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**1994 CJCS STRATEGY ESSAY WRITING  
COMPETITION ENTRY**

**THE 21ST CENTURY U.S.-CHINESE RELATIONSHIP:  
PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION ... OR ... CONFLICT AND COMPETITION**

by

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## INTRODUCTION

The transition from the Cold War's familiar, well-understood containment strategy to a new international security environment produces formidable challenges. Secretary of Defense Perry identifies national security interests that include prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, maintaining regional stability, and avoiding the re-establishment of an antagonistic global rivalry with Russia. (31:1) Former Ambassador Vernon Walters highlights three great challenges the United States faces in the future, two of which are very similar to Secretary Perry's: to prevent proliferation and prevent Russia from returning to a revisionist Soviet Union. Of significant importance, however, is Ambassador Walters' third challenge: prevent China from becoming the "Soviet Union" of the next century. (32:1)

Given the thousands of nuclear weapons still possessed by Russia, President Clinton emphasizes that it is in the United States' national interest to "work with Russia to lower the nuclear threshold, to support the development of Russia as a stable democracy and to help it develop a healthy market economy that can benefit both our peoples." (31:1) As important as a stable Russia is to the international security environment, the United States must not become so "Russo-centric" that it loses perspective on other great nations -- such as China.

President Clinton's goals of lowering the nuclear threshold and developing a stable democracy and healthy market economy are as important for China as they are for Russia. China is a key actor with respect to the United States and the global economic, political, and security environment -- and will become even more important in the future. China currently has the fastest growing economy in the world. (34:273) China's population, already the largest in the world, is growing at the rate of more than one million per month, making it a market with enormous potential. (33:5,10) The U.S. trans-Pacific trade in 1992 was \$344 billion, 50 percent more than the \$228 billion in trans-Atlantic trade. (34:274) The United States' \$18 billion trade deficit with China, second only to Japan, is our fastest growing trade deficit. (36:218) China has more nuclear weapons than the British and the French combined, most likely third in the world following only the United States and the weapons remaining from the former Soviet Union. (35:54) Additionally, recent Senate testimony revealed that China is developing intercontinental

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ballistic missiles with a range of almost 7500 miles that could be deployed in the next decade. (42:12) Geographical proximity to Russia, Japan and the Korean peninsula, Southeast and South Asia, as well as the Middle East places China in position of considerable influence toward many regions containing vital U.S. national security interests. Finally, as a member of the United Nations' Security Council, China plays a key role in authorizing and implementing United Nations' resolutions in a variety of regional conflicts around the world.

Our ability to develop a cooperative relationship with China will support vital U. S. national security interests -- specifically, preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and maintaining regional stability -- and may be the linchpin in preventing a U.S.-Chinese "antagonistic global rivalry" that could become the 21st century Cold War. An analysis of the regional impact of China's arms and technology transfers to the Middle East provides valuable insight into the development of a security framework for the future. This paper briefly describes the history of Chinese arms and technology sales in the Middle East, discusses the impact of these sales on the region as well as the effect on U.S. national interests, describes the effectiveness of international arms control programs and initiatives, and finally, assesses the implications for the future in terms of U.S. policy options toward China.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Middle East has been the scene of two major wars and a large number of small conflicts in the past decade -- wars and conflicts fueled through tremendous arms buildups by nations in the region. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) 1993 Yearbook argues that the Middle East was the "most important single international market for conventional weapons" during most of the 1980s, and despite recent declines, may once again rise to the top in 1993. (18:418) Although we have been spared the disaster of nuclear conflict in the region, SIPRI's 1993 Yearbook also stated that "Nowhere are the dangers or the incentives associated with nuclear weapon proliferation as great as they are in the Middle East." (18:249) While a number of states, including the United States and Russia, have sold vast quantities of arms in the Middle East, the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) also has played a major role in the Middle East arms race.

## CHINESE ARMS SALES, 1949 - 1992

**Policy.** The Peoples Republic of China (PRC) has provided arms to other countries for over 40 years in a process that can be broken down into two distinct phases. The first phase lasted from 1949 to 1977, a period during which China, under the tutelage of Mao Zedong, provided arms to a relatively small number of countries, such as Pakistan, North Korea, and the African nations of Congo, Zaire, and the Sudan. As might be expected, Mao used these arms transfers as a clearly-defined political tool. In this context, he provided arms to "revolutionary regimes and national liberation fronts, such as North Vietnam and the Khmer Rouge" and to the so-called "independent" communist states, including Albania and North Korea. For a complex array of reasons, Mao generally did not support the concept of selling arms for profit, instead preferring to sell them for a very low cost or to give them away as foreign aid. (9:3)

The second phase runs from 1977 until the present, initiated under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping and his efforts to modernize the PRC. During this period, symbolic of the entire worldwide arms trade, the PRC has greatly increased the number of countries to which it sells arms, the quantity and quality of arms transferred, and the number of different weapons systems offered for sale. (7:383) China's strategic objectives for selling arms remained relatively stable throughout this second phase. China's highest priorities are to get the hard currency and access to foreign technology that are necessary for modernizing the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). The PRC also uses arms transfers, to a lesser degree, to gain political influence and strategic advantage in various parts of the world. (9:5)

