deal with them without difficulty. Although decades of Sino-Soviet confrontation deeply alienated Russia and China, its recent leaders were willing to improve bilateral relations and forge a partnership. However, with each power transition in China, the following logical questions arise: Can the current normal ties be sustained under less Russianized Chinese leaders? Will they be able to continue the legacy of the generation of leaders who were largely "made in Russia?" How would they decide China's national interests - which may or may not overlap with those of Russia?

B. CREATION OF THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The initiative of creating a partnership between the two nations came from the Russian side. President Yeltsin hinted at and favored the creation of a strategic alliance with China. However, the Russians first suggested creating a system of collective security in Northeast Asia that would include not only Russia and China, but also the United States, Japan and the two Koreas. The Russian side made this proposal during Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev's visit to China in spring 1995. Pavel Grachev was known for his unconventional statements and before making the proposal, he obviously had not consulted with the Foreign Ministry. Beijing, aware of the results of the previous "inviolable" alliance with the USSR respectfully declined the Russian offer.³⁸

Nevertheless, in the mid-1990s, China and Russia repeatedly expressed a desire to develop their relations into a strategic partnership directed to the 21st century. As then-Russian President Yeltsin explained, the purpose of this partnership was to promote an emerging multi-polar world structure, and to oppose any attempts of hegemony by any single country in a situation where "there are absolutely no controversial issues between Russia and China."³⁹

In April 1996, during the Sino-Russian summit meeting held in Beijing, Jiang Zemin and Boris Yeltsin signed a joint statement proclaiming the forging of a "strategic

³⁸ Alexander Lukin, "Russia's Image of China and Russian-Chinese Relations" p. 14

³⁹ Izvestiia, April 26, 1996

partnership of equality and trust oriented towards the 21st century.”⁴⁰ Since then, both nations have been set on a course of strategic partnership. In a sense, this partnership is a logical outcome of improved Sino–Soviet relations under Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin.

C. FACTORS THAT PRECIPITATED THE FORMATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Several factors precipitated the formation of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership.

First, the Kosovo crisis had a profound impact on the development of the Russian-Chinese partnership and on the formation of tandem Sino-Russian outlooks. Although not agreeing with Milosevic’s policies, China and Russia considered NATO’s methods for resolving this international crisis dangerous to the maintenance of international stability. Being multi-ethnic states and having ethnic problems similar to Yugoslavia, Russia and China were gravely concerned that the precedent for resolving such a U.S. or NATO-set crisis would pose a direct threat to their own sovereignty and security in the future. However, China and Russia had no other choice but to insist on respect for the role and prerogatives of the United Nations. Failure to do so would mean moving international relations towards unipolarity, while also intensifying domestic political struggles in both countries at a moment when both need consolidation of all political forces to reform their economies.

Second, one of the powerful forces that drew Russia to China was China’s financial aid to Russia. In the late 1990s, the Russian economy almost collapsed due to the Russian leadership’s mismanagement and incompetence. Inflation was so high that the Russian currency, the ruble, dropped several times a week, reaching the point of no value. Western nations were reluctant to provide any assistance due to lack of confidence in the Russian government, concerns about corruption and organized crime, and the threat of losing their money. At the end of August 1998, China provided Russia with \$540 million in financial aid despite having its own economic problems. No other country or

⁴⁰ Chen Qimao “Sino-Russian relations after the break-up of the Soviet Union” p. 129

international financial institution offered economic assistance to Russia, and, at the time, the action was unprecedented and greatly appreciated.⁴¹

Third, United States withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and its determination to proceed with TMD and NMD plans have had a tremendous impact on the development of the Sino-Russian strategic partnership. Both Russia and China hoped to raise the authority and the role of the United Nations, defend the primacy of international law in world affairs, maintain strategic stability, and create a new, just, world order where everyone enjoys equal rights.⁴² Therefore, preserving the ABM treaty was important for the joint Russian and Chinese vision of the future world order. United States withdrawal from the treaty and development of TMD and NMD systems ended any chance to maintain strategic stability in the world and the region. Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov, referring to the latest developments in international security environment, said, “Now it is essential that Russia and China cooperate in key areas.”

In the period since Kosovo, Russian and Chinese representatives have repeatedly stated their inclination to progress to a new and more advanced stage of the strategic partnership between the two countries. This advance may take place in both the political and military-technical spheres, and it would certainly be accelerated by implementation of a NMD system or NATO enlargement.

D. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTNERSHIP

China and Russia have a legitimate right to manage their relations unless it threatens the security interests of third parties, such as India, Japan, or the United States.

The China and Russia-proclaimed strategic partnership had far-reaching goals. Its political objective was to develop a new multi-polar world order based on the “five principles of peaceful coexistence” and opposition to a unipolar world. Regarding economic cooperation, the two countries decided (1) to increase their bilateral trade to \$20 billion per year; (2) to cooperate in machine-building, aeronautical and aerospace

⁴¹ Alexandr V. Nemets and John L. Scherer “Sino-Russian Military Relations: The fate of Taiwan and the New Geopolitics” p. 6

⁴² Igor Ivanov, “Nashi vzaimootnosheniya svobodny ot emotsiy”, p. 3.

technology; (3) to build a gas pipeline from Eastern Siberia to Northeast China; and (4) to build a thermal power network in China. Other objectives included the demarcation of the 4300-km eastern border, and making China and Russia's shared border and their borders with the new Central Asian nations more peaceful and stable. Besides political and economic ties, scientific, cultural, and military exchanges were also included in the partnership. Many Chinese and Russian analysts indicate that in recent years Sino-Russian relations have indeed developed and reached a stage of strategic partnership that include cooperation in various fields.

E. POLITICAL COOPERATION

In order to realize practical relations and cooperate in key areas, China and Russia have taken several important steps. On July 16, 2001, Putin and Jiang codified their partnership in the Sino-Russian Treaty on Good Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation. This treaty was the first such agreement between these two nations since Mao Zedong signed a treaty with Joseph Stalin in 1950, four months before the outbreak of the Korean War. If that treaty was driven by anti-Western sentiments, then the motivations behind this new treaty are much more complex. The 2001 treaty involves serious geopolitical, military, and economic considerations and outlines the ambitions of a Sino-Russian partnership that caused some U.S. observers to warn of the formation of a full-fledged anti-U.S. alliance.⁴³ Although Russia and China announced that the treaty is not specifically directed at any nation, no nation should underestimate the strategic significance of these ties.

This time the two nations again formed an identity of views on world affairs by joining together to condemn U.S. air strikes against Iraq, NATO intervention in the Balkans, and the development of a U.S.-Japan theater missile defense system. Russia and China also shared a conservative view of sovereignty—China has supported Russia's intervention in Chechnya and Russian officials have reiterated their commitment to a one-China policy. The 2001 treaty covers five important areas of cooperation:

⁴³ Sherman Garnett, "Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership" p.1

- Joint actions to offset perceived U.S. hegemonism;
- Demarcation of the two countries' long-disputed 4,300 km border;
- Arms sales and technology transfers;
- Energy and raw materials supply; and
- Combating the rise of militant Islam in Central Asia. 44

While reaffirming their commitment to certain principles of relations (respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, the one-China policy, domestic development choices, strategic stability, and the view that the U.N. should take the lead in conflict resolution), the treaty indirectly called attention to some areas of tension in Sino-Russian relations. Thus the signatories pledged to avoid economic pressure on each other, condemned illegal immigration, forswore territorial claims, and agreed to work toward achieving mutual trust in regional relations. Moreover, the signatories announced the treaty did not signal the creation of a Russian-Chinese alliance. Yet scholars studying international alliances, define alliance as “a formal or informal arrangement for security cooperation between two or more sovereign states.”⁴⁵ The Russian-Chinese Treaty meets the conditions of formality and contains two articles typical of alliances, namely references to military cooperation and to cooperative responses to threats to security or territory of the parties. While the treaty does not spell out specific military measures, it does require that in situations endangering peace or portraying a threat of aggression, Russia and China will immediately make contact with each other and hold consultations in order to eliminate the emerging threat.⁴⁶

As a result of forging close ties by signing the treaty, the ensuing year, 2002 was one with "dynamic development in all areas." In December, Jiang Zemin and Putin signed a joint statement further expanding the partnership. The Sino-Russian strategic partnership now covers various areas of cooperation, including trade; exchanges in cultural, educational, science, legal, and media areas; foreign policy and world affairs; the

⁴⁴ Ariel Cohen, “The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A Strategic Shift in Eurasia?” p.1

⁴⁵ Stephen Walt, “The Origins of Alliances” (1987)

⁴⁶ Patrick E. Tyler, “Russia and China Sign ‘Friendship’ Pact” *New York Times*, July 17, 2001

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and antiterrorist affairs; regional stability and missile defense systems; and multilateral approaches to resolving world and regional problems.⁴⁷

Summit diplomacy, which provided crucial early momentum, is now an annual feature of the relationship. Political cooperation between the two sides includes regular meetings between the heads of state; regular contacts between defense and foreign ministers, and the heads of other key agencies; as well as the activities of twelve branch inter-governmental bodies and the work of more than ten permanent working groups and commissions. On bilateral relations, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov recently commented, "Moscow doesn't have such a comprehensive mechanism with any other country of the world."

F. ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Economic cooperation is an important leg of the Sino-Russian partnership. The Russian Federation's Foreign Policy Concept reveals that, for the Sino-Russian partnership, the main task is "to bring the scale of economic interaction in conformity with the level of political relations."⁴⁸ The April 1996 summit statement, for example, announced an overall goal of \$20 billion in trade between the two sides by the end of the century and identified leading projects in industry, energy, and large-scale construction. China's transformation during the last decade from energy exporter to importer will slowly emerge as a major factor in Eurasia, one likely to shape eastward-oriented energy projects in both Russia and Central Asia. Russia agreed to assist China in building a fast-neutron cycle reactor at Beijing's nuclear power institute. These steps forward suggest the possibility of an energy and nuclear power-led economic partnership, though not what was envisioned in 1996.

China seeks to maintain its impressive economic growth rate from 1985–2000 in the future, however it faces a major raw materials shortage. For example, China imported 30 million tons of oil in 1999; by 2010, it may import 100 million tons a year.

⁴⁷ Yu Bin "Putin's Partners: Old and Young" p. 3

⁴⁸ "Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiyskoy Federatsii" by V.Putin, June 11, 2000

By 2010, China will face a water deficit of 10 percent of its total consumption. By 2020, it will not be able to supply itself with oil, iron, steel, aluminum, sulfur, and other minerals.

Chinese experts predict that Russia will be able to export 25 billion to 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas to China annually, as well as 15 billion to 18 billion kilowatts of electricity from newly completed hydropower stations in Siberia and 25 million to 30 million tons of oil from oil fields in Eastern Siberia. In addition, Russia can pump oil produced in Kazakhstan to Irkutsk in eastern Siberia and then supply it to China. In order to satisfy China's increasing energy needs, Russia is willing to assist China in building six nuclear reactors that would generate up to 1.5 trillion kilowatts.

