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## Meeting the China Challenge or Not



March 28, 2019

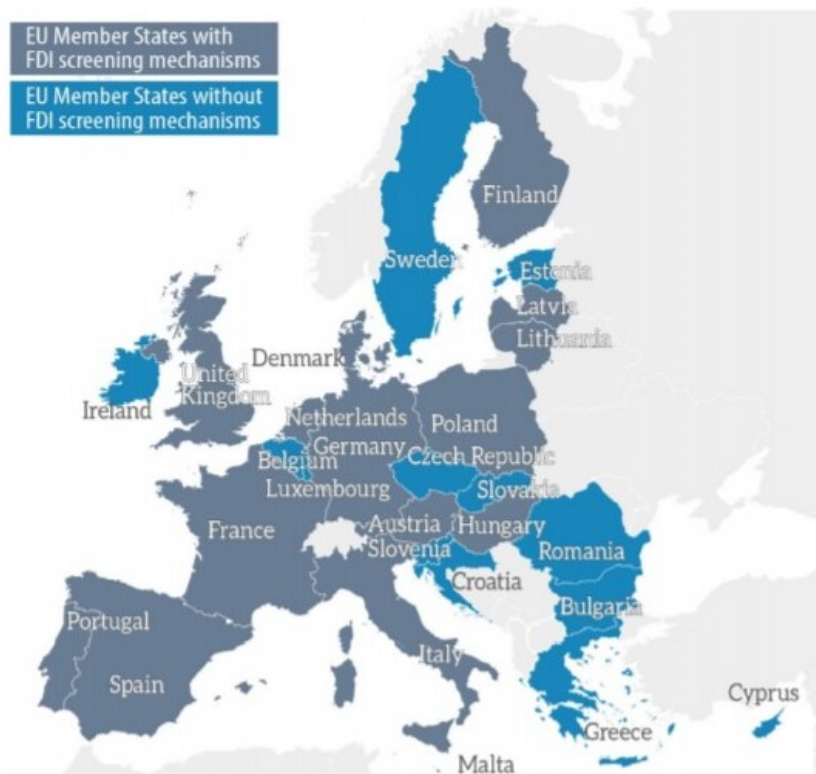
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# Monitoring Foreign investments in Europe : Filling the Gap

03/27/2019

By Mureille Delaporte

Figure 2 – Formal FDI screening mechanisms in the EU  
(as of February 2019)



Source: EPRS update of information provided by the [European Commission](#) in 2017.

The European Union's adoption on March 21st of a new "framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union," as published in the [Official Journal of the EU](#), is a major step forward towards a growing common awareness on the Old Continent about the risks involved in unchecked foreign investments.

It also reflects the beginning of some form of unity on a long-standing issue that could never get passed the form of EU Parliament Resolution at best, like the call made in May 2012 entitled [EU and China : Unbalanced Trade ?](#) which happened a year after the attempted takeover of Dutch cable-maker Draka by the Chinese company Xinmao.

Even though China is not explicitly targeted, the timing of this new legislation as EU leaders meet for two days within the European Council in part to prepare the upcoming EU-China Summit planned for April 9th is no accident.

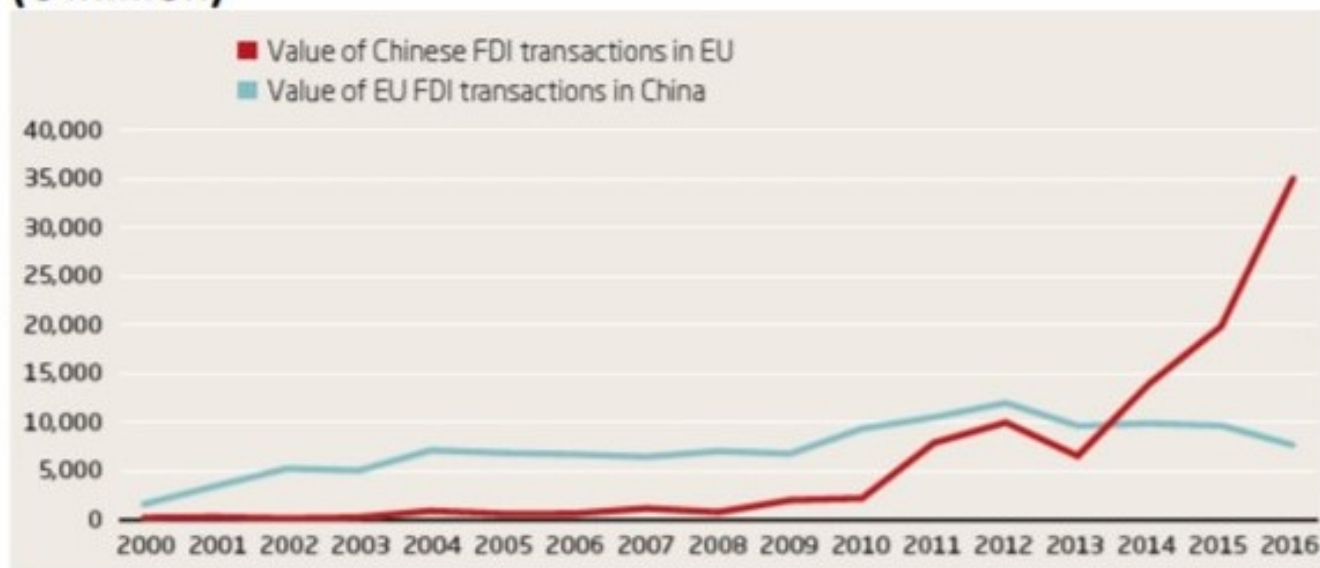
*"China can no longer be regarded as a developing country."*

This sentence, which comes from the latest European Commission Report on the state of relationships between the EU and China and ten-point plan of action to address the latter in a new balanced way, sums up the change of mood in Europe regarding everything Chinese.

One can identify several triggers to such a switch.

1. The coming to power of President Xi Jinping and his new strategic vision embodied in China's five-year plan (2016-2020) and Made in China Strategy (2015) and implemented with the development of a more aggressive approach to take-overs of strategic assets, such as the Silk Road Fund and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) meant to support the global One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative ;
2. The growing scissors effect between foreign direct investments between the EU and China (see chart below) ;

**Figure 1 – FDI transactions between the EU-28 and China  
(€ million)**



Data source: [Record flows and growing imbalances](#), Merics, 2017, p. 5.