The PRC's declaratory policy regarding criteria or restrictions on potential use of Chinese arms transfers does not appear to match its actual policy. China's Foreign Ministry described their current arms transfer policy in a 1988 published statement called "Three Principles of Arms Transfers," stating that arms transfers are to "strengthen legitimate self-defense capabilities; safeguard and promote peace, security, and stability; and not to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries." (8:115) Despite this stated policy, observers have difficulty relating PRC arms transfers to these criteria, especially to the principle of promoting peace, security, and stability. In part this is due to the fact that, although the Foreign Ministry has some influence on arms transfer

decisions, the PRC's arms transfers are primarily controlled by agencies under the clear direction of the PLA. The PLA's primary focus is getting hard currency profit for internal modernization -- not "influence seeking foreign policy considerations." (8:1106) In reference to China's apolitical policy, one author described the PRC as "supplying arms virtually without consideration of political or security implications." (7:379)

**Quantity.** The PRC provided significant numbers of arms to the developing world. The PRC was the fifth largest supplier to the developing world for each of the three decades from 1951 through 1979 -- following the US, USSR, France, and the UK, respectively. (9:5) From 1980 to 1990, the PRC moved past the UK to become the fourth largest supplier for that period. (7:379) The PRC's sales peaked in 1991 as they were third behind only the US and the USSR/Russia for the period of 1988-1992. (18:444) In terms of developing nation exporters, the PRC was first without a close competitor. (9:v) During the period 1978-1988, their sales of more than \$14.5 billion were three times larger than the nearest competitor and more than the sales of the next three developing nations combined. (5:11)

The Middle East -- vital to the United States and its allies as a source of oil and already a relatively unstable region -- received a disproportionately large share of these arms. Since 1980 the PRC sent 60 percent of its arms transfers to Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq, with relatively smaller quantities to Egypt, Oman, Yemen, and Syria. (7:383,387) The PRC earned a tremendous amount of money from the nearly decade-long Iran-Iraq war, selling arms to both sides during the entire period of the war. Nations in the arms sales business naturally focus on the Middle East, because the region is one of the few in the world with the money (from oil) to pay for available weapons. (30:57)

**Characteristics of Chinese Arms.** The PRC's arms exports have both positive and negative characteristics for arms purchasers. First, on the negative side, Chinese quality has been questionable, in that China often placed a higher priority on the quantity of weapons produced rather than on the quality. (9:14) More importantly their technology generally remains several generations behind that of either Soviet or U.S. design. There are, however, several significant exceptions: Chinese F-7M aircraft are considered better than most Mig-21s found in the Third

World, and their surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs) and anti-ship missiles (AShMs) are considered "reasonably modern." (9:16)

Despite these drawbacks, Chinese arms have a number of characteristics that make them particularly advantageous to buyers in the developing nations. (8:1106) These weapons are very affordable, selling for only half as much as Western models and typically outperforming the Soviet originals from which they were generally reverse-engineered. The weapons are relatively simple, easy to operate and maintain, as well as reliable and rugged. (9:15) These weapons are often compatible with Soviet-made weapons, which strengthens the incentive to purchase Chinese arms for those nations that already possess Soviet weapons.

One of the most important advantages of Chinese arms is availability. (8:1106) The PRC typically sells these arms with "no political strings attached," in contrast with the restrictive "use criteria" often established when dealing with the superpowers or developed nations. The PRC also becomes an alternate arms source for nations that do not want to become overly dependent on one particular supplier. Finally, and as a key point of contention with the United States, the PRC has been the sole source for some weapons and technology that are not available anywhere else. Additionally, China has sold these weapons and technology (e.g., nuclear reactors and missiles) to North Korea and Iran, nations that others refuse to do business with. (9:17, 8:1106)

### **IMPACT ON THE MIDDLE EAST**

A thesis of this paper is that China, in aggressively seeking funds for the PLA's expensive military modernization program, has as a by-product contributed to regional instability in the Middle East. As one might expect, however, there are differing opinions about the impact of Chinese arms sales to the Middle East. For example, one analyst concluded that the Chinese impact was relatively insignificant compared to Soviet and Western arms sales:

The transfer of Chinese weaponry to Africa, Asia, or the Middle East generally has not led to any substantial military destabilization of these regions -- or at least they have not been as serious a cause as the sale of Soviet, Western, or other Third World arms. For the most part, the kinds of other Third World forces these weapons would conceivably go up against ... are usually superior in firepower and offensive capacity, sometimes vastly so. Chinese equipment in Iran's armed forces was no match for the Soviet or French arms in Iraq's army, for example. (9:vi)

**But there is also a contrary view: that the Iran-Iraq War lasted as long as it did at least in part because of the significant amount of weapons that the PRC sold to both sides -- China sold a total of \$8 billion in arms to Iran and Iraq from 1983 to 1990. (7:388,389) As a consequence, the availability of arms increased the difficulty of mediating an end to the war and led to more deaths by prolonging the war.**

**On the positive side, however, some analysts argue that the totality of arms sales to the Middle East can be viewed as establishing and maintaining a relative regional balance of power. For example, U.S. arms sales to Israel have been designed to create a balance of power between Israel and its Arab neighbors. (29:1454) In terms of the entire region, a "rough political-military balance of power" existed for the past two decades between Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, preventing any one of the three from emerging as the regional superpower. (54:118)**