Several large-scale energy projects are in the process of implementation. For instance, in June 1997, Russia and China signed an agreement to develop the Kovyktinskoe gas fields near Irkutsk. The China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) is participating in a feasibility study for the development of the fields, but CNPC insists on verifying Russian reserve estimates and disagrees with the Russians over the route of the proposed pipeline. The Russian side proposed to construct the pipeline from Irkutsk via Mongolia to Beijing, the shortest route from East Siberia to China. The Chinese, however, want the pipeline to go directly from Russia to Daqing in the Heilongjiang Province and then to Dalian in Liaoning Province.

During the July 2001 summit, Russia and China reached an agreement on a feasibility study for a \$1.7 billion pipeline that would run from Angarsk in eastern Siberia to Daqing in northeastern China. Despite Tokyo's interference in Sino-Russian energy cooperation, Beijing was able to secure the contracts to export Russian natural resources in 2003. China once again won the contract to construct an oil pipeline from the Russian city of Angarsk to the city of Daqing. Japan has industriously campaigned in Russia to cancel it. Tokyo wants the pipeline to flow directly to Nahodka, a Russian seaport across from Japan, so that other countries in the Asia-Pacific region would also benefit from the oil. Japan's primary argument against the Chinese contract was Russian vulnerability by relying on a single purchasing country for revenues. Tokyo was so eager to sway Moscow it had agreed to cover the estimated \$5 to 6 billion dollars to divert the pipeline

to Nahodka. As an added enticement, Tokyo expressed willingness to spend an additional one billion dollars to develop and upgrade existing ports and facilities in the Russian Far East. Prime Minister Koizumi's efforts partially paid off with the Russian Prime Minister Kasyanov's announcement on April 29, 2003 that pipelines would be constructed to Daqing as well as to Nahodka. However, due to continuing negotiations over payment, Russian oil is only scheduled to flow into Daqing.⁴⁹

The 1,500-mile pipeline could be built as early as 2005 and begin pumping 147 million barrels annually to China.

Russia and China are also seeking to cooperate in the high technology sector. Chinese officials have invited Russian high-tech experts and engineers to build hi-tech incubators in the northern city of Harbin.

The two countries are considering building a bridge over the Amur river to connect the Chinese city of Heihe in Heilongjiang Province with the Russian city Blagoveshchensk.

There also are numerous projects for developing free economic zones along the Chinese-Russian border and an international port in the mouth of the Tumen River (Tumangan), where the Russian, Chinese, and Korean borders meet.

Russia and China are planning to cooperate in developing a network of railroads and pipelines in Central Asia, building a pan-Asian transportation corridor (the Silk Road) from the Far East to Europe and the Middle East. However, ambitious Chinese plans to build the longest pipeline in the world, from Western Kazakhstan to China, at a cost of \$10 billion, have run into financing difficulties.⁵⁰

China is interested in a few select advanced industries, specifically the aerospace and nuclear industries. China has made it clear to Russia that its vision of the strategic relationship does not extend to granting special concessions in the economic realm. Russia suffered a bitter disappointment in August 1997 when its bid to provide generators and turbines for China's massive Three Gorges hydroelectric dam project was rejected in favor of bids from several Western European firms. The Chinese are well aware of the perils of doing business with Russia. In civilian markets that are exempt from the

⁴⁹ Izvestiya, 05.06.03

⁵⁰ Ariel Cohen, "The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A Strategic Shift in Eurasia" p. 7

constraints imposed by the arms embargo, Russia faces difficult and in some cases seemingly fierce competition from Western firms.⁵¹

In sum, economics provides only a secondary impetus for rapprochement. While trade between the two nations reached a record of US\$12 billion, it lags far behind Chinese trade with the United States and its other major trading partners. While the trade structure between these two countries is weak and primarily involves Russian raw materials and Chinese low quality consumer goods and food, the potential for growth in trade and investment remains high.

Regarding industrial products and technology, Russian officials often complain that the Chinese, despite numerous official pledges, are unwilling to grant Russian producers the same terms that other Western competitors enjoy, and sometimes even refuse to sign contracts with Russian companies even if they make the best offer. Chinese business interests would like to sell more of their products to Russia and engage in more cooperative projects with Russian businesses in the Russian Far East in order to boost economic development in China's Northeastern provinces.

G. THREAT FROM RADICAL ISLAM

As multinational states, China and Russia have concerns regarding the spread of terrorism and militant Islam. Both desire stable regimes firmly established in the region and are aligned in the struggle against radical Islamic forces. The last thing that China or Russia wants is a radical Islamic regime serving as a refuge for China's Uighurs or Russia's numerous Muslim minorities. Even while carefully cultivating its own ties in the region, China has been content to let Russia continue its security primacy in the former Soviet Union. Beijing has happily supported the Commonwealth of Independent States and other Russian-led plans for integration, as well as Russian military deployments and obligations in the region. China clearly sees its most important security interests engaged along and beyond its littoral borders, not in Central Asia. Beijing and Moscow have thus cooperated to form the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

⁵¹ Jeanne L. Wilson, "Prospects for Russian-Chinese Relations: Whither the Strategic Partnership" p. 17

with Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan in 1996, with Uzbekistan was invited to become a member of the SCO in 2001.

In addition to political cooperation, China has also sought to improve its economic position in Central Asia. It has been persistent in cultivating ties with the Central Asian states, and its energy companies have concluded important agreements with the Kazakhs. These Chinese companies could well be seen in the years ahead as the forerunners of large-scale operations in Central Asia if a pipeline from the area to China's coast can be financed and built.⁵²

The events of September 11, 2001 further strengthened Russia's and China's incentives to combat terrorism. The September 11 attacks on the United States brought major changes in the orientation of American foreign policy. U.S. President George W. Bush declared that the global war on terrorism would be the "singular focus" of his administration's foreign policy, and that all states would need to choose whether they were "for us or against us" in this struggle. Vladimir Putin was reportedly among the first foreign leaders to sign on to the coalition against terrorism and Jiang Zemin also declared China's enlistment in the cause. Both states clearly saw the American-led efforts against al Qaeda as a means of dealing with perceived Islamic extremist threats to their own security.⁵³ Russia gained a free hand in fighting with Chechen separatists and China exploited the situation by persecuting Uighurs, Tibetans, and other religious minorities.

H. FUTURE TRENDS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

At present both China and Russia have officially recognized the policy of a Russian-Chinese strategic partnership. Speaking in the July 2000 Shanghai Five meeting in Dushanbe, President Putin stated "China for us is really a strategic partner in all spheres of activity."⁵⁴ In April 2001, at a meeting with the Chinese foreign Minister

⁵² Sherman Garnett, "Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership" TWQ August 2001 p. 48

⁵³ Robert H. Donaldson and John A. Donaldson "The arms Trade in Russian-Chinese relations: Identity, Domestic Politics, and Geopolitical Positioning" p. 17

⁵⁴ Igor Ivanov, "Nashi vzaimootnosheniya svobodny ot emotsiy"[Our relations are emotions free], *Rossiyskaya Federatsiya*, No. 10 (155), July 2000, p. 3

Tang Jiaxuan, Putin reiterated Russia's position: "We practically have no problems that irritate our relations. On the contrary, relations between the two countries are developing dynamically and positively."

Regarding the partnership, different leaders have used different approaches. For instance, in contrast to the Yeltsin's leadership, Putin appears to view relations with China with far less idealism and is attempting to take a more pragmatic approach to developing a truly equal partnership. The Chinese government, on the other hand, under the new leadership of Hu Jintao, acknowledged its increasing dependence on Russian weapons purchases, and is attempting to ensure that the Sino-Russian partnership will endure.

The Sino-Russian strategic partnership emerged as an expression of Moscow's and Beijing's unhappiness with the shape of the world system. It may serve to remind Washington that Moscow and Beijing must be taken seriously. Russia is not the only country where anti-Western sentiments have grown over the last decade. In China, where people have their own reasons for dissatisfaction with U.S. policy, such feelings are also on the rise. If these trends continue (which seems likely), it is only natural to expect that Russia will gradually grow closer to China, as well as to India and other Asian countries with which it has fewer problems.⁵⁵

At the same time it is believed that if Russia approaches the Chinese challenge rationally, speedy Chinese development can provide the two countries with many opportunities for cooperation and that Chinese prosperity will certainly be one of the main conditions for peace and cooperation in the international arena.⁵⁶

There is a possibility that, in case of a formal Sino-Russian alliance, both Russia and China will find themselves cut off from vital Western financial, commodity and technological resources and will be forced to give up their plans for economic modernization and social democratization. However, Western analysts believe that if Russia and China sustain their partnership, accelerated Chinese development can provide

⁵⁵ Alexander Lukin, "Russia's Image of China and Russian-Chinese Relations" p. 21

⁵⁶ V. G. Gelbras, "KNR posle Den Syaopina: problemy ekonomicheskogo razvitiya" p. 55

the two countries with many opportunities for cooperation and Chinese prosperity will certainly become one of the main conditions for peace and cooperation in the international arena.

There are strong reasons to be more optimistic about bilateral relations in the short term as well. Two-way trade reached a record of \$12 billion in 2002, up from \$10.7 billion in 2001. Large-scale projects are either in progress (nuclear power plants) or promising (energy and resources). In October 2002, the Admiralteiskiye Verfi shipyard in St. Petersburg started to construct the first two of eight super-quiet Kilo class diesel-electric submarines (totaling \$1.5 billion) for the Chinese navy. In November, the Northern Shipyard in St. Petersburg began to build the second of two destroyers ordered by the Chinese navy at a total cost of \$1.4 billion. In the international arena, the SCO started its operations when member states moved forward to set up an antiterrorist center in Kyrgyzstan's capital of Bishkek and its secretariat in Beijing. Both Russia and China are concerned with the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. However, Moscow and Beijing believe this issue provides them with an opportunity to exert influence vis-à-vis other powers.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Yu Bin, "Putin's Partners in Beijing: Old and Young" p. 2

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IV. CRITICAL ISSUES IN THE SINO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

Several potential sources of friction cast a long-term shadow over the Sino-Russian partnership and limit its scope. The flow of power, which for the past several centuries has made Russia the stronger nation, are again at work but apparently to different ends this time. The political, economic, and even military power shift in favor of China causes concerns in the Russian government and the Duma. Russian concerns are reflected in joint Russo-Chinese projects. For instance, recently the Russian parliament moved to prevent the Chinese oil firm, China's National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), from bidding on the Russian 'Slavneft' project, forcing the CNPC to withdraw and causing friction in Sino-Russian relations. According to media reports, President Putin took quick steps to repair the damage in bilateral relations. On the same day that the CNPC announced it was withdrawing from the bidding, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov instructed the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry to conduct talks with the Chinese Academy of Engineering Physics on possible cooperation in the sphere of high-density energy physics. The initiative came from the Russian side and was coordinated with the Foreign Ministry and other federal executive institutions. Next, Putin urged the CEO of Russia's oil firm Yukos, which is to construct the Russian side of the 2,200-kilometer Siberia-Manchuria pipeline, to speed up that process.⁵⁸

Fears of being invaded by Chinese immigrants, who come to Russia legally and illegally, have become a constant theme in the Russian media. In response to a debate about China as a future threat to Russia, First Deputy Chief of Russia's General Staff General Yuri Baluyevsky, after returning from a trip to China, warned publicly that if Russia changed its Chinese policy, it might face a neighbor that "can threaten us by virtue of its quantitative and qualitative potential." "Do we need this? I believe that today the most correct policy is to have a good neighbor, true friend, and strategic partner, and never an enemy."⁵⁹ Although China and Russia skillfully manage problems in their relations, there are issues that could enormously strain the Sino-Russian partnership and perhaps renew the conflict between the two nations. These issues exist in all areas of

⁵⁸ Yu Bin, 'Putin's Partners in Beijing: Old and Young' p. 5

⁵⁹ Ibid p. 6

Russo-Chinese relations and cannot be eliminated because many of them have historical roots. The issues are categorized as political, economic, military, territorial, demographic and cultural.