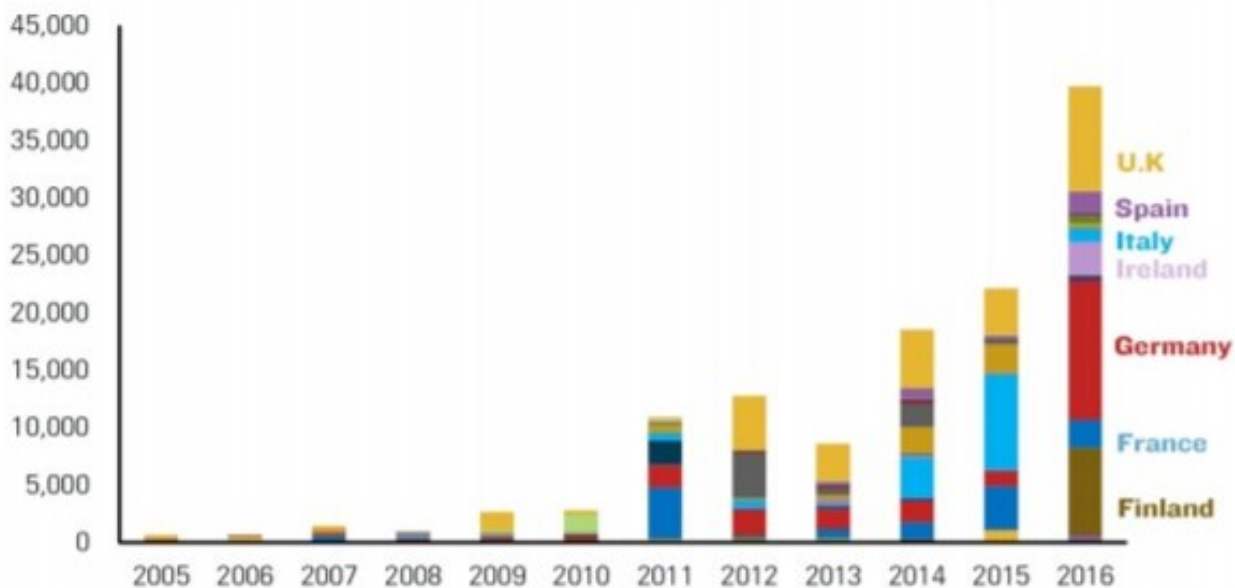
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[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603941/EPRS\\_BRI\(2017\)603941\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603941/EPRS_BRI(2017)603941_EN.pdf)

3. The increasing number of Chinese acquisitions of – or attempts to acquire or control through majority shares – strategic assets, which abound. To name just two : the Greek port of Piraeus – which COSCO Shipping purchased 67% of its capital in 2016- is part of the 29 ports and 47 terminals now ran by Chinese companies in more than a dozen countries in Europe and elsewhere ; another recent exemple is the debate over the fate of the Toulouse airport, located at the heart of France's aerospace industry and research community, of which Chinese consortium Symbiose's firm Casil owns 49,99 %.

## FDI screening mechanisms and FDI inflows?

Figure 3 – Chinese FDI transactions in EU-28 in US\$ million



Source: [Rhodium Group](http://www.rhodiumgroup.com), 2017.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/614667/EPRS\\_BRI%282018%29614667\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/614667/EPRS_BRI%282018%29614667_EN.pdf)

4. A new willingness to promote a true European defense – prompted by Russian actions starting with Ukraine and Crimea, as well as other factors such as Brexit, President Trump’s rhetoric about NATO allies, the arrival of President Macron in power with a passion to resurrect the old Franco-German drive in European institutions, and so on.

Intersecting all these trends is the awareness that Europeans have to protect their industrial base for economic reasons of course, but also for security reasons like used to be the way at the height of the Cold War.

Infrastructure and mobility are for instance now hot topics in the EU, each member being for instance required by the end of the year to establish national plans for military mobility and focusing on improving interoperability.

The same goes about cybersecurity, as the debate about Huawei’s 5G mobile network investment in Germany (with the US warning about restricting intelligence sharing with Berlin if the deal goes on) shows (to note, there is a similar debate in France, but the battle in this case is more about “digital sovereignty” and the promotion of a European champion able to compete with the GAFAs, which are now required to pay a tax based on their revenue made in France).

Indeed if China is mostly targeted, Russia is also part of the motivation and the reason why Nordic countries went finally on board with the new screening legislation, which rapporteur is French conservative (“Les Républicains”) Franck Proust, member of the European Parliament.

*So what does this new legislation really mean ?*



One can compare the new mechanism to the US CFIUS established since 1975 in the sense that it provides a way to monitor foreign direct investments on a EU-wide basis. The regulation states the main objective – i.e. « *provide (...) with the means to address risks to security or public order* » – the following way :

*(8) The framework for the screening of foreign direct investments and for cooperation should provide Member States and the Commission with the means to address risks to security or public order in a comprehensive manner, and to adapt to changing circumstances, while maintaining the necessary flexibility for Member States to screen foreign direct investments on grounds of security and public order taking into account their individual situations and national specificities. The decision on whether to set up a screening mechanism or to screen a particular foreign direct investment remains the sole responsibility of the Member State concerned.*

If national means to do so exist in some countries, it is not the case in all of them, while policies and preferences differ a great deal among them.

Article 8 of the regulation details the range of investments targeted as they affect “*those projects and programmes which involve a substantial amount or a significant share of Union funding, or which are covered by Union law regarding critical infrastructure, critical technologies or critical inputs which are essential for security or public order.*”

That includes dual-use technologies – such as artificial intelligence, robotics, nanotechnologies, etc -, but also sectors related to energy, data processing and storage, health, transportation, communications... The supply chain and access to strategic resources (including food security) should also be affected. Cyber also, with, in addition a new focus on access to personal data, as well as on media freedom....

An annex related to Article 8 indeed lists some specific programs connected in particular with space, telecommunications, energy and transportation:

***List of projects or programmes of Union interest referred to in Article 8(3)***

1. *European GNSS programmes (Galileo & EGNOS):  
Regulation (EU) No 1285/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the implementation and exploitation of the European satellite navigation systems and repealing the Council Regulation (EC) No 876/2002 and Regulation (EC) No 683/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 1).*
2. *Copernicus:  
Regulation (EU) No 377/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 April 2014 establishing the Copernicus Programme and repealing Regulation (EU) No 911/2010 (OJ L 122, 24.4.2014, p. 44).*
3. *Horizon 2020:  
Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) and repealing Decision No 1982/2006/EC (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 104), including actions therein relating to Key Enabling Technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, semiconductors and cybersecurity.*
4. *Trans-European Networks for Transport (TEN-T):  
Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and repealing Decision No 661/2010/EU (OJ L 348, 20.12.2013, p. 1).*
5. *Trans-European Networks for Energy (TEN-E):  
Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1364/2006/EC and amending Regulations (EC) No 713/2009, (EC) No 714/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 (OJ L 115, 25.4.2013, p. 39).*

6. *Trans-European Networks for Telecommunications:*  
Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on guidelines for trans-European networks in the area of telecommunications infrastructure and repealing Decision No 1336/97/EC (OJ L 86, 21.3.2014, p. 14).
7. *European Defence Industrial Development Programme:*  
Regulation (EU) 2018/1092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 establishing the European Defence Industrial Development Programme aiming at supporting the competitiveness and innovation capacity of the Union's defence industry (OJ L 200, 7.8.2018, p. 30).
8. *Permanent structured cooperation (PESCO):*  
Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/340 of 6 March 2018 establishing the list of projects to be developed under PESCO (OJ L 65, 8.3.2018, p. 24). »

The mechanism is one of exchange of informations and is non-binding however.

It requires member states to inform the Commission about foreign direct investments when relevant, but other member states can only comment :

*(17) When a Member State receives comments from other Member States or an opinion from the Commission, it should give such comments or opinion due consideration through, where appropriate, measures available under its national law, or in its broader policy-making, in line with its duty of sincere cooperation laid down in Article 4(3) TEU.*

*The final decision in relation to any foreign direct investment undergoing screening or any measure taken in relation to a foreign direct investment not undergoing screening remains the sole responsibility of the Member State where the foreign direct investment is planned or completed.*

Having to balance legitimate security concerns with as legitimate sovereignty considerations based on free trade, the legal impact of the text and being “opinionated” appears therefore limited.