**While these views each have merit, to understand the issue fully it is necessary to consider the impact from a broader perspective and determine why nations in the Middle East are buying these weapons systems. In addition to the obvious reasons of self defense and survival, virtually all of these Middle Eastern countries are motivated by their competitive desire for regional leadership, political identity, and a powerful image. (23:18) Beyond conventional capability, nations generally view nuclear capability in particular as providing the ultimate deterrent, regional supremacy, and a cheaper alternative than conventional arms buildups. (41:21) Indian Army Chief of Staff General K. Sundarji described another incentive: "The lesson of Desert Storm is don't mess with the United States without nuclear weapons." (41:142) The existence of Iranian and Iraqi nuclear programs demonstrate that these incentives can overcome such disincentives as the risk of preemptive attacks on nuclear facilities, decreased regional stability, high development cost, and a variety of potential international economic and political sanctions. (41:27)**

**In this strategic context, at least three specific aspects of Chinese arms sales to the Middle East have been generally destabilizing. First, China has contributed to the presence of large numbers of surface-to-surface missiles in a number of Middle Eastern nations. Israel, Syria, Egypt, Iran, Libya, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia have all acquired significant missile capabilities, some of which exceed the technical sophistication of those possessed by the Iraqis during the Gulf**



War. (4:17) Although numbers alone may not be destabilizing, the added potential these missiles have for delivering nuclear, chemical, or biological warheads diminishes stability.

Second, China has contributed to the proliferation of ballistic missiles to the Middle East. In the late 1980s the PRC completed an agreement with Saudi Arabia for the sale and installation of between 25 and 50 CSS-2 intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBMs). Installed by 1988, these missiles have the longest range of any missile exported to the Third World, as they can reach virtually any target in the Middle East. Although both the Saudis and the Chinese guaranteed that these missiles had only conventional warheads, the Chinese have demonstrated that these missiles could be configured to carry nuclear warheads. (8:1104) Other Middle Eastern countries, such as Israel, Iran, and Iraq, were clearly concerned by the long-range destructive capability represented by these missiles. Although Saudi Arabia obviously took this action in support of their own national interests, the United States felt a sense of betrayal by the Saudi actions, in that a country considered a close friend and close ally would clandestinely purchase missiles with such a potentially destabilizing effect on the region in terms of Arab-Israeli as well as Arab-Arab conflicts. (13:79) Moreover, there are persistent rumors that China agreed to sell the mobile M-9 short range ballistic missile (SRBM) to Syria, and is considering the possibility of selling the longer range M-11 to Syria. (8:1104) Although the United States initially forced China to stop the M-9 sale to Syria in 1988, the missile transfer may have occurred later anyway, largely because it was simply beyond U.S. ability to stop the transfer process.

Finally, the PRC was involved in the transfer of sensitive technology to Iran, including nuclear and missile production capability. (4:7) The Chinese are helping the Iranians build a nuclear research reactor, technology that could clearly support a nuclear weapons program. There is little question that Iran actively seeks to gain nuclear weapon capability. Additionally, both China and North Korea provided technical and industrial assistance to enable the Iranians to produce their own medium range missiles. (4:7) The transfer of arms is serious enough, but the risks are magnified when the transfer of such advanced technological and production capabilities provides nations their own internal capacity to produce weapons of mass destruction.

## **IMPACT ON U.S. INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

The United States has significant national security interests and objectives in the Middle East. This view was articulated in the 1993 National Security Strategy, which states that the US seeks the broad objective of "Global and regional stability which encourages peaceful change and progress." (20:3) In terms of the Middle East, this document underlines the objectives of achieving "bilateral and multilateral negotiations aimed at resolving conflicts, fostering arms control and regional stability, and promoting economic and technical cooperation." (20:8) Former Secretary of Defense Les Aspin further emphasized these concerns in the 1993 Bottom Up Review, which identified regional conflicts and the proliferation of nuclear weapons/weapons of mass destruction (WMD) as two of the four "New Dangers." (21:1)

General Joseph P. Hoar, Commander-in-Chief of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM), presented the 1993 CENTCOM Posture Statement to the Congress last year and asserted that "The area's vast oil reserves, and its strategic location and critical waterways, make regional stability vital to the U.S. and its allies." (22:3) CENTCOM's regional objectives are "to strengthen stability through regional defense cooperation, enhance self-defense capability of friendly countries, and promote regional military balance . . . to deter or defeat direct threats to the U.S. and our friends and allies by protecting access to Middle East oil, preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, reducing the threat of terrorism, and stemming the flow of illegal drugs." (22:3) CENTCOM identifies the primary challenge to Middle East stability as "the resurgence of military power in Iraq and Iran" and states that "Iran may in the long-term become the greatest single threat to peace and stability in the Central Region" of CENTCOM's area of responsibility. (22:viii,23)

Chinese arms sales and technology transfers to the Middle East have an impact on U.S. interests. This impact is demonstrated in three ways. First, in the wake of the Gulf War, Middle Eastern countries seek to expand their military capabilities -- a strong military capability is an obvious requirement for regional leadership. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is clearly looking to the West for arms sales and security guarantees. (1:14) If the U.S. attempts to limit

our arms sales in the region, there are a number of nations, including China, that are willing to satisfy these military orders. (3:9, 8:1116) Chinese arms sales and technology transfer to Iran and Iraq are well documented. As noted earlier, Iran's quest for nuclear capability is in part based on the perception that their regional status is significantly elevated through nuclear ownership.