A. POLITICAL:

In the past one of the main areas of the Sino-Soviet alliance was political cooperation. China's and the Soviet Union's world outlook, policy orientation and dealings with the rest of the world were generally identical. Thus, they cooperated in supporting North Korea during the Korean war, in which the Chinese provided most of the manpower and the Soviets most of the war materiel. At present the Sino-Russian political partnership is challenged by the following factors:

Unhappy experience of alliance. The *Straits Times* in Singapore recently alleged that Russia offered China an alliance. Beijing reportedly turned this down but won instead an agreement on the transfer of advanced technologies from Russia. China's rejection can be explained by the Beijing's long-standing suspicion of alliances, going back to its earlier unhappy experience with Moscow from 1949-60. China will never forget that the former Soviet Union made China pay for its economic and military aid, stopped the technological transfer and the delivery of a sample nuclear bomb, and withdrew all Soviet advisers and technical experts. Beijing also views the alliance system as legacy of the Cold War⁶⁰ and is highly critical of U.S. alliances in East Asia.

Policy difference: An alliance requires nations to formulate similar positions on key policy. At present, there are important policy differences between the Russian and Chinese government on key issues. For instance, Russia supported, but China opposed, Japan's campaign for a United Nation's Security Council seat. Also, in order to maintain its influence over the Korean peninsula, China has done nothing to bring Russia into the four-power Korean peace process. ⁶¹

Non-existence of party-to-party ties: One of the factors that makes formation of an alliance unlikely is the lack of ties between the ruling parties of two countries. During

⁶⁰ Kenneth W. Allen and Eric A. McVadon, "China's Foreign Military Relations" p. 7

⁶¹ Stephen Blank, "The Strategic Context of Russo-Chinese Relations" p. 8

the Sino-Soviet Alliance in the 1950s, the Chinese Communist Party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had strong ties with each other based on shared ideology. The two parties coordinated their international and domestic policies, cooperated in economic and defense spheres, and conducted cultural, educational and scientific exchanges. Party congresses were important events in the two countries. The end of communist rule in Russia and Chinese reforms since 1978 have made the ideological issues and party-to-party bound irrelevant.

Problems in Russo-Chinese regional relations:

Although the Sino-Russian partnership is the central axis of Moscow's Asia policy, cooperation between Russia and China has been weakest at the regional level.⁶² A Russian Far East open to trade and cooperation with China and the Pacific Rim countries sounded promising in the speeches of policymakers in Moscow, but the reality is complex. Unlike their colleagues in Moscow, who emphasize the strategic benefits of Sino-Russian partnership, officials in the Russian Far East view China as Russia's main competitor in the short-term and as a potential threat in the long-term. These differences in views between Moscow and the Russian Far East stem from divergent priorities, assessments of the regional balance of power, and different interpretations of the costs and benefits of cooperation. For politicians in Moscow, concerned about NATO expansion and American missile defense, the strategic partnership with China provides a respite against Western pressure. In the Russian Far East, on the other hand, China represents the main potential threat to regions weakened by economic decline and population outflow. While policymakers in Moscow still focus on Russia's standing vis-à-vis the West, in the Russian Far East, officials are concerned about the impact of a rising China. Although China's rise is often overstated and Chinese regions across the border actually share many of the same structural impediments to reform that are present in the Russian Far East, Russian regional leaders nonetheless fear that an increasingly prosperous and populous neighbor with unclear intentions will overshadow their regions.⁶³ In addition to these views, the regional relationship is complicated due to

⁶² Elizabeth Wishnik, "One Asia Policy or Two? Moscow and the Russian Far East" NBR Analysis March 2002, p. 47

⁶³ Ibid p. 48

Russian failures in reform, organized crime in the border provinces, mutual bureaucratic slowness, suspicion, and obstruction, and demagogic fears that a sinification of Russian Far East through illegal and unrestricted immigration and commercial penetration might overturn Russian rule there.⁶⁴

At present, regional cooperation is the most difficult area in Sino-Russian relations. Russian regional administrations' policy came as the biggest surprise to Chinese policymakers, who believed that increasing regional interactions would ensure the rapid growth of economic ties and contribute to the bilateral relationship. Chinese unwillingness to acknowledge the existence of internal conflicts within Russia has made Chinese policymakers slow to address this problem's potential impact on bilateral relations. Although some Chinese scholars call attention to the role of regional officials such as former Primorskii Krai Governor Evgenii Nazdratenko in fanning anti-Chinese sentiment for political purposes, most Chinese observers attribute problems in regional economic relations to inadequate administration or to the unstable business environment in the Russian Far East.

Russia's integration in the Asian economy remains the main priority in Putin's Asia policy. This goal is unlikely to be achieved without strengthening the ties between border provinces of both Russia and China and without major improvements in Russian relations with the United States, Japan, and South Korea.

B. ECONOMIC:

Low Volume of Trade: Russian and Chinese leaders had high hopes for achieving significant economic cooperation. At their 1996 summit meeting, Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin pledged to reach \$20 billion in bilateral trade by 2000. This turned out to be an unattainable goal: in 1999 bilateral trade only reached \$5.9 billion, far below the peak level of \$7.68 billion achieved in 1993. In 2000, Sino-Russian trade reached \$8 billion, in 2001 \$10.67 billion, and in 2002 a record of \$12 billion was reported. As mentioned earlier, the volume of trade between the two nations continues to be no match against

⁶⁴ Elizabeth Wishnick, "Prospects for the Sino-Russian Partnership: Views from Moscow and the Russian Far East" *Journal of East Asian Affairs*, XII, No.2 pp. 418-451

Chinese trade with the United States and its other major trade partners. Japan, the United States, Taiwan, and Europe account for over \$284 billion in trade with China.

Not only is the volume of bilateral trade low, but Russian and Chinese economies are moving in diverging directions. China seeks to satisfy its demand for advanced industrial equipment not from Russia, but from the West. Apart from energy and arms, the remaining portion of trade is localized in border areas--so-called "shuttle trade"--and involves foodstuffs and cheap consumer goods. Moreover, the management of Russian-Chinese trade is plagued with contract violations, corruption, disorder, and distrust.

Russian Fears of Dependence on China: Although the Russian Far East depended on border trade with China for necessary goods, officials and the general public became concerned that an excessive reliance on Chinese products could lead to unprecedented dependence on China, and possibly invite Chinese economic control over Russia's weakened peripheries. In response, officials expanded trade with other Pacific Rim countries, and by the mid-1990s, food products and consumer goods from South Korea, Japan, and the United States began competing for a share of the consumer market in the Russian Far East. In addition, concerns about an unfavorable regional demographic and economic balance between China and Russia has prompted regional leaders in Primorskii Krai and Khabarovskii Krai (Russian Far Eastern Provinces bordering China) to broaden cooperation with a range of other countries.

Difference in economic development: In the economic arena, Russia and China have experienced one of the most stunning reversals of economic position in recent history. Once one of the most industrially advanced, Russia's economy has declined to almost half its former value, with more than one-third of its people living below the officially defined subsistence level.⁶⁵ Once one of the world's poorest countries, China's GDP now ranks third in the world, depending on the way it is measured, and its rate of growth is the fastest of all major countries--destined, from the optimistic view, to achieving its goal as a world player. Even as its 1.3 billion population continues to grow, and Russia's 146 million population continues to decline, China is on a course to surpass Russia on a GDP per capita basis. Maintaining current GDP growth through foreign

⁶⁵ Robert H. Donaldson and John A. Donaldson, "The Arms Trade in Russian-Chinese Relations" p. 11

investment and introduction of high technology is an important issue for the Chinese Communist Party to remain in power. Russia is incapable of meeting these needs, and therefore the West will continue to be China's leading trade and economic partner for the foreseeable future.

C. **MILITARY:**

China and Russia often underscore that their military ties have been very successful. However, Russian fears of rising Chinese power find reflection in the military and technical cooperation sphere. First of all, Russia does not export its most advanced weapons systems and technologies to the PRC. According to Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Russia only sells defensive weapons to China, and only within the framework of international agreements.⁶⁶ The items of defensive nature include SU-27 fighter-interceptors, the SU-30MKK multipurpose fighter, S-300PMU and Tor-M1 surface-to-air missile systems, Sovremenniy-class Design No.956E destroyers and design No.877EKM diesel submarines. In addition to the sell of defensive hardware, there are the following factors that cause frictions in the military cooperation:

Russia's Arms Quality Difference: There is a considerable difference in the performance characteristics of the hardware used by the Russian Armed Forces and those being sold to China. Russian officials claim that the aircraft it sells to the Chinese have less capable avionics and radar packages than in versions provided to the Russian Air Force. Also striking is the fact that the same weapons systems sold to China and other countries are different. For instance, China and India have purchased two fighter aircraft that are nearly identical in designation-the SU-30MK.⁶⁷ The Indian SU-30 MKI fighter is reported to be equipped with state-of-the-art phased-array radar, canard foreplanes, and engines with thrust-vectoring nozzles enabling incredible maneuvers. Russia also sold India the license to manufacture the engine for this fighter, the AL-31FP. In contrast, the version sold to China have no comparable features, and Beijing is still only negotiating to purchase the engine license for its aircraft.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Igor' Ivanov, "Nashi vzaimootnosheniya svobodny ot emotsiy", p. 3

⁶⁷ "New Approaches to Russian Arms Trade with India, China," *Izvestiya* 18 December, 2002

⁶⁸ Victor Litovkin, "Putin Visits China, India: Two Points of a 'Triangle?'" *Vremya MN*, 3 Dec. 2002