Such a move should therefore be considered more like a framework for cooperation allowing to monitor and filter in order to “*retain the best*,” as Franck Proust describes it, as well as a warning mechanism.

The worry expressed by some analysts and business lawyers is however three-fold.

First, it may affect the reputation and competitive edge of the EU as the most welcoming trade partner at a time of slow growth when investments are crucial. Indeed, with the value of exchange of goods between the EU and China larger than 1.5 billion euros a day, the EU is China's biggest trading partner and China is the EU's second after the United States.

The stakes are high and many European countries – especially those without a strong industrial base – desperately need these investments – whether in infrastructure like the 16 + 1 Group – a group gathering 11 EU members and 5 Balkan countries under the initiative of China and focusing on the funding of projects such as the Belgrade-Budapest High Speed rail, or other areas such as health (recent shortages of drugs in Europe have highlighted our overall dependency on Asia in this crucial public health field as well...).

This article was first published by Breaking Defense on March 26, 2019.

# Italy, France and the Chinese-European Relationship

03/28/2019



While the EU puts together an initial response to the challenge of Chinese investments and infrastructure ownership in Europe, Italy and France this week signaled sovereign decisions to shape their own approaches within the evolving context.

Two articles in the EUObserver published this week provide insights into the priorities of the leadership of each country.

With regard to Italy, the Chinese have their first EU participant in their global “silk road” initiative.

In an article by Mads Frese and published on March 22, 2019, the Italian position on the silk road initiative was discussed.

*During Xi Jinping’s visit to Rome the Italian government will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) about its participation in China’s ambitious One Belt, One Road, also known as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which aims to create an intercontinental infrastructure connecting Asia with Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Europe.*

*Consequently, Washington has put a lot of pressure on Rome not to sign, primarily citing security issues related to digital infrastructure.*

*According to Lucio Carracciolo, director of the geopolitical magazine Limes, Italy has thus, “without even noticing”, ended up “in the ring where the US and China are competing for the World Heavyweight Championship”.*



Later in the week, the Chinese leader was in Paris meeting with President Macron. He was not seen wearing a yellow jacket.

In an article by Andrew Rettman, published on March 26, 2019, entitled “France Takes Chinese Billions Despite EU Concerns,” underscores the tight rope act which President Macron is playing with regard to China.

*France has signed €40bn of business deals with China, despite concerns on strategic investment and human rights abuse.*

*The bulk of the new deals, worth €30bn, were in the form of 300 airplanes to be sold by European firm Airbus to China Aviation Supplies Holding Company, while the rest covered energy, transport, and food.*

*French president Emmanuel Macron and Chinese president Xi Jinping announced the moves at a bilateral meeting in France on Monday (25 March).*

*They will meet again in an enlarged format with German chancellor Angela Merkel and European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker also in France on Tuesday....*

*The wave of Chinese investment, which had so far focused on poorer central European states, has raised alarm in Europe that China's acquisition of sensitive assets, such as commercial ports, or involvement in high-end IT projects, such as 5G telecoms networks, posed strategic, intellectual property, and security threats to the EU.*

*“If some countries believe that they can do clever business with the Chinese, then they will be surprised when they wake up and find themselves dependent,” German foreign minister Heiko Maas warned on Sunday.*

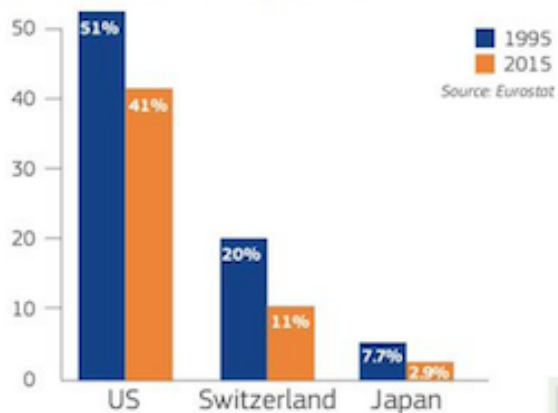
*Gunther Oettinger, Germany's EU commissioner, also voiced concern the same day that, soon, “in Italy and other European countries, infrastructure of strategic importance like power networks, rapid rail lines or harbours [will] no longer be in European, but in Chinese hands”*

Meanwhile, the same French government is working with Australia to build a new generation of submarines whose clear focus is upon the Chinese military push out into the Pacific.

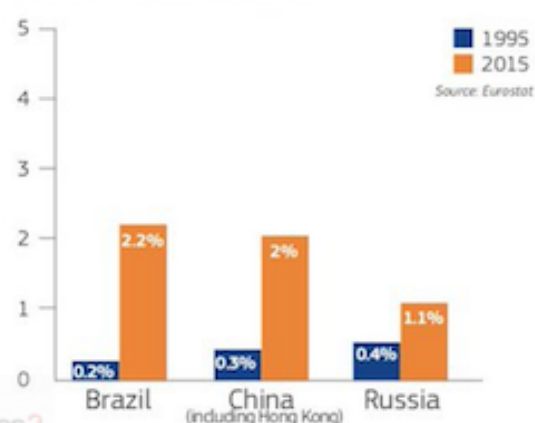
Italian and French actions do raise concerns at the EU level, notably with a new effort being launched to raise not just awareness of Chinese investments but also the question of infrastructure controls.

The featured photo shows the French and Chinese leaders ate dinner with their wives, prior to announcing business deals in Paris (Photo: [elysee.fr](http://elysee.fr))

Decrease for some partners...



...increase for others



Source : <https://club.bruxelles2.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/schema-investissementsstrategiques@e170913.png>

Second, even though not constraining, the regulation may be enough to discourage investors, as more time, uncertainty about feasibility and therefore cost could be the ripple effects, especially for firms with Chinese ties which will go under more scrutiny.

Third, it has already an impact on national legislations being reinforced or established, while the new regulation will be adding an extra layer in a bidding process complicated enough, and could be used to break deals or favor other competitors, even through mere political exposure and pressure.

It happened in the past both in the United States with the CFIUS system and in Europe just through resolution, and it is indeed the goal and the deterrent impact which the legislators hope to achieve with this new bold statement.

However, as the signing into law last summer of the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act (FIRRMA) by President Trump shows, the initial CFIUS mechanism seems to have been circumvented by Beijing via other means, such as real-estate acquisitions and technology transfer through joint-ventures, to name a few.

The new battle emerging from Brussels means President Trump is not alone anymore in his efforts to deal with the Chinese challenge.

But then again, China and Russia do not have to comply to a levelled playing field in non- US and non-EU European areas...

# China's Regional Bomber and its Potential Impact

03/23/2019



By James Bosbotinis

The US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) published an unclassified assessment of Chinese military developments on 15 January 2019. The report, *China Military Power: Modernizing a Force to Fight and Win*, disclosed that China is developing 'new medium- and long-range stealth bombers to strike regional and global targets', thus confirming long-standing rumours regarding a potential regional bomber.

The development of a new strategic bomber, the H-20, had been confirmed by the commander of the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) in 2016. The medium-range bomber is also described as a tactical bomber and a fighter-bomber in the DIA report: significantly, the new aircraft will reportedly possess a long-range air-to-air missile capability.

The medium-range stealth bomber programme is indicative of China's efforts to expand and enhance its air power capabilities, in particular through the pursuit of multiple fifth-generation aircraft (such as the J-20, J-31 and H-20), unmanned air systems, and an aircraft carrier force. It will also constitute a potent addition to China's growing long-range strike capability.

