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Opening the Aperture

Advancing US Strategic Priorities in the Indo-Pacific Region

Gen Herbert J. “Hawk” Carlisle, USAF, Retired

No doubt, North Korea puts on a great fireworks display. Yet, while Americans fixated on the volatile dictator rattling rockets on the Korean Peninsula, the rest of the Indo-Pacific region continued to transform at an increasingly breakneck pace. Public discourse on US defense strategy in Asia is outdated, reflecting a fixation on legacy threats, disputes, and commitments of the last century rather than the emerging threats and opportunities of this century. The renaming of US Pacific Command to US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) provides the United States with an opportunity to expand the aperture of US grand strategy and to engage the region clear eyed. While the regional security map of the twentieth century prioritized Northeast Asia, the map of the twenty-first century demands strategic attention spotlight a wider landscape characterized by People’s Republic of China’s (PRC) hegemonic aspirations and a larger set of competing national interests. As the United States learns to look at Asian security through an Indo-Pacific lens, securing the American commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific will require focused attention on three issues: (1) denying the PRC’s assertion of control of the South China Sea, (2) leveraging Indo-Pacific economic integration to balance against Chinese economic power, and (3) integrating India as a regional security partner.

To understand the worrisome gaps in the national discussion of US defense strategy in the Indo-Pacific region, consider the simple difference between the media attention devoted to North Korea’s recent provocations against the United States and its allies and the attention directed to the PRC’s aggressive actions in the South China Sea. North Korea and the PRC both engaged in a series of provocative military actions throughout 2017. Between Inauguration Day 2017 and New Year’s Eve 2017, *The New York Times*, the daily foreign affairs news source of choice for Washington policy elites, published 1,179 articles containing the words “North Korea nuclear” versus 377 articles containing the words “South China Sea.” When on 9 August 2017, North Korea announced its intent to fire four test missiles close to the US territory of Guam, *The New York Times* published 91 articles containing “North Korea nuclear” during the following week. When on 10 August 2017, Chinese naval vessels confronted US naval ships conducting freedom-of-navigation patrols in the South China Sea, the next week saw *The New York Times* publish a mere 8

articles containing “South China Sea.” By these measures, hostile military contact between the world’s most consequential powers was less newsworthy than the test launch of 1960s rocket technology.

What made this discrepancy puzzling is that there is no particular reason to believe the North Korea situation warranted such a large prioritization in coverage over the South China Sea disputes. Fear of war between the United States and North Korea is justified but remains unlikely, especially taken in context of North Korea’s history of hundreds of provocations against the United States and its allies in Northeast Asia since the end of the Korean War. Meanwhile, the PRC’s unprecedented aggressive territorial control measures in the South China Sea repeatedly brought opposing military forces into close contact. Strategically, the attention the United States pays to North Korean tensions must be balanced with the need to take effective action to counter the PRC in the South China Sea.

Enduring Twentieth-Century Legacy on US Indo-Pacific Grand Strategy

One reason North Korea receives disproportionate attention in the public discourse on US defense strategy in the Indo-Pacific is because policy makers failed to evolve twentieth-century notions of US security interests in the region in conjunction with the changing strategic landscape. Post-World War II, US strategic objectives in the Indo-Pacific included protecting allies, containing authoritarian communism, maintaining regional stability, and supporting free trade. As the dominant military power in the Indo-Pacific, the United States guaranteed security for its allies by permanently forward basing forces in Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the Philippines and conducting regular exercises with other allies in the region. The United States also offered security guarantees to Taiwan to help maintain its independence from the PRC. The large US security umbrella in the Indo-Pacific helped to deter communist expansion, and, by assuring allies of their protection, helped to demilitarize and stabilize the region. The United States supplemented its military presence in the Indo-Pacific with economic and diplomatic power, developing trade and political relationships often leveraged to promote liberal economic institutions and to encourage anti-communist resistance. US economic and security guarantees created conditions for non-aligned nations to coexist peacefully as well. This effective strategy built the foundation for peace and

economic success for many, if not most, Indo-Pacific nations through the end of the twentieth century.

The changing political structures and socio-economic landscape of the region did little to change US Indo-Pacific regional security strategy. The basing and posture of US forces in the Indo-Pacific continue to prioritize the deterrence and assurance needs of US allies in the northeast. When the fall of the Soviet Union and the rocky *détente* between the United States and the PRC reduced the overall threat to allies and interests in the Indo-Pacific, the United States retained focus on the communist regimes of North Korea and mainland China. The general peace and prosperity of Indo-Pacific during the post-Cold War era enabled the United States to rely heavily on economic and diplomatic engagement to achieve its interests in the rest of the region.

The PRC's post-Cold War growth disrupted the old security order in the Indo-Pacific, in no small measure by selectively flouting and exploiting international rules. China's turn from impoverished communism to an increasingly prosperous state-managed capitalism enabled its rise from ranking 11th in gross domestic product (GDP) among nations in 1980 to second in 2017, transforming it into a global power. Following an import substitution strategy built on cheap labor copying and manufacturing foreign innovations, the PRC reinvested the earnings from its export-driven economic growth to enhance its economic, diplomatic, and military power. China now challenges the United States as the Indo-Pacific's dominant influence on regional affairs. While the PRC's power grows, American influence in the Indo-Pacific declines, straining under the weight of America's commitments in the Middle East and throughout the world. According to the World Bank, China and the United States are now roughly equal as destinations for Indo-Pacific exports; however, China exports double the amount of goods and services to other Indo-Pacific countries. China has seven free trade agreements with Indo-Pacific partners, under implementation or signed, while the United States has three. Finally, despite China's heavy investments in expanding and modernizing its armed forces, US military deployments to the Indo-Pacific region have roughly stayed the same for the last two decades.

Opening the Aperture of US Grand Strategy in the Indo-Pacific

This challenge from China calls for the United States to “open the aperture” of its grand strategy. Doing so will allow the United States to get a much bigger picture and better understanding of the entire region. The big picture in the Indo-Pa-

cific region shows current US engagement—economic, diplomatic, and military—is insufficient to secure American objectives against China’s hegemonic push for regional power.

Department of Defense (DOD) leaders show strong signs of recognizing how the United States must respond to this challenge. In May 2018, the DOD re-named US Pacific Command (USPACOM) as US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM). At a ceremony announcing the change, Secretary of Defense James Mattis remarked that the name change recognized the importance of America’s allies and relationships with countries bordering the Indian Ocean as well as the Pacific Ocean to maintaining regional stability and achieving a shared vision of an Indo-Pacific region of “many belts and many roads,” countering the PRC’s One Belt, One Road Initiative.

Opening the aperture of US Indo-Pacific grand strategy requires more than a name change. It also requires changes to America’s strategic priorities. If, as the 2018 National Defense Strategy declares, the United States has entered an “era of great power competition,” then the United States should engage in a full-spectrum, whole-of-government competition against the PRC’s ambitions for Indo-Pacific dominance. Too often, US strategic priorities in the Indo-Pacific region seem narrowly constructed around the specific geography of Northeast Asia and around traditional military and diplomatic solutions. The big picture of the Indo-Pacific balance of power strongly suggests that America’s most important priorities encompass the region’s full geography and have solutions that include, but certainly are not limited to, traditional military and diplomatic approaches. As mentioned earlier, three issues stand-out as most deserving of immediate prioritization: (1) control of the South China Sea; (2) enhanced US economic integration in the Indo-Pacific; and (3) the US–India regional security partnership.

Control of the South China Sea

Disputes over control of the South China Sea are a simmering crisis of regional and global importance. Since 2009, China has unilaterally, and without international legal support, claimed sovereign rights over most of the South China Sea, invoking the 1947 “nine-dash line” boundary and recently increasing the claim to the “ten-dashed line,” placing at risk the core American interest of free and open navigation of Indo-Pacific waters. The PRC’s militarized campaign of land reclamation, involving hundreds of islands and atolls in the South China Sea, is also

triggering multiple disputes between China and its Southeast Asian neighbors, in particular, Vietnam and the Philippines.

Many of the disputes center on the Spratly Islands, the largest of the South China Sea's island groups. The Spratly's scattered geography and shallow waters once made them dangerous territory for ships, but British and American naval mapping of sea lanes allowed the South China Sea to evolve into a major international transshipment corridor. A nation with control of the Spratly's sea lanes could strangle international commerce. Through a series of invasive military measures, China positioned itself to gain such control. For example, in 2014, it prevented the Philippines from resupplying a detachment of their marines based in the southern zone of the Spratly. Thus, the PRC has demonstrated the capability, capacity, and will to execute naval blockade operations through a key maritime chokepoint.

Preventing China from impeding shipping in the Spratly should be among America's top strategic priorities because that strategic line of communication enables global commerce. The South China Sea has become a vital hub of the global economy. Huge growth in global trade volumes with China and Southeast Asia have driven a corresponding surge in the shipping volumes that pass through the South China Sea. Nearly half of all global oil tanker traffic passes through the South China Sea (five times greater than the volume of traffic passing through the Panama Canal). Several of the world's largest shipping ports are located close to the South China Sea. Although the PRC is unlikely to disrupt freedom of navigation casually, because it normally benefits from it, during a future regional conflict, its control of an important economic chokepoint would provide a significant strategic advantage. However, shipping is not the only economic priority in the South China Sea.

A free and open South China Sea is also important to all Southeast Asia nations because of the potential economic benefits from the region's natural resources. The South China Sea provides a rich source of fossil energy resources and fisheries. Competition for these resources has driven multiple disputes in the region. For instance, Chinese oil companies have competed with a joint Vietnamese–Indian project to develop oil and gas resources in the South China Sea. Most recently, in 2014 Chinese security ships used water cannons to deter a Vietnamese flotilla that tried to sail into Chinese oil drilling claims in the Paracel Islands. Additionally, a decline of fisheries' production in the South China Sea has led to territorial disputes, such as the 2012 crisis that ensued after the Philippine Navy detained eight

Chinese fishing craft in the Scarborough Shoal. The PRC appears willing and able to use its military and economic strength to ensure it controls a disproportionate share of the natural resources in the South China Sea.

As a part of an Indo-Pacific grand strategy, the United States must develop policies and capabilities to deter and, if necessary, overcome Chinese actions to control the South China Sea. The United States should continue to prioritize freedom of navigation for all nations and create conditions for regional and international forums to determine resource allocation. The PRC's current forces in the South China Sea are increasingly formidable. Incoming USINDOPACOM commander Adm Philip Davidson stated China is now capable of “overwhelming” any other island claimants in the South China Sea and is capable of controlling access to and use of the shipping lanes. To effectively counter Chinese forces, the United States will need to prioritize a permanent and rotating military presence in the region. Only by presenting a credible military deterrent will US leaders be able to insist on freedom of navigation and independent adjudication of Chinese territorial claims.



US Navy Adm Philip S. Davidson, left, shakes hands with Navy Adm Harry B. Harris during the change-of-command ceremony in which Davidson assumed command of US Indo-Pacific Command at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, 30 May 2018. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Nathan H. Barbour.



EODMU 5, Australian and US forces train together on Guam. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician 3rd Class Devin Rodriguez, right, looks on as Senior Chief Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician Luigi Mendoza, center, and an Australian Army soldier coordinate during the unit-level training event Pyrocrab. Held biennially, Pyrocrab focuses on strengthening relationships and enhancing interoperability between the US Navy and Australian forces. EODMU-5 is assigned to commander, Task Force 75, the primary expeditionary task force responsible for the planning and execution of coastal riverine operations, explosive ordnance disposal, diving engineering and construction, and underwater construction in the US 7th Fleet area of operations. US Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kryzentia Richards.

The United States must also harness the power of alliances and partnerships to enlist participation in regional cooperative security arrangements that help to counter Chinese forces. US naval forces regularly conduct freedom of navigation operations (FONOPS), essentially sea patrols through disputed waters, in the South China Sea, to “exercise and assert [US] navigation and overflight rights and freedoms on a worldwide basis in a manner that is consistent with the balance of interests reflected in the Law of the Sea (LOS) Convention.” The United States works with traditional naval allies such as Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom, and France in FONOPS but needs to increase the involvement of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries in these patrols to enhance the scale and consistency of such operations. Another example of the kind of cooperative engagement that will play an important role in the Indo-Pacific is the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, also known as “the Quad.” Reconvened in November 2017 after a 10-year hiatus, the Quad is an informal gathering of defense officials from the United States, Japan, Australia, and India to discuss Indo-Pacific security issues.

Trade Partnerships & the Role of Economic Integration in the Indo-Pacific

Trade relationships are strategically important for maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Once an afterthought, the economies of Southeast Asia are among the world's fastest-growing and are important to global production networks. However, the massive Chinese economy increasingly dominates regional trade and capital flows. As a result, many of the region's economies are increasingly connected to the Chinese economy and, therefore, sensitive to Chinese policy preferences. These countries are increasingly pulled into China's economic and political orbit, becoming outlets for Chinese goods, services, capital, and policies. They could provide the PRC with important diplomatic and military backing for its regional hegemonic goals.

The United States should counteract Chinese economic and political influence by developing trade partnerships with Southeast Asian economies. Trade partnerships also help improve US economic competitiveness against China. Negotiated trade agreements can help to improve conditions under which a country's corporations conduct business, by reducing barriers to market access, affirming intellectual property rights, and equalizing labor and environmental standards. Without such agreements in place, US companies may operate at a disadvantage in comparison with native competitors or competitors from countries with their own trade agreements.

The controversy over the multilateral Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement should not dissuade US policy makers from negotiating future trade partnerships in Southeast Asia and other parts of the Indo-Pacific. In fact, America's withdrawal from the TPP should do the opposite. The TPP attempted to establish an encompassing trade regime linking key economies of Southeast Asia and Oceania with the North American free trade zone. Some in the United States criticized the TPP for potentially weakening domestic investment by US companies and creating another back door for Chinese products to flood the American market. These potential pitfalls cannot be overlooked. However, many economic and foreign affairs experts extolled the TPP benefits as necessary to ensure the long-term competitiveness of US companies operating in the Indo-Pacific, and as an important tool for building support for economic liberalism. By pulling out of TPP, the United States lost an opportunity to lead the region economically, while simultaneously missing an opportunity to provide a viable alternative to a China-centric regional economic system. Despite the US withdrawal, the other 11 participant countries, comprising

nearly 16 percent of worldwide economic production, renegotiated and authorized the agreement as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. Notwithstanding any merits of withdrawing from the negotiations, the United States' absence sacrificed an opportunity to strengthen its regional partnerships outside of defense relationships. It also limited economic interdependence between the United States and those nations, weakening the potential foundation of a transformational whole-of-government US strategy for the region. Finally, it provided China an opening to raise the profile of its own multilateral regional trade partnership strategy. The United States must work diligently to build economic and trade cooperation with the nations of the Indo-Pacific.

India and the Indo-Pacific's Future Balance of Power

Skepticism of US reliability and intensions in the region may damage America's relationship with the nation whose impact in the region will only increase over the next decade. The bulk of the DOD's justification for renaming USINDOPACOM recognized the deep linkages between India and the future of Pacific Rim affairs. India's integration into regional economic and security partnerships has the potential to dramatically shift the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region. Expected to become the world's most populous country by 2024 and currently the world's sixth largest economy, India exemplifies the traits of a rising global economic and military power. India's economy is strongly interdependent with the rest of the Indo-Pacific, exporting nearly 23 percent of the goods imported into East Asian and Pacific countries, while importing over 38 percent of the goods exported by those countries. Home to one of the world's largest armed forces and defense budgets, India is expanding its military, announcing in February 2018 plans to increase defense spending by nearly 8 percent for the 2018–2019 fiscal year.

For the United States, India is attractive as a potential security ally and trading partner. Not only does India have the world's second-largest military, it is also one of the relatively few nations that possesses an aircraft carrier, giving it the ability to project military power at regional distances and scales. In recognition of its strategic importance, in 2016 the United States conferred "Major Defense Partner" status on India. Although India has a post-colonial tradition of neutrality between competing great powers, its current political leadership has expressed interest in participating in regional cooperative security ventures.

The United States and India share a strategic imperative to hedge against Chinese regional dominance. India fought a minor war against China in 1962, and its

subsequent relationship with China has been tense. For example, China blocked India's ambitions to join the UN Security Council, and India has resisted China's One Belt, One Road Initiative. More recently, Chinese and Indian armed forces engaged in a months-long standoff in 2017, triggered by Chinese road-building in the Bhutanese territory of Doklam near the Chinese-Indian Border. Most troublesome for India, China forged a security partnership with Pakistan, India's bitter rival, even announcing in late 2017 plans to construct a strategic offshore naval base in Pakistan. Therefore, the current relationship between the countries is characterized by deep suspicion and conflict. Through more intensive engagement with India, the United States might forge a partnership that could transform grand strategy in the region.