The situation is largely the same with naval vessels sold to China and India. Moscow offered Beijing a Sovremenny class Project 956 destroyer. The destroyer is a 20-year-old design and is being fitted with fairly modern anti-ship missile systems, such as Moskit 3M-80 anti-ship supersonic cruise missiles, which the Russians claim have unparalleled capabilities. The purchase made the Chinese navy not only the most powerful navy in the Asia-Pacific region, but also a direct challenge to the U.S. Navy. But Chinese joy was short-lived when Russia offered to sell India Project 1135.6 destroyers. This ship was developed as a replacement for the Project 956. The power plant and the main missile complex were changed, which has critical significance for these ships. The ship was developed taking stealth technology into account. As a result, the Indian ships are not only more reliable, and sail and fire farther, they also have a low signature for enemy weapons. China has noted these crucial imbalances and has demanded that an improved air defense system and long-range cruise missiles be included in the second shipment of destroyers.⁶⁹

One more example of Russia's unequal treatment of its partners are deliveries of diesel submarines. China receives very old Varshavyankas, while India receives the more modern Amur. Analysts say that New Delhi wants and obviously will obtain nuclear submarines of the Project 971 Akula class, a third and quieter generation. China can only dream of the opportunity to purchase this generation of nuclear submarines from Russia.⁷⁰

Russian Arms Sales To China's Neighbors: To counterbalance Beijing's growing military might, Russia is strengthening defense ties with China's strategic opponents in the region, India and Vietnam. Russia sells to India not only aircraft and air defense systems, but also offensive weapons, such as 350 T-90S tanks, a model still in service with the Russian Army.⁷¹ In addition to sales of modern weapons, the Russians are willing to build nuclear submarines for New Delhi. Together with the Sukhoi Aircraft Military-Industrial Complex, the Russians are offering to provide India with a fifth-

⁶⁹ "What Russia Sells to China," *Kommersant*, Moscow, 06 November, 2002

⁷⁰ "New Approaches to Russian arms trade with India, China needed," *Izvestiya*, 18 December, 2002

⁷¹ Viktor Litovkin, "Putin Visits China, India: Two Points of a 'Triangle?'" Current Digest of P-Soviet Press.

generation fighter. Naturally, China is extended no such offers. Russia and India are already operating defense-industry joint ventures, such as Bramos, which manufactures the Bramos supersonic anti-ship cruise missile for the Indian Navy. Again, Russia has no such ventures with China.⁷²

Today China's options include aging Soviet weapons, although they do have years of operational reliability. And Delhi is counting on Russian high technology transfer. As a result the quantity of Chinese purchases is offset by the quality of Indian purchases. Why is that? The answer is Moscow continues to feel that, over the long-term, Beijing may yet emerge as a potential rival to Russia.

Problems with payment: When Russia sold first 24 SU-27 aircraft to China in the early 1990s, reportedly only 35 percent of the sales price was paid in hard currency. The rest was paid through barter of foodstuffs and consumer goods. In recent years, Russia has become dissatisfied with the financial terms of its arms sales to China. The problem is that while Russia exports roughly \$1 billion a year in weapons to China, according to their bilateral agreement, Russia must collect 50 percent of the Chinese payments through Chinese goods. In other words, Moscow gets only \$500 million a year in cash, while the rest comes in so-called "currency A50", which can only be used to procure merchandise from China. Russian officials have pledged to eliminate A50 in 2003, yet it remains to be seen whether Beijing is willing to pay 100 percent in hard currency.

Russian Defense Establishments' Opposition to Military Cooperation With China:

Although Moscow has not sold China complete weapons systems that could strike at the Russian heartland, the Russian military is concerned about these armament sales based on wariness about the future Russian-Chinese relationship.

In recent years, Russia has supplied a significant number of modern weapons to China. As a result the quality of the People's Liberation Army has greatly improved, and, according to the Russian estimates, China already possesses a significant military capability. Therefore, the Russian General Staff and the Ministry of Defense are stepping forward as the primary opponents of the broader development of Russia's military and technical cooperation with China. There have been reports that the Russian military is

⁷² Ibid

unwilling to part with its best platforms and weapons, fearing that these same weapons could one day be turned on Russia. Despite Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov's declaration of the concentration of army training on combating international terrorism, the Russian military is preparing to engage in future conflicts with China. For instance, according to Russian newspaper *Izvestiya*, Siberian and Far East military districts' exercises were based on repelling large-scale PRC military aggression. In each engagement, the Russian Army found itself in a knowingly disadvantageous position: there were not enough men and equipment to contain the Chinese, and in a matter of days retreated into the depth of Russian territory. It is believed that if today's situation in the Russian Armed Forces persists in the future, and if an armed conflict breaks out between Russia and China, Moscow will not attempt to resist using conventional weapons and equipment and will immediately shift to the nuclear deterrence mode.⁷³ The quantity and quality of Russian nuclear forces remains the last area of unequivocal Russian military superiority over the Chinese.

At present there are two factors that sustain the Sino-Russian cooperation in the military sphere: Russia's need to sustain its huge military-industrial complex and China's difficulties in assimilating and mastering Russian weapons systems and technologies. Russia's sale of arms and weapon systems is motivated in large part by economic considerations and necessity to support the military-industrial complex. Russian defense industry lobbyists argue that the total collapse of their sector would be disastrous for the country: not only hundreds of thousands of workers would be left without pay, but also numerous plants and design bureaus would be forced to terminate research and development of new technologies. The impact of the expected job losses would be especially severe in Siberia and the Far East, where defense enterprises are the sole industry.

Exports of arms became the most secure source of income for Russian military producers and China has been the most enthusiastic buyer. According to the former head of the main Russian arms exporter Rosvooruzhenie, A. Kotelkin, revenues from arms exports finance more than fifty percent of Russia's military-industrial complex. It is

⁷³ Ibid

believed that the largest part of the payments for Russian arms and weapons come from China.⁷⁴ Stephen Blank reports, "in 1997 defense producers were told that they had to sell conventional and state-of-the-art systems until the year 2005 and that the state supervision would be minimal." ⁷⁵

On the other hand, China's problems in incorporating Russian weapons systems into military doctrine, training, and actual use persuade the Russians that they have little to fear for the next 10-15 years and induce a healthy contempt in the Russian military elite for China's military capabilities.⁷⁶

D. TERRITORIAL

The most important issue that could develop in the future and challenge the partnership is any territorial dispute between the PRC and Russia. In the early 1960s, a border problem surfaced that later escalated into a dispute over conflicting territorial claims. China claimed an area east of Lake Baikal as seized by Russia through old unequal treaties. In the late 1990s, the border conflict that had once threatened to engulf the Soviet Union and China in outright war was essentially resolved as an issue. At present, China and Russia have still many issues to resolve, namely demarcating the border, finding a solution to disputed islands, and establishing effective control over borders. Despite current friendly relations, the possibility of a resurrection of the border conflict still exists in the future due to the following factors:

Beijing's Claim of Russian Far Eastern Territories: In the Far East, the sparsely populated wastelands north of the Amur River and east of the Ussuri River became part of the Chinese empire in the 17th century as a result of the Manchu conquest of China, but they were never effectively settled by the Chinese. The Treaty of Aigun (1858), which was imposed on a war-weakened China by the Russian Tsarist government in 1856-58, gave Russia sovereignty over 230,000 square miles north of the River Amur and placed 150,000 square miles east of the Ussuri under joint Sino-Russian control. The Treaty of

⁷⁴ Alexander Lukin, "Russia's Image of China and Russian-Chinese relations" p. 13

⁷⁵ Stephen J. Blank, "Russia's Armed Forces on the Brink of Reform" p.12

⁷⁶ John Pomfret, "Russia and China, Allies Once Again?" *Washington Post*, November 30, 1998

Beijing (1860) incorporated the territory east of the Ussuri into the Russian empire.⁷⁷ These territories are still regarded by the Chinese as “Chinese” and could be claimed in the future if a leader with strong sense of nationalism comes to power in Beijing.

Failure To Demarcate the Border: The maintenance of peaceful, stable, and secure relations along the Russian-Chinese border is a matter of mutual concern to both regimes. During the 1990s, Russia and China worked to complete the interrelated tasks, initiated in the Gorbachev era, of demarcating and demilitarizing the border. The Russian and Chinese foreign ministries reached several agreements in recent years. In the PRC, media portrayed the signing of agreements on Sino-Russian border issues as the major accomplishment of the summit, claiming that border conflicts were a thing of the past. However, these agreements did not cover all disputed areas and a sense of uneasiness is still reflected in summit meetings and official documents. For instance, according to Russian media, Putin and Jiang decided, right before the signing of the joint statement in December 2002, to add an item on the border issue to the text.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministries of both nations were instructed to complete the process of border talks “in the shortest possible time”. The urgency to demarcate and find a resolution to the disputed areas may be designed to keep current uncertainty and disputes from escalating in the near future.

Existence of Disputed Islands: There are three islands in the Far East that are claimed by both Russia and China. These islands are Bolshoy Ussuriysky and Tarabarov on the Amur River across from the Russian city of Khabarovsk and Bolshoi Island in the upper reaches of the Argun River. Although the islands do not have any economic value, the Chinese are keen to recover them. The Russian newspaper *Izvestiya* reports about an incident that occurred recently. A Russian Border Guard patrol arrested a Chinese national on the disputed islands. The Russians asked a regional Chinese consulate to send them information about him in order to arrange an official deportation. In return, the consulate issued a statement saying that the Chinese national was on a territory that currently had no status, and the Russian border guard’s actions were illegitimate.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Peter Jones and Sian Kevill, “China and the Soviet Union” p. 87.

⁷⁸ Yu Bin, “Putin’s Partners in Beijing: Old and young” p. 6

⁷⁹ Anna Amelkina and Elena Loriya, Elena Yakovleva “Jeltim po belomu” *Izvestiya*, 03.15. 03

Russian regional and military officials oppose the return of the islands because of their strategic value, and the Russian government made clear to the Chinese that they are non-negotiable. The leaders of some border regions, especially the Maritime Kray and the Khabarovskiy Kray, constitute a major pressure group which lobbies against unrestricted Russian-Chinese border trade and opposed a border demarcation treaty. While generally not resistant to trade relations, they lobby for a strictly controlled border and tough measures against Chinese immigration. It was their influence that led to the abolition of the no-visa border crossing system and although they failed to undermine the Russian-Chinese border demarcation treaty, they managed to attract the entire country's attention to border problems. The power of regional authorities was so strong during the Yeltsin period that, as discussed above, they were able to unilaterally impose measures, such as changing the border control regime. On the whole, their influence and their vigorous anti-immigration propaganda created an atmosphere unfavorable for developing relations with China, and, combined with the inconsistent and convulsive actions of Moscow, wreaked havoc on Russian-Chinese border disputes.⁸⁰

The Putin government has tried to address concerns about Chinese territorial intentions in the region in the Russian Far East. Presidential Representative for the Far East Konstantin Pulikovskii accompanied the Russian President on his July 2000 visit to Beijing. As soon as the summit meetings concluded, Pulikovskii was immediately dispatched to Khabarovsk to reassure the regional administration that the Russian and Chinese governments agreed to maintain the status quo of the three remaining disputed islands.