Although the DIA report does not provide detailed information concerning either of China's stealth bomber programmes, it does offer useful insight, which together with other open-source analyses, enable some discussion of the regional bomber, its potential roles, and the implications both for the PLAAF and more broadly.

## The Regional Bomber

China Military Power states that stealth technology is central to the development of the regional bomber and that it will employ ‘many fifth-generation fighter technologies’ (as will the H-20); the aircraft will include an active electronically scanned array (AESA) radar and be capable of delivering precision-guided munitions.

The new bomber is not likely to enter service before 2025, nor has it been disclosed whether the aircraft will be subsonic or possess a supersonic capability. In this regard, if the regional bomber is indeed the JH-XX, a designation noted by observers in connection to a regional strike aircraft programme for a number of years, it will likely be supersonic.

The JH-XX is believed to be a relatively large, twin-engine aircraft, possibly around 100 feet long with a maximum take-off weight of 60 to 100 tons, with a combat radius potentially around 1,500 miles (estimates vary between 1,000 and 2,000 miles).

A combat radius of 1,500 miles would, for example, be sufficient to cover Japan, the Korean peninsula, (if operating from Hainan) the South China Sea and northern halves of Sumatra and Borneo plus the entirety of the Philippines, and from western or southern China, much of India and the Bay of Bengal.

If forward deployed to the airfield on Panganiban Reef in the South China Sea, the regional bomber could threaten, with stand-off weaponry, targets in northern Australia. The JH-XX has been compared in concept to the FB-22 regional bomber project.

The approximate coverage of the JH-XX’s 1500 nm combat radius operating from China.

The armament of the regional bomber is likely to include a variety of precision-guided munitions, stand-off weapons (potentially including air-launched cruise missiles such as the CJ-10), and anti-ship missiles.

In terms of the aforementioned long-range air-to-air missile capability, this could include the ramjet-powered PL-XX, a 400 km-range weapon featuring mid-course off-board targeting support and active radar and infra-red terminal guidance, and intended to target large platforms such as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft.

The integration of a significant electronic warfare capability may be likely, given that the H-20 strategic bomber is described as ‘able to disturb and destroy incoming missiles and other air and ground targets through a range of equipment including radar, electronic confrontation platform, high power microwave, laser and infrared equipment’. Likewise, as with the H-20, the regional bomber may be ‘capable of large-capacity data fusion and transmission.

It can serve as a C4ISR node and interact with large sensor platforms like UAV, early warning aircraft and strategic reconnaissance aircraft to share information and target data’. In this respect, the long-range air-to-air capability of the regional bomber may be particularly significant.

That is, the aircraft could be employed as an extended-range interceptor utilising targeting support from unmanned air vehicles such as the Divine Eagle counter-stealth airborne early warning system. This would, assuming a 1,500-mile combat radius for the regional bomber, together with the 250-mile range of the PL-XX, enable the PLAAF to target high-value assets such as ISR aircraft and strategic bombers deep within ostensibly friendly airspace.

## Implications

The development of the regional bomber, alongside the H-20 strategic bomber, reflects China’s ambition to develop world-class armed forces. The pursuit of two stealth bomber programmes alongside two known fifth-generation fighter projects – the J-20 and follow-on variants and the J-31, unmanned air systems, and hypersonic technologies provide a clear statement of intent concerning the level of air power Beijing is seeking. In this context, the regional bomber project is noteworthy.

Although the US and Russia are working on strategic stealth bombers, the B-21 Raider and PAK DA (‘Prospective Aviation Complex for Long Range Aviation’) respectively, neither are known to be developing a manned sub-strategic bomber

(Russia had previously sought to develop a stealthy medium-range bomber, the Sukhoi T-60S, to replace the Tupolev Tu-22M3 Backfire).

The regional bomber, given its combination of stealth, precision-guided munitions and long-range air-to-air missiles, AESA radar, and other advanced systems, will provide the PLAAF with a potent ‘day one’ (the ability to conduct operations at the start of a conflict, against an adversary’s strategic targets defended by a still-intact integrated air defence system) capability.

The new aircraft will constitute a significant defensive challenge, in particular with regard to the find, fix, track, target, engage and assess (F2T2EA) process. Moreover, the potential for the regional bomber to be employed in a deep, offensive counter-air role would likely necessitate the diversion of allied fifth-generation aircraft from offensive operations to defend high-value assets.

Also, is the development of the regional bomber intended to enable the PLAAF to focus its eventual H-20 force on strategic air operations, in particular, vis-à-vis US forces in the Pacific and potentially the continental US? Similarly, the H-20 is believed to be intended to have a nuclear role; will the regional bomber also be dual-capable?

It also warrants asking whether an intermediate-range stealth aircraft offering precision-strike and long-range air-to-air capabilities should be considered by, for example, the US, UK, Australia and Japan?

Would such an aircraft offer a sufficient level of capability, in particular against high-end anti-access/area denial and advanced air threats, to justify what would likely require considerable investment?

The trajectory of Chinese air power development in the coming decades, the options it confers on policy-makers in Beijing, and the implications are likely to prompt too many more questions regarding the direction of Western air power.

Dr James Bosbotinis is a UK-based specialist in defence and international affairs, and Co-CEO of JB Associates, a geopolitical risk advisory. Dr Bosbotinis has written widely on British defence issues, Russian strategy and military modernisation, China’s evolving strategy, and regional security in Europe, the Former Soviet Union and Asia-Pacific.

This article was first published by The Williams Foundation’s [Central Blue](#) on March 17, 2019.

## Japan and the Coming of the Osprey

03/24/2019

The Japanese along with the USAF and the USN are trained to operate the Osprey at the USMC’s New River Air Station.

The increased number of aircraft and partners is providing a welcome challenge to the Marines at New River.

In a recent visit to [2nd MAW](#), the training role was highlighted for the new partners.

During visits several years ago at New River, the Osprey training squadron was focused upon the Marines and the Air Force.

Now with the US Navy buying Ospreys as well as the Japanese, there are new stakeholders in the training process, and that training squadron has become a priority effort within MAG-26 for sure.

Given the concerns the Japanese have about public opinion, and the flawed public record with regard to Osprey safety, there is a challenge facing the Japanese forces to deploy and use the new aircraft in Japan.

An original way to address the challenge has been provided by working the CV-22 aspect of the Osprey within the Japanese force structure.



According to a story published on March 24, 2019 by The Japan Times, the Japanese government has decided to deploy CV-22s along with a revamped UH-60 as part of a rescue ops package.

*The government plans to introduce a special operations variant of the U.S. Marine Corps MV-22 tilt-rotor Osprey aircraft for Self-Defense Forces to conduct dangerous and covert missions abroad, such as the rescuing of Japanese citizens, according to sources.*

*The Ground Self-Defense Force has a special anti-terror unit to carry out such operations. But the unit is still not fully capable and lacks specialized aircraft.*

*Under the government plan, the CV-22 Osprey, the special operations variant of the MV-22, will be deployed along with refurbished models of the GSDF's UH-60 helicopter, the government sources said Saturday.*

*The CV-22 is widely seen as more capable of nighttime flying and its terrain-following radar enables it to fly at low altitudes, they said. The remodeled UH-60 is regarded as better armored and can be carried by the Air Self-Defense Force's C-2 transport airplanes.*

[https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/03/24/national/japan-use-osprey-aircraft-overseas-rescue-operations-sources/?utm\\_source=Daily+News+Updates&utm\\_campaign=d46f281edb-Monday\\_email\\_updates25\\_03\\_2019&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c5a6080d40-d46f281edb-332756961#.XJevjC2B1sY](https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/03/24/national/japan-use-osprey-aircraft-overseas-rescue-operations-sources/?utm_source=Daily+News+Updates&utm_campaign=d46f281edb-Monday_email_updates25_03_2019&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c5a6080d40-d46f281edb-332756961#.XJevjC2B1sY)

In an article we published in 2014, we focused on the coming of the Osprey as part of the defense modernization effort by the Japanese.