Conclusion

The United States can no longer afford to have a grand strategy for the Indo-Pacific based primarily on legacy defense priorities and commitments. To be sure, traditional issues such as the defense of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are and will remain important areas of strategic interest. However, in a rapidly evolving Asian economic, political, and security landscape, the United States must widen its strategic aperture to recognize and respond to changing regional dynamics. The renaming of US Pacific Command as US Indo-Pacific Command begins to implement strategic changes necessary if the United States intends to achieve its vision of "free and open" access to the Asian markets. The United States must open the aperture of its strategy in Asia to recognize and engage other, lesser known, but strategically important issues. Maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region against an increasingly powerful China will require a combination of deterrence and assurance measures. As the PRC tries to assert control over the South China Sea, the United States must invest in the capabilities and capacity sufficient to deter aggression. Developing more and better trade partnerships with the emerging economies of the Indo-Pacific is an important step in limiting the PRC's economic and diplomatic influence. Finally, developing a robust partnership with India can help counter Chinese hegemonic aspirations by fundamentally altering the region's balance of power. **JIPA**

Notes

1. James N. Mattis, "Remarks at U.S. Indo-Pacific Change of Command Ceremony" (speech transcript, US Department of Defense, 30 May 2018), <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/1535689/remarks-at-us-indo-pacific-command-change-of-command-ceremony/>. The One Belt, One Road Initiative is a push by the PRC to take a more prominent role in global affairs through the establishment of a China-centric trading network.

2. US Department of State, “Maritime Security and Navigation,” website, n.d., <https://www.state.gov/e/oes/ocns/opa/maritimesecurity/>.

3. Ankit Panda, “US Implementation of ‘Major Defense Partner’ Perks for India Underway,” *Diplomat* (website), 14 April 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/04/us-implementation-of-major-defense-partner-perks-for-india-underway/>



Herbert J. “Hawk” Carlisle

Gen Herbert J. “Hawk” Carlisle, USAF, retired, is president and chief executive officer of the National Defense Industrial Association. General Carlisle came to NDIA after a 39-year career in the Air Force, from which he retired as a four-star general in March 2017. His last assignment was as commander, Air Combat Command at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia. Before that, Carlisle was the commander of Pacific Air Forces; the air component commander for US Pacific Command; and executive director of Pacific Air Combat Operations staff, Joint Base Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Carlisle served in various operational and staff assignments throughout the Air Force and commanded a fighter squadron, an operations group, two wings, and a numbered air force. He was a joint service officer and served as chief of air operations, US Central Command Forward in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. During that time, he participated in Operation Restore Hope in Somalia. He also participated in Operation Provide Comfort in Turkey and Operation Noble Eagle, which continues.

Carlisle served as director of operational planning, policy, and strategy; deputy chief of staff for air, space, and information operations, plans, and requirements; and twice in the plans and programs directorate. He also served as deputy director and later director of legislative liaison at the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. He is a command pilot with more than 3,600 flying hours in the AT-38, YF-110, YF-113, T-38, F-15A/B/C/D, and C-17A.

Carlisle graduated from the US Air Force Academy in 1978 with a bachelor of science degree in mathematics. He received a master’s degree in business administration in 1988 from Golden Gate University of San Francisco. He completed studies at the Squadron Officer School, the F-15 Fighter Weapons Instructor Course, Air Command and Staff College, Armed Forces Staff College, and Army War College. He also studied national security management at Syracuse University, international relations at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and national and international security at George Washington University.

A Short History of US Involvement in the Indo-Pacific

Christopher L. Kolakowski

The United States has always been tied to the Indo-Pacific. Indeed, the last battle of the War of Independence that started on Lexington Green in 1775 occurred in India in 1783. What follows is a short history of US involvement in Asia, from its humble post-independence beginnings to the prominent engagement of today.¹

The first US presence in Asia comprised trading vessels that serviced China in 1784. New England whalers soon joined, and over the next decades American ships increased their presence in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. During the War of 1812, the frigate USS Essex embarked on a famous cruise against British shipping along South America's Pacific coast.

After the war, America realized the increasing need to protect its interests in the Pacific. In 1821 the Navy authorized the Pacific Squadron, and in 1835 the East India Squadron. These squadrons carried out the first US military operations in Asia, namely two punitive expeditions against Sumatran pirates in 1832 and 1839. The Pacific Squadron also helped conquer California during the Mexican–American War in the 1840s.

Also in the 1840s, the East India Squadron became involved in the First Opium War, securing US access to China via treaty in 1844. American missionaries now started their educational and ministerial work in earnest, which led to increasing American interaction with China's interior communities. This spurred the US Navy to create the Yangtze River Patrol in 1854, which when it ended in 1949 was the longest sustained overseas naval commitment in American history.

Arguably the most famous US naval operation of this period occurred on 14 July 1853 when Commodore Matthew Perry took the East India Squadron to Tokyo Bay and successfully opened Japan to the world for the first time in 200 years. Perry's mission spurred Japan to become a major Asian power, a process marked by the Meiji Restoration in 1868..

East India Squadron ships also participated in China's Second Opium War from 1856 to 1860. The treaty ending that conflict recognized the United States—along with Britain, France, and Russia—as one of four major powers allowed direct access to Chinese ports and the capital Peking (Beijing), plus extraterritoriality for its citizens from Chinese laws. These concessions sparked the Taiping Rebellion from 1860 to 1864; American mercenaries participated on the government's side. Most notable of these was Frederick Townsend Ward, who formed the Ever Victorious Army and died leading it in battle near Ningbo in September 1862.

The American Civil War reached Asia when the CSS *Alabama* captured several Union merchant ships in the Straits of Malacca and docked at Singapore in September 1863. Fifteen months later the CSS *Shenandoah* sailed across the Indian Ocean, refit in Australia, and ravaged Union whalers in the central and northern Pacific before discovering on 2 August 1865 that the war had been over for several months.

During and after the Civil War, the East India Squadron (renamed Asiatic Squadron in 1868) continued antipiracy operations in waters from Japan to the South China Sea. Major actions in this period included skirmishes in Shimonoseki Strait, an expedition to Formosa in 1867, and operations in Korea in 1871. This latter operation resulted in the first Medals of Honor awarded for action on foreign soil at the Battle of Ganghwa, the US military's first combat on the Korean Peninsula.

As the nineteenth century neared its end, the US presence in the Indo-Pacific increased. The purchase of Alaska in 1867 staked a major claim to the North Pacific and Arctic, while development of California's ports linked the continental United States with the Indo-Pacific. US traders and missionaries extended American reach from the Kuril Islands to India. American backing of a rebellion in 1893 against the queen of Hawaii led to her overthrow and the islands' annexation by the United States five years later.

War with Spain made the US a prominent Pacific power. Commodore George Dewey's victory on 1 May 1898 at Manila Bay, followed by Maj Gen Wesley Merritt's capture of Manila that August, led to the Spanish relinquishing the Philippines to the United States after 350 years of colonial rule. Guam also became American. The Filipinos revolted in 1899 against American rule but failed to win independence after three years of fighting. Also in 1899, the Second Samoan Civil War concluded with the signing of the Tripartite Convention, dividing the archipelago between Germany and the United States.



From right, Marine Corps Gen Joe Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Coast Guard Adm Karl L. Schultz, commandant of the Coast Guard; and Army Lt Gen Daniel R. Hokanson, vice chief of the National Guard Bureau, render honors during a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, 16 July 2018, to commemorate the 74th anniversary of the liberation of Guam. DOD photo by Army Sgt. James K. McCann.

In 1900 the Boxer Rebellion in China surrounded the international legations in Peking. The defenders held out for 55 days of siege while the international China Relief Expedition fought inland from the Yellow Sea. US Marines distinguished themselves in Peking's defense; US Navy, Marine, and Army units supported the expedition, marking the first time since the War for Independence the United States allied with other sovereign nations in a conflict. China paid reparations (the Boxer Indemnity); the United States used its portion of those payments to educate Chinese students in American universities. The 4th Marine and US Army 15th Infantry Regiments assumed permanent station in China to protect American interests.

American power in the region grew in 1905, when President Theodore Roosevelt presided over the Russo–Japanese War's end via the Treaty of Portsmouth. In 1907 the Great White Fleet, consisting of 16 new battleships and a variety of destroyers and auxiliary ships, sailed throughout Asia on its global military-diplomatic voyage, demonstrating to the world America's newly established naval power and rendering humanitarian assistance.

Meanwhile, the United States developed the Philippines. American teachers arrived to create schools, while investors stimulated the Philippine economy to unprecedented levels. Self-government gradually took hold under American control. In World War I, the Filipinos supported the United States; however, the war ended before the US Army's Philippine Scouts could deploy to Europe.

In 1921 the Washington Naval Treaty forestalled a naval arms race by fixing the ratio of British, American, and Japanese capital ships at 5-5-3 respectively. This treaty generated resentment in Japan for its inequality and stoked nationalist sentiment, which in turn drove the aggressions against Manchuria in 1931 and Chiang Kai-shek's China in 1937. The war in China, still a source of bitter memory and recrimination today, bogged down and left Japan unable to secure victory despite four years of effort. Americans supported China via supplies on the Burma Road and the American Volunteer Group (also known as the Flying Tigers). Further Japanese expansion into French Indochina caused Britain, the United States, and the Netherlands to embargo Japanese raw material shipments, including oil.

Unwilling to retreat or concede, Japan decided to attack. The Pacific War opened on 8 December 1941 (7 December in Hawaii and Washington) with attacks on Allied bases from Pearl Harbor to Malaya. Guam fell on 10 December, Wake Island 23 December, and Hong Kong on Christmas 1941. British troops retreated in Malaya and US/Filipino defenders in the Philippines made a stand on Bataan and Corregidor. Singapore fell on 15 February 1942 in the largest surrender in British military history. Japanese forces swept into Burma, the Netherlands East Indies (today Indonesia), New Guinea, New Britain, and the Gilbert Islands.

The Philippines became an increasingly isolated outpost behind Japanese lines. Pres. Franklin Roosevelt ordered the commander of the islands, Gen Douglas MacArthur, to Australia, where general famously pledged, "I shall return." Australian prime minister John Curtin gave MacArthur operational command of the Australian Army, thus forging an enduring alliance between the United States and Australia. Bataan surrendered 9 April 1942, the Philippines one month later.

These events occurred as British prime minister Winston Churchill gave the United States primary operational responsibility for China and everything east of the Asian coast and Singapore, effectively ceding the Americans first place among Allied powers in Asia.

Japan's expansion ended with the American victories at Coral Sea and Midway in May and June 1942. Both sides turned to New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, where the Americans and Australians won grueling campaigns at Buna-

Gona and Guadalcanal. In November 1943 forces under Adm Chester Nimitz drove west from Hawaii through the Gilbert Islands. As MacArthur encircled Rabaul in early 1944 and leapfrogged along New Guinea's northern coast, Nimitz captured the Marshall and Mariana Island groups.

On the Asiatic mainland, American planes began to fly supplies from northern India over the Himalayas (the Hump) to China. Lt Gen Joseph W. Stilwell had been sent to China in 1942 to coordinate aid, training, and operations of Chinese forces, and in late 1943 he started a campaign in northern Burma to reopen a land route to China, which lasted until the capture of Myitkyina in August 1944. Meanwhile Japan (assisted by collaborationist Indian forces) invaded India in March 1944 but ran into stout defenses at Imphal and Kohima. US air units helped supply the British at both places as they defeated the Japanese in heavy fighting. Follow-up advances opened the road to China in early 1945.

MacArthur fulfilled his pledge to return by wading ashore at Leyte on 20 October 1944. The Filipinos had believed in him, and a quarter million guerrillas aided the liberation forces as they fanned out over the islands, in some cases, liberating entire provinces on their own. The cost was high—more than 100,000 Filipinos were killed in a month of house-to-house fighting during the Battle of Manila. However, alone among the colonial powers, the United States kept its promise to liberate its colonies by war's end—a fact that further cemented the United States as a key player in Asia.

Meanwhile, Nimitz captured Iwo Jima and Okinawa after weeks of very bloody combat. By July 1945 the Allies stood before Japan itself. The war in Europe had ended in May 1945, and reinforcements were on the way for what all expected would be the climactic battle of the Pacific War. The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August, plus entry of the Soviet Union into the war, compelled Japan's surrender on 15 August 1945. World War II thus ended with the US in a pivotal position regarding Asia, which it maintains to this day.

General MacArthur became ruler of Japan with the title Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. Over the next six years he rebuilt Japan into a modern state, leaving a legacy that echoes to this day. Elsewhere, US troops assisted in disarming and reoccupying Japanese-controlled territory throughout the Indo-Pacific.

The 30 years immediately following Japan's surrender were defined by conflicts between Communism and the West. China fought a major civil war, which ended in 1949 with Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang clinging to Taiwan and Mao Tse-tung's Communists firmly in control of the mainland, now the new People's Re-

public of China. Korea had been divided in 1945, and the communist North invaded South Korea in 1950. The United Nations, with the United States leading the way, entered the conflict on the side of the South; Russian and Chinese “volunteers” assisted the North. After three years of back-and-forth fighting, an armistice ended fighting on 27 July 1953. Meanwhile, the United States covertly supported the French effort to hold Indochina against Ho Chi Minh’s communist revolutionaries; after France’s defeat in 1954 led to partition, the United States fought unsuccessfully to support South Vietnam against the communists. The fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975 destroyed South Vietnam and ended 33 years of unbroken US involvement in Southeast Asia, dating back to Stilwell in 1942.

One of the most important events in the latter half of the twentieth century occurred in 1972 when Pres. Richard Nixon established relations with the People’s Republic of China. This presaged increased economic ties between the two nations over the next four decades and helped bring Communist China onto the world stage after nearly a quarter century of effective isolation. As part of this transformation, Taiwan was forced to give up China’s seat in the United Nations.

In the four decades since, the United States has continued its defense alliances with allies like South Korea, Japan, and the Philippines. The US presence has expanded back into South and Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, India, and Pakistan. These ties, many forged in World War II and its aftermath, retain their importance to America today.



A US sailor interacts with children in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka, 2 May 2018, during a community relations event as part of Pacific Partnership, an annual multinational mission in the Indo-Pacific. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Kelsey L. Adams.

In recent years, US strategy focuses more on Asia—first with the Obama administration’s “pivot” to the region and now with the Trump administration focusing on the Indo-Pacific. These initiatives continue a legacy of engagement dating back to the War of Independence. The United States has always been involved in the Indo-Pacific, and it will continue to be well into the future. **JIPA**

Notes

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Realignment and Indian Airpower Doctrine

Challenges in an Evolving Strategic Context

Dr. Christina Goulter
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With a shift in the balance of power in the Far East, as well as multiple challenges in the wider international security environment, several nations in the Indo-Pacific region have undergone significant changes in their defense postures. This is particularly the case with India, which has gone from a regional, largely Pakistan-focused, perspective to one involving global influence and power projection. This has presented ramifications for all the Indian armed services, but especially the Indian Air Force (IAF). Over the last decade, the IAF has been transforming itself from a principally army-support instrument to a broad spectrum air force, and this prompted a radical revision of Indian airpower doctrine in 2012. It is akin to Western airpower thought, but much of the latest doctrine is indigenous and demonstrates some unique conceptual work, not least in the way maritime airpower is used to protect Indian territories in the Indian Ocean and safeguard sea lines of communication. Because of this, it is starting to have traction in Anglo-American defense circles.¹ The current Indian emphases on strategic reach and conventional deterrence have been prompted by other events as well, not least the 1999 Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan, which demonstrated that India lacked a balanced defense apparatus. This article examines the evolving doctrinal thinking of the IAF and argues that the service is transformational in the way it situates the use of airpower in addressing India's security environment.²

The IAF is currently the fourth-largest air service in the world, with nearly 1,500 aircraft, and, for this reason alone, it merits far greater attention than has been the case to date.³ But it is also one of the oldest independent air forces, having been established in 1932. Since that time, it has been involved in a variety of conflicts, including high-end, regular conventional warfare during WWII through to what can be categorized as counterinsurgency (COIN) and counterterrorism operations, including action against tribal groups in Waziristan. However, in spite

of this extensive experience, the IAF has lacked a comprehensive doctrine and balanced force structure and has primarily served two masters since its inception: the Indian Army and nuclear deterrence. This has had a variety of consequences, not least a defensive and reactive posture. Since independence, India has done its utmost to prevent escalation of conflict with Pakistan and, in spite of numerous incursions into its territory, has managed to contain the violence.⁴ These engagements between India and Pakistan, and, in one case, with China, should not be seen merely as border skirmishes; China and Pakistan have compelled India to fight five separate high-intensity conflicts, in addition to numerous low-intensity clashes.⁵ What is particularly significant about all the major conflicts waged by India is that the 1962 war with China was the only one they lost, and it is the only conflict during which Indian airpower was not employed. In all other instances, the Indian forces managed to turn the tide with the assistance of airpower. But what is also notable about all the conflicts up to the end of the 1990s is that lessons over and above the tactical level were not taken on board, and a myopic focus on Pakistan as a threat reinforced this tactical focus. As a result, most bases and air assets were positioned close to the Pakistani border.⁶

In other words, until the last decade, India has lacked a conventional deterrent capability and the type of reach that would allow New Delhi to engage in power projection, should the need arise. In view of the observation that half a century's worth of experience seemed not to influence Indian airpower thinking much beyond tactical effect, it is interesting to note that the last serious exchange between India and Pakistan during the Kargil War in 1999 appears to have galvanized Indian thinking about the role of airpower. Events since 9/11 and the rise of China have also compelled India to rethink conventional deterrence and redefine security well beyond India's borders and territorial waters. This can be seen as a response to Chinese behaviors, in particular. For the last decade, China's air strategy defines strategic frontiers well beyond its own borders.⁷ However, the major step change in India's defense posture occurred most markedly after the Kargil War, and one of the most striking features of this change is the way in which airpower is viewed—both as a strategic instrument and as a decisive instrument in its own right. It is, therefore, worth examining the Kargil conflict briefly in order to understand why it exercised such influence over Indian thinking.