Secondly, the United States is extremely concerned with unauthorized transfer of technology. Demonstrating that it rarely chooses sides, the PRC maintains an almost two-decade old technical cooperation relationship with Israel -- while continuing to sell arms to the Arab states. (8:1116) As a result of this relationship, the State Department investigated reports that the Israelis transferred sensitive Patriot missile technology to the PRC. Although unable to verify specific reports about the sale of Patriot missile technology, the State Department concluded that Israel "systematically made unauthorized transfers to China." (8:1117) The close relationship between Israel and the United States was strained as a result of this cooperative relationship, in that Israel provides China "major high technology" and a "back door" to advanced American technology. (8:1116)

Finally, the United States remains concerned over the potential impact of Islamic extremism in many Arab countries in the Middle East. (11:13) U.S. concern is magnified in light of the potential proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to "second level" nations such as Iran and North Korea -- nations dependent on Chinese technical assistance. These nations may, in turn, be willing to provide weapons of mass destruction capability to "third level" Islamic extremist factions or other non-state actors whose goals are inimical to vital U.S. interests in the Middle East and elsewhere. (41:108)

### **ARMS CONTROL PROGRAMS**

Many of the challenges to the U.S. national security objective of promoting regional stability in the Middle East are a direct result of arms transfers, including those made by the United States and the PRC. One means for countering the arms and technology transfers and subsequent arms races is through arms control programs.

There has been a tremendous amount of effort in the international community in the arms control arena. As the International Institute for Strategic Studies' Strategic Survey for 1992-1993 argues:

In the wake of the Cold War, arms control negotiations have flourished. Agreements on nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons have been reached in rapid succession, and new issues have crowded the arms control agenda. At the same time that reaching agreements on limiting or eliminating certain types of weapons has become much easier, however, their implementation has become far more difficult. (17:211) (emphasis added)

There are powerful motivations to pursue such agreements. Despite the ultimate victory of the U.S.-led coalition forces, the world saw the tragic result of an uncontrolled arms build-up when Iraq invaded and destroyed Kuwait in August of 1990.

On the contrary, however, there are large revenues at stake in arms transfers. The predictable result is that states will talk about arms control, but will not stop selling arms and lose the attendant profits. The United States has taken the lead in many arms control negotiations around the world -- while simultaneously leading the world in arms sales, accounting for about 57 percent of the total value of worldwide arms sales. (14:59, 15:587) U.S. arms industries, facing tough times after expanding to meet requirements of the Reagan military build-up, are aggressively looking for overseas markets and customers. (27:32) While Congress has the authority to stop these arms transfers, it is unlikely that there will be any serious opposition to sales, since that could eventually result in the loss of jobs to their constituents. (2:5,6) There is grim irony in the fact that in their last three combat situations -- Panama, Iraq, and Somalia -- United States soldiers had to fight an enemy force armed in part with U.S. weapons (44:3)

The following sections examine arms control programs that have in the past (or may in the future) affect international arms transfers.

**Conventional Arms Control.** The five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (the United States, Russia, Great Britain, France, and China) are also the five largest suppliers of arms to the rest of the world. These five nations met twice in 1991 to discuss formal guidelines for controlling conventional arms transfers. The second meeting in London in October of 1991 produced an accord in which the five nations "promised to consult with one

another regarding the flow of arms to particular regions and to observe rules of restraint when deciding on major arms export transactions." (1:7) China attended the meetings and signed the agreement; however, China subsequently removed itself from the process -- in response to the poorly timed U.S. announcement of a proposed sale of F-16s to Taiwan. (17:135) China's willingness to negotiate and sign the London accord should be interpreted as a very positive signal, serving as the future foundation for re-energized negotiations between these five nations.

The United Nations sponsored a conventional arms control initiative, which called for voluntary participation in a "Register of Conventional Arms" that included "information on domestic procurement and holdings as well as international transfers." (10:12) This "transparency" initiative passed by an almost unanimous vote, although China, North Korea and Iraq (and five other nations) abstained. (1:3) China's decision not to vote against the initiative may be cause for measured optimism in terms of future United Nations' initiatives.

The complexity of the situation is further demonstrated by several actions of the Bush administration in the aftermath of the Gulf War. On 29 May 1991, the President announced an initiative to control the flow of conventional arms to the Middle East. (19:11) The following day, the Bush administration announced the sale of 10 F-15 fighters to Israel, describing their objective as "halting proliferation ... while supporting the legitimate need of every state to defend itself." (29:1454) This represents an example of competing strategies -- arms sales and arms control -- that conflict with each other while trying to accomplish the same national security objective: regional stability through balance of power. (19:11) Viewed from abroad, however, nations such as China see U.S. policies as inconsistent at best, and at worst, hypocritical, self-serving, and a means of restricting economic competition. (24:10) As described above, U.S. actions at times may provide some rationale for China's hesitancy to enter arms control agreements.