That article follows:

When we wrote our book on Pacific strategy, a key element in considering how the key challenges facing the United States and its allies was how Japanese relationships with the US and the Pacific allies might evolve.

The entire second section of our book deals with Japan, and after a history of the relationship, which was largely, the work of Dr. Richard Weitz, we focused on where Japanese defense policy might evolve in the coming years. We argued that with the emergence of the “dynamic defense” approach Japan would reach out to shape new capabilities to provide for perimeter defense and to plus up its working relationships with allies in the region.

We argued that:

*The Chinese seem bent on driving the two greatest maritime powers of the 20th century together into a closer alliance.*

*And at the heart of this alliance are key joint investments and procurement working relationships.*

*Japan is a key technological partner for the United States throughout. They are a founding member of the Aegis global enterprise.*

*They are an investor and operational partner in the SM-3 missile capability to enhance missile defense.*

*They are a major player in the F-35 program, which will allow the shaping of an attack-and-defense enterprise.*

*They are building a final assembly facility for the F-35, which will become a key element in the F-35 global procurement system, subject to Japanese government policy decisions.*

*And they are keenly interested in seeing how the Osprey can shape greater reach and range for the “dynamic defense” of Japan.*

Laird, Robbin F.; Timperlake, Edward (2013-10-28). *Rebuilding American Military Power in the Pacific: A 21st-Century Strategy: A 21st-Century Strategy (The Changing Face of War)* (Kindle Locations 3968-3969). ABC-CLIO. Kindle Edition.

Hardly had the book been printed than the Japanese government moved forward on its “dynamic defense” policy.

Notably, the current Prime Minister has worked to reshape Japanese policy to allow it to become a more significant contributor for its neighbors and to provide a more significant contribution to the US and allied deterrence in depth strategy, which is emerging in this decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**With the decisions made to re-set Japanese defense policy, the Japanese government will clearly play a greater role in Pacific defense.**

And a recent piece in The Japan Times provides the following look at how the “new look” in defense policy might alter Japanese policies.

*The Abe administration’s reinterpretation of the war-renouncing Constitution to allow greater use of military force in defending other countries is one of the biggest changes ever to Japan’s postwar security policy.*

*The administration has given a range of examples as to how the Self-Defense Forces might used when related laws are updated later this year. They include scenarios in which troops might:*

*Defend U.S. warships.*

*Troops could protect U.S. warships under attack from a third country near Japanese waters, before an imminent, direct attack on Japan, because cooperation with the U.S. military is considered essential to secure Japan’s own survival.*

*Intercept ships for inspection.*

*Troops might forcibly stop vessels for inspection when they are believed to be carrying weapons to a third country that is attacking U.S. warships in the region, when the battle seems likely to spill over to Japan — a step currently considered unconstitutional and prohibited as use of force.*

*Shoot down a missile fired at the U.S.*

*The SDF could intercept a ballistic missile that is flying over the Japanese archipelago heading toward Hawaii, the U.S. territory of Guam or the U.S. mainland, and when requested by America to do so.*

*Protect peacekeepers abroad.*

*SDF personnel could rescue civilians engaged in U.N.-backed peacekeeping operations that come under attack, using weapons if necessary to defend those civilians.*

*Minesweeping in the Middle East.*

*A plan still being contemplated would allow Japanese forces to participate in U.N.-led multinational minesweeping efforts to secure sea lanes in the Middle East, such as in the Strait of Hormuz, arguably crucial lifelines for resource-poor Japan.*

# Japan Enhances Perimeter Defense

03/22/2019



With the continuing threat from North Korea and the Chinese pushing out their perimeter of operations, Japan has had little choice than to enhance the capabilities of their forces and push their operational reach out to the Japanese perimeter.

According to a recent story in *Japan Times* published on March 16, 2019, the Japanese government is focusing on enhanced presence in its outer islands as one means of doing so,

*The government is pushing ahead with plans to build new Ground Self-Defense Force bases on remote islands in the southwest in response to military threats from China.*

*On March 26, GSDF bases are due to be opened in the city of Amami and the town of Setouchi, both on Amami Oshima island in Kagoshima Prefecture. About 560 troops will be stationed at the bases.*

*Surface-to-air missile systems will be deployed at the Amami base, while land-to-sea missiles and an ammunition depot will be placed at the Setouchi base.*

*Another GSDF base will be opened on the same day on Miyako Island in Okinawa Prefecture. That base will initially host 380 soldiers, but will eventually expand to host some 700 to 800 troops once surface-to-air and land-to-sea missiles are deployed in fiscal 2019.*



*In the meantime, work to lay the groundwork for yet another GSDF base has started on Ishigaki Island in Okinawa. The city of Ishigaki includes the Senkaku Islands, which are administered by Japan but also claimed by China, which calls them Diaoyu, and Taiwan, which calls them Tiaooyutai.*

*The government plans to situate the base in the Hiraomata area, around the center of Ishigaki Island, and man it with 500 to 600 troops plus a missile unit.*

For the complete story, please go to the following:

[https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/03/16/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-expanding-gsdfs-presence-southwestern-islands-new-bases-missile-batteries/?utm\\_source=Daily+News+Updates&utm\\_campaign=1201379944-Sunday\\_email\\_updates17\\_03\\_2019&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c5a6080d40-1201379944-332756961#.XJIDZi2ZPUI](https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/03/16/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-expanding-gsdfs-presence-southwestern-islands-new-bases-missile-batteries/?utm_source=Daily+News+Updates&utm_campaign=1201379944-Sunday_email_updates17_03_2019&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c5a6080d40-1201379944-332756961#.XJIDZi2ZPUI)

## Russia, China and Collaborative Actions: An Alliance in the Making

01/19/2019



By Stephen Blank

A virtual flood of studies and articles continues to appear concerning Russo-Chinese relations.[i]

Although the expert consensus remains that no alliance or no formal alliance between Russia and China exists despite their visibly growing intimacy; I would dispute that finding.[ii]

Indeed, Moscow keeps inventing euphemisms to disguise what is going on.

First it was called a comprehensive strategic partnership.[iii]

More recently in November 2018 President Putin called it a ‘privileged strategic partnership.’[iv]

Both these formulations sound like attempts to deceive foreign observers as to the alliance’s real nature.