For more than two months during 1999, Indian and Pakistani forces waged an intense conflict on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LOC) separating the two nations in Kashmir.⁸ Outside of the Indian subcontinent, it was a little known

war, mainly because the West's attention was focused on the Kosovo conflict, which occurred at the same time. During March and April 1999, units of the Pakistani Army infiltrated the Indian region of Kashmir by stealth. Almost all of the lead elements comprised Pakistan's Special Services Group and the locally-recruited Northern Light Infantry, disguised in tribal clothing.⁹ Because of harsh winter conditions during the preceding months, many of the Indian Army's outposts and observation points at altitudes of 16,000-18,000 feet had been abandoned, and reconnaissance of the region was reduced in scale. The withdrawal of Indian troops seemed to the Pakistanis too good an opportunity to miss, and although never officially stated at the time, the Pakistani aim was to seize control of India's only land line of communication to the Siachen Glacier, at the top end of the LOC, adjacent to the Chinese border.¹⁰ By the beginning of May, Pakistani forces occupied some 130 outposts, along a front of 112 miles, to a depth of 5–6 miles on the Indian side of the LOC. Conservative estimates at the time suggested that this involved an occupation force of between 1,500–2,000 Pakistani troops.¹¹

The Pakistani invasion became apparent only during the first week of May, when the Indian Army units that had withdrawn from their outposts and observation points a few months earlier started to return. At first, the initial assessment was that Pakistani troops had occupied only a handful of posts and that the incursions could be dealt with by a local unit response within a few days.¹² However, following artillery and small arms exchanges with Pakistani units, it became apparent that repelling the invaders would require a coherent response, and the IAF was called upon to support Indian Army battalions in the Kargil zone. As attack helicopters were unable to operate at the high altitudes involved, the IAF had to employ jet aircraft for reconnaissance and attack. During the third week of May, five infantry divisions, five brigades, and 44 battalions were dispatched to the Kargil sector, totaling more than 200,000 troops, and an Indian counteroffensive was planned for 26 May.¹³

The time elapsed between the first official acknowledgment of the Pakistani incursion and the counteroffensive was characterized by vacillation by senior Indian military leadership as to the nature of the threat posed, dogmatism on the part of Army commanders as to how they were going to meet the challenge (specifically, the type of air support they wanted), and fears over escalation of the conflict.¹⁴ There can be little doubt that the scale of the Pakistani incursion caused a strategic shock. Although artillery exchanges in the Kargil sector had increased in frequency over the preceding two years, the region was considered a quiet zone in compari-

son with others along the LOC. For the first two weeks of May, many senior commanders refused to believe that the incursion was performed by anyone other than militant insurgents, and briefings continued to refer to mujahedeen. The Indian Army persisted in its belief that it was markedly stronger and more capable than the Pakistanis, so the realization, when it finally came, that India had suffered a major incursion caused considerable psychological dislocation—not just at local unit level but, most significantly, among the senior military leadership.¹⁵ This dislocation manifested itself in a number of ways, not least in a lack of a joint response from the Indian armed forces. The initial reports were kept within Army circles, and as late as the morning of 10 May, the IAF's Western Air Command still knew nothing about the incursion. The only air support that was requested in the early stages was at a local level, when calls were made for helicopter gunships. When it was pointed out by the local air commander that attack helicopters would be extremely vulnerable to ground fire, especially Pakistani surface-to-air missiles (SAM), the Army vice-chief insisted that fast jet aviation would be inappropriate and potentially escalatory. At this point, the chief of the IAF, Air Chief Marshal Anil Tipnis, sought political approval for the use of fixed-wing offensive airpower.¹⁶ Permission was granted, as long as strikes were made inside Indian territory, and not across the LOC.

Offensive air operations began at first light on 26 May, two weeks after the first indications of a Pakistani incursion.¹⁷ The initial missions proved to be unusually taxing for the IAF; most of the targets were located on or near mountain ridgelines at altitudes between 16,000 and 18,000 feet.¹⁸ The rock-and-snow terrain made visual target identification very problematic, and the fast jet pilots found it very difficult to aim their weapons within the confines of narrow valleys.¹⁹ The threat of Pakistani anti-aircraft artillery and SAMs was always present, and three IAF aircraft were lost within the first three days of the campaign. Although no Indian aircraft were lost to enemy fire after this point, the SAM threat remained high, and the Pakistanis fired more than 100 SAMs in the course of the conflict. Exacerbating the problems facing the aircrews was the paucity of intelligence. Not only had there been a lack of joint air-land planning but the Army had also failed to pass on the latest intelligence assessments of Pakistani strengths and dispositions. Much of the intelligence being used by the IAF during the first weeks of the campaign was derived from its own aerial reconnaissance. In contrast to the Army's own organic aviation reconnaissance, which failed to detect any Pakistani activity in the previous months, the IAF's imagery analysis had at least shown where most of the Paki-

stani dispositions were, and electronic surveillance of the area provided useful signals intelligence (SIGINT), in spite of the Pakistani's increased signals security.²⁰

The most significant aerial action in support of the Indian 3rd and 8th Mountain Divisions occurred during the first two weeks of June. In order to prevent the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) from interfering with the fighting on the ground and Indian air support, the IAF maintained combat air patrols along the full length of the LOC and the Indo-Pakistani border, more widely.²¹ This was done as a precaution in case of a rapid escalation of the conflict. By this point, there was close coordination between the IAF and the Indian Army, and almost all the actions on the ground were preceded by air strikes. To begin with, the IAF was employing unguided weapons, but because of the problems with targeting in the mountainous terrain, the IAF quickly employed Mirage 2000H aircraft, which were capable of delivering laser-guided weapons. The change to precision weapons played a significant role in swinging the campaign in India's favor, and by mid-June, the Indian mountain divisions had recaptured the high ground that gave direct line of sight onto the national highway to the north. Another significant aerial action occurred on 17 June, when IAF Mirages hit the Pakistanis' main administrative and logistics hub at Muntho Dhalo, causing not just physical destruction but also dealing a major blow to Pakistani morale. Pakistani reports show that this attack marked the turning point in their campaign, as they were unable to sustain their operations after this point. As the weeks passed, the Indian mountain divisions recaptured one post after another, and the only occasions on which air support was not provided was when the weather precluded flying operations. Some strike operations were done at night, which also added to the psychological pressure being applied to the Pakistanis, who had not anticipated round-the-clock air attacks. Air strikes ended in mid-July, but other air support continued. This included several thousand helicopter sorties engaged in troop movement, air resupply, casualty evacuation, and heavy lift provided by Antinov-32 transport aircraft, which brought 6,650 tons of materiel and 27,000 troops into the Kargil sector. The Pakistanis were unable to match this level of sustainment and reinforcement, and, by 26 July, Indian forces had recaptured most of the posts, and almost all Pakistani units had withdrawn to their side of the LOC. The Indian counteroffensive had cost the Army 471 killed and a further 1,060 wounded.²² The Pakistani casualties were substantially more: over 700 killed and an estimated 1,000 wounded. Some sources suggest that these official Pakistani figures underplay the total losses by several hundred.²³ It is worth noting that, in spite of the difficulties the IAF experi-

enced in targeting, there were no “blue-on-blue” incidents during the campaign, and the application of airpower had been both precise and proportionate.

In the decade that followed the Kargil War, the conflict became the subject for extensive study in both India and Pakistan and was seen as a watershed.²⁴ It was recognized as a unique conflict, not least because the two antagonists were nuclear-armed nations. Pakistan’s acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1998 had made the country bolder in its dealings with India, but both nations came away from the conflict impressed (and relieved) that they had succeeded in preventing a nuclear escalation. Up to that point, the accepted orthodoxy within Western political and military circles was that nuclear-armed adversaries would avoid conflict at all costs for fear of escalation to a nuclear level.²⁵ The Kargil War defied that orthodoxy. The failure of the nuclear deterrent in this case prompted a rethinking of nuclear doctrine, but the conflict also spawned a new limited war concept, especially as far as India was concerned.²⁶ For India, Kargil demonstrated that it was possible to engage in a limited conventional conflict without escalation to the nuclear level, and this hurriedly prompted India to pursue the build-up of conventional forces in order to maintain its military-strategic advantage over Pakistan. As part of that desire to dominate escalation in a conflict, India looked to airpower to provide the principal strategic advantage, and this posture was very clear from a number of actions and pronouncements made by IAF seniors.²⁷ Interestingly, the Pakistani analysis of the consequences of Kargil also drew a clear connection between the conflict and the IAF’s modernization program. One PAF senior officer asserted that the Kargil review report provided the basis for the IAF receiving the preponderance of the 15-year defense spending plan (i.e. about \$30 billion) for new multi-role aircraft, including the Sukhoi Su-30MKI and French Rafale, as well as new transport aircraft and an enhanced airborne early warning capability.²⁸

Doctrinal Evolution

India’s intent to dominate conflict escalation is also reflected in its 2012 airpower doctrine. What differentiates this doctrine from its predecessor (published in 1995) is that it goes beyond outlining merely what airpower is, in terms of its roles, and explains to a far greater extent what airpower is for.²⁹ In contrast to the previous IAF doctrine, and, indeed, most Western airpower doctrine, the 2012 version makes a much clearer connection between airpower and national security. Airpower is viewed as an indicator of national power and is defined as comprising the “sum total of a nation’s aviation and related capabilities,” including civilian assets.³⁰ The

inclusion of civilian assets is unusual in doctrinal terms, but it demonstrates that the IAF is now thinking in a holistic way about national capability. Airpower is seen as serving Indian national interests across the full spectrum of conflict as well as taking a leading role in nation building and military diplomacy.

However, perhaps the most unique conceptual work is displayed in the areas of control of the air and strategic effect.³¹ Control of the air is seen not merely as the most fundamental role of airpower (to protect the nation-state from attack) and a vital prerequisite for all other operations but also as the capability to defend a nation and provide freedom of maneuver as a deterrent in itself. This is a very important point overlooked in most other airpower doctrine. The IAF doctrine does not go as far as some previous British airpower doctrine, which suggests that control of the air is “an end in itself”; the argument the IAF puts forward is far more nuanced.³² It sees deterrence and control of the air as inextricably intertwined; the credibility of the air force is dependent upon the ability of that air force to maintain control of the air, but the ability to control the airspace means little if the deterrent value of the air force is limited. The phrase deterrent air defense encapsulates what is intended.

It is also interesting to note that the IAF has retained the old doctrinal nomenclature of degrees of control of the air.³³ This has been dispensed with in most Western air doctrine over the last decade and a half, coinciding with COIN campaigning, during which time there has been little threat from the air. However, it is under consideration again now that state threats have come back into focus and the West is having to operate in parts of the world where air defense is well developed and de-confliction among various national air contingents may not be thoroughly worked out. The 2011 air campaign over Libya and recent operations against the Islamic State in Syria are good examples of this.³⁴ During the Kargil operation, the IAF maintained air superiority adjacent to most of the LOC, but a persistent threat posed by SAMs meant that the IAF did not have air supremacy. The IAF’s control of the air was not absolute, but it possessed sufficient control in order to prosecute the campaign it wished in order to dislodge the invaders.

There are several other aspects of control of the air that have been downplayed or omitted in Western doctrine since the end of the Cold War but feature in the latest IAF doctrine. One of these is protection of airfields. The IAF doctrine notes that airfields are “densely packed, high-value targets. Aircraft on the ground at airfields are more concentrated and vulnerable than they are in flight.”³⁵ With considerable prescience, these lines were written just prior to the major Taliban attack on Camp

Bastion, Afghanistan, in September 2012, which resulted in the loss of two US servicemen and several aircraft, prompting the US and Britain to re-examine existing tactics and resuscitate old Cold War survival-to-operate procedures.³⁶ However, the point is that it should not have taken the attack on Camp Bastion to draw attention to force protection issues. Since the end of the Cold War, several NATO nations have had experiences of bases being attacked. During the closing stages of the conflict in Iraq, for example, British Royal Air Force (RAF) aircraft came increasingly under attack in Basra, causing the larger assets (such as the Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft) to be withdrawn further back in theatre, and during 2007, the RAF lost a C-130 Hercules after an improvised explosive device detonated on the airfield at Al-Amarah. In both of these cases, the lesson supposedly learned was that no freedom of maneuver meant no airpower effect, or, at least, delayed airpower effect. One of the reasons why such incidents seem not to have had much impact in the United Kingdom may be because force protection is not addressed directly in the latest British airpower doctrine but is dealt with in subordinate operations manuals written by the RAF Regiment. These manuals convey the importance of force protection in a manner that should appear, at least briefly, in the main airpower doctrine. For instance, the RAF Force Protection for Air Operations manual refers to the way in which force protection “is recognized, along with Air Logistics, as a key enabler for Air and Space Power’s four fundamental roles.”³⁷ This is one of several areas where the IAF airpower doctrine is superior because it acknowledges that control of the air includes protection of aircraft on the ground in the face of surface-to-surface threats.

However, the main reason the IAF doctrine has attracted attention in the West, particularly in the United States, is its treatment of strategic effect and conventional deterrence. The US interest stems from the fact that it is seeking to partner with nations that it regards as counterbalances to China, but it is also related to a new US focus on tailored deterrence using nuclear and conventional means.³⁸ In India, discussions of strategic effect preceded the Kargil conflict, and, indeed, the subject appeared briefly in the previous IAF doctrine, but the conflict in 1999 prompted far greater consideration of airpower’s strategic role, not the least because it helped to defuse a potential nuclear escalation. During the early to mid-2000s, many writers, several of whom were recently retired senior officers, underscored the importance of airpower in turning the tide during the Kargil conflict and how airpower provided the best means of ensuring that India attains its place as a global player economically.³⁹ As far as India is concerned, the principal threat to this aspiration comes

from China. Although Indo-Chinese relations improved for a time during the late 1990s, military competition and distrust remain. China engaged in what were considered to be several provocative actions during the following decade, including the building of SIGINT installations in the southern portion of the Tibetan plateau and in Aksai Chin, a disputed border area between the two countries. Chinese rapid reaction forces were also deployed close to the border. As a result, the IAF strengthened its Eastern Air Command, deploying Su30 Flankers there from 2008 onward. The commander of the Eastern Air Force at the time, Air Marshal Pranab Kumar Barbora, made the point that this reinforcement was designed to thwart any “misadventure” by the Chinese and a repeat of the 1962 conflict. While it was admitted that India could not match China’s numerical strength, it was felt that the IAF would provide a sufficiently strong “deterrent force” because of its force multiplying potential.⁴⁰

So, while India sees Pakistan as a constant drain on its defense resources because of the ongoing territorial claims, the rise of China has eclipsed most other security concerns. Whereas India’s concept of defense used to focus purely on its borders, it now envisages “strategic reach” to protect national interests, particularly economic, trade, and energy security.⁴¹ Implicit in this strategic reach is deterrence; India is no longer content to fight purely within its own borders when threatened and now talks in terms of protecting its security interests at a continental level and extending its range also in the maritime sphere from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca.⁴²

This emphasis on strategic reach and strategic effect, more broadly, is a fundamental revolution in how India views airpower and is reflected in both the 2012 IAF doctrine and procurement. After half a century of viewing the IAF as a tactical support instrument, the 2012 doctrine seems to go almost to the opposite extreme. It states “air power is inherently strategic in nature and its tactical application would only fritter away its prime advantage of creating strategic effects.”⁴³ Interestingly, the doctrine makes a point of quoting some of Marshal of the RAF Lord Hugh Trenchard’s pronouncements from the 1920s, “It is not necessary for an air force, in order to defeat an enemy nation, to defeat its armed forces first. Air power can dispense with that intermediate step, can pass over the enemy navies and armies, penetrate the air defences and attack direct the centres of production, transportation and communication from which the enemy war effort is maintained.”⁴⁴

But just when the new doctrine could appear to be a throwback to the extreme positions of the interwar theorists, it then offers some unique insights about the na-

ture of strategic effect and serves to demonstrate where Western airpower doctrine is conceptually weak. One of these areas is the definition of strategic air effect. The IAF document makes the point that “the classification of an offensive air operation as ‘strategic’ is not determined by range, platform type or the weaponry used, but is determined by the objective or the purpose served.”⁴⁵ Much of Western airpower doctrine continues to conflate range or depth of penetration with “strategic.” For example, the latest British airpower doctrine talks about strategic being the effect sought, yet it also refers to operations against targets in the “heart of enemy territory.”⁴⁶

However, one of the most important observations made by the IAF doctrine about the nature of strategic effect can be found in a section on sub-conventional operations. One of the fallacies in Western discourse, especially since 2001, is that airpower is a purely supporting instrument in irregular warfare, and that airpower cannot have strategic effect in this setting.⁴⁷ Although the 2012 IAF doctrine could have expanded on this area a little more, it makes the point that key leadership targeting has a strategic effect.⁴⁸ It uses the US operation to kill Osama bin Laden in May 2011 to illustrate airpower’s role in sub-conventional warfare, but a better example might have been the targeting of the Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2006, which included airborne tracking of al-Zarqawi and the final act performed by F-16s.