**Nuclear Arms Control.** The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is a primary vehicle for worldwide nuclear arms control. China finally signed the NPT in March of 1992 after many years of refusing to do so. (16:122, 8:1116) Although Iran signed the NPT in 1970, much evidence indicates it is moving on a course toward a nuclear capability, supported by the PRC's assistance with the nuclear research reactor. (18:251) Of even greater concern are recent reports

that Iran was actively seeking to smuggle and/or purchase nuclear weapons from states like Kazakhstan that used to be part of the USSR. (4:6, 23:17) These examples demonstrate that membership in the NPT has not been effective in preventing some nations from either seeking nuclear status or providing nuclear technology to other nations.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is responsible for monitoring and verifying the implementation of established safeguards to ensure that critical nuclear materials are used only for peaceful purposes and are not diverted into programs that would violate agreements such as the NPT. The IAEA's credibility was "severely shaken" as a result of post-Gulf War findings that Iraq developed a secret nuclear program while in full compliance with IAEA safeguard inspection criteria. (18:240) Further damage occurred in 1992 when an IAEA inspection team published their conclusion (despite strong evidence to the contrary) that based on IAEA criteria Iran was not developing a secret nuclear weapons program. (41:107) North Korea continues to challenge the IAEA, refusing to allow required inspections of its nuclear facilities and announcing in March of 1993 that it would withdraw from the NPT. (18:245) Thus far, even direct diplomatic intervention by the United States has been unsuccessful in convincing North Korea to allow comprehensive inspections, demonstrating the difficulty of enforcing these nuclear safeguards with an uncooperative nation. (43:29)

**Missile Controls.** The primary tool for missile technology controls and the model for technology controls is the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). This 1987 multilateral agreement is designed to prevent the unauthorized release of ballistic missile technology and thereby prevent the use of ballistic missiles for the delivery of nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) weapons. (1:3) China is not a signatory of the MTCR; however, after diplomatic pressure from the United States, they pledged in February of 1992 to abide by the MTCR guidelines. (8:1101) In a recent development, the United States charged that the PRC violated this pledge in selling M-11 missile components to Pakistan. (Over the past 25 years, the PRC "has become Pakistan's most reliable and extensive supplier of military hardware." (7:386)) Despite PRC protests to the contrary, President Clinton imposed sanctions that could cost the United States defense industry up to \$1 billion in technology sales to China. (17:135, 26:1) Although such

economic sanctions are not trivial, there is no evidence that China will be deterred from future sales to Pakistan or others. Meanwhile, the U.S. defense industry is denied sales that probably cannot be replaced and the U.S. trade deficit with China grows even larger.

The Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Control (COCOM) agreement expired on 31 Mar 94. For the past 47 years, 17 signatories to this agreement worked to prevent the flow of Western equipment and the sale of "strategic items" to the Communist bloc.

(45:25,46:8) Recognizing that uncontrolled economic competition between nations could result in damaging technology transfers, the United States and other nations have voiced support for a follow-on organization to fill the "control vacuum" left with COCOM's demise. (46:8) The new organization would change its focus to prevent the sale of "dual use" technology (for example, computers, telecommunications, and chemicals) to nations such as Iran, Iraq, and North Korea.

(48:4) At the same time, however, President Clinton "ordered the wholesale lifting of export controls on computer and telecommunication sales to China, Russia, and the former Warsaw Pact states" and directed that a policy of liberal licensing go into effect on 1 April 94. (45:25) For example, a U.S. corporation now plans a \$2 billion gas turbine engine sale to the Chinese.

Although the Chinese state that these gas turbines will be used in jet engines, concern exists that these same engines could be used for long range cruise missiles that could threaten virtually all of Asia. (50:39) As the United States pragmatically seeks to "strike a sensible balance between security and commercial advantage," there is a clear competition between foreign policy goals of nurturing U.S. trade and protecting U.S. security interests. (47:20)

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The previous examples represent a broad sample of arms control programs that apply to conventional, nuclear, and missile technologies. As proliferation increases, difficulties in implementation and enforcement of these agreements decrease their effectiveness. This brief survey supports the conclusion that these agreements and initiatives are "no longer sufficient to prevent proliferation" in our current and future international security environment. (41:135)

Given the insufficiency of these controls, the United States must be concerned with the implications for U.S. interests in the Middle East and around the world.

## **ARMS CONTROL -- IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

Currently depressed oil prices may moderate the funds available for nations to spend on arms transfers; however, the Middle East remains one of the few regions likely to aggressively pursue arms purchases. (30:57) Nations of East and Southeast Asia, supported by rapid economic growth and steady rise in GNP, are applying economic resources to engage in "an accelerating arms race with significant implications for regional and international security." (51:136,138) The close geographical proximity of as many as five nuclear capable nations -- Russia, China, Pakistan, India, and possibly North Korea -- demonstrates the challenge to regional and international stability.