Thus Putin described comprehensive strategic partnership as follows:

*As we had never reached this level of relations before, our experts have had trouble defining today’s general state of our common affairs. It turns out that to say we have strategic cooperation is not enough anymore. This is why we have started talking about a comprehensive partnership and strategic collaboration. “Comprehensive” means that we work virtually on all major avenues; “strategic” means that we attach enormous inter-governmental importance to this work.[v]*

Similarly Foreign Minister Lavrov has stated that,

*As regards international issues, we feel – and our Chinese friends share this view – that our cooperation and coordination in the international arena are one of the most important stabilizing factors in the world system. We regularly coordinate our approaches to various conflicts, whether it is in the Middle East, North Africa, or the Korean peninsula. We have regular and frank and confidential consultations.[vi]*

It is hard to know how a privileged partnership expands upon a comprehensive one. Moreover, this alliance is not merely a political relationship but one of active military collaboration.

In addition, leading officials in both countries expect this relationship to deepen, including in its military dimensions, during 2019.[vii] Indeed, President Xi Jinping told Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu that not only can both militaries deal with “common security threats” but also they should increase cooperation and unswervingly deepen their strategic coordination.[viii]

And we can already see practical examples of such coordination as both governments jointly conducted a series of experiments in the atmosphere that not only could alter earthly environments but also apparently disturb electrical connections in the territories below these experiments.[ix]

These experiments look suspiciously like preliminary efforts to test both ground-based and space-based capabilities to achieve the effects of an EMP (Electro-Magnetic Pulse) attack on earth against their adversaries.

Indeed, commenting on these tests, the Chinese journal Earth and Planetary Physics observed that the results were satisfactory but also “such international cooperation is very rare for China.”[x]

Similarly, the Vostok-2018 exercises involving large-scale Russian forces and about 3200 Chinese forces in September - 2018 may have originally been intended as an exercise in anticipation of a U.S. attack on North Korea.[xi]

In fact Russian writers, e.g. Vasily Kashin, Senior Research Fellow at the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of the Far East, claim that the 2001 Russo-Chinese treaty enshrined at the very least strategic military and political coordination between both governments.

Specifically, he observes that,

*Chapter 9 of the treaty stipulated that “in case there emerges a situation which, by [the] opinion of one of the Participants, can create threats to the peace, violate the peace, or affect the interests of the security of the Participant, and also in case when there is a threat of aggression against one of the Participants, the Participants immediately contact each other and start consultations in order to remove the emerging threat.[xii]*



Kashin further notes that, “While the treaty did not create any obligations for mutual defense, it clearly required both sides to consider some sort of joint action in the case of a threat from a third party.”[xiii]

This means that even before these events in the military sphere, we see a well-developed process of shared learning and exchange of operational and strategic concepts to enhance bilateral relations.[xiv]

This parallels the wider and extensively developed network of bilateral consultations across many ministries of both governments that are then manifested in practice and thereby reflect an alliance, even if it remains an informal one.[xv] These postures and operations go considerably beyond the joint exercises and arms sales that others have written about.[xvi]

The point here, as confirmed by many analysts, is the extensive inter-military dialogues that have gone on for over a decade as part of the larger program of inter-governmental exchanges.[xvii]

Certainly the joint air and missile defenses exercises of 2017 suggests an alliance for in such exercises both sides must put their cards on the table and display their C4ISR.

As Vasily Kashin observes, this exercise took the form of a computer simulation where both sides constructed a joint air/missile defense area using long-range SAM systems like the Chinese HQ-9 and the Russian S-300/400 series.[xviii]

Likewise, both the preceding and ongoing naval exercises before and after 2017 point to deepening collaboration and a vibrant bilateral military dialogue.

## Conclusions

Analysts have long chronicled the political, economic, and ideological manifestations of the evolving Sino-Russian partnership. But the steadfast denials of a military alliance dynamic here are not based on the evidence of arms sales, technology transfer, joint exercises, conventional and nuclear coordination and long-term strategic dialogues.

Inasmuch as the U.S. has singled out China and Russia as its adversaries misreading the true nature of their relations gravely undermines the chances for successful American strategy and policy and not only in Asia.[xix]

It is long since time that analysts and policymakers acknowledged the reality that is evolving right before their eyes and stopped taking refuge in clichés and wishful thinking.

Only on the basis of realism can we move forward to deal with this alliance and the challenge of either defeating or disassembling it in exclusively peaceful ways.

Stephen Blank is a Senior Fellow with the American Foreign Policy Council.

## Editor's Note

One can debate what kind of alliance these two authoritarian states are forging.

But clearly as the Australian strategist, Ross Babbage has argued, both are working towards the goal of making the world safe of authoritarian states.

It is important to factor in how these two states reinforce one another's actions, plan joint actions, or operate counter to one another as a key element of the strategic shift from the land wars to crisis management with peer competitors.

And the study of how authoritarian states work together — in both support as well as cross purposes — is a neglected study.

We recently reviewed a book about Japan and Nazi Germany which had many insights into the alliance and its dynamics.

<https://defense.info/book-review/2018/12/germanys-last-mission-the-failed-voyage-of-u-234-to-japan/>

There is also interesting information on the Japanese-Nazi alliance contained in a book on Bletchley Park which we have reviewed as well.

<https://defense.info/book-review/2018/11/the-secrets-of-station-x-how-the-bletchley-park-codebreakers-helped-win-the-war/>

[i]To give three of many examples, Marcin Kaczmarek, Mark N. Katz, and Teija Tillikainen, *The Sino-Russian and US-Russian Relationships: Current Developments and Future Trends*, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Helsinki, 2018 [www.upi.fiia.fi](http://www.upi.fiia.fi); Richard J. Ellings and Robert Sutter, Eds., *Axis of Authoritarians: Implications of China-Russia Cooperation*, Seattle, WA: National Bureau of Research, Asia 2018; Jo Inge Bekkevold and Bobo Lo Eds., *Sino-Russian Relations In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018,

[ii]*Ibidem*.

[iii]“Interview to the Xinhua News Agency of China,” [www.kremlin.ru](http://www.kremlin.ru), June 23, 2016

[iv]Alla Hurska, “Flawed ‘Strategic Partnership’: Putin’s Optimism On China Faces Harsh Reality,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, December 12, 2018, [www.jamestown.org](http://www.jamestown.org)

[v]“Interview to the Xinhua News Agency of China,”

[vi]Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, “Statement and Answers to Questions From the Media by Russian Foreign Minister S.V. Lavrov at the Press Conference on the Results of Russia’s Chairmanship of the UN Security Council, New York, October 1, 2015,” *BBC Monitoring*.

[vii]“Russia, China To Bolster Ties In 2019: Envoy,” <http://tass.com/politics/1038117> December 27, 2018; “China, Russia Agree To Boost Military Ties, *Xinhua* December 21, 2018, Retrieved from *BBC Monitoring*

[viii]“China: Xi Meets Russia Defence Minister,” *Xinhua*, October 20, 2018, Retrieved from *BBC Monitoring*

[ix]“China, Russia Test Controversial Technology Above Europe-Paper,” *South China Morning Post*, December 17, 2018, [www.scmp.com](http://www.scmp.com)

[x]*Ibid*.

[xi]Brian G. Carlson, “Vostok-2018: Another Sign Of Strengthening Russia-China Ties,” *SWP Comment*, No. 47, November, 2018, [https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/comments/2018C47\\_Carlson.pdf](https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/comments/2018C47_Carlson.pdf),

[xii]Vasily Kashin, *The Current State Of Russian-Chinese Defense Cooperation*, Center For Naval Analyses, 2018, p. 14

[xiii]*Ibid*.

[xiv]*Ibid*.