E. DEMOGRAPHIC

In the 1990s, Chinese migrants came to the Russian Far East to work in trade, farming and service sectors. By the turn of the century, locals and residents of the regions began to fear the geo-economic consequences of an influx of Chinese migrants to once closed regions. In reality, however, concerns about Chinese migrants are disproportionate to their numbers. According to reliable data from the Institute of

⁸⁰ Alexander Lukin, "Russia's Image of China and Russian-Chinese Relations" p. 13

Economic Research in Khabarovsk, even in 1992–93, the peak period of Sino-Russian border trade, 50,000–80,000 Chinese worked in the Russian Far East, including 10,000–15,000 contract workers and 10,000–12,000 students on long-term exchanges.⁸¹ Russian Police estimated 5,000–6,000 Chinese were in Primorskii Krai and Khabarovskii Krai illegally.⁸² Currently, there are 250,000–450,000 Chinese in Russia, including approximately 20,000–25,000 in Moscow and a maximum of 20,000 in each of two of the border regions, Khabarovskiy Krai and Primorskiy Krai.⁸³

Despite the low number of Chinese living in Russia, economic weakness and a decreasing population in the Russian Far East make many Russians nervous. Some Russians fear that the underpopulated Russian Far East and Siberia could become targets for Chinese expansionism and the eventual loss of Russian sovereignty over the area in the 21st century. The population disparity is immense. Only eight million Russians live between Lake Baikal and the Pacific, while over 200 million Chinese live in northeast China. For Russia, Chinese labor resources are important, since some estimates project that Russia's working age population will shrink by one million between 2006 and 2010. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) will decrease in importance as a source of migration to Russia, and in the intermediate and long term, Russia will need a new source to supply its labor-intensive industries. That source may be China, due to its demographic resources and high rate of unemployment.⁸⁴ Many Russians believe that Chinese expansionism is happening in the Russian Far East. For instance, every year approximately four thousand Chinese come to work in Khabarovskiy Krai legally and ten thousand illegally.⁸⁵

The U.S. military has explored long-range scenarios that see conflict arising between the two states as a result of a slow and steady influx of Chinese into the Russian Far East and resulting tensions with local Russian nationalist groups. A massive Chinese migration into the region under the current conditions would indeed be a destabilizing

⁸¹ Elizabeth Wishnick, "One Asia Policy or Two? Moscow and the Russian Far East" NBR 03.01.03 p. 59

⁸² G. Vitkovskaya and Zh. Zaonchkovskaya, "Navaya stolypinskaya politika na Dalnem Vostoke" p. 84

⁸³ V. G. Gelbras, "Kitaiskaya realnost Rossii" 2001, p. 39

⁸⁴ Alexei D. Voskressenski, "Russian-Chinese Partnership in a 'New' global Context" APSR 09/01 p. 10

⁸⁵ Izvestiya 03.15.03

trend.⁸⁶ A recent Russian survey found that almost half of the respondents feared that the Chinese population in the region could grow to comprise 20–40 percent of the total within the next decade. Another 20 percent believed the figure could become as high as 40–60 percent. This suspicion rests on ethnic prejudices, the rough-and-tumble atmosphere of the suitcase trade, decades of separation and isolation, and memories of Chinese claims to the region. Many fear scenarios where the Chinese could press such claims, through a determined and resurgent Chinese government or by a weakened Chinese government unable to control the flow of its people. Presently, both sides have taken steps to reduce tension in the area. The Chinese have cracked down on illegal migration, introducing greater controls for obtaining a visa. Border trade—once seen as the engine of growth for both sides of the Amur River—is kept within bounds and even controlled in ways that concentrate it at select border locations. If Chinese migration pressure is sustained in the Russian Far East, the current strategic partnership will be seriously challenged.

F. CULTURAL

There is also a deep cultural gap between the Chinese and the Russians. This gap might widen in the future due to the mistrust, suspicion, and prejudices. Some politicians in Russia claim that Chinese call Russians stupid, hairy and bear-like, and despite their interactions and business dealings with Russians, the Chinese strongly believe that they are only temporarily tolerating the historical injustice of Russia’s control over the Maritime and Amur regions.⁸⁷ These same politicians propagate a theme that the Chinese have already “created a well-established illegal network on the Russian territory,” and that Chinese businessmen are siphoning Russian resources and hard currency “like a giant pump.”⁸⁸

People-to-people contact is also obstructed by the fact that Russians do not show any active interest in China, its language, and culture, and prefer that immigrant Chinese learn Russian.

⁸⁶ Sherman Garnett, “Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership” TWQ Aut.2001 p. 50

⁸⁷ Alexander Lukin, “Russia’s Image of China and Russian-Chinese Relations” p. 10

⁸⁸ Ibid

In addition, the Russians do not quite understand the Chinese image of Russia. For the Chinese, Russian imperialism is not a propagandistic cliché but part of their history. Not only are the people-to-people ties weak, but so are contacts between officials, be they government or military, which are reported very shallow.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Robert H. Donaldson and John A. Donaldson "The Arms Trade in Russian-Chinese Relations" p. 11

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V. SINO-RUSSIAN MILITARY COOPERATION

Western encroachment, the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, the Chinese civil war, and the Japanese occupation all convinced Chinese communist leaders that the international system is rough and the possession of substantial military force and a willingness to use it are essential for China's security.⁹⁰

From its inception, the Sino-Russian strategic partnership has been built on Russian transfers of arms and military technology to the PRC. Steady increases in the size and quality of these transfers have enabled the PRC to improve and modernize its armed forces, the People's Liberation Army. As the chief organization responsible for the national defense of China, the PLA is expected to become a key instrument and a primary means of accomplishing PRC security goals, imposing influence in the region, and defending China's national interests in the future. The PLA is currently undergoing a long-term strategic modernization program that encompasses all components (ground forces, air force, navy, and strategic missile force) and significantly changes its composition, disposition, force structure, combat equipment, weapons system, training, and military doctrine. Uniformed and civilian leaders in Beijing have studied recent conflicts, including the U.S. performance in the Gulf War and Kosovo, and more recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Their continuous studies have thoroughly analyzed comparative Chinese shortfalls and identified areas of improvement in their force structure, doctrines and equipment. China's military leaders are well aware of the gap in modern military capabilities that exists between the PLA and modern militaries exemplified by the U.S. armed forces.

The aim of the modernization is to develop and transform the PLA from the present backward military force into a fighting force of a new century that could overwhelm Taiwan's defenses, and project China's power well beyond its shores. The PRC's modernization efforts are ambitious and comprehensive, and they include the following programs:

⁹⁰ John W. Garver, "Foreign Relations of the PRC" p. 255

- Arms acquisition. Due to the extensive secrecy of arms deals between China and Russia, many reports cannot yet be verified. According to open sources, from 1995–1999, Russia’s arms trade with China accounted for more than \$3.3 billion.⁹¹ Obviously, current momentum and declared intentions will only expand this form of bilateral cooperation. China intends to upgrade ICBMs, improve combat characteristics of its air force and navy, improve its air defense, build an ABM defense, and prepare for manned space flights.⁹² Outside of Russia, China buys arms and weapon systems from Ukraine, Israel and South Africa.
- Force restructuring. One of the significant changes occurring in the PLA is the shift from being a quantitative military force to becoming qualitative force. Military leaders significantly reduced manpower and placed emphasis on acquiring and introducing high-tech weaponry.⁹³
- Change in the military doctrine. Since the establishment of the PRC, the PLA has undergone several changes in its doctrine. From 1949 to the late 1970s, China’s military doctrine was dominated by Mao Zedong’s theory of People’s War; Deng Xiaoping changed it to “people’s war under modern conditions and then to “limited, local war”; and in 1991, Jiang Zemin shifted the strategy to “limited war under high-tech conditions.”
- Improvement in training. China is putting more financial resources into training soldiers, airmen, and sailors and is spending more time than ever on costly live-fire exercises and emphasizing coordination between its ground, naval and air forces. China still trains its officers in Russian military academies and colleges. There are unconfirmed reports that China asked the Russians to train PLA officers in offshore and amphibious operations.

All these programs receive Russian help and assistance. In addition to weapons sales, high-level exchanges, technological transfer, and assistance in training and formulation of doctrine, military cooperation between China and Russia has expanded to

⁹¹ Sherman Garnett, “Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership” TWQ Aut.2001 p. 45

⁹² Stephen Blank, “The Strategic Context of Russo-Chinese Relations” p. 9

⁹³ You Ji, “The Armed Forces of China” p. 37

include intelligence sharing and joint exercises.⁹⁴ For instance, at the end of May 1999 General V. Korabel'nikov, the Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff, Director of the General Intelligence Directorate, made his first ever visit to Beijing,⁹⁵ an unprecedented event in the history of Sino-Russian relations, to discuss possible avenues of intelligence cooperation with his Chinese counterpart. The Chinese and Russian navies began conducting joint military exercises in 1999. Participants included Russian Pacific Fleet missile cruisers and destroyers as well as warships from the Chinese Eastern Fleet. The Sino-Russian exercises were reported to include Russian TU-22 bombers equipped with long-range nuclear-capable cruise missiles flying attack missions against simulated U.S. forces in East Asia.⁹⁶

Sino-Russian military cooperation efforts indicate important trends in doctrine, strategy, and force development that the Chinese are pursuing. Analysis of Russian military purchases and deliveries portend that China desires to achieve air and naval superiority in the Taiwan Strait and in the South China Sea. The PLA is transforming itself into a mobile and technologically competent force able to fight limited wars under high-technology conditions. Much has been written about Chinese equipment purchases from Russia, China's military modernization, and its implication on the security situation in Asia. However, this thesis reviews and analyzes only specific Chinese arms and weapons acquisitions in relation to the strategic modernization.