The GCC will continue to depend on the United States to be the ultimate "guarantor" of peace in the Persian Gulf region. (1:14) As that guarantor, U.S. interests are best served by limiting arms races within the region, thereby attempting to prevent the rise of leaders such as Saddam Hussein. In the worst case, arms control programs limit the threats that U.S. and allied forces might have to face from sophisticated weapons, should they become involved in a future Middle East regional contingency. (30:67)

Preventing the sale and proliferation of nuclear weapons located in nations of the former Soviet Union remains a high priority. A related but seemingly intractable problem is the "control" of the human talent (having nuclear and other special technical expertise) that is available because of continuing economic problems in the former Soviet Union. (16:209) As long as Islamic nations like Iran believe that Israel has nuclear weapons, they will also actively seek the human, technological, and production capability necessary for a nuclear weapons program. (4:20, 12:195)

The PRC's technology transfer policies will require continued vigilance by U.S. policy makers. (17:120) The PRC's willingness to provide nuclear reactor technology to Iran, Pakistan, and Algeria is of great concern to the United States. (7:387,25:42) Another trend is for nations to seek the transfer of production technologies that help the nation become more self-sufficient in arms production. (28:21) The PRC is assisting Iran in construction of a 900-km range missile factory and has discussed joint production of major weapons systems such as fighter aircraft and



tanks. (8:1116) The proliferation of production capabilities ultimately will negate most of the desired benefits of arms control programs focused on preventing technology transfer. (30:66)

### **ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVES FOR THE FUTURE**

The end of the Cold War generated significant changes in the international security environment. The challenge for U.S. arms control policy is clear: "future generations will judge current U.S. policy-makers on the basis of their success in fashioning a new framework for global security in a world of nuclear proliferation." (41:77) This new framework must accommodate a spectrum of future conventional, ballistic missile, and nuclear proliferation threats.

**Conventional Weapons.** The primary goal of conventional arms control initiatives is to help gain and maintain regional stability. As the world's largest arms supplier, the United States must take the initiative to build on the foundation of the October 1991 London arms control accord and persuade China to resume negotiations. Although the "Big Five" cannot completely stop the flow of arms to a particular region, they can have a significant impact on regional stability by agreeing to evaluate potential arms sales against mutually-agreed-upon "restraint criteria." Facing a united "Big Five" that refuses to sell arms unless sales satisfy these criteria, regional powers will have greater difficulty purchasing arms that can alter a region's balance of power.

Regional arms control agreements also have potential as confidence building measures, providing incentives for the participants to avoid spending scarce resources on military arms and increase spending to improve domestic economic and social programs.

**Ballistic Missiles.** Ballistic missile non-proliferation efforts are implemented through regimes and agencies such as the MTCR and COCOM, whose focus has been prevention of technology transfer. Of course, COCOM is no longer in existence -- although the United States and others have voiced support for a follow-on organization, none exists today. (45:25) Should a new organization be developed, it will face many severe challenges. These challenges include international disagreement on such issues as how to prioritize and which critical components to restrict, how to ensure all potential suppliers abide by established standards, and what criteria to use in targeting those nations that should be disqualified as buyers. (49:8) In reality, the challenges to this proposed new organization may be too great to overcome. Based on

demonstrated international inability to prevent technology transfer, the time may have come to transfer the focus from technology solutions to political solutions. (35:52) For similar reasons this transfer of focus may also be necessary in the nuclear arena as well.

**Nuclear Weapons.** Nuclear non-proliferation is primarily focused on the NPT and IAEA. The NPT faces the prospect of elimination in 1995 unless it can be renegotiated. At least three difficult issues must be dealt with during future negotiations. First, the foundation of the treaty has been based on a "have and have-not" criteria for possessing nuclear capability that has been overcome by the increased number of nuclear nations and is no longer credible. (35:46,41:165) As a result India and Pakistan, for example, are nuclear nations who are not currently members of the NPT and may not support future membership. (41:78) Second, there is concern that China, although a relatively recent 1992 signatory of the NPT, may join India and Pakistan in opposing the renewal of the NPT in the upcoming 1995 negotiations. (35:46) Finally, North Korea added to the challenge by announcing that it would withdraw from the NPT over the nuclear inspection issue. (18:245) While it is not certain that North Korea will withdraw, the possibility does exist.

As the number of nuclear-capable nations increases and the effectiveness of international mechanisms such as export controls and regulatory regimes decreases, the United States will have great difficulty in totally preventing nuclear proliferation. (41:135) In the event that non-proliferation fails, Pentagon planners are in the process of developing a "counter proliferation" capability designed to find and destroy weapons of mass destruction that threaten U.S. forces -- a well-known example of counter proliferation was the preemptive 1981 Israeli bombing of an Iraqi nuclear reactor that was under construction. (52:11)

As an alternative, further analysis should be given to the concept of replacing "non-proliferation" or "counter proliferation" with a "managed proliferation" strategy. (41:147-148) In reality, the United States has never truly pursued a strict policy of non-proliferation. The United States pragmatically allowed both Israel and Pakistan to gain nuclear capability, for example, because at that time it was in our national interest to do so. Under this concept the United States recognizes that since it can no longer totally prevent nuclear proliferation, U.S. policy should focus on influencing when and how nuclear technology is proliferated. A policy of managed

proliferation would promote "broader access to civilian nuclear power and technologies" and make nuclear ownership more widely possible, subject to "behavior that conforms to international standards." (41:v) The United States would continue to resolutely oppose (and take action as required to prevent) nuclear ownership by those nations demonstrating destabilizing behavior.