Reflecting India’s new interest in protecting its global interests and defending forward, the 2012 doctrine also devotes space to strategic lift. The doctrine and senior IAF commentators make the point that a strategic strike capability without strategic airlift risks a gap in India’s ability to project power.⁴⁹ Doubtless, the Kargil experience was informative here, as airlift was used to bring several divisions into the zone prior to the Indian counteroffensive, but airlift has been viewed as a lifeline to Indian forces in the border zones for over 50 years.⁵⁰ However, it is also apparent that the IAF sees strategic airlift as important for soft power, including humanitarian aid and disaster relief in the region. Reference is made in several places throughout the doctrine to airpower’s role in non-kinetic activity, and a whole chapter is devoted to “Nation Building, Aerial Diplomacy and Perception Management.”⁵¹ Western airpower doctrine, in contrast, has tended to emphasize kinetic effect when addressing strategic airpower. This is particularly the case with US doctrine.⁵²

India’s aspiration to achieve power projection and an expeditionary capability is not yet a reality, and some writers cast doubt on the idea that India can achieve a true expeditionary footing, even in the midterm.⁵³ The IAF has many legacy assets,

with a preponderance of short-range interceptor aircraft, such as the MiG-21, which were given multirole functions during the 1980s and 1990s. The short range of the aircraft concerned meant that the IAF could only perform air defense and Army-support functions.⁵⁴ However, the IAF's modernization program is making steady progress toward a strength of 42 squadrons by 2022, and the types of aircraft being procured indicate a serious intent to develop a balanced air force and a true strategic capability.⁵⁵ Three combat aircraft acquisition programs aim to provide a new light combat aircraft (an indigenous design, the Tejas) to replace the aging MiG-21s, a multirole combat fighter (the French Rafale), and a fifth-generation fighter (the Su-T50 being developed in collaboration with the Russians). Although the introduction of the Tejas has been slower than desired, the IAF expressed satisfaction with its performance as a light multirole strike aircraft during recent exercises.⁵⁶ In addition, the IAF is acquiring a fleet of 272 Su-30 fighter-bombers, Israeli airborne early warning aircraft, and air transport aircraft from the United States (including six C-130J Hercules, air-to-air refueling aircraft, and an unspecified number of C-17 Globemasters).⁵⁷ These acquisitions will have not just force multiplier effects but synergies that will add to the deterrent value of the IAF. Early warning aircraft will not only enhance India's air defense radius but will also play a key role in any expeditionary context. Similarly, refueling tanker aircraft will increase the range and weapon loads of strike aircraft, thereby adding to India's air deterrent.

Challenges Facing Indian Airpower

While greater thought is being applied as to how these aircraft are being acquired, one of the key weaknesses of the IAF has been the multiplicity of aircraft types in service. During the 1980s, for example, the IAF had no fewer than 11 different fighter aircraft, and this placed an unnecessary training and maintenance burden on the service.⁵⁸ There may still be problems if the current modernization program persists with multinational procurement, not the least because the United States' increasingly strained relations with Russia may affect India's relationship with those two countries. After decades of deliberately pursuing a non-aligned posture, India has cultivated much closer ties with the United States, including several high-profile joint exercises since 2004.⁵⁹ But closer interaction with the United States may imperil India's collaborative fifth-generation fighter aircraft project with Russia.

In spite of the hurdles inherent in the IAF's modernization program, the service has at least received international recognition as a balanced, full-spectrum air



Lt Col Casey Eaton, USAF, explains the capabilities of the C-17 Globemaster III to Indian air force wing commanders Anup Kumar Dutta, K.V. Surendran Nair, and S.K. Vidhate during their visit to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. As part of their visit, Indian air force officers learned how the United States commands and controls airpower in the Pacific through the 613th Air and Space Operations Center (AOC). Five 613th AOC members later visited India for a similar orientation, as part of a subject-matter expert exchange with the Indian air force. US Air Force photo by Oscar Hernandez.

force. However, there remains one serious impediment to India's desire for global reach and power projection—a flawed intelligence apparatus. Sharing of intelligence between the military and intelligence agencies remains suboptimal, and India currently lacks a command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, information, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4I2SR) system suitable for network-centric warfare.⁶⁰ While India made a variety of important observations about the Kargil conflict, chief of which was the deficiencies in the Indian intelligence apparatus, not all the lessons identified were acted upon or received further attention.⁶¹ This is evident in several places, not the least the 2012 IAF doctrine, which pays scant attention to the subject of intelligence, either in terms of intelligence supporting operations or airpower as a source of intelligence. Although a doctrinal precepts section talks about how targets need to be “carefully chosen” and “must have a direct link with the enemy's strategy or his decision-making process,” intelligence is not considered one of the main precepts and is accorded fewer

than a dozen lines in the doctrine.⁶² There is no real discussion about the role of intelligence in target selection, target prioritization, the importance of timely and precise intelligence, and so forth. This is in contrast to most Western airpower doctrine, which treats intelligence acquisition as one of the four main roles of airpower and how strategic effect, in particular, is dependent upon all-source analysis.⁶³ Even allowing for Indian sensitivities over releasing too much information about their intelligence machinery, to accord the subject just a few lines is a serious weakness in the doctrine. Other nations' airpower doctrine manages to address intelligence in generic terms, without compromising national security, and the IAF should be able to do the same.

In the past, when countries have suffered strategic shock as a result of perceived or actual intelligence failure, not only is the intelligence apparatus overhauled but also the significance of accurate and timely intelligence is usually impressed upon all organs of state, especially the military.⁶⁴ For the IAF doctrine to downplay the role of intelligence is not just dangerous, it is an oddity, because one of the conclusions drawn in the Kargil report was that India's national surveillance capability was "grossly inadequate," particularly satellite and other imagery acquisition.⁶⁵ The report states that had India possessed high-definition satellite imagery capability, unmanned aerial vehicles, and better human intelligence, the Pakistani incursion would have been spotted at a much earlier point. The report recommended that every effort be made and adequate funds provided to ensure that a capability of world standards was developed "indigenously and put in place in the shortest possible time."⁶⁶ Therefore, it would be reasonable to expect the 2012 doctrine to, at least, treat intelligence acquisition as a core role for airpower in a similar way to Western airpower doctrine. One of the possible reasons why the doctrine devotes so little attention to the subject is that airpower, itself, is accorded surprisingly little attention in the Kargil report. The report tends to focus on the failures by the Indian defense-and-security apparatus, rather than addressing any success stories. As airpower was considered the principal factor explaining Indian success, it may have been sidelined as a topic not demanding further investigation.⁶⁷ If airpower had been found wanting, then it and air-derived intelligence may have been addressed in more detail.

Nevertheless, the Kargil report does point to failings in service intelligence and sharing of intelligence among the services and intelligence agencies. Among the observations made is that Indian air intelligence was lulled into a false sense of security. When Pakistani aircraft were located near the border just prior to the incur-

sion, both army and air force intelligence assessed this activity as “normal.”⁶⁸ Equally, reports of construction of helicopter bases were dismissed, as it was reasoned that the bases were required to support Pakistani positions near the LOC. However, both the air force and the army were criticized for shortcomings in order-of-battle analysis, especially their failure to keep track of five Pakistani light infantry battalions as they crossed the LOC.⁶⁹ In several cases, tactical intelligence was not shared beyond one-star headquarters, either within the same service or with other services so that a holistic view of Pakistani activity impossible.⁷⁰ However, the failings did not just exist at unit level. The operational level intelligence apparatus also came in for criticism when it became apparent that there was some tactical intelligence suggesting that an invasion was imminent, but that the analytical staffs compiling an overall assessment for the Director General of Military Intelligence overlooked this intelligence.⁷¹ Part of the problem seems to have stemmed from a classic intelligence pitfall: mirror imaging. Because the Indian Army lacked the means to sustain operations in winter weather at altitude, the assumption was made that the Pakistanis would not attempt major military operations in that type of environment.⁷²

Many writers consider Kargil to have been a systemic intelligence failure,⁷³ but this may be doing a disservice to parts of the intelligence machinery that functioned reasonably well. It is worth noting on which occasions and at what levels the intelligence apparatus made the correct assessments. There is a suggestion in the Kargil report that the Indian Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), which is responsible for pan-government strategic assessments, did raise the possibility of a Pakistani campaign in the Kargil zone in November 1998, some five months before the incursion.⁷⁴ The JIC also repeatedly pointed to an emboldened Pakistani government that was likely to initiate a move in the Jammu and Kashmir region. The Kargil report made the point that JIC assessments did not receive the attention “they deserved at the political and higher bureaucratic levels. . . . The JIC was not accorded the importance it deserved either by the intelligence agencies or the Government.”⁷⁵ The question can be raised as to why the JIC’s assessments did not gain traction especially within the Indian government. The problem may have been the type of language used; assessments done by committee tend to reflect the lowest-common-denominator positions within the committee, leading to anodyne language. It is, therefore, possible that the strategic indicators of an incursion by Pakistan were not conveyed robustly enough. But writers who suggest that no strategic assessments had been made are wrong.⁷⁶ Equally, after the incursion became

apparent, the IAF did perform well in reconnaissance and imagery analysis. One of the IAF's strengths is its adaptability, and as early as 10 May, the IAF's reconnaissance-and-surveillance assets were swung into action, including Jaguar fighters employed in a reconnaissance role.⁷⁷ Air-derived intelligence helped to bring clarity to the situation during the critical days after the incursion was first reported, and on 14 May, the Air HQ established an air operations center for the Jammu–Kashmir region in anticipation of a counteroffensive.

The responsiveness that the IAF demonstrated was in spite of a lack of effective joint machinery. There was surprisingly little communication between the Land and Air HQs, and during the first week after the incursion was detected, the Indian Army attempted to respond alone. The Air Chief Marshal Tipnis recalled how the Army's Northern Command was reluctant to share reports on its initial artillery and small arms exchanges with the Pakistani forces. When the Army did engage with the local air officer commanding, the request was for helicopter gunships to assist with the "eviction" of the "intruders."⁷⁸ It was pointed out that the altitudes at which air support would have to operate precluded the use of helicopters, and fast jet aviation was suggested as the only option, not least because if the situation escalated, airpower was going to provide the best means of dealing with the situation quickly. This was eventually agreed upon, after discussions between the service chiefs, but valuable time was lost due to there being no formal process for air-land integration. Air Chief Marshal Tipnis commented that there was a total lack of Army-IAF joint staff work and no joint planning, not even joint deliberations at any command level, and this persisted for several weeks.⁷⁹ However, once the gravity of the Pakistani incursion became known at the governmental level and approval for the use of fast jet aviation was received, with the caveat that the IAF operated on the Indian side of the LOC, jointery characterized India's conduct of the conflict.⁸⁰

The IAF's senior leadership was clearly scarred by the initial lack of service integration during the Kargil conflict, and jointery is one of the areas that does receive close attention in the 2012 doctrine (in contrast to intelligence). A whole chapter is devoted to "Joint Operations," and it provides almost unique clarity on the subject.⁸¹ Western airpower doctrine would do well to emulate it. One of the particular strengths of the chapter is the way in which ideas are articulated; the language used is direct and very clear. The doctrine uses the word "jointmanship," making it a function of leadership. This is a vitally important point and a considerable advance on most other doctrine. Second, it emphasizes that jointery is about true

partnership and genuine respect for each service's capabilities. The issue of respect is so often omitted in Western doctrine. It underscores mutual trust and confidence, as well as each service taking the time to learn and understand the strengths and weaknesses of other partners. The doctrine also emphasizes the importance of using the appropriate tools at the right time. The issue of appropriateness is rarely discussed in Western doctrine. It is suggested that if all these factors are taken account of, then joint action will have synergistic and force multiplying effects, but the point is also made that jointmanship needs to be exercised regularly, because this is the only way to refine operating concepts. In short, this chapter articulates the essential tenets of jointery in a way that is yet to be done properly in the West.

Although some of the most unique conceptual work found in the IAF doctrine relates to control of the air and strategic effect, the way in which air-surface integration is treated is also noteworthy.⁸² A number of important observations are made, including the psychological effect of air attacks on enemy troops and the fact that air interdiction of enemy supply lines can create strategic effect (the example cited in the latter case is Wehrmacht General Erwin Rommel's Afrika Corps being unable to exercise any real impact on Mediterranean strategy after 1942 due to the aerial interdiction of his supply lines). During the Kargil conflict, the attack on the Pakistani logistics hub at Muntho Dhaho dealt a fatal blow to both Pakistani morale and their ability to sustain their campaign, and these effects were highlighted in the Kargil report.⁸³ Clearly, this experience had a major impact on IAF thinking about the psychological effect of airpower and the significance of aerial interdiction.

However, perhaps most interesting is the IAF doctrine's treatment of air-maritime operations. Unusually, India employs its navy for maritime reconnaissance, but the strike function has been given to the air force. Of particular note is the way in which a distinction is drawn between anti-shipping strike and maritime strike.⁸⁴ The former is aimed at the enemy's naval assets in proximity to Indian forces, while the latter is aimed at enemy targets that are not in contact with friendly forces, and included in this category are enemy naval facilities in harbor and maritime patrol aircraft on the ground. This distinction between anti-shipping strike and maritime strike is unique and is akin to the distinction made in Western airpower doctrine between close air support (the targeting of enemy troops in contact with friendly forces) and air interdiction (the targeting of enemy supply lines, reserves, and troops not in the immediate battlespace). The main point, however, is that the IAF doctrine dedicates far more space to this subject than most Western

airpower doctrine, certainly the British equivalents since the 1990s, which have steadily decreased the attention given to anti-shipping (or maritime strike) roles.⁸⁵

What the authors of the Indian airpower doctrine appreciate, while their counterparts in the West seem not to, is that one of the roles of air doctrine is to highlight how airpower should be used or could be used, if the nation possesses all the resources it requires. One of the traps into which British doctrine, in particular, has fallen is to downplay or disregard certain functions of airpower when the country has lacked particular assets. This is certainly the case with maritime aviation. In the late 1990s, after the RAF dispensed with its two Tornado squadrons devoted to an anti-shipping role, no mention was made of a maritime-strike function in RAF doctrine.⁸⁶ Similarly, the axing of the Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft after the Strategic Defence Review of 2010 led to the maritime reconnaissance-and-surveillance function being dropped from the 2013 doctrine, just as strategic effect disappeared from British air doctrine in the fourth edition simply because the operational context was, apparently, all about COIN warfare at the time. In other words, doctrine of any service type needs to deal in some universal constants and should not be overly swayed by either operational contexts or available capabilities. A certain proportion of any doctrine also has aspirational elements to it, and some of the IAF doctrine falls into this category. The IAF doctrine optimistically predicts that air force and carrier aviation will be able to meet both regional and out-of-area defense requirements, so long as operations are properly coordinated and planned.⁸⁷

Conclusion

It is clear from the 2012 doctrine that the IAF sees itself as an instrument of power projection and underpinning expeditionary capability, but it also recognizes that it is the principal tool in India's armory if deterrence fails.⁸⁸ It is also clear that the Kargil experience was extremely important in crystalizing Indian thinking about the utility of airpower. For India, the overriding lessons from 1999 were that the nation had paid a heavy price for its failure to invest properly in conventional deterrence, a balanced force structure and intelligence, but that airpower had been the chief factor in turning the tide in its favor. Since then, Pakistan has been reluctant to engage in major adventurism (even if border skirmishes continue). Therefore, it is difficult to agree with some writers who suggest that the IAF's expanded capability is causing more, not less, instability in South Asia.⁸⁹ The IAF's modernization program has been transformative, not merely in material and training

terms but also in the conceptual realm. While some flaws in the airpower doctrine remain, not least in how intelligence is treated, the 2012 doctrine is revolutionary on many levels. This transformation has ensured new, strong international partnerships that have, in turn, added to the deterrent value of the IAF. **JIPA**

Notes

1. See, for example, Adam B. Lowther and Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, "Building a Partnership between the United States and India: Exploring Airpower's Potential," *Air & Space Power Journal* 29, no. 2 (March–April 2015): 21–35, http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/ASPI/journals/Volume-29_Issue-2/F-Lowther_Rajagopalan.pdf.
2. For an overview of the changing priorities of Indian defence policy, see Harsh V. Pant, ed., *Handbook of Indian Defence Policy: Themes, Structures and Doctrines* (London: Routledge, 2015).
3. Arjun Subramaniam, "The Strategic Role of Airpower: An Indian Perspective on How We Need to Think, Train and Fight in the Coming Years," *Air & Space Power Journal* 22, no. 3 (Fall 2008): 56–66, http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/ASPI/journals/Volume-22_Issue-1-4/2008_Vol22_No3.pdf; and George K. Tanham and Marcy Agmon, *The Indian Air Force: Trends and Prospects* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1995), 91, https://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR424.html.
4. The only significant loss of territory (in the far north of India, in the Ladakh region) occurred during the 1962 conflict with China. See J. A. Khan, *Air Power Challenges to IAF* (New Delhi: APH Publishing, 2004), 180–81.
5. *Ibid.*, 265.
6. Subramaniam, "The Strategic Role of Airpower," 56–62.
7. A. K. Sachdev, "Chinese Missiles: Winning the Limited War," *Strategic Analysis* 24, no. 3 (2000): 525–38.
8. The best general analysis of the Kargil War can be found in Peter R. Lavoy, ed., *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of the Kargil Conflict* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009). The best analysis from an airpower perspective can be found in Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Airpower at 18,000': The Indian Air Force in the Kargil War* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012).
9. Kargil Review Committee, Indian Government, *From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999), 230.
10. The "Kargil Plan" was discussed among the senior political leadership in Pakistan as early as November 1998. See *Kargil Review Committee, From Surprise to Reckoning*, 226.
11. Benjamin S. Lambeth, "Air Power in India's 1999 Kargil War," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 35, no. 3 (2012), 292.
12. Lambeth, *Airpower at 18,000'*, 8.
13. Lambeth, "Air Power in India's 1999 Kargil War," 293.
14. *Ibid.*, 298.
15. John H. Gill, "Military Operations in the Kargil Conflict," in *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of the Kargil Conflict*, edited by Peter R. Lavoy (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 104.
16. Lambeth, "Air Power in India's 1999 Kargil War," 296.
17. The counteroffensive was called Operation Vijay, and the air element Operation Safed Sagar.