A. CHINA'S STRATEGIC ROCKET FORCES

For the past decade, China has followed a deliberate, incremental modernization strategy, slowly phasing out older, less capable generations of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), replacing them with more advanced and more survivable systems. According to the latest U.S. governmental estimates, China's approximately 20 CSS-4 missiles (also known as the DF-5) are to be replaced with a modernized version by 2005. In addition, China reportedly has three longer range solid fuel missiles under development, with initial deployment of at least one of these missiles (the DF-31) scheduled prior to the

⁹⁴ Elizabeth Wishnick, "One Asia Policy or Two?" NBR Analysis 03/02 p. 50

⁹⁵ Alexandr V. Nemets, "Sino-Russian Military Relations" p. 12

⁹⁶ Ariel Cohen, "The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A Strategic shift in Eurasia" p. 3

middle of this decade. The optimal size and configuration of its future nuclear force (and the nuclear strategy it might support) remain less clear to Chinese strategists. Chinese policies will likely depend on how far and fast the U.S. missile defense programs progress, and whether China concludes that it must accelerate development of its strategic offensive forces, as well as deploy countermeasures intended to defeat ballistic missile defense.⁹⁷ Both U.S. national and theater missile defenses are likely to affect smaller Chinese nuclear forces. According to Russian media, modernization of China's strategic rocket forces is focused on development of solid fuel ballistic missiles with high degree of combat readiness, reliability, accuracy, mobility and survivability that could destroy strategic, operational, and tactical targets.⁹⁸

B. PLA AIR FORCE (PLAAF)

The Chinese air force purchases and development programs have focused on power projection. China is building a modern air force to operate over the East China and South China Seas. In 1993–1997, it acquired 74 SU–27 Flankers and the rights to produce 200 more under a Russian license by 2012. These aircraft are similar to the American F–14s and F–15s. Equipped with advanced radar and AA -11 radar-guided missiles capable of hitting targets beyond visual range, these fighters are designed to give China air superiority. Earlier, China acquired 40 SU–30 MKK multi-purpose fourth generation fighter-bombers (a modernized version of the SU–27) as well as an in-flight refueling capability needed to extend the Flanker's range. The Chinese military also purchased a license to produce 250 SU–30 fighters domestically. Altogether, China has bought or is planning to manufacture up to 525 of these combat aircraft. The PLAAF already has acquired over-the-horizon targeting capability, which may prove crucial in

⁹⁷ Jonathan D. Pollack, "Chinese security in the Post-11 September world: Implications for Asia and the Pacific" *Asia Pacific Review*, Vol.9, No.2, 2002

⁹⁸ Vyacheslav Baskakov, Alexandr Gorshkov, "Raketno-Yaderniy Arsenal Pekina" *Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozreniye* 07.12.02

future conflicts, and it is seeking airborne early warning capabilities for wide-area air and naval battle management, most probably by purchasing the Russian A-50 Beriev aircraft.⁹⁹

The purchase of the ten Il-76 Russian heavy cargo planes will provide the lift capacity to move men and material quickly throughout China's vast area and outside its borders to support territorial claims. This purchase will enable China, through reverse engineering or direct design assistance, to build its own heavy transports in the future. The significance of all these purchases is underlined by the PLAAF's recent shift from a defensive strategic doctrine to one that emphasizes taking the offensive.¹⁰⁰ In addition, PLAAF is developing a new generation of fighter aircraft with Russian assistance. This aircraft will have stealth features and enter service in 2005.¹⁰¹

C. PLA NAVY (PLAN)

Chinese naval strategists argue that the PLA must enhance its capacity for extended maritime operations if China is to credibly reinforce its territorial claims, deny such options to maritime rivals, and assert effective control over sea-based resources. Therefore, Beijing has decided to build a strong and capable navy by 2025.¹⁰² The arguments for maritime power presume that extending naval operational range and reach can effectively defend China's sea approaches, to prevent encroachment on China's maritime possessions and territorial claims, and more effectively assert Chinese maritime interests in the contiguous territorial seas. ¹⁰³ Recently the PLAN shifted to an offshore active defense strategy. At the core of this strategy is a three-tiered layer of naval defenses. The first level extends from the coast outward 50 nautical miles. The PLAN would defend this zone with shore-based anti-ship missiles, fast attack craft, minesweepers, and minefields. The second level of defense runs from 50 to 300 nautical miles from the coast. The major surface combatants (destroyers and frigates) and older submarines will

⁹⁹ Ariel Cohen, "The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A strategic shift in Eurasia" p.5

¹⁰⁰ Michael J. Barron, "China's Strategic Modernization: The Russian Connection" p. 3

¹⁰¹ Alexander V. Nemets, "Sino-Russian military Cooperation" p. 82

¹⁰² Dmitrii Pevtsov, "Kitai Stremitsya v Okean" Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye, 03.28.03

¹⁰³ Jonathan D. Pollack, "Chinese security in the Post-11 September world: Implications for Asia and the Pacific" APR, Vol.9, No.2, 2002

be deployed in this area. Beyond this is the open sea space, where the navy would operate shore-based naval aircraft and submarines with ship-to-ship missiles. The PLAN's next objective is to become a "green water navy." China's "green water" extends eastward in the Pacific Ocean out to the first island chain formed by the Aleutians, the Kuriles, Japan's archipelago, the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Borneo. Further eastward is what the navy calls "blue water"--this extends out to the second island chain starting in the north at the Bonin Islands and moving southward through the Marianas Islands, Guam, and the Caroline Islands. China is striving, through its modernization program, to have a "green water navy" early in this century and a "blue water" navy by 2050.¹⁰⁴ During the past decade, China has intensified arms purchases for its Navy. In 1999-2000, the Chinese navy received two Project 956E 'Sovremenniy' (Modern) class destroyers to China in a \$603 million deal. In January 2002, China and Russia signed a \$1.4 billion contract to build another two of the same destroyers. The destroyers are equipped with Moskit 3M-80 anti-ship cruise missiles. China was supplied with two Project 877EKM diesel-electric submarines and two Project 636 vessels, an upgraded version of the 877EKM. In May 2002, a \$1.5 billion contract was signed to build another eight Project 636 submarines. U.S. media reports that the PLAN plans to procure Russian "Akula" nuclear submarines to supplement ongoing purchase of eight Kilo -class conventional submarines, as well as two Slava-class cruisers armed with 16 P -500 anti-ship missiles with a range of more than 500 kilometers.¹⁰⁵

According to Russian open sources the PLAN modernization program has the following objectives:

- Equip PLAN with one or two aircraft carriers by 2050;
- Acquire a new generation of attack and nuclear submarines;
- Develop an amphibious force
- Create a naval task force capable of conducting operations in the Western Pacific.

¹⁰⁴ Michael J. Barron, "China's Strategic Modernization: The Russian Connection" p. 8

¹⁰⁵ Sergei Blagov, "Ukraine peddles its arms in China" Asia Times Nov.22, 2002 p. 3

Beijing is determined to create a navy to defend PRC national interests and establish sea dominance in the Japan, Yellow, East China and South China seas.

D. INFORMATION AND SPACE WARFARE

Chinese strategists seem increasingly concerned by rapid advances in U.S. information warfare capabilities, and they are working on whether and how China might be able to thwart or counteract such advances. China has repeatedly proposed banning the placement of weapons in outer space, and has recently made a joint proposal with Russia calling for such a ban. However, in part for development purposes and in part as a hedge against future U.S. actions, China is undertaking substantial efforts to improve its information warfare capabilities and to develop space systems with both the civilian and military applications. In November 1999, and in January 2001 China launched a ‘Shenzhou-1/LM-2F’ and ‘Shenzhou-2’ spacecrafts from the Jiuquan cosmodrome in northwest Gansu Province.¹⁰⁶ The launch was not only a Chinese success, but also a Russian achievement, as it assisted China in training its personnel and manufacturing the spacecraft. In addition to this launch China’s efforts to develop Information and space warfare capabilities include following steps:

- Research on U.S. dominance in this field;
- Development of strategy and capabilities to counter the United States; and
- Training personnel to conduct Information and Space Warfare.

These steps (driven both by U.S. exploitation of its information technology and the global revolution in information technology) ensure that the PLA will continue to deal with these issues, and very likely invest some resources in both research and application. Developing information and space warfare capabilities could improve the security of China, but decrease international security as the United States and China’s neighboring countries take countermeasures.

E. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

It is a common belief that the current technological level of the Chinese defense forces and equipment is at least two generations behind the advanced Western

¹⁰⁶ Vyacheslav Baskakov and Alexandr Gorshkov “Raketno-Yaderniy Arsenal Pekina” NVO 07.12.02

countries.¹⁰⁷ China has made it clear that it is interested in creating “pockets of excellence”—local weapons development programs based on foreign technologies; but to do so, it must first obtain that foreign technology. Russia agreed to provide technologies to China with both civilian and military applications. These technologies include:

- Technological cooperation in the area of commercial aircraft;
- China’s import of high-level machinery from Russia;
- Cooperation in nuclear energy technology;
- Cooperation in the space area, including satellite development, space science and technology, and development of space launch vehicles; and
- Russian transfer of next-generation fighter aircraft technology to China.¹⁰⁸

However, the large number of Russian weapons scientists who moved to China over the past decade is the most dangerous aspect of the Sino–Russian strategic relationship.¹⁰⁹ Thanks to these Russian scientists and engineers, China could conceivably, through reverse engineering, leapfrog over obsolete intermediate technologies, perhaps developing state-of-the-art military capabilities comparable to those of the United States in a decade or less. Many analysts predict that in the not-too-distant future, China may well be producing sophisticated weapons systems domestically.¹¹⁰

F. IMPROVEMENT IN AIR DEFENSE CAPABILITIES

U.S. air campaigns in the Balkans and Iraq have convinced Chinese military leaders to improve PLA air defense capabilities. In the late 1990s, China started to assemble a multi-layer air defense system based on the Russian S-300, Tor and Tuguska air-defense missile systems. Open sources indicate that the PLA has acquired eight regiments of the S-300PMU1 long-range anti-aircraft missile system and 27 short-range Tor-M1 systems from Russia in the 1990s. In 2001, Russia and China reportedly signed

¹⁰⁷ Jyotsna Bakishi, “Russia-China Military-Technical Cooperation: Implications for India” SA 07/2000

¹⁰⁸ Alexander Nemets, “War Does not Curtail The Growing Russia-China Alliance” China Brief Vol.2 Issue 1, 01.03.03.

¹⁰⁹ Ariel Cohen, “The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A strategic shift in Eurasia” p. 4

¹¹⁰ Michael J.Barron, “China’s Strategic Modernization: The Russian Connection” p. 2

a \$400 million contract to supply another four regiments of the more modern S-300PMU-2. In addition, earlier this year, agreements were signed regarding the shipment to the PLAN of 28 Su-30MKK multi-role naval fighters and two ship-based S-300 anti-aircraft missile systems.¹¹¹

In sum, there are a few trends in Sino-Russian military cooperation that need to be highlighted. First, the amount of equipment purchased from Russia confirms the selective modernization throughout the Chinese military. China purchased enough equipment to develop its air force, navy, strategic rocket forces and a limited number of rapid-reaction units.¹¹² Second, China is likely to proceed with military modernization at a relatively moderate rate that presumably will not cause alarm to Western militaries for some time to come. However, China's smaller regional neighbors are already wary of Beijing's intentions and notable improvements in Chinese nuclear, missile, and conventional power projection capabilities.¹¹³ Regardless of foreign perceptions, for the purpose of its own prestige and in the pursuit of its foreign policy objectives, China will seek to have a visible, standing military force capable of deterring war and intimidating potential opponents. Third, China has made great strides in developing asymmetric and cyber warfare techniques to challenge Western strengths or, perhaps as perceived by Chinese strategists, weaknesses. Beijing long ago decided to quietly use America's huge reliance upon computers and satellite based command, control and communications as a weapon to severely undermine Washington's capability to conduct offensive operations against China in any future conflict.¹¹⁴

It can no longer be seriously doubted that China is on the verge of becoming a credible military power. Intelligence agencies of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, India and the United States have all confirmed the enormous effort and expense Beijing has invested on upgrading its military capability. This conclusion has been buttressed by

¹¹¹ Sergei Blagov, "Ukraine peddles its arms in China" Asia Times Nov.22, 2002 p. 3

¹¹² Michael J.Barron, "China's Strategic Modernization: The Russian Connection" p. 8

¹¹³ Sherman Garnett, "Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership" TWQ Aut.2001 p. 53

¹¹⁴ Richard Bennett, "China and Russia-natural partners?" AFI Research Intelligence Briefing Jun.2002 p. 1

the Chinese intelligence services' world-wide espionage campaigns to obtain a vast array of advanced technology and vital industrial secrets.