The primary advantages of this policy are that it is based on a more realistic and pragmatic assessment of the current status of global proliferation and more honestly describes de facto U.S. proliferation policy. Broader access to civilian nuclear power and technology also satisfies the complaint of the "have-not" nations that the current strict NPT is discriminatory and actually designed to prevent their nation's advancement by precluding access to nuclear power. (41:45)

Given the problematic renewal of NPT, bilateral or multilateral regional agreements may serve in lieu of (or in addition to) international agreements. Asia is an extremely important region for nuclear stability, given that China, Russia, India, Pakistan, and possibly North Korea have nuclear capability. After the 1990 Kashmir crisis, India and Pakistan developed a successful bilateral agreement designed to prevent nuclear war on the subcontinent. (41:36) The United States should build on this agreement and rejuvenate the 1991 Bush administration proposal to convene a South Asia nuclear proliferation conference that includes the United States, China, Russia, India, and Pakistan. (39:112) This regional conference could be helpful in both building support for the 1995 NPT renegotiation and serving as a confidence building measure for regional stability. (35:52)

The IAEA is facing a severe credibility crisis. In the wake of failures with respect to Iraqi and Iranian nuclear programs, the agency must develop new criteria that properly assess nuclear programs in order to reestablish international authority and credibility. Additionally, the IAEA may face a "conflict of interest" problem as a result of competing objectives within the agency. IAEA desires to promote substantially increased peaceful use of nuclear energy may be a fatal flaw, ultimately resulting in the agency's apparent inability to correctly identify nuclear programs that have illegally transitioned to nuclear weapons production. (41:45)

A possible solution to this conflict of interests would be the creation of a new organization, possibly within the context of the 1995 NPT renegotiation. This organization's sole

objective would be prevention of wrongful use of nuclear power, thereby allowing the IAEA to focus on aggressively promoting peaceful nuclear energy programs.

The United States met the challenges of the Cold War, coexisting with the Soviet Union and avoiding global nuclear war for over 45 years. However, the world is changing rapidly and proliferation challenges are increasing significantly. The United States must now focus on proliferation policies that maintain stability, are pragmatically based on realistic assessments of current capabilities, and are clearly enforceable to ensure a high degree of international credibility.

### **U.S.-CHINA SECURITY INITIATIVES**

Proliferation policy must be effectively interwoven in the overall fabric of U.S. national security policy toward China. Proactive U.S. security policy initiatives address the spectrum of economic, military, and non-proliferation challenges. Cooperation on economic and military initiatives provides, in the short term, the basis for improved communication on more difficult issues such as non-proliferation, as well as facilitating longer-term opportunities to address the most difficult issues such as human rights.

**Economic Initiatives.** The United States should continue in the short term to annually assign MFN status to China. Based on the obvious economic advantages, MFN is a clear "win-win" situation for both the United States and China. (40:251) Assignment of MFN status should be based solely on economic rationale and requirements rather than other non-economic issues. In the longer term, the United States should work closely with the Chinese government to continue the process of opening their economy. After China ultimately meets General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) systemic economic requirements, the United States should strongly support full Chinese membership in GATT, thereby guaranteeing continued MFN status and stimulating economic openness.

**Military Initiatives.** The resumption of direct military-to-military contact could have a very positive influence on U.S.-Chinese relationships. (37:14,40:252) Routine exchange visits between high ranking military officers and exchange programs, such as attendance at professional military schools, are currently being executed with a number of nations such as Russia and the Ukraine and are a model for corresponding U.S.-Chinese programs. These programs provide the

foundation for future military cooperation, such as combined exercises and the development of a multi-lateral regional security framework for Asia, as well as providing the Chinese military a model for military interaction in a democracy. (37:14)

### **U.S.-CHINA POLICY -- IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

SIPRI, in their evaluation of the PRC, stated that "for the world as a whole China is becoming more important and more difficult to handle." (17:128) U.S. and Chinese actions in the next five years in great measure will determine the nature of the U.S.-Chinese relationship into the next century: whether it becomes one of global partnership and cooperation ... or one of global conflict and competition, reminiscent of the U.S.-Soviet Cold War power struggle.

Consider the implications of a future U.S.-Chinese relationship based on partnership and cooperation. As key members of the United Nations Security Council, the two governments could work in concert to both support and sponsor effective United Nations resolutions in response to crises around the world. Additionally, China may be the only major nation that has the capability to reason with and provide positive influence on nations such as Iran and North Korea. (40:249) Based at least in part on their desire to maintain a cooperative relationship with the United States, a conscious Chinese decision to serve as mediator on such key issues as Iranian and North Korean nuclear weapons programs could be the significant factor in defusing increasingly volatile and confrontational situations.

As the only remaining superpower, the United States has a vital interest in maintaining regional stability around the globe. (20:3) Positive U.S.-Chinese relationships could contribute immeasurably to the maintenance of a stable regional balance of power (vis a vis Japan and the Korean peninsula), such that no single nation could establish Asian hegemony. Additionally, as U.S. responsibility for regional security around the globe increases, the number of U.S. military forces is decreasing. Chinese cooperation in Asia decreases the likelihood that U.S. forces would be required to deploy in response to a future Asian contingency.

In contrast, consider the implications of U.S.-Chinese competition and conflict. UN Security Council deadlocks and subsequent UN inaction could relegate the UN to the sidelines and significantly reduce the organization's effectiveness in world affairs. Instead of positively

influencing nations such as Iran and North Korea, China could replace the former Soviet Union as an active sponsor, supporting these nations whose actions and interests are inimical to those of the United States. Finally, direct Chinese actions or actions of Chinese-sponsored nations in the Middle East and Asia could challenge U.S. capability to deploy a smaller, CONUS-based force in response to single or multiple regional contingencies.