18. Lambeth, "Air Power in India's 1999 Kargil War," 299.
19. This was particularly so when aircraft had to make perpendicular approaches to targets, crossing several ridgelines in quick succession, rather than flying up valleys.
20. James J. Wirtz and Surinder Rana, "Surprise at the Top of the World: India's Systemic and Intelligence Failure," in *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of the Kargil Conflict*, edited by Peter R. Lavoy (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 222–24; and Lambeth, *Airpower at 18,000'*, 10, 20.
21. Lambeth, "Air Power in India's 1999 Kargil War," 300.
22. *Ibid.*, 303. The official Indian report, *From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report*, has different figures for Indian wounded (1,109) and a total figure of 474 killed (which takes account of the three IAF aircraft lost to SAMs).
23. See, for example, Gill, "Military Operations in the Kargil Conflict," 120–22.
24. In India, the unclassified official report appeared as *From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report*. In Pakistan, although most military analyses of the Kargil conflict remain classified, a semi-official account was published in 2003 by Shireen M. Mazari, *The Kargil Conflict 1999: Separating Fact from Fiction* (Islamabad: Institute of Strategic Studies, 2003). Since that time, several Indian and Pakistani senior officers have published their own accounts and analyses, including V. P. Malik, *Kargil: From Surprise to Victory* (New Delhi: Harper-Collins, 2006); Jasjit Singh, "Kashmir, Covert Wars, and Air Power," *Air Power Journal* (Summer 2005); and A. Y. Tipnis, "My Story: The Chief of Air Staff on Operation Safed Sagar," *Force* (October 2006). See also: Hasan-Askari Rizvi, "The Lessons of Kargil as Learned by Pakistan," in *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of the Kargil Conflict*, edited by Peter R. Lavoy (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 333–52; and Timothy D. Hoyt, "Kargil: The Nuclear Dimension," in *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of the Kargil Conflict*, edited by Peter R. Lavoy (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 144–70.
25. Peter R. Lavoy, "Introduction: The Importance of the Kargil Conflict," in *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of the Kargil Conflict*, edited by Peter R. Lavoy (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 30–31.
26. Hoyt, "Kargil: The Nuclear Dimension," 163.
27. Fali H. Major, "Indian Air Force in the 21st Century: Challenges and Opportunities," *Journal of Defence Studies* 2, no. 1 (Summer 2008): 17–30, https://idsa.in/jds/2_1_2008_IndianAirForceinthe21st-Century_FHMajor+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us. See also S. P. Tyagi, "Strengthen India's Aerospace Power," *Indian Defence Review* 22, no. 1 (January–March 2007), <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/news/strengthen-indias-aerospace-power/2/>; and Zia ul Huque Shamsi, "Indian Air Force Modernisation Plan of 2020: Challenges for Regional Air Forces," Australian Defence College, October 2012, http://www.defence.gov.au/ADC/Publications/Commanders/2012/04_IAF%202020%20AWC.pdf.
28. Shamsi, "Indian Air Force Modernisation Plan of 2020," 8–10.
29. Norman Anil Kumar Browne, "Foreword," in *Basic Doctrine of the Indian Air Force* (Delhi: Indian Air Force HQ, 2012), v–vi.
30. *Ibid.*, 22, and see also 1, 6–8, 36–56; and Tyagi, "Strengthen India's Aerospace Power."
31. *Basic Doctrine of the Indian Air Force*, 36–56 and 69–74. Virtually a whole chapter is devoted to the subject of control of the air, in all its facets, and strategic air is accorded the same level of attention throughout the 2012 doctrine.
32. Air Staff, Ministry of Defence, *Royal Air Force: Air Power Doctrine AP3000*, 2nd ed. (London: Ministry of Defence, 1993), 39. See also Shamsi, "Indian Air Force Modernisation Plan of 2020," 13; and R. V. Phadke, "Response Options: Future of Indian Air Power Vision 2020," *Strategic Analysis* 24, no. 10 (January 2001): 1795–812.

33. The three main categories outlined in the IAF doctrine are *air supremacy*, *air superiority*, and *favourable air situation*. *Basic Doctrine of the Indian Air Force*, 40–41.

34. Especially in the latter case, NATO partners have had difficulty deconflicting their operations against the Islamic State with activity by the Syrian regime and Russian aircraft, which have been pursuing their own agendas. See Christina Goulter, “The British Experience: Operation Ellamy,” in *Precision and Purpose: Airpower in the Libyan Civil War*, ed. Karl P. Mueller (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2015), 153–82, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR600/RR676/RAND_RR676.pdf.

35. *Basic Doctrine of the Indian Air Force*, 45. The doctrine was signed off, officially, by the IAF Chief on 17 September 2012, three days after the Taliban attack on Camp Bastion in Afghanistan, but the main text was completed some months before.

36. For more information on the Camp Bastion attack and American perspectives on air base defense, see Erik K. Rundquist, “A Short History of Air Base Defense: From World War I to Iraq,” in *Defending Air Bases in an Age of Insurgency*, edited by Shannon W. Caudill (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 2014), 3–42.

37. RAF Air Publication 3241B *RAF Force Protection for Air Operations: Operations Manual* (March 2011), 1.2.

38. Lowther and Rajagopalan, “Building a Partnership between the United States and India”; Craig H. Neuman II, “Forging an Indian Partnership,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 112–44, http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-06_Issue-2/07-Neuman.pdf; Robert Blake, “Looking East, Looking West: U.S. Support for India’s Regional Leadership” (speech, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 12 April 2013), <https://2009-2017.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rmks/2013/207497.htm>; C. Raja Mohan, “Rising India: Partner in Shaping the Global Commons?,” *Washington Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (July 2010): 133–48, http://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2010/gc/ws_mar_risingindia.pdf; Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, “The New Era of Nuclear Weapons, Deterrence, and Conflict,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 7, no.1 (Spring 2013): 3–14, http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-10_Issue-5/Lieber.pdf; Robert S. Ross, “US Grand Strategy, the Rise of China, and US National Security Strategy for East Asia,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 20–40, http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-07_Issue-2/Ross.pdf; David J. Trachtenberg, “US Extended Deterrence: How Much Strategic Force Is too Little?,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 62–92, http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-06_Issue-2/05-Trachtenberg.pdf; and David W. Kearn Jr., “The Future of US Deterrence in East Asia: Are Conventional Land-Based IRBMs a Silver Bullet?,” *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (Winter 2013): 93–116, http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-07_Issue-4/2013winter-Kearn.pdf.

39. See, for example, Tyagi, “Strengthen India’s Aerospace Power”; K. B. Menon, “Modernisation of India’s Military Aviation,” *Indian Defence Review* 26, no. 1 (January–March 2011), <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/news/modernisation-of-indias-military-aviation/2/>; and Subramaniam, “The Strategic Role of Airpower,” 56–66. Air Commodore Subramaniam’s article was originally published by the Indian Centre for Air Power Studies in 2006. See also Kargil Review Committee, Indian Government, *From Surprise to Reckoning*, 105.

40. Quoted in Jonathan Holslag, “The Persistent Military Security Dilemma between China and India,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no.6 (2009), 823, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01402390903189592?needAccess=true>.

41. S. P. Tyagi, “India to Protect Interests Beyond Border,” *Dawn*, 24 August 2006. See also Tyagi, “Strengthen India’s Aerospace Power.”

42. Subramaniam, "The Strategic Role of Airpower," 61; and Phadke, "Response Options," 1795–812.
43. *Basic Doctrine*, 70.
44. The National Archives, AIR 9/8. CAS Sir Hugh Trenchard, "The War Object of an Air Force," 2 May 1928.
45. *Basic Doctrine*, 69.
46. See, for example, British Air Power doctrine since the 1990s. While the 1993 edition of *Air Power Doctrine*, AP3000, 2nd ed., made the same point about *strategic* not being defined by range, platform, or weaponry, on page 72, the latest British air doctrine, JDP 0-30, published in 2013, is confusing on the issue (paragraph 319, Chapter 3-13).
47. *British Air Power Doctrine*, AP3000, 4th ed., omitted reference to strategic effect altogether, and the focus was on support aviation in a joint context. See also Christina Goulter, "Irregular Warfare: The Regular in the Irregular," in *A Century of Military Aviation, 1914–2014: Proceedings of the 2014 RAAF Air Power Conference*, ed. Keith Brent (Canberra, Australia: Air Power Development Centre, 2014), 129–53.
48. *Basic Doctrine*, 73.
49. Ibid., 72, 78, and Chapter 7. See also Subramaniam, "The Strategic Role of Airpower," 61–62.
50. Phadke, "Response Options."
51. *Basic Doctrine*, Chapter 10, 117–23.
52. See, for example, USAF, Air Force Doctrine Document 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine*, 17 Nov 2003, 40–41. See also Robert Frank Futrell, *Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine: Basic Thinking in the United States Air Force, 1961–1984* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1989); and Curtis E. LeMay, Richard H. Kohn, and Joseph P. Harahan, *Strategic Air Warfare: An Interview with Generals Curtis E. LeMay, Leon W. Johnson, David A. Burchinal, and Jack J. Catton* (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1988).
53. P. I. Muralidharan, "Indian Air Force: Is It an Expeditionary Force?" special commentary, *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 2 January 2014, http://www.ipcs.org/comm_select.php?articleNo=4232.
54. For example, the MiG-21 has an effective range of only about 750 miles. With a full weapons load this is reduced significantly.
55. Gurmeet Kanwal, "India's Military Modernisation: Plans and Strategic Underpinnings," *National Bureau of Asian Research* (website), 24 September 2012, <http://www.nbr.org/research/activity.aspx?id=275>.
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57. Ibid. See also Lambeth, B. 'India's Air Force Evolves,' *Air Force Magazine*, March 2015, pp.62–66.
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62. *Basic Doctrine*, 74, and 14, 71. Under *combat enabling air campaigns* on pages 87–94, space is devoted to surveillance and reconnaissance, but the preponderance of the discussion focuses on the distinction between surveillance and reconnaissance.

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US Military Liberty Restrictions in Okinawa —Falling on Deaf Ears?

Maj John C. Wright, USAF

On 21 November 2017, in response to a criminal drunk driving incident by a US Marine that resulted in the death of an Okinawan civilian, US military leadership in Japan issued the latest in a series of disciplinary measures for US personnel, designed to show the Japanese that the United States is taking the behavior of its troops seriously. These restrictions were draconian by previous standards: US service members were strictly prohibited from traveling anywhere beyond their work locations and their residences and barred from purchasing or consuming alcohol on or off base, including their own residences. The restrictions were subsequently relaxed on 1 December, then removed on 14 December.

Enacting these measures is understandable: faced with the formidable political and diplomatic obstacles challenging the US–Japan alliance, the highest US military authorities must consistently respond to a bevy of incidents, unfortunately with fewer arrows in their quiver to deal with local personnel crimes and breaches of decorum than those at their disposal for dealing with potential enemies. However, even considering their severity, these disciplinary actions will never achieve their objective—preventing further deterioration of the US–Japan relationship—without the help of the Japanese central government. A significant gulf exists between how the central government strategically views Okinawa and how the Okinawans view themselves, which aggravates reactions following incidents and harms bilateral defense strategy. The central government must do more to help Okinawans understand the need for US military presence on the island.

A brief examination of Japanese reactions after US military liberty restrictions is instructive. Since 2000, the US military has attempted to discipline its own by instituting massive restrictions to liberty and movement on Okinawa (and the rest of Japan) on four major occasions—to various degrees of severity. There are some who say the objective of these restrictions are to punish US military service members as a whole; while an argument can be made that such an approach is effective,

especially in preventing a second incident immediately following the first, such an argument does not present the whole picture. The restrictions' primary objective is to prevent the US–Japan relationship from souring by accidentally inflaming the seemingly never-healing sore of Okinawa-central government relations. Incidents by US forces in Okinawa place pressure on the central government for action; this pressure returns to US leadership in the form of an urge to placate Okinawans, preferably on a large scale, usually resulting in a curfew. However, as the following chart shows, such curfew decisions seem to have negligible impact on either the Okinawan government's official stances or on its relationships with the US military and Japanese central government. Over a period of 16 years, the Okinawan government has appeared disinterested in acknowledging US apologies, which presents a major obstacle to finding common ground and resolving differences among the US military, the Okinawan government, and the Japanese central government.

Type/Date of Incident	US Reaction	Central Gov't Reaction	Okinawan Gov't Reaction
Rape in Okinawa: 2000	Statement of regret; curfew instituted ¹	Consultations with US counterparts ²	Outrage; demands for harsher restrictions ³
Rape in Okinawa: 2008	Top US military commander enacts severe curfew ⁴ ; declares “period of reflection” for troops to review behavior; US ambassador travels to Okinawa for talks; suspect turned over to Japanese prosecutors ⁵	Strong statements of anger from prime minister and defense minister ⁶ ; Foreign Ministry welcomes US decision to enact stricter measures ⁷ ; chief cabinet secretary comments on rarity and severity of curfew	Large protests outside US base; regional government passes resolution of protest against US and Japanese central governments ⁸
Rape in Okinawa: Oct 2012	US Forces Japan commander issues apology; ⁹ enacts nationwide alcohol restrictions and harsher restrictions for Okinawan bases	Prime minister enacts high-level discussions among ministries, US departments, and US ambassador to Japan; accepts curfew measures as sufficient ¹⁰	Okinawan governor Hirokazu Nakaima rejects apology (“hard to forgive” ¹¹); outcries label US forces as “occupiers” ¹²

Rape and Murder in Okinawa: May 2016	Formal apology by US secretary of defense ¹³ , US ambassador, and highest-ranking military leader in Okinawa; ¹⁴ mourning period enacted, heavy military curfew, status of forces agreement supplement with Government of Japan	Japanese minister of defense acknowledges apology, ¹⁵ reaffirms strong alliance posture with United States, ¹⁶ and negotiates status of forces agreement supplement with US side	No apparent acceptance of apology; Okinawan governor Takeshi Onaga demands total status of forces agreement revision ¹⁷
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This simple chart is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of incidents that affect the US–Japan relationship but as the data seem to indicate, there are two clearly different tacks taken by the Japanese central government and the Okinawan prefectural government, respectively, following liberty restrictions. The former, while correctly expressing outrage, largely supports US decisions to resolve issues and seems willing to work with the US side as long as it's able to save face with the Okinawan people. The latter is clearly unsatisfied with the liberty restrictions—no matter their scale and scope—and often express outrage with the central government as much as with the United States. Meanwhile, the vast majority of law-abiding US personnel in Okinawa perceive the restrictions as punishment for crimes they did not commit.