VI. CHINA'S USE OF FORCE: TAIWAN AND THE DISPUTED ISLANDS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

China's use of force is a matter of concern for neighboring countries and regional powers. Indeed, the PRC historical record is rich with examples of Chinese application of military force. According to John W. Garver, in the CCP's short existence, China's leaders have decided a dozen or so times to employ military force to influence China's relations with foreign countries.¹¹⁵ China did not hesitate to use force against neighboring countries such as India and Vietnam, or nuclear-armed superpowers (United States, Soviet Union). The decisions to use force were carefully calculated and were intended to create surprise and political shock, and demonstrate China's determination to defend national interests. The following categories were identified as the goals of China's use of military force:

- To deter a superpower attack against China;
- To defend Chinese territory against foreign encroachment;
- To bring 'lost' Chinese territory under Beijing's control;
- To increase regional influence; and
- To enhance China's global stature.¹¹⁶

One of the interesting characteristics of China's use of force is the consistent avoidance of a major war. Although China used force against a stronger power or against the ally of a stronger power, it managed not to instigate, or become involved in a major military conflict. The one exception is the Korean War. China entered Korea to counter U.S. involvement after Moscow's security blessings and assurances of the Soviet Union support. The PRC's cases of using military force to resolve international disputes include: three-year war with the United States/United Nations in Korea in 1950-53; artillery bombardments of Quemoy and Matzu islands in 1954 and 1958; incursions into Burma against nationalists' remnants with Burmese government consent in 1960-61; military construction of roads and anti-aircraft protection of roads in northern and eastern Laos in 1961-68; mobilization in South China to force "neutralization" of Laos in 1962;

¹¹⁵ John W. Garver, "Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China" p. 250

¹¹⁶ Ibid p. 253-254

one month war with India in 1962; military deployment on Indian border to relieve Indian pressure on Pakistan during Indo-Pakistani war in 1965; confrontation with United States over Vietnam and large deployment to North Vietnam in 1964-70; two border skirmishes with the Soviet Union in 1969; seizure of western Paracel Islands (Crescent Group) from South Vietnam in 1974; naval deployment to Japanese-held Senkaku islands during treaty negotiations with Japan in 1978; one month war with Vietnam in 1979; border confrontation and sporadic skirmishes with India in 1962-88; border confrontation and sporadic skirmishes with Vietnam in 1979-88; seizure of Johnson Reef in the Spratly Islands (from Vietnam) in 1988; naval and missile exercises in the Taiwan Strait in 1995-96;¹¹⁷ missile exercise in the Taiwan Strait in 2000.

The most recent instance of China's use of force occurred in 2001. Beijing sent a J-8 fighter to intercept a U.S. Navy EP-3 surveillance plane that was conducting a routine patrol in international airspace off the southeastern coast of China. The Chinese pilot clipped the U.S. EP-3, forcing it to make an emergency landing on the southern Chinese island of Hainan, where its crew was held for 11 days. The Chinese pilot's body was never recovered. While the collision was unintentional, the fighter's presence was a well-planned military action by Beijing intended to enforce maritime claims and demonstrate China's willingness to use force.

Many experts support the idea that a strong China is bound to turn expansionistic, or that perhaps it is already practicing "latent expansionism."¹¹⁸ While Asian and western countries interpret PRC's policies as being expansionistic, Beijing defines expansionism as defending Chinese territorial integrity and sovereignty. China has tended to use force when its leaders wanted to take a strong stand to emphasize sovereignty. In this regard, the Chinese fourth generation leaders are not different from their predecessors. Although they stress the necessity to resume active dialogue with Taiwan, their position remains the same--to regain sovereignty over Taiwan in the near or longer term. Russian analysts on China believe that with power transition there will be a change in Beijing's policy toward reunification. The Chinese new leaders might adopt a

¹¹⁷ John W. Garver, "Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China" p. 251

¹¹⁸ Alexander Lukin, "Russia's Image of China and Russian-Chinese Relations" p. 9

tougher stance and use coercive methods against Taiwan.¹¹⁹ Beijing considers unification is possible due to the following three factors:

- Successful integration of Hong Kong and Macao into Mainland China;
- Expansion of economic links; and
- Existence of three informal ties between Mainland China and Taiwan.

Though the Sino-Russian Treaty signed in 2001 claims that “the military and military-technical cooperation between the two countries...is not directed against third countries,” Taiwan is not considered a third country. China considers Taiwan as a rogue province that must eventually be brought back into the PRC. Hence, the non-aggression statement of the treaty does not apply to Taiwan. Russia supports China’s reunification efforts, reiterates its stance on the Taiwan issue as already announced in previously published documents, and does not accept the rhetoric that cross-Straits relations are equal to a state-to-state relationship. The Chinese are satisfied with the Russian stand.¹²⁰

As China practices expansionism, Russia greatly aids this process by helping upgrade Chinese military capabilities. Moscow clearly knows that the systems it sells China, whether conventional or strategic, are mainly intended to deter U.S. forces. China currently sees the United States as the biggest obstacle in establishing Chinese sovereignty over territories it claims and is prepared to use its military capabilities against the United States in the event Washington comes to the aid of Taiwan. Therefore, Chinese arms purchases are geared towards responding to a Taiwan scenario. For instance, China’s purchases of Russian fourth and fifth generation tactical aircraft are designed to gain air dominance; purchases of attack submarines, naval surface combatants, and anti-ship missiles all give China a capability to counter U.S. aircraft carriers and AEGIS-equipped escort vessels; purchases of S-300, Tor, and Tunguska air defense missile systems create a multi-layered air defense system designed to neutralize U.S. airpower; joint Sino-Russian space warfare projects are focused on developing anti-satellite capabilities that will take out American battle systems.

¹¹⁹ Varvara Kolobova, “Kommunizm s rinochnim litsom ” *Izvestiya*, 03.19. 03

¹²⁰ Alexander V. Nemets and John L. Scherer, “Sino-Russian Military Relations” p. 79

Russia’s military assistance may encourage China to take a hard stance on another territorial issue. China has extensive territorial claims and disputes to settle with its neighbors. One of the areas where China might use force in the future is the South China Sea. Multiple countries claim the Spratly (Nansha) and Paracel (Xisha) islands, making this area the most probable flash point.¹²¹ According to China’s 1992 “Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone,” the disputed islands and the sea are within the limits of China’s maritime borders and China believes it has a right to exercise control over them.

During the past 25 years, China used force to take possession of disputed islands on three occasions:

- The Crescent group in the Paracel (Xisha) Islands in 1974 from South Vietnam;
- Johnson Reef in the Spratly (Nansha) Islands in 1988 from Vietnam; and
- Mischief Reef in 1995 from the Philippines.¹²²

The key factor in this dispute is that China remains militarily stronger than the other claimants. A gap between China’s military capabilities and those of its neighbors is illustrated in the following table:

	PRC	Taiwan	Vietnam	Malaysia	Philippines	Brunei
Armed Forces	2,270,000	370,000	484,000	100,000	106,000	7,000
Reserve Forces	600,000	1,657,500	4,000,000	41,600	131,000	700
Standing army	1,600,000	240,000	412,000	80,000	66,000	4,900
Total tanks	8,200	1,700	1,935	ukn	ukn	20
Artillery pieces	17,600	1,300	3,000	500	280	24
Combat aircraf	1,900	479	189	95	49	-
Major naval combatants	63	32	6	4	1	-
Submarines	69	4	2	-	-	-
Naval infantry	10,000	30,000	27,000	-	7,500	-

¹²¹ Mel Gurtov and Byong-Moo Hwang “China’s Security: The new roles of the military” p. 259

¹²² Mark Burles, “Patterns in China’s Use of Force” p. 15

(Source: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, “*The Military Balance 2002-2003*”)

Many analysts observed that in recent years Beijing has undertaken more cooperative approach to settle the issue of disputed islands. However, there are three factors that push China to use force:

1. *Historical Legacy.* China claims that the islands were possessed and administered by the Song Dynasty that reigned in China during 960-1279 A.D.¹²³ This is not a solid argument because the same historical arguments have been raised by other claimant nations. However, Beijing realizes the fact that if China cannot reclaim territory based on historical reasons, then its claim to other disputed areas will be seriously weakened. Moreover, if China fails to reclaim the islands, there is a danger of increased separatist activity. The intensity of separatist activity in Tibet, the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region and Inner Mongolia will definitely increase and Taiwan will be “lost” forever.
2. *Economic Considerations.* The several hundred small islands in the South China Sea might seem not worthy of a political confrontation, or even a military conflict. Nevertheless, the area adjacent to the islands is rich in marine life and is believed to be rich in mineral resources as well. The claimant nations widely speculate that the area contains vast resources of undersea minerals, oil, and natural gas. Therefore, Chinese aspirations to dominate this area are understandable. China wants to secure its resources and meet future economic needs.
3. *China’s International Image.* The issue of the disputed islands in the South China Sea is directly connected to China’s image as a major player in international politics and its status as a regional power. Failure to possess these islands will hurt its image and downgrade its status. China is determined to avoid any loss of status.

¹²³ Denny Roy, “China’s Foreign Relations” p. 185

Establishing a threatening naval presence and intermittent displays of naval force in the South China Sea indicate that Beijing sees the PLA as a blunt and effective instrument to influence other countries and is likely to continue this behaviour.¹²⁴ All these factors suggest that China will not apply diplomacy with respect to other neighbors, particularly those with which China has conflicts over territorial claims. Instead, China will likely use force in the settlement of the disputed islands in the South China Sea. One might argue against this assumption by raising the issue of increasing economic interdependence and the possible involvement of major powers. However, the facts today prove that 1) relations and economic ties between China and claimant countries have not developed to a level capable of preventing an armed conflict; and 2) despite the defense relationships between some claimant countries and major powers such as the United States or United Kingdom, these major powers are unlikely to become involved in the settlement. The disputed islands in the South China Sea do not affect U.S. or British national interests of the U.S., or the U.K. In addition, neither country wants to sever its relations with China.