[xv]Marcin Kaczmarek, *An Asian Alternative? Russia’s Chances of Making Asia an alternative to Relations With the West*, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, [www.osw.waw.pl](http://www.osw.waw.pl), 2008, p.p. 35-36

[xvi]Schwartz, Wishnick, Vostok-2018

[xvii]Kaczmarek, pp. 35-36; Jacob Kipp, “From Strategic Partnership to De facto Military Alliance: Sino-Soviet Mil-Mil Contacts in the Modern Era, 1945-2018, Presented to the NPEC Conference, Washington. DC, 12 July 2018

[xviii]Kashin, p. 20. C4ISR stands for Command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance

[xix]*The National Security Strategy of the United States Of America*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>, December, 2017

## Combating 21st Century Authoritarian States: The Perspective of Ross Babbage

08/20/2018



By Robbin Laird

During my current visit to Australia, I had a chance to continue my discussions with Ross Babbage about the challenges of dealing with 21st advanced authoritarian states.

Recently, he co-authored a study entitled “Countering Comprehensive Coercion: Competitive Strategies Against Authoritarian Political Warfare,” and with that as the predicate we discussed the nature of the challenge posed by 21<sup>st</sup> century advanced authoritarian states and how to deal with that challenge.

<https://sldinfo.com/2018/08/information-warfare-and-the-authoritarian-states-how-best-to-respond/>

**Question: Your new report lays out the nature of the challenge. Where is your project now headed in terms of working both the challenge and response to what I would call 21<sup>st</sup> century advanced authoritarian states?**

Babbage: This is a starting point but we need to dig more deeply into their own thinking, their own literature, their own doctrine, and their own practices in political warfare.

We are proceeding by generating a series of case studies to highlight what those methods and approaches are so that we can assess them more concretely.

There is a lot of history.

Both the Chinese and Russian approaches are rooted in their history but using modern methods to execute their templates of political warfare.

**Question: How would contrast the authoritarian approach to our basic liberal democratic mindsets?**

Babbage: For the liberal democracies, there is a pretty clear break between what we would consider war and peace.

For the Chinese and the Russians, there is not quite the same distinction.

They perceive a broad range of gray areas within which political warfare is the norm and it is a question of how effective it is; not how legitimate it is.

They are employing various tools, such as political and economic coercion, cyber intrusion, espionage of various types, active intelligence operations and so forth.

For example, in Australia, certain Chinese entities have bought up Chinese newspapers here so that there's very little Chinese language media in Australia, which is not pro-Beijing.

And they are leveraging their business people, students and visitors to work for broader political means within Australia as well.

In contrast, the West is employing very traditional means such as diplomacy and military tools.

Our tool set is clearly constrained compared to the innovative and wide ranging tool set with which the Russians and Chinese are working and they are learning to use their presence in our societies to expand their influence on our policies.

Aaron Friedberg at Princeton really got it right when he said words to the effect that "a primary driver of Beijing's international policies is to make the world safe for all authoritarianism."

And that's what we're seeing.

What we're confronting is a new version of a long-standing theme in Chinese strategic thought which emphasizes the importance of shaping the strategic environment in your favor by reaching a long way into the enemy's camp, and putting him off balance, and getting him focused on internal problems and exacerbating those internal problems.

The goals are to distract and weaken the enemy and get him to not focus on things other than the main game.

The political warfare approach is one of interfering, disturbing, distracting, confusing, disrupting the institutions and the normal operations of democratic states.

The head of the Australian Security and Intelligence Agency (ASIO) has stated that the scale and pace of foreign intelligence and espionage activities in Australia is now higher than they were at the peak of the Cold War.

**Question: What can be done?**

Babbage: A key aspect of meeting the challenge is to recognize it exists and encourage the public focus on its existence and operations.

Regardless of domestic political persuasion, our people do not like to see this kind of authoritarian coercion operating in our society.

When they realize what is happening, they're upset, they're angry about what a foreign country could be trying to do, these sort of things, and they want to galvanize action.

And many pose the question of "What can we do to actually stop this and fix it?"

At present we are not telling the story of foreign political warfare broadly enough within our political and economic sectors.

We've got to improve our information operations. We need to throw sunlight on what these guys are doing and do so in a comprehensive and sustained manner.

Beyond that effort, I would identify a number of potential components of what one might call an effective counter strategy.

First is a denial strategy.

Here the objective is to deny, not just the operations and make them ineffective, but also to deny the political benefits that authoritarian states seek to win by conducting their operations.

Second is a cost imposition strategy.

We need to find ways to correlate their behavior with an imposed cost. We need to make clear that if they are going to behave like this, it will cost them in specific ways.

Third is focused on defeating their strategy, or making their strategy counterproductive.

We can turn their strategy on its head and make it counter-productive even within their own societies.

Their own societies are fair game given the behavior of the of our combined assets Russians and Chinese.

Fourth is to make it damaging, and even dangerous, for authoritarian regimes to sustain their political warfare strategy.

Authoritarian regimes have their own vulnerabilities and we need to focus on the seams in their systems to make their political warfare strategies very costly and risky.

And we need to do this comprehensively as democratic allies.

There's no reason why we can't coordinate and cooperate and make the most of our combined resources, as we did in the Cold War..

But do we have the right tools and coordination mechanisms for an all-of-alliance strategy to work well?

In my view, the Western allies have a great deal of work to do.



# The Strategic Shift and Enhanced Force and Combat Sustainability

03/24/2019



The Williams Foundation launched a series of seminars in 2013 which address the transformation of the ADF into a fifth generation force. Last year, we focused on the strategic shift from the land wars to crisis management with peer competitors.

The next seminar to be held in Canberra on April 11, 2019 will focus on a key part of defense or deterrence in depth, namely the ability Australia to enhance the sustainability of its force and its ability to support sustainment engagement by allies operating with the ADF from Australian territory in a crisis.

## Background

Since 2013 the Sir Richard Williams Foundation seminars have focused on building an integrated fifth generation force. Recent seminars have evolved from the acquisition of new platforms to the process of shaping and better understanding the environment in which that integrated force will prepare and operate.

In doing so they have, among other things, highlighted the challenges of making the strategic shift from counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to higher tempo and higher intensity operations involving peer competitors.

Within this context, the seminar in August 2018 focused on the importance of a joint approach to building an independent and potent regional strike capability. The topic broadened to begin an examination of new ways and means of enhancing sovereign options as part of an evolving deterrent strategy.

The August seminar began a process of looking at the evolution of Australian defence capabilities through an increasingly sovereign lens and concluded there are some important choices to be made if we are to maintain our capability edge and influence in the region.

Allies are crucial to the Australian concept of defence; however, the emerging strategic circumstances demand it is vital we reconsider the ways and means of enhancing Australian sovereignty to better contribute to our relationships and ensure a more sophisticated and independent defence of Australian interests.

During the 2019 seminars, the Sir Richard Williams Foundation will develop this theme and address more broadly the question of how to look at the evolution of the Australian Defence Force from the perspective of the sovereign lens and setting the conditions for future success.

## Aim of the Seminar

The first seminar will examine the question from an historical standpoint and focus on the importance and challenges of sustaining an Australian Defence Force that can autonomously contribute to the pursuit of Australia's national interests in an increasingly challenging environment.

A key element of our thinking is to focus on the importance of our natural strategic strengths and reconsider Australian territory and geography, as well as the near region, as an integral part of our deterrence posture.