## **A U.S.-CHINA POLICY FRAMEWORK FOUNDATION AND PRINCIPLES**

U.S.-Chinese relations are at a critical crossroads -- during the remaining years of the 20th century, U.S. policy decisions regarding China are crucial. Clearly, as seen in the previous section, a future world characterized by U.S.-Chinese cooperation and partnership is highly preferable to a world characterized by global conflict and competition. As the foundation for an overall policy framework that creates a stable and secure world, the United States can choose between a policy of engagement or a policy based on demands and ultimatums.

A policy of engagement is preferable for three reasons. First, and of greatest importance, a window of opportunity applies to the United States' relationship with China. Two factors form the basis for this unique opportunity. China is demonstrating an increasingly pragmatic approach, seen most clearly in economic and cultural issues (less so in political or military realms). Additionally, despite the U.S. trade deficit, the United States has a significant measure of economic leverage over China, based on critical Chinese requirements for U.S. export markets and access to advanced U.S. technology. (40:249,250)

Secondly, based on the U.S. experience with other nations, the development of strong economic relationships has the potential to create conditions that "allow for the slow emergence of social forces -- the civil society -- that may eventually lead to democratic transition." (40:251)

Finally, a U.S. policy of engagement effectively complements a similar engagement policy that Japan is effectively executing at the present time. Japan is ambitiously investing billions of dollars throughout Asia, including China. For example, Japan has invested over \$5 billion in a Chinese iron and steel complex -- Japan's economic development program to China is much larger than similar U.S. assistance. (33:8) Japan views China as a potential ally (balancing an

increasingly aggressive North Korea), as well as a huge market and potential source of cheap labor. (33:10) Complementary U.S.-Japanese engagement policies should accelerate Chinese economic development and build a foundation for negotiating more complicated political and security issues.

Alternatively, a policy characterized by demands and ultimatums is more likely to isolate China, providing opportunity for conflict and producing negative reaction to U.S. policy initiatives. It is noteworthy that the United States and NATO have carefully worked with Eastern European nations, proceeding cautiously with the Partnership for Peace program for these former Warsaw Pact nations, to ensure that Russia does not feel isolated or threatened in such a way as to precipitate a confrontation or provide opportunity to extreme Russian nationalists. (31:2,4) Using similar rationale the United States should be as concerned about isolating China as it is about isolating Russia. There is potential for an isolationist response, for example, as a result of Chinese irritation with U.S. demands for changes in the Chinese human rights arena (an issue the Chinese view as internal domestic policy) in exchange for continued most favored nation (MFN) status. The Chinese view these demands as inappropriate U.S. intervention -- demands that should not be linked to U.S.-Chinese economic relationships. Former President Nixon, writing in his last book Beyond Peace, warned that U.S. "human rights lectures" are imprudent and that in two decades "the Chinese may threaten to withhold MFN status from the United States unless we do more to improve living conditions in Detroit, Harlem and South Central Los Angeles." (53:92) As another example, the North Koreans are graphically demonstrating the significant difficulties an "isolated nation" can create for the world -- the fact that the North Koreans have far less capability than a belligerent China should provide ample motivation to avoid policies likely to result in Chinese isolation.

Given a U.S. policy foundation based on engagement, the application of three important principles will serve well in facilitating future U.S.-Chinese cooperation. First, the United States must be very patient -- progress will be measured in years, not in months or days. (40:252) Second, the United States should resist the temptation to link or place conditions on economic cooperation based on U.S. demands with respect to other unrelated issues, such as human rights.

The Chinese don't believe that any direct linkage should exist between economic policy and human rights issues. China views human rights as an internal Chinese matter (a subject of Chinese sovereignty, not open to U.S. or international intervention), while economics is an external matter which can and should be negotiated with other sovereign nations such as the United States. Attempts to apply economic pressure to solve other problems will not only be ineffective, but may also waste precious economic leverage. (40:251) Finally, Chinese culture expects that a person will be treated with dignity and respect, particularly in public. In recognition of this cultural expectation, U.S. interests are better served if U.S. leaders speak more softly in public (significantly tone down the rhetoric) and then bargain hard during private negotiations. (32:1)

### **SUMMARY**

Although the United States is the only remaining superpower and has both the right and responsibility to aggressively pursue our national interests, we must also recognize that China has interests that are "legitimate, important, and not easily set aside" in their eyes. (7:392) Secretary of Defense Perry recently summarized this concept, stating that "We cannot expect Russia or any other great power to do things inconsistent with its own national interest, but we can expect Russia to recognize the benefits of being a responsible member of the world community." (31:5) The same concept applies with respect to China. The United States -- aggressively engaged in developing U.S.-Chinese cooperation and partnership across the spectrum of economic, military, and political issues -- can provide strong motivation and create high expectations that an emerging China will recognize its responsibilities and act as a responsible member of the international community. Responsible Chinese actions, in turn, allow China to reap the full advantage of the benefits alluded to by Secretary Perry.

The United States must continue to develop a strong working relationship with the PRC, recognizing China's increasing influence and importance in the international strategic security environment. There is no time to delay -- future U.S. national security interests and the global security of our world depend on effective development and implementation of today's initiatives and policies. An integrated policy of cooperative engagement can go far in making a stable and productive U.S.-Chinese partnership a reality in the next decade.



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