Perhaps most striking about Okinawa's various reactions is Governor Takeshi Onaga's attitude that seems to indicate the United States's efforts are worthless to him. Since his election to prefectural governor in 2014, Onaga has repeatedly stated his single-minded insistence to prevent the move of Futenma Marine Corps Air Station to a location mutually-agreed upon between the Japanese and US governments, including personally attending a protest rally in March 2017. He has attempted on at least seven separate occasions to derail this move via methods ranging from prefectural orders to lawsuits. The governor was also conspicuously absent (he claimed a scheduling conflict) from a ceremony in December 2017 that commemorated the reversion of nearly 10,000 acres of land from the US military to Okinawa in 2016. Of particular note, as the above data show, he and the Okinawan government seemed impervious to US apologies. Even in this, Governor Onaga did not speak for all Okinawans, and never can, even though his government claimed he did. We have known for a long time, for example, that Okinawans who do not live near bases refer

to opinions emanating from areas near Naha, the capital city of Okinawa Prefecture, as the thoughts of those living “over the mountains”—in other words, people who do not represent their views.

But, more importantly, this quick comparison reveals the Japanese central government to be the key to resolving the different viewpoints affecting the “Okinawa situation,” without which curfews of any size or shape by the US side will be completely ineffective with an Okinawan prefectural government that has clearly made up its mind, in spite of faithful efforts by high-ranking Japanese officials to work with the Okinawan government. For example, former Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida met with Governor Onaga in February 2017; Minister of Defense Itsunori Onodera met with Onaga in August 2017; and most recently, Foreign Minister Taro Kono met with the governor on 4 December 2017. Their attempts to find compromise and understanding regarding Okinawan issues, while admirable, again revealed that very rarely do the views of the Japanese central government and those of the Okinawan prefectural government match, and their relationship has degenerated to one more resembling hostile nations. The well-established pattern of these meetings—with each side explaining its position, Okinawan prefectural complaints, central government official insistence on obedience, and then departure with no solution—must be reimagined if there is to be progress.

Other leaders, such as former Minister of Defense Gen Nakatani, claim to have attempted to get the Okinawan people to understand the central government’s position and the importance of Okinawa’s strategic location; however, such overtures appear to have failed to make an impression on Okinawan leaders.¹⁸ Rather, such attempts are drowned out by a media that seems obsessed about how closely US statements conform to what they think an apology should look like¹⁹ and that continues to use language personifying the Okinawan basing burden as “suffering.”²⁰ The relationship will never improve without the Japanese central government’s intervention to change this narrative by rethinking how they address the Okinawan people.

The inability of the central and prefectural governments to see eye to eye has clear implications for the US military which, while attempting to defend Japan, becomes caught in the middle of the domestic bickering and is placed in a situation where pleasing both parties is clearly hopeless. This creates a sense of urgency to find something that works; and to a military mind, this means developing a meaningful, fast, and punitive response to a transgression—clearly indicating that the United States means business. These messages, while powerful from the US

perspective, are largely mute to career protestors who regularly tumble onto Okinawan shores, to locals paid off by subsidies, and to a broader Okinawan audience with no frame of reference. The messages also mean nothing to those with a rabid—and prefectural government-sponsored—desire to remove US forces from the island completely.

Further, US leadership in Japan seems to be repeating the same prescription for a disease with no meaningful result. That's because there is no cure possible from what they are prescribing. The Okinawan "problem" is no more than a localized set of grave misunderstandings compounded by individual crimes and mistakes and fueled by central government subsidies. It must be solved locally. It requires a deep understanding of local concerns, a historical perspective on how past problems were dealt with, and steady punishment for the guilty parties—and only the guilty parties.

Luckily, there is a potential cure for the troubles: instruction from the Japanese central government on the Okinawans' critical role in national defense. A strong case can be made that the central government has shirked its responsibility to instruct Okinawans on the island's strategic role and location. Despite Ministry of Defense announcements and private meetings with the Okinawan prefectural government, the limited audience and disinterest in central government opinion exhibited by the Okinawan prefectural government in these instances mean that the average Okinawan still may not understand his or her island's geographic significance to bilateral defense, may not care why US military forces are stationed there, and likely does not understand why the United States and Japan share a major security interest in the island and its location. Indeed, many Okinawans do not encounter American military forces on a day-to-day basis. Within this vacuum, Okinawans are free to cook up historical or paranoid reasons why either (or both) party "hates" them, free to view the "military burden" cash subsidies provided to them by the central government as a well-earned and justified birthright, and free to hang the US military in effigy within the local newspapers without consequences. The real failure in this trilateral relationship among the US, the Japanese central government, and the Okinawan prefectural government, is that many Okinawans appear to have ignored or have not grasped how important and necessary they are, and by extension why US forces are there in the first place. The central government can clearly help close this gap by better education and explanation beyond closed-door meetings, as Okinawans may not listen to US military sources who try to do the same. As a matter of domestic national security, the central

government has a responsibility and duty to find the courage to counter historical narratives for the sake of national defense; if Okinawan leadership attempts to obstruct this view, they must—by necessity—be countered as well.



Takeshi Onaga, elected Okinawan governor in 2014, left, exchanged greetings and discussed bolstering relationships among the Okinawan government, citizens, and US forces in Okinawa with Lt Gen John Wissler, USMC, Okinawa area coordinator, US Forces Japan, during their first meeting 18 December 2014 at the Marine Corps Installation Pacific headquarters. US Marine photo by Cpl. Henry Antenor

The United States will continue working to minimize and forestall US personnel transgressions and crimes, as it always has. Recent apologies by US leaders have been notably effective in guiding the alliance through rough times by providing the central government with their critical face-saving requirements. Further, deputy chief of staff for Marine Corps Installations Pacific Col Darin Clarke's comment on 5 December 2017 firmly informed Okinawans the recent criminal drunk driving incident was the fault of an individual while simultaneously apologizing, which is exactly the proper message. However, the press's careless commentary that Col Clarke's statement and the subsequent central government decision to not obstruct US military operations showed "contempt for the people of Okinawa"—without further elaboration—were not constructive measures and recklessly exacerbated the problem.²¹ If the Japanese central government wants a better-behaved Okinawa, its

path is clear: the central government must “kill them with kindness” and begin doing so by making clear to Okinawans their critical role in Japanese national strategy at a local level.

This is not a lie: few geographic areas in Japan are more strategic than Okinawa. If necessary, to get this critical message across, the Japanese central government must bypass the Okinawan prefectural government and address the people directly—they certainly possess the charisma within the cabinet to make a large impact on the local population. There are logical, prudent reasons why Okinawan officials’ cooperation is in doubt: these officials may have too much political capital invested in a “throw out the Americans” stance to realistically assist central government efforts. Further, the central government does not have to shame itself or keep giving Okinawans free money; it simply has to explain where the perceived military burden originated, why it’s necessary to continue the course, and what it means to the nation if the US forces were to withdraw. An occasional statement from the defense minister and a twice-a-year meeting will not be sufficient; an island-wide, long overdue, education campaign directed at the populace ought to be the best solution. Given the problematic relationship and lack of overall progress, it’s certainly worth a try.

To be cold, if curfews do not lead to a correspondingly positive diplomatic result from Japan, the curfews are effectively hollow and only result in US self-effacement. Okinawa really is important, and the people there really are critical to the US–Japan relationship. They have simply been disenfranchised by the central government and disappointed by US military mistakes to the point that they believe the closer they can get to “independence,” the better off they will be. Nothing is further from the truth. The more fragmented Okinawa is, the more danger Japan—and the US military forces stationed there—are in, which is bad for all three parties. **JIPA**

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Evolving Dynamics in the Indo-Pacific

Deliberating India's Position

Pooja Bhatt

The current literature on the Indo-Pacific concept is still under deliberation regarding the actualization of its structure, organization, and purpose. The term is not just a hyphenation of two oceans but a construct connecting the economies across these oceans. The Indian Ocean is the backyard of various developing economies in contrast to the developed Pacific economies. India, being one of the largest regional countries, is seen as an important fulcrum and stakeholder in the operationalization of the Indo-Pacific from an academic concept to an institutional framework. Therefore, India stands in the epicenter of the region according to its geopolitical position as well as the alliances and threat perceptions existent in the region. This paper, hence, is divided into four parts, tracing the conceptual understanding of *Indo-Pacific* in official documents beginning with the appearance of the term in the white papers of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States since 2013 and then simultaneously in 2017. The second part discusses the economic and strategic issues contributing to the shaping of this new geographical construct and how it differs from the earlier established Asia-Pacific paradigm. The current developments that are shaping India's approach toward the Indo-Pacific form the third part of the article. It attempts to draw the larger picture of India's current position on the Indo-Pacific both as a socio-economic-political platform and at the strategic level better known as the "Quad." The fourth part of the paper argues that though there are commonalities of interests among the countries on the former, the latter faces potential problems arising from two issues—one, finding a common ground for collective security, and two, the current understanding excludes the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as potential stakeholders in the Quad.

Each time a political administration coins a new word or diplomatic jargon in its official documents, the geopolitical strategic community excitedly searches to

understand the meaning, causes, and implications. The past few years have seen the term *Indo-Pacific* gain new credence, originating in its use by several governments around the world and gaining momentum via the current US administration's embrace of the phrase. Although the term was introduced more than a decade ago, shifting geopolitical realities have given enough reasons for countries in the region to deliberate on it and formulate their foreign policies accordingly. Interestingly, the term has brought attention to the maritime domain of Asia and related security perceptions. Since the end of the Second World War, Asian security concerns were linked to the land-based territorial construct and scant attention was paid to the security and foreign policy of the high seas or maritime waters. However, the burgeoning maritime trade among the regional and international countries over the past decades and the lack of an overarching institutional architecture for maritime governance at the regional level, exacerbated by an increase in traditional and nontraditional security threats in the high seas, provided compelling reasons for the littorals of the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean to cooperate.

India has remained a primary actor in the governance of the Indian Ocean, but it cannot work in isolation. Rather it needs cooperation with other important Indian Ocean littorals, many of whom also happen to share maritime domains with the Pacific, thereby connecting the economies of the two oceans. India's approach toward the Indo-Pacific, therefore, can be best seen working in tandem with the maritime policy considerations of other Indo-Pacific littorals. Hence, one must examine the defense and foreign policy white papers of the four large democracies—Australia, Japan, and the US, along with India—to understand their conception of the Indo-Pacific as a region and the threats facing that region and their interests. A clearer picture of other countries' perceptions is likely to provide some answers as to how India intends to work with them for a regional-level maritime governance architecture. Additionally, this knowledge can be helpful for stakeholder countries in the Indo-Pacific in conceptualizing the term in ways that converge their interests and address the challenges that the region perceives in a collective manner.

The Indo-Pacific as a Geopolitical Construct

A country's foreign policy approach is based upon the geopolitical calculations of its threat perceptions, locating challenges and looking for opportunities. A white paper can be a definitive yet confounding political document to trace these elements—not only for domestic socio-military consumption but also for researchers, policy analysts, and decision makers from the rest of the world. These publica-

tions generate considerable interest both domestically and globally. Hence, allies and adversarial states read these documents closely, seeking to understand a country's threat perceptions and the tools they employ to deal with them. Additionally, white papers help other countries revise and refine their own foreign policy approaches accordingly toward the country publishing the document. In this context, a particular focus on any subject area is bound to raise the interest of the rest of the geopolitical community.

The term *Indo-Pacific* has recently found its place in white papers of four of the world's largest democracies: Australia, Japan, India, and the United States. This illustrates the importance of the region in the foreign policy pronouncements of these four countries in particular and for Asia in general. In 2017, the white papers of all these countries repeatedly mentioned the term *Indo-Pacific* and stressed the need to proactively secure this region for the peace, growth, and stability of Asia.

Therefore, it becomes pertinent to understand how each of these countries has defined the Indo-Pacific construct in their official documents. The “approach toward defining” a particular region can help provide clarity regarding each country's recognition of threat perceptions and opportunities.

Japan

First in line to initiate the use of the term *Indo-Pacific* in its official documents was Japan. As early as April 2017, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) released its white paper in which it clearly promoted a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy” as a part of its foreign policy aimed at proactively “securing the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community.”¹ Promoting interconnectivity in the Indo-Pacific is one of the pillars in Japan's vision of “developing an environment for international peace, stability and sharing universal values.”² This white paper recognizes the growing confidence of the Asian countries and their keenness to assume leadership and responsible roles in the several domains based on the rule of law, democracy, and market economy within East, South, and Southeast Asian countries. On the other hand, it views Africa as demographically vibrant and rich in natural resources, which makes that continent full of potential and a promising market. Japan sees a role in connecting these two continents via infrastructure development projects and improving business environments through necessary technological and similar investments that can lead to growth and prosperity throughout the region as a whole.

The Japanese construct of the Indo-Pacific is based on combining not just the two large oceans but also the two continents of Asia and Africa. Developing inter-connectivity and infrastructure projects among the developing economies of these two large landmasses seems to form the heart of the Japanese concept of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP). For the reasons of free flow of goods, capital, and knowledge in addition to human exchange, a robust and well-understood normative and institutional framework is needed as the firm ground upon which the structure can be constructed. The rules of law and complementary understanding of the global commons can be key deciding factors when enacting any formal or even informal working equation among so many countries. For Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe and his administration, freedom of navigation, as enshrined in United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas, forms a central pillar in the FOIP, valuing “freedom, the rule of law, and the market economy, free from force or coercion, and making [Japan] prosperous.”³ In other words, Japan’s reflection of the Indo-Pacific is an external manifestation of its domestic vision, which is development oriented based upon respect for norms and rules. This aspiration was also reflected in its 2017 white paper clearly defining the Indo-Pacific as a key area for development.

Australia

With considerable strategic and commercial interests in the region, Australia regards itself as an Indian Ocean nation and has been involved in the Indian Ocean Rim Association regional institution since 1997 to foster economic cooperation.⁴ The country started its approach toward the Indo-Pacific as an extended neighborhood in its 2009 defense white paper.⁵ Titled *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, the document clearly identified that a stable and secure Southeast Asia is a vital strategic interest for Australia. The paper was visionary in predicting that the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean regions will converge as a crucial maritime region and global sea route for energy supplies and therefore see several major naval powers competing for strategic advantage in the region by the year 2030.

Apart from securing its immediate vicinity, the Australian defense white paper 2009 maintained the importance of its extended neighborhood. It highlighted the Asia-Pacific as the geopolitical construct that stretched from the eastern Indian Ocean, as a part of its larger strategic interests. For maintaining a global security order, the country drew its strength from the centrality of the United Nations

charter's established "rules-based order."⁶ To secure its strategic interests, Australian defense policy is transparent about acting independently and being self-reliant in safeguarding its unique strategic interests. At the same time, Australia promotes a willingness to lead military coalitions and make tailored contributions to other military coalitions with countries having shared strategic interests in the region.⁷



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (right) and Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull at a joint press statement, at Hyderabad House, in New Delhi on 10 April 2017. Photo courtesy of Press Information Bureau, Government of India.

The *Australian Defense White Paper 2013* became nuanced in its perception of the global changes and noted that "China's continued rise as a global power, the increasing economic and strategic weight of East Asia and the emergence over time of India as a global power are key trends influencing the Indian Ocean's development as an area of increasing strategic significance. In aggregate, these trends are *shaping the emergence of the Indo-Pacific as a single strategic arc*."⁸ Ensuring the safety and security of sea lanes in the Indo-Pacific became a vital strategic interest for Australian national defense and maritime policy. The document called for strengthening the regional security architecture by including countries like China, India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the United States as a community to dis-

cuss and cooperate on the political, economic, and security issues in the Indo-Pacific region.⁹

The term *Indo-Pacific* was further shaped and concretized in the *2016 Defense White Paper* and *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, the former of which stated that “a stable rules-based regional order is critical to ensuring Australia’s access to an open, free and secure trading system and minimizing the risk of coercion and instability that would directly affect Australia’s interests,” representing Australia’s crucial strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific context.¹⁰ Australia’s maritime-based economy requires unfettered access to trading routes, secure communications, and transport to support its economic development in the long run. Hence, the focus of Australian foreign and defense policy is to build a “stable and prosperous” Indo-Pacific region.¹¹

India

The importance of the Indian Ocean and its evolution to *Indo-Pacific* as a strategy needs a more detailed focus in this study. The Indian Ocean derives its name not from the country but the entire Indian subcontinent, which comprises several neighboring littoral and territorial countries. The Indian Ocean surrounds India on three sides, making the country as maritime focused as the Himalayas and the country’s mass (2,973,193 sq. km, with more than 7,000 km of coastline, including its island territories in the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea) make it land-centric.¹² The Indian Ocean connects India to near and extended neighborhoods in both eastern and western parts of Asia and to Africa and Oceania.

