

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

The many facets of US global leadership require continual refining as America adjusts to the realities of persistent geopolitical, market, and technological uncertainty. Whether these updates take the form of laws protecting privacy or critical supply chains or result in policies that clarify red lines and strategic messaging, decisionmakers must respond and adapt in order to preserve US leadership in the world. At the organizational level, innovative advances in all-domain warfare and new ways of analyzing the human domain demand similar honing of technology and processes. And none of this occurs in a vacuum. America's ability to lead with strength, advocate for peace and justice, and oppose tyranny and violence depends in full on our global network of strong Allies and partners.

In the spirit of alliances, we are extremely honored and grateful to present a **Senior Leader Perspective** by US Air Force General James B. Hecker, Commander of US Air Forces in Europe, US Air Forces Africa, and Allied Air Command, and the Director of the Joint Air Power Competence Centre, a NATO Center of Excellence. General Hecker calls for the United States and its Allies and partners to adapt to dispersed operations of forces and headquarters, reconceptualize risk delegation and decision authority, and innovate with the right mix of low-end and high-end capabilities.

In **Managing Risk**, Gregory Wischer, Gregory Autry, and Morgan Bazilian discuss the mineral-intensive composition of major space assets—satellites, direct-ascent anti-satellite weapons, and rocket bodies—to highlight supply-chain vulnerabilities. Three key policies will mitigate risk and the resulting national security vulnerabilities.

In our second forum, **Technology, Society, and War**, Alison Russell presents findings from a global study on public- and private-sector facial recognition technology across 20 countries and the EU. In the face of either a total lack of rules and regulations or laws that do not protect citizens from their governments, the United States and its Allies and partners should establish and promote norms that safeguard human rights. Paul Calhoun presents DARPA's innovative energy web dominance framework. This framework will provide new and more resilient methods to achieve military effects, principally in the delivery of energy, through breakthroughs in wireless energy distribution.

The last article in the forum, by Denise Tennant, Louis Nolan, and Deanna House, calls for the establishment of policy red lines in the realm of adversary cyber operations. Such red lines will also help define what constitutes cyber operations in the gray zone.

In **Elements of Deterrence**, Luke Stover examines the concept of assurance, and advocates for a clear delineation between assurance and deterrence. In today's world, alliances and partnerships provide asymmetric advantages, as they are grounded in a firm commitment to the multiple facets of assurance. The forum concludes with an article by Jessica Taylor, who cautions about the strategic messaging the US-Northeast Asia alliance system sends to Pyongyang through its responses to North Korea provocations and alliance system exercises. Avoiding deadly miscalculations on all sides requires clear communication and long-term policy stability on the part of the member nations of the alliance system.

Our final forum, **Transforming Bureaucracy**, considers institutional policy change. Kelly Atkinson analyzes her decade of work with the Air Force Women's Initiatives Team through a new framework of organizational theory that builds upon rational actor theory and addresses the challenges of collective action, emphasizing the roles played by change agents, power brokers, and the frozen middle.

Thank you, as always, for your support of the journal. Team *Æther* wishes you a good second half of 2024. Æ

~ The Editor

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