¹²⁴ Ibid p. 51

VII. TRENDS IN FOREIGN POLICY OF RUSSIA AND CHINA

Both Russia and China have major power ambitions. While Russia seeks to regain a lost position, China is focused on achieving a higher degree of influence. Russia has an interest in preventing any individual nation from becoming the dominant military-political force, especially in the Asia-Pacific. Therefore, by promoting a multi-polar international system, Russia ensures itself a place in the international system equal to its potential. Thus, Sino-Russian relations remain important for Russia, especially since China is Russia's largest Asian neighbor. Friendly relations with China guarantee Russia stable borders in the East and simultaneously a reliable ally in its relations with the West, just as friendly relations with Russia give China similar benefits. Yeltsin's, and later Putin's, government took a positive approach to China by pursuing relations that gave concrete benefits to Russia—strategic stability on the Russian-Chinese border, economic benefits, promotion of Russian and Chinese small businesses¹²⁵ and infrastructure development in Asia.

China also wants to become a major power in Asia. It is conducting across the board reforms and modernization of its economy, technological base, and military. China wishes and needs good relations with the United States, but also believes that these relations must respect and accommodate the growth of Chinese power and regional ambitions. As one of the largest countries in the world, China plays an important role in international politics and in shaping security environment in the Asia Pacific region. China wants other nations to believe that Beijing is pursuing a policy of peace, security and prosperity, both in the region and worldwide. Jiang Zemin's Report to the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in November 2002 proclaims that China's foreign policy is intended to promote peace, stability and prosperity. The policy can be divided into three categories:

Content of China's foreign policy in general:

“Peace and development remains the theme of our era. It is the common aspiration of all peoples to preserve peace and promote development.... The purpose of

¹²⁵ Alexei D. Voskressenski, “Russian-Chinese Partnership in a ‘New’ Global Context” p. 9

China's foreign policy is to maintain world peace and promote common development. We are willing to work with people of all nations to advance the lofty cause of world peace and development."

Policy toward developed countries:

"We will continue to improve and develop our relationship with the developed countries proceeding from the fundamental interests of the peoples of all countries. We will broaden the convergent points of common interests and properly settle differences on the basis of the 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.'"

Policy toward neighboring countries:

"We will continue to strengthen our friendship with our neighbors and consistently build good neighborly relationships and partnerships with them. We will strengthen regional cooperation and bring our exchanges and cooperation with our surrounding countries to a new height."

Policy toward developing countries:

"We will continue to enhance our solidarity and cooperation with third world countries, increase mutual understanding and trust, and strengthen mutual help and support."

According to Chinese and U.S. officials and analysts, China is exhibiting a peaceful attitude and cooperative approach to settle major international issues. It has embraced a more engaged foreign policy and has sought to remove long-standing barriers in relations with the United States and Western countries. For instance, in the recent past China has taken several measures to improve relations:

- It established additional rules to control the export of missile technology and dual-use biological and chemical agents;
- It tightened military export regulations;
- It sought political contact through Jiang Zemin's visit to the U.S.; and
- It moderated its tone and gestures toward Taiwan.

*Moreover, China has indicated its willingness to support a U.N. resolution on weapons inspections in Iraq, possibly one that authorizes use of force.*¹²⁶

All these suggest that China indeed changed its foreign policy and the way it deals with the world. China pursues a policy of world peace and development, and poses no threat to any nation. China's intentions are clear and its actions are within the framework of China's constitution and international laws. However, despite Beijing's pledges of pursuing peace and development the following factors are considered as alarming:

- Chinese strategic ambitions lack transparency;
- China's extensive territorial claims;
- Growing nationalism;
- Hostility towards democracy;
- Uncertainty about the future of the Chinese leadership;
- Modernization of the People's Liberation Army;
- Continued violations of human rights;
- China's arms trade with rogue nations;
- Historical use of force to resolve territorial disputes.

While reading Beijing's statements of peace and stability and comparing them to China's history of international relations, various China analysts can identify major inconsistencies between Beijing's stated foreign policy and its actual behavior. China suspects that Washington is attempting to contain Chinese power; therefore, China wishes to expand its options to respond to U.S. pressure.¹²⁷

China hopes to constrain the exercise of U.S. military power by political and diplomatic means in the near to mid-term. Beijing views U.S. involvement in Taiwan with suspicion. China also seeks to acquire capabilities over the longer run that would ultimately raise the perceived military costs and risks to U.S. forces deployed in the vicinity of China.¹²⁸ Chinese military planners believe that the PLA can develop and execute options

¹²⁶ John Pomfret, "Analysts Say China's Moves Show New Confidence," Washington Post Oct 24, 2002 p. 23

¹²⁷ Sherman Garnett, "Challenges of the Sino-Russian Strategic Partnership" TWQ Aut.2001 p. 46-47

¹²⁸ Jonathan D.Pollack, "Chinese security in the Post-11 September world: Implications for Asia and the Pacific" APR, Vol.9, No.2, 2002 p. 9

for decisive action that would compel Taiwan to enter into direct negotiations over the island's future. The "Taiwan scenario" therefore, shapes China's current acquisitions and future plans; it is the PLA's closest approximation of a threat driven scenario. Unless China and Taiwan achieve explicit political understandings that obviate the need for accelerated defense programs, an ever more concentrated buildup of military power on both sides of the Taiwan Strait seems all but inevitable.¹²⁹

Chinese foreign policy suggests that the PRC aspires to become a regional and global power and to ensure conditions where China's goals will be decisive in the future. At present, Chinese foreign policy has following elements:

- Determining its future national priorities;
- Seeking options for constraining the exercise of U.S. power;
- Managing long-term relations with Japan and India; and
- Pursuing possibilities for regional security cooperation.¹³⁰

In addition, China is deliberately pursuing a policy to ensure external conditions for helping its economic transformation, modernizing its armed forces, and maintaining stable supplies of badly-needed oil. Chinese foreign policy suggests that China aspires to accumulate enough power and wealth to become a first tier state.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Ibid p. 11

¹³⁰ Ibid p. 8

¹³¹ Alexei D. Voskressenski, "Russian-Chinese Partnership in a 'New' Global Context" APSR p. 9

CONCLUSION

Despite the success of high-level interactions in the past ten years, Russia and China are not yet at ease with each other. Their interactions are far from being a relationship of real allies in terms of depth and openness. Each country's motives are pragmatic and sometimes selfish, and there is no real cordiality or frankness in their relations. Both are cautious and even suspicious of each other's intentions and motives. One indicator of this lack of trust is Russia's carefully managed weapons sales to India and China, with the former qualitatively ahead of the latter in almost every category of weapons. Moreover, Russia does not permit the export of its most advanced weapons systems and technologies. Meanwhile China is concerned about the risk of over-dependence on Russian military technology, arms and weapons systems, and spare parts.

From the Russian perspective, the importance of developing relations with China is determined by several considerations: concerns about the international situation, the threat of Islamic separatist movements, the urgent need to develop natural resources for economic development, and the necessity to secure a peaceful environment along common borders. Moscow currently needs Western financing and technology, but it wants a free-hand in handling internal unrest. Its economic future is in the largely underdeveloped arctic north and the eastern territories. The full potential of the economic lifeline offered by the reserves of natural resources would be better, if more slowly, exploited in cooperation with China say many Moscow analysts.¹³²

China, on the other hand, is essentially a growing power, seeking to gather its economic and military capabilities to dominate the region and to compete with the United States on a global stage. Tradition, history and culture lead Beijing's leaders to assume that China is destined to be a great power and China will play a leading world role in the future. They have faith in China's capacity to achieve this goal. Nationalism motivates the Chinese leaders to build a strong nation state, to strive for total independence, and to oppose any compromise of China's sovereignty. Nationalism also motivates the leaders to try to minimize Western influence within China, and to struggle against all forms of

¹³² Richard Bennett, "China and Russia-natural partners?" AFI Research Intelligence Briefing p. 1

imperialism, colonialism, and hegemonism, all major threats to China's security. In order to do so, China needs to cooperate with Russia in all possible spheres. Beijing is attempting to develop the nation's 'comprehensive national power' that would enable it to preserve national unity, stability and sovereignty and manage its relations with major foreign powers. Partnership with Russia provides political, military-technical, economic and technological support to China. The formation of a real multi-polar global system is extraordinarily important for China. Without the active role of Russia, it is barely possible for China to progress to the status of a first tier state.¹³³ In addition, China needs continued access to energy resources in Russia and Central Asia, as well as to Russia's advanced military technologies. China is determined to gain its territorial objectives in Taiwan and the South China Sea, while retaining its position in Tibet and increasing its influence over Mongolia and the states of Central Asia. China seeks to maintain military superiority over India and Japan, in part through its ties with Pakistan and both Koreas, and in part by reducing the U.S. presence in the region.¹³⁴

Therefore, the Sino-Russian strategic partnership is based on mutual needs and is no more than a marriage of convenience. Despite criticism and calls for multi-polarity, currently Russia and China are doing their best to maintain good relations with the United States. Relations with the United States are crucial for them, because both Russia and China need Western investment, technology and trade for development. Although the two nations' leaders proclaim that relations between the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China are good, the strategic partnership will not develop into a political-military alliance and the possibility of parting ways is quite real.

There are two important consequences of the partnership. First, it increases China's political and economic power, which eventually will lead to conflicts of interest with major powers in the region—the United States and Japan. As China rises and becomes more powerful, it will attempt to assume a new identity and play a wider role in regional and global security. Growing power could change China's independent and

¹³³ Alexei D.Voskressenski, "Russian-Chinese Partnership in a 'New' Global Context" APSR p. 10

¹³⁴ Robert H.Donaldson and John A.Donaldson, "The Arms Trade in Russian-Chinese Relations" p. 11

peaceful co-existence posture and lead to adoption of coercive strategies against China's neighboring countries to settle territorial disputes and against major powers to advance national interest.

The second negative consequence is the Russian contribution to Chinese military modernization. China's military modernization is aimed at preparing for a potential conflict in the Taiwan Strait. Beijing is pursuing the ability to force Taiwan to negotiate on Beijing's terms regarding unification with the mainland. It also seeks to deter, deny, or complicate the ability of foreign forces to intervene on Taiwan's behalf. By selling China arms, Russia risks upsetting the delicate military balance in Asia and even being drawn into China's territorial disputes with Taiwan, Vietnam, Japan and ultimately the United States. As one Western specialist summarized, "Russia's short-term advantages from arms sales and defense cooperation may well not be compatible with long-term Asian stability and Russia's role there."¹³⁵

Ultimately, the Sino-Russian partnership is an enduring reality that the international community must acknowledge. The international community should acknowledge the benefits that grow out of a relaxation of tension between Asia's two largest land powers. It should welcome and support increased trade and economic cooperation between Russia and China. Yet the international community should pay attention to Sino-Russian arms trade, cooperation in the fields of military, nuclear energy and space technology, and demographic shifts on both sides of the Russian-Chinese border. It should not make efforts to exclude them or cast doubt on their interests in any area of Asia. It should develop a new sub-regional system of security in which Russia, China and other countries would be equal partners. The international community wants to see Russia and China as stable, prosperous and friendly nations integrated globally.

¹³⁵ Ibid

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