There is a significant body of respectable literature that has established the Indian subcontinent’s maritime trade back to third millennium BCE, beginning with the Indus Valley Civilization.¹³ Indian maritime heritage flourished until the seventeenth century, and Indian ports were visited by ships and traders from several countries from the Arab world and Europe, including the Portuguese, Dutch, and British, seeking to trade for Indian spices. However, in modern history, since the birth of India as an independent nation in 1947, the first few decades of maritime trade, commerce, and exchange remained limited due to the shortcomings of the country’s infrastructure and institutions. It was in the 1990s that the Indian government enunciated its approach toward its neighbors across the Indian Ocean under the policy of Look East—unveiled by Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao in Singapore in 1992.¹⁴ The new policy started as a trade and economy-based relationship between India and its ASEAN neighbors.

However, for years there remained a glaring lack in application of this policy toward interconnectivity and infrastructure projects to integrate India and its eastern neighbors for the prospects of trade, market, and exchange of information.¹⁵ Realizing this shortcoming, Prime Minister Narendra Modi transformed the existing Look East policy into the more proactive “Act East” policy in 2015. The objective of Act East is to promote economic cooperation, forge cultural ties, and develop strategic relationships among ASEAN countries.¹⁶ The policy, envisaged both at bilateral and regional levels, includes steady efforts toward developing and strengthening the interconnectivity of northeast India with the ASEAN region through trade, culture, interpersonal contacts, and physical infrastructure projects.

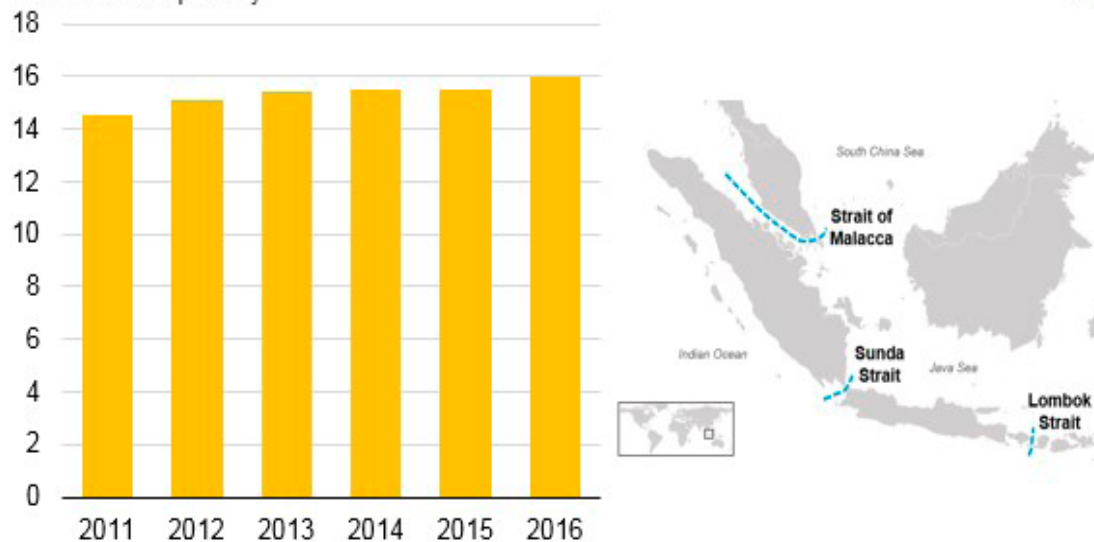
In addition to land-based interconnectivity projects, the maritime component of the Look East policy has gradually expanded, and so has the realization of the importance of the security and strategic dimensions of maritime-related trade.¹⁷ The current Indian leadership understands the growing strategic importance of the Indian Ocean not only for India but also for the entire region. The vast Indian Ocean region is composed of more than 40 states and represents nearly 40 percent of the world’s population. One-half of world’s container shipment, one-third of the bulk cargo traffic, and two-thirds of all oil shipment pass through Indian Ocean routes, though three-fourths of this traffic is destined for delivery in other regions of the world.¹⁸ For India, 90 percent of its trade volume and 90 percent of its oil imports rely on Indian Ocean transport.¹⁹

India’s current approach to the maritime domain can be described as two layered—regional and extra-regional. The recognition of the Indian Ocean as a common home to its neighboring states, its desire for regional peace, growth, and stability, and the need to protect itself from any threats led to Prime Minister Modi’s commencement of his vision of “Security and Growth for All in the Region” (SAGAR)²⁰ during his visit to Seychelles in 2015. Former Indian Foreign Secretary Subrahmanyam Jaishankar defines SAGAR as “doctrine that succinctly defines India’s vision to collaborate with the region.”²¹

From the land-based conception of the Asia-Pacific, India’s extended neighborhood now coherently encompasses the wider, maritime-based conception of the Indo-Pacific. Therefore, the second layer also considers the interconnectivity of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. About 61 percent of the world’s petroleum and other petrochemicals moved along maritime routes in 2015. The Strait of Hormuz and the Strait of Malacca are the world’s most important strategic choke-points by volume of oil transit, and the latter lies at the eastern end of the Indian

Ocean.²² In fact, the Malacca Strait is the primary chokepoint in East Asia, being just 2.7 km (1.7 miles) wide at its narrowest. It is an increasingly important waterway, with an estimated 16 million barrels per day (b/d) passing through in 2016, compared with 14.5 million b/d in 2011 (fig. 1-1). Crude oil generally comprises 85–90 percent of total oil flows per year, and petroleum products account for the remainder.²³ Therefore, safety of these maritime trade routes is a matter of concern for all regional stakeholders, including India. This realization has now broadened India's conceptual understanding of the strategic domain to include Indo-Pacific economies from the previously land-based conception of the Asia Pacific. In November 2017, a secretarial-level consultation between the officials of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and their counterparts from Australia, Japan and the United States focused on cooperation to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region for all, marking the first official diplomatic step toward realizing India's Indo-Pacific strategy.²⁴ Additionally, recent press releases from the MEA have stressed "India's centrality in the Indo-Pacific along with Japan."²⁵ Therefore, for India, the Indo-Pacific is crucial for the security of trade and development within the Indian Ocean and for maritime connectivity to the Pacific economies as part of its Act East Policy.

Crude oil and petroleum products transported through the Strait of Malacca
million barrels per day



Crude oil and petroleum products transported through the Strait of Malacca. (US Energy Information Administration, "The Strait of Malacca, a Key Oil Trade Chokepoint, Links the Indian and Pacific Oceans," Today in Energy [website], 11 August 2017, <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=32452>.)

United States

The United States has been long engaged with the Asian region as a whole. It has remained diplomatically, politically, economically, and, most importantly, militarily involved in West Asia (the Middle East in American diplomatic parlance), East Asia, and South Asia since the mid-twentieth century as a part of its Asia-Pacific strategy.²⁶ Pres. Barack Obama brought a renewed focus to South and East Asia after America's long engagements with Russia and West Asia. This shift was widely recognized as a "Pivot to Asia." However, under Pres. Donald Trump, the US administration has focused even deeper on the maritime concept of the region, aligning its policies with the Indo-Pacific construct. The *National Security Strategy 2017* and *National Defense Strategy 2018* documents—released in December and January—are the two white papers that used the term Indo-Pacific for the first time in American policy.²⁷ Both documents repeatedly used the term and even placed it before other regions such as Europe and the Middle East, highlighting the salience of the region strategically.²⁸

However, the drivers of American strategic policy to shift toward the region as mentioned in the white papers are different from those of the other three countries previously discussed. The documents highlighted the rise of China and the perception of Russia as a threat to the region—labeling these powers as the "two revisionist powers"—reflecting the drivers for American engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. Since then, Secretary of Defense James Mattis and former US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson have used the term Indo-Pacific in their speeches. This has been a departure from former President Obama's approach to the region, delineated a "Rebalance to Asia and the Pacific" since 2011 and focusing exclusively on the maritime threat of China's belligerent approach in the South China Sea (SCS), East China Sea, and Indian Ocean over the last several years. The Obama administration had engaged with the region through several institutional architectures such as ASEAN and the East Asia Summit and envisioned partnerships and alliances through the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)—the latter of which was quickly scrapped by the Trump administration—as well as enhancement of defense posturing in the region.²⁹

The American strategic shift toward the Indo-Pacific region could be gauged by the fact that the US Pacific Command (USPACOM) was renamed as US Indo-Pacific Command (US INDOPACOM) in May 2018. However, it has been argued elsewhere that President Trump's approach toward the Indo-Pacific in the recent documents is inclined toward putting "America First" in domestic as well as

global affairs rather than having a vision or a well-rounded foreign policy consideration for the Indo-Pacific.³⁰ The Trump administration, though it withdrew from the TPP, continues to view India as a major defense partner. However, the administration's policy pronouncements indicate a desire to form military and economic partnerships with Southeast Asian countries on a bilateral level. The American conceptualization of the Indo-Pacific construct still needs more deliberation to be seen as more than just a theater of conflict and competition—something that recent American documents and statements seem to convey. US policy toward the Indo-Pacific at the current stage is fragmented at best in terms of areas of engagement within the region and requires more collaborative work with regional stakeholders to develop a comprehensive security framework in the region.

Nonetheless, there are certain caveats one needs to bear in mind while considering the white papers. The objective of a defense or foreign white paper is to substantially define or redefine national strategy, embracing foreign policy and security objectives. Additionally, it explicates tools for foreign security and domestic security, through military and civilian means. It responds to risks emanating from states or nonstate actors; active, deliberate threats; and security implications of major disasters and catastrophes of a nonintentional nature. However, these official documents are to be read beyond their objectivity and require careful approach to not be taken at their face value. Countries can be expected to declare their security objectives without explicitly mentioning their threat perceptions or their strategy to deal with them. Therefore, too much reading into the defense and foreign policy white papers can be misleading. Additionally, the fact that several countries, such as India, do not even publish defense white papers cannot be construed as a lack of any tools and strategies for ensuring their national security. In other words, white papers are a crucial political document of a country; however, it is not necessary that every political leadership produce one. Absence of one does not necessarily impede a country's capability to join regional or supra-regional regimes or mechanisms to ensure its peace and security. Apart from white papers, official statements from the crucial government ministries and departments provide an insight into the government's stand on defense- and security-related issues. This paper too has based its conceptual understanding of the Indo-Pacific as mentioned in the various official documents and statements for the purpose of debating and postulating the future of the Indo-Pacific region and construct.

Evolution from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific

In this section, the paper outlines persuasions that likely contributed to the aforementioned shifts toward the Indo-Pacific construct. Chinese belligerence in the South China Sea; the current range of North Korea's nuclear and missile program, encompassing several Indo-Pacific states; and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)—all of which rely heavily upon the maritime construct of the region and impact the peace, growth, and stability of the overall region. Hence, besides the focus on territorial security in Asia, there is a renewed focus on securing the seas and oceans from impending threats and unilateral aggressions.

China's Aggressive Maritime Posture

The South China Sea, incorporating an area from the Karimata and Malacca Straits to the Strait of Taiwan, presents a peculiar challenge that the world is finding extremely difficult to overcome. It is among the world's most important maritime trade routes and is currently under dispute due to China's unilateral and excessive claims in the region. The SCS connects the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean via the narrow straits—Malacca, Lombok, and Sunda—all lying to the west of it. The region is also important for the maritime trade flow and its abundant resources. Most the economies to the east of the SCS—like China, Japan, and Korea—are dependent upon the oil that comes from West Asia and Africa.³¹ As discussed earlier, crude oil forms the largest part of the maritime trade passing through the Indo-Pacific, and the SCS route forms a crucial sea lane of communication (SLOC). The oil tankers and ships reaching East Asia travel the shortest route through these three straits.³² Overall, in 2016, maritime trade worth US \$3.4 trillion passed through the waters of the SCS, making it one of the most significant maritime trade routes in the world.³³

China has been legally claiming the landforms as well as the waters of the SCS on the basis of historic maps since 1951.³⁴ The maritime region lying to the south of Hainan extends to 3.5 million km² and has been demarcated by Chinese authorities under U-shaped dashed lines to represent its claims, known as Nine-Dash Line (NDL). China has been aggressively countering rival claims by Vietnam and the Philippines on various occasions within this maritime region since the 1970s.³⁵ The SCS region is surrounded by five countries in addition to China and Taiwan: Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. All the countries claim overlapping exclusive economic zones (EEZ) and rights within the region. How-

ever, by claiming the entire region and the resources therein, China has unilaterally impinged the maritime rights of all the other SCS littorals.

Since the 1970s, China and other littoral states have disputed over the landforms in the region that fall into their claimed jurisdictions. The most important ones are the Spratly and Paracel groups of islands that lie beyond China's 200 nautical EEZ—some parts fall into the maritime jurisdictions of Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines.³⁶ However, the superior economic power and military strength that China possesses in comparison to these other states have afforded it the ability to project its power over several of the landforms since the 1970s.³⁷ Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan, and the Philippines continue to hold several of the other landforms in the Spratly and Paracel groups.

The Chinese historic rights over the NDL were “invalidated” in a legal battle between Beijing and Manila over the excessive claims at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in a landmark verdict in July 2016. However, recent reports and satellite images confirm that over the past few years China has constructed artificial islands and dual-use military establishments such as runways and infrastructure in the disputed areas.³⁸ Beijing has been extensively demonstrating its growing and modernized military and naval fleet while hampering the use of open seas and overflight rights in the SCS by other countries.³⁹ Such belligerent actions threaten the peace and security of the region in general.

North Korea's Nuclear and Missile Program

Kim Jong-un's authoritarian and autocratic regime in North Korea has used nuclear weapons and long-range missile systems as tools for blackmailing and negotiating with the United States rather than for conventional deterrence. The country has conducted more than 150 missile and nuclear tests since 1984—over half of these tests since 2011 when Kim took power.⁴⁰ While his predecessors Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il focused on the testing of short- (up to 1,000 km) and medium-range missiles (1,000–3,000 km), Kim Jong-un aimed his attention at perfecting the intermediate-range missile (3,000–5,000 km) and intercontinental missiles (greater than 5,500 km) that cover the entire Indo-Pacific region, touching the shores of Australia and all of South and Southeast Asia and reaching as far as Oman in the western Indian Ocean.⁴¹

The totalitarian North Korean regime and its destabilizing behavior have created a sense of insecurity among its neighbors. The nuclear and missile tests have been a matter of concern since 2006. Though the success of earlier tests were contested,

the 2016 tests indicated the country had attempted a thermonuclear or hydrogen bomb test yield estimated anywhere between 10–20 kilotons. By comparison, the Hiroshima bomb explosion in August 1945 yielded 15 kilotons. There are unconfirmed reports that Pyongyang is on its way to miniaturizing its nuclear weapons, which could then be mounted on the long-range missiles with the capability to reach Japan and Western parts of the United States—putting the entire Indo-Pacific region under constant nuclear threat.⁴²

The danger of nuclear weapons under an authoritarian ruler has contributed to regional insecurity. The United States has been a forerunner in ensuring global nuclear nonproliferation and arms race reduction and, therefore, views as imperative remaining engaged with the North Korean regime. The United States and its allies, notably Japan and Australia, are demanding North Korean submission to a non-proliferation regime as a precondition for any negotiation, and China's and Russia's calls for freeze on further North Korean tests are supported by other states such as France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, and the United States. The larger geopolitical implications of North Korean nuclear weapons have brought together several regional and extraregional countries to negotiate with Pyongyang's leadership.

Chinese Belt and Road Initiative

There have been many scholarly debates regarding the drivers and the larger geopolitical implications of Chinese president Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China is aiming to stimulate a new approach to economic globalization—one in which Beijing plays a pivotal role in shaping the norms and institution building. First proposed by Xi in 2013, BRI is a much-touted \$1.3 trillion connectivity and infrastructure development project encompassing more than 60 countries in Eurasia and East Africa. Beijing promotes BRI as a development vehicle for the hardware of trade and investment. Additionally, it is also the foundation on which China views its role in future global leadership. The BRI has two primary components: the overland Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and the sea-based twenty-first-century Maritime Silk Road (MSR)—thus, “belt and road.”

The MSR is focused on developing key seaports that connect to land-based transportation routes across countries. The maritime trade route envisioned in this initiative starts from the South China Sea, connecting westward to the Indian Ocean and finally reaching Europe through the Red Sea and Mediterranean Sea. The success of the BRI and Chinese economy is dependent upon the SLOCs in

this region.⁴³ China has been systematically modernizing its army, airpower, and naval forces for several years.⁴⁴ The importance of SLOCs as envisioned in the BRI, has, therefore, incentivized China to build up its military and naval forces to protect its ships. However, the nature of forces being utilized by Beijing has become a matter of concern for the other regional and extra-regional countries involved in the region. Deployment of aircraft carriers, amphibious attack ships, submarines, and related craft points toward an offensive, warlike Chinese psyche rather than any intention to simply protect their maritime routes. Moreover, Chinese investment in building dual-use ports and airfields in Pakistan, Africa, and Sri Lanka and on the South China Sea islands raise questions about Beijing's objectives—in fact presenting China as a regional security threat. These activities have reverberating impact on other countries that are trying to counter Chinese belligerence through internal (buying or building arms and strengthening militaries) or external (aligning with other powers) balancing, thereby making the region precarious.