This entails building the infrastructure and partnerships necessary to enable more effective mobility so that Australian and partner territory can be used as a chessboard on which we are able to move Australian forces, and upon which allied forces could operate in times of crisis as part of a broader coalition engagement and sustainment strategy.

Enhanced Australian industrial sovereignty and sustainability is a core requirement of a secure and sustained force in times of crisis, where the normal functioning of the global supply chain will be deliberately targeted and disrupted. This will require an integrated strategy for preparedness, operations and sustainment of the force enabled by appropriate industry policy to ensure the delivery of a sovereign defence capability.

## Seminar Outline

This industrial policy must be closely aligned with defence policy, concepts and doctrine and will require a new approach and attitude to partnerships and an increased emphasis on the combat support and combat service support functions of the fifth-generation force. This will further develop the Australian manoeuvre approach to warfighting but set in a much broader context than simply the force elements.

The seminar will address the evolving Australian approach to building new capabilities and systems with an expanded role for Australian industry as part of a broader alliance structure. A contemporary example is how Army is building its unmanned aircraft capability through an innovative partnering strategy with industry. Similarly, the seminar will address how Defence can be a better steward of its major platforms by partnering with industry.

One such sector worthy of consideration by Australia is in emerging technologies and how these might disrupt traditional concepts of supply chains and enhance Australia's sovereign capabilities. The development of an Australian-based research, design, manufacture, test and sustainment capability is a realistic aspiration and provides sovereign capability which contributes significantly within a broader alliance structure.

In particular, Australia can play a significant role in the development and production of 21st century missiles and at the same time support the needs of core allies who could leverage evolving Australian science and technology, test and experimentation ranges, and advanced manufacturing capabilities within a sophisticated and diverse global supply chain.

Above all, this will add diversity, complexity and resilience to the Australian defence and security posture and provide additional choice in the selection of the most appropriate ways and means of delivering a balanced suite of defensive and offensive independent strike capabilities.

# Launch of Committee on the Present Danger: China

03/28/2019

By defense.info



Earlier this week (March 24, 2019), a “Committee on the Present Danger:China” was launched in Washington DC.

According to the [website](#) for the group in announcing the launch:

*WASHINGTON—A distinguished team of China experts, national security practitioners, business leaders, human rights and religious freedom activists, and others will launch next week the “Committee on the Present Danger:*

*China” (CPDC) to reprise a critically important role played by an earlier incarnation of such a group during the darkest days of the Cold War.*

*Then, as now, the United States faced an existential threat from an aggressive totalitarian foe. Now, as then, the nation needs to be awakened to the danger posed by the Chinese Communist Party and the country it misrules—and equipped with recommendations for mitigating that multifaceted and growing threat.*

*The CPDC’s mission statement:*

*The mission of the “Committee on the Present Danger: China” is to help defend America through public education and advocacy against the full array of conventional and non-conventional dangers posed by the People’s Republic of China.*

*As with the Soviet Union in the past, Communist China represents an existential and ideological threat to the United States and to the idea of freedom—one that requires a new American consensus regarding the policies and priorities required to defeat this threat.*

*And for this purpose, it is necessary to bring to bear the collective skills, expertise and energies of a diverse group of experts on China, national security practitioners, human rights and religious freedom activists and others who have joined forces under the umbrella of the “Committee on Present Danger: China.”*

*Founding members of the “Committee on the Present Danger: China”—a number of whom will be present at the press conference on Monday—include: Brian Kennedy, chairman; Frank Gaffney, vice chairman; Hon. R. James Woolsey; Dr. William Bennett; Kyle Bass; Steve Bannon; Mark Helprin; Pastor Bob Fu; Kevin Freeman; Dr. Peter Pry; Dr. Sasha Gong; LTG William Boykin; Hon. Ed Timperlake; Dr. Mark Schneider; Richard Fisher; Amb. Hank Cooper; Lianchao Han; Dr. Michael Waller; Capt. James Fanell, USN (Ret.); Col./Dr. Lawrence Sellin, USA (Ret.); Dr. Dan Blumenthal; Dr. Stephen Mosher; and Dr. Bradley Thayer.*

## **China’s Maritime Gray Zone Operations**

03/26/2019

*By Robbin Laird*

The book edited by Andrew S. Erickson and Ryan D. Martinson on Chinese maritime operations which they label as operating in the “gray zone” is a first rate piece of work.

The book identifies and discusses in detail “gray zone” operations, namely, operations short of the use of lethal force but empowered by a well worked out chain of maritime power elements up to and including the presence of combat forces.

The goal is to reshape the external environment in ways favorable without the need to engage in kinetic operations. In the hybrid war concept, lethal operations are the supporting not the tip of the spear element to achieve what the state actor is hoping to achieve tactically or strategically.

The book argues that this is a phase short of what the Russians have done which has been labelled hybrid warfare.

**But from my point of view both gray zone ops and hybrid war ops are part of a broader strategic reality, namely, the nature of crisis management facing the liberal democracies competing with the authoritarian states in a peer-to-peer competition.**

The challenge can be put bluntly — deterrence has been designed on the Western side with large scale engagement of enemy forces in mind.

What if deterrence in this sense is the necessary but not sufficient capability to constrain the actions of the authoritarians?

What if you can deter from full scale war, but by so doing not be able to control what your adversary is doing in terms of expanding his global reach and reshaping the strategic environment to his benefit?

**What if you have organized yourself for deterrence but not effective crisis management?**

The gray zone concept in my view is subsumed in this broader strategic shift and challenge.

There is also a key question whether gray zone operations is the strategic focus or really a phase on the way to engaging in kinetic operations as part of the way ahead.

What if the US and its key allies are not willing or able to respond and the Chinese expand their approach over time?

We can not assume that as Chinese look at the world or read RAND studies that they will not believe that actually striking a US or allied warship might not be a useful part of their evolving approach to crisis management.

From this point of view the discussions of the book could be seen as a historic look at a phase of Chinese maritime power and the evolving approach to strategic engagement in the region and beyond.

I would note that the focus in the book is on the US Navy and its responses.

Having worked with the USCG for years, I found the resource neglect of the service and the strategic decision to stick them into the Department of Homeland security as significant strategic failures on the part of the US.

First, the engagement in the Middle East has stolen resources from many security and non-security accounts, among them the USCG.

And then the focus on the return of Great Power politics, although admirable must focus on the nature of who these competitors actually are and how they operate.

**How do we constrain China, and not just deter it?**

Many years ago when I started a series on Pacific defense for the then AOL Defense, now Breaking Defense, I actually started with the significance of the USCG and why they were a foundational element for the kind of “constraint” as well as deterrent strategy we needed to shape.

That series led eventually to our co-authored book on Pacific strategy which again started with the “constraint” challenge not just the deterrence one.



What I had not realized was that it is the broader challenge which the authoritarian states were generating for crisis management against the liberal democracies which was in play.

And that this was the core strategic shift from the land wars.

This book simply validates how important the missing USCG National Security and Offshore Patrol vessel hulls and trained personnel are.

Instead, the US focused on Littoral Combat Ships which made no sense.

The white hulls are crucial to a “constraint strategy”, and the expansion of the Chinese Coast Guard in the region has been central to the gray zone operations discussed in the book.

I would highly recommend reading this important book and thinking through what it teaches us, or challenges us to think about in terms of the much broader spectrum of crisis management we are facing.

And please rebuild the USCG and get it the hell out of the Department of Homeland Security so that it can focus on its global role.