China is providing loans through its Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to countries for the development of projects under the BRI. However, there are strong concerns about such “debt diplomacy,” under which the recipient nations might have put collaterals against the loans gained from China.⁴⁵ For example, China's leasing of Sri Lanka's Hambantota port for 99 years against the unpaid \$3.1 billion loan at a 6.3 percent interest rate is one such example.⁴⁶ This is a deviation from the noncollateralized developmental funds given by the World Bank or International Monetary Fund. A recent 2018 study by the Washington-based Center for Global Development claimed that 23 of the 68 potential borrower countries under the BRI were already at a “quite high” risk of debt distress.⁴⁷ The threat of economic insecurity related to such a massive and interconnected project are intimidating. As China moves toward globalization and institution building following a blueprint that deviates from the Western-led order—maybe “with Chinese characteristics”—the norm and rule making under the BRI still remains a big question mark.⁴⁸

The current developments in Asia demonstrate threat perceptions in the maritime domain. While the oceans serve the positive role of interconnecting countries economically, diplomatically, and culturally, they also serve to link the threats found in one area to the entire region. Therefore, none of the countries in the Indo-Pacific can formulate its maritime policies in isolation by excluding these common threat perceptions or being selective of the ones that affect it more than

others. The next section is an overview of how the stakeholders are currently cooperating to address the concerns that affect the Indo-Pacific region.

India's Approach in the Indo-Pacific

India's geopolitical location, its capability and ambitions, and the various threat perceptions present in the Indo-Pacific will remain key determinants in shaping the nation's position in the region. India is a large country with a population second in size only to its neighbor, China. India also possesses one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Growing economic ambitions come with more responsibilities and an appetite to play a larger role in the regional geopolitics and security architecture. India, too, is looking forward to its role as a "net security provider" in the Indo-Pacific.⁴⁹ However, New Delhi still lacks clarity on how it can go about taking a leading role in the regional architecture and institutions.

Prime Minister Modi has demonstrated his clarity and vision toward India's position and importance in the Indian Ocean. In a speech in February 2016 at the International Fleet Review held at Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, Modi stressed India's centrality in the Indian Ocean and the shared opportunities and threats that the Indian Ocean presents to the regional economies.⁵⁰ More than 40 countries have shores on the Indian Ocean, and half of world's container traffic and close to one-third of world's cargo traffic passes through this region. India has 1,200 island territories and a huge EEZ of 2.4 million km² in the Indian Ocean, establishing the importance of the region for the country—and vice versa. At the same time, the region shares threats of seaborne terror, piracy, natural disasters (like tsunamis and cyclones), and manmade problems such as oil spills and climate change, which continue to put at risk the stability of the maritime domain. The scale and complexity of these challenges toward international maritime stability cannot be the preserve of a single nation.⁵¹ Hence, to ensure a peaceful and stable maritime environment, Modi explicated his vision of SAGAR, making the Indian Ocean region his foremost policy priority. The policy is conceptually based upon actively pursuing and promoting India's geopolitical, strategic, and economic interests on the seas, in particular the Indian Ocean.

India has been involved similarly at the political, institutional level within the Indian Ocean states through the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) since 1997. The organization celebrated its twentieth anniversary in 2017 and has "remained committed to building and expanding understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation through a consensus-based evolutionary and non-intrusive ap-

proach in the rapid changing environment faced by the region.”⁵² IORA is a dynamic organization of 21 member states and seven dialogue partners within the Indian Ocean. The organization has eight focus areas: maritime safety and security, trade and investment facilitation, fisheries management, disaster risk management, tourism and cultural exchange, blue economy, women’s economic development, and academics, science, and technology.⁵³ On the other hand, the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) forms the functional body, comprising 35 Indian Ocean littoral states that have been grouped into four sub-regions (South Asian, West Asian, East African, and Southeast Asian littorals including Australia). IONS formed in 2008, seeking to provide a regional forum through which the chiefs of navies (or equivalent maritime agency) of all the littoral states of the IORA can increase maritime security cooperation.⁵⁴

Over the past few years, one can observe a lack in attention in India’s foreign policy approach focused on issues of immediate bilateral and multilateral importance. This adversely impacted India’s relationship with the states at the long-term, strategic level. Now, however, India and the United States have restarted their institutionalized dialogues designed for deepening cooperation in the spheres of defense, technology, and counterterrorism.⁵⁵ The two countries have operationalized agreements for allowing greater bilateral interoperability and technology transfer, including the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Association (LEMOA).⁵⁶ Apart from the United States, the Indian navy regularly carries out naval exercises to increase interoperability in the maritime domain with several countries such as Singapore (SIMBEX),⁵⁷ France (VARUNA),⁵⁸ Australia (AUSINDEX),⁵⁹ Oman (Sea Breeze),⁶⁰ Japan (JIMEX),⁶¹ and Myanmar (MILAN and CORPAT).⁶² The scope of these exercises has remained limited to the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea.

With the above structures in place, it could be safely argued that India has a vision and strategy for the Indian Ocean. However, as India is extending its approach toward the Indo-Pacific as its extended maritime domain, it needs to ponder more deeply the institutional structures required to do so. Considering the current trajectory of India’s involvement in the region through bilateral and multilateral institutions related to several aspects of security (economic, military, political, and so forth), it could be argued that India is approaching the Indo-Pacific with a two-pronged approach—building multilateral alliances for socio-economic and political issues for development and keeping the security issues on a more bilateral level with the other regional powers rather than an overarching institutional proposition within the Indo-Pacific.

One of the key factors driving India toward its Indo-Pacific neighbors was the recognition of a lack of interconnectivity that includes the western region as India's immediate neighborhood in addition to its eastern neighbors. Expanding the area of interest and influence has come to be a foreign policy driver for New Delhi in recent years, and Prime Minister Modi's foreign visits are examples of the fact. There is a growing awareness among Indian leaders regarding the country's poor position in connecting with its neighboring states in terms of infrastructure building and capacity development due to the country's own internal structural problems. However, India does share old historical and cultural ties with many of its neighbors, which several subsequent Indian leaderships are trying to revive as part of the nation's "Neighbourhood First" policy.

India's approach toward Africa can be seen in this context. As a continent, Africa has huge human and resource potentials, but it lacks development and capacity building needed for its growth. Several Asian countries are taking initiatives to address structural issues that is keeping resource-rich African states from peace and prosperity. Japan has been playing a major "complementary role" by providing developmental assistance to African states. At the same time, to bridge the supply-and-demand gap between the developing countries—like India and those in Africa—and developed Japan, the Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) has been proposed. AAGC, in its vision document of 2017, has been envisaged as a socio-economic project to improve infrastructure, connectivity, and related development projects and increase people-to-people interaction between Asia and Africa.⁶³ The project envisions that it "will have a strong influence on India's constructive role in shaping the global agenda for sustainable economic development and international cooperation based on the principles of solidarity, equity and sharing."⁶⁴ In other words, there is a political willingness among nations and mutual acknowledgment of the opportunities presented by having an institutional structure in place.

On the strategic side, however, there is still a lack of any institutional structure in the Indo-Pacific region. The four large democracies of the region—Australia, India, Japan, and the United States—are in talks for renewing their Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, an informal body better known as the Quad, into a formal institutionalized relationship. The primary objective of the Quad is to maintain a rules-based order in the regional maritime security architecture. The first meeting of the Quad took place in May 2007 on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in the Philippines, and the second one was held in conjunction with the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in June 2018. In 2008, the cordial relations

between the ruling Australian government and China temporarily led to Canberra quitting the group. Japan, India, and the United States went ahead with the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue, and the trio continued conducting joint naval exercises, known as the Malabar exercises in the Bay of Bengal near India and in the waters near the Okinawan coast of Japan. After the failure of the first iteration of the Quad, a revival occurred in 2017. Changing geopolitics in the region and China's belligerent maritime posture at the regional level and bilaterally with several countries of the neighborhood—including India, Japan, Vietnam, and the Philippines—had heightened the sense of threat perceptions in the intervening decade.

Despite seeing China as a threat individually, the defense and security white papers of the four Quad nations do not reflect this perception at a collective level. Except for the US paper, which repeatedly mentions China as the threat to American interests in the Indo-Pacific, the white papers from the other three members of the Quad have centered their focus on the growth and developmental aspect and



An Indian Navy explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technician and a US Navy sailor launch a MK18 Mod. One unmanned underwater vehicle during a mine countermeasures training mission near Sasebo, Japan, during Exercise Malabar 2016, June 13. A trilateral maritime exercise, Malabar is designed to enhance dynamic cooperation between the Indian Navy, Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), and US Navy forces in the Indo-Pacific. US Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Charles White.

maintenance of a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region. The lack of a common understanding of the Indo-Pacific region as a theater and the delimitation of its scope form the basis of the fault line for any organizational and operational structure to be developed among the four countries. India shares a long-disputed territorial border with China, and the two nations fought a brief but bloody war in 1962. China and Japan too have a disputed maritime border in the East China Sea. Similarly, Australia and the United States share their maritime zones with China in the Pacific Ocean. Still, all the members of the Quad conceptualize the Indo-Pacific in their own manner based upon their maritime interests, rights, and threat perceptions, and these disparate conceptions are likely to have implications for any intra-regional legislation required for political and institutional building. The territorial/maritime proximity and economic interdependence with China can be seen as one of the major reasons for these countries to avoid increased hostility in the region.

Complications and a Way Forward

The term Indo-Pacific has gained currency in India since 2006, when the term was used as an academic and strategic concept.⁶⁵ The regional geopolitics has come a long way since in defining the threats and opportunities for India and other littorals in the Indo-Pacific region. Japanese prime minister Abe's "Confluence of the Two Seas" speech in 2007 in the Indian parliament brought regional focus to the term by advancing cooperation and development. The United States and Australia, as the other stakeholders in the peace, security, and development in the Indo-Pacific region, joined the ranks recently to initiate a regional-level maritime dialogue. Nonetheless, the term still suffers handicaps from several angles, starting with the conceptualization of the term and further from a lack of finding common grounds to form a supra-regional institution to address security concerns.

That said, there are a few existing institutional mechanisms that can function as a platform for dialogue and deliberation among the regional stakeholders, reducing the need for establishing new institutions for maritime security in the Indo-Pacific. These include the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus), and the IORA—all of which deal with security issues within the region. These ASEAN sister organizations have seen some successful participation over the past years, with several high-ranking political and military officials from the member and observer countries attending each year. However, the same cannot be said of the out-

comes of such meetings, as the joint communiques or statements produced after these summits have reflected the inability to establish common grounds in terms of threat perceptions.

Still, it brings the focus back to the centrality of ASEAN countries as the pillar for the establishment of an Asian security architecture. ASEAN countries have shown their willingness to develop an open and inclusive maritime security architecture but have shied away from any strategic-level, Quad-like arrangements.⁶⁶ Just like several other neighbors, many ASEAN countries have complicated relations with China. On the one hand, there are disputed maritime boundary issues that some of these countries face individually with China, and on the other, they are dependent upon China economically—even more so now, as the BRI offers attractive land and maritime infrastructure and connectivity development opportunities to Southeast Asia. ASEAN countries see these development-based projects as a boost to their economies. Additionally, land-oriented ASEAN countries such as Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, and others share better bilateral relations with China than the maritime counterparts, which has reflected in their seeming inability to come up with a collective position in ASEAN with regard to China. The latter, too, plays an upper hand while negotiating with ASEAN at the multilateral level as seen in discussing maritime issues. The Declaration on the Code of the Conduct on South China Sea (DoC 2002) that is yet to be concretized into a binding code of conduct, remains a point in case. China's precondition while discussing the DoC is to keep the maritime issues pertaining to SCS out of the agreement, which has kept the agreement from reaching fruition.

The reinstituted Quad had an enthusiastic start with a joint secretary-level meeting among the countries; however, the initiative is facing issues with India repeatedly not accepting Australia in its Malabar naval exercises over the years.⁶⁷ India did not provide its reasons for the exercises that were held in June 2018 near coast of Guam.⁶⁸ Moreover, Indian foreign policy is in a flux vis-a-vis its relations with China, and as the general elections are approaching in 2019, the current leadership appears reluctant to put India in a volatile situation.

Nevertheless, the Indo-Pacific regional maritime framework is likely to see a joint effort from the four countries based upon a common agreement of being free, open, and inclusive, governed by a rule of law, and norms based upon the consent of all to ensure the peace and prosperity of the region. However, the same cannot be said about the establishment of the Quad in the current form of a purely military angle. Several countries, including ASEAN nations, though agree-

able with joint maritime and military exercises, have expressed their reservations regarding militarizing the region with warships. The countries in the region are seeking freedom of navigation and overflight rights as common for all and have denounced unilateral attempts by any country to claim territorial rights of sovereignty over these global commons. Additionally, these nations seek peaceful settlement of disputes and the formation of partnerships based upon shared values and interests rather than war fighting. In other words, the Quad states need to consider these aspirations of the regional stakeholders and ensure an overall security of the region beyond the military perspective. Having stated that, as most of the littoral countries in the IORA are dependent upon maritime trade and have considerable stake in the security of the Indo-Pacific, such concerns need to reflect in regional policy making collectively and without ambiguity.

This article establishes that India's position in the Indo-Pacific stems from its location and its interests in the region. The nation is keen to take a larger role in the regional security architecture—for which it needs to move beyond the Indian Ocean and take a proactive role in consensus building among the regional stakeholders.⁶⁹ At the same time, US foreign and security policy need to move beyond China's containment and seek to engage with American allies at a regional level beyond military or economic bilateral partnerships. India has a role to play beyond just being a major defense partner to the United States in ensuring a peaceful, free, and open Indo-Pacific. Along with Australia and Japan, India can deliberate on how New Delhi wishes to conceptualize the Indo-Pacific and then address the threat perceptions collectively. The Indo-Pacific is still evolving, and now is an opportune time for the Indo-Pacific littorals to cooperate on issues of concern to build a maritime security framework architecture and for India to take a prominent role in it. **JIPA**

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Ecuador's Leveraging of China to Pursue an Alternative Political and Development Path

R. Evan Ellis

This paper examines Ecuador's use of financing, commerce with, and investment from the People's Republic China (PRC) in its pursuit of a path independent of the United States and traditional Western institutions. The work details significant Chinese engagement with the country in the political, economic, and military arenas. It finds important differences in the dynamics and progress of Chinese companies in different sectors, as well as numerous challenges for Chinese companies, including both legal challenges to past contracts, as well as political mobilization against construction and extractive sector projects. Ecuador's engagement with the PRC is compared to and contrasted with patterns of engagement between the PRC and two other ALBA countries: Venezuela and Bolivia. In all cases, populist elites changed the political system and accountability mechanisms, and isolated their country from traditional commercial partners in ways that helped Chinese investors to reach deals that personally benefitted the populist elites and the PRC-based companies at the expense of the country. The work concludes by examining the prospects for the evolution of the relationship under the country's new leadership.

In the literature on interactions between the People's Republic of China and Latin America, the PRC relationship with Ecuador has received relatively little attention outside Ecuador itself.¹ Among the countries of the Bolivarian Alliance of the Peoples of the Americas (ALBA), scholars have principally focused on the PRC relationship with Venezuela. Ecuador, like other members of ALBA, was until recently headed by a relatively anti-US leader (Rafael Correa) who borrowed significant amounts of money from the PRC, secured by exports of petroleum, to obtain

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resources for a political course independent of the United States and traditional Western institutions such as the International Monetary Fund. Yet while Ecuador's relationship with the PRC shares characteristics of China's relationship with Venezuela and other ALBA countries, it also stands out from those other cases in important ways. Ecuador is both one of the countries with the highest rates of Chinese loans on a per capita basis, and one of the first in the region in which a PRC-based company made a significant investment of its own resources to operate in the country, with the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC)-led Andes coalition in 2005.² Ecuador is further one of the countries in which Chinese companies operating on the ground have encountered the most violent resistance, with significant incidents against Chinese-owned oilfields in Tarapoa in 2006³ and protests in Dayuma in 2007.⁴ Ecuadorans have also mounted significant mobilizations against Chinese mining projects in Zamora Chinchipe beginning in March 2012⁵ and continuing with actions against the San Carlos-Panantza mining project in December 2016,⁶ and against the Rio Blanco mine in 2018,⁷ among others.

Unique to other ALBA regimes, the Ecuadoran government once suspended the negotiations over a major hydroelectric facility (Coca Codo Sinclair) hydroelectric facility, drove the Hong Kong-based logistics giant Hutchison to abandon its concession to operate and develop the port of Manta, and cancelled the contract of a major Chinese defense contractor, CETC, only to have that company sue the country for over \$200 million dollars, even while it continued to purchase defense products from the PRC.

Ecuador is, in addition, the only ALBA state to date to peacefully deviate from a radical populist course. Indeed, when Lenin Moreno, Correa's hand-picked successor elected to the presidency, departed so much from the policies Correa expected that the latter formed a new movement to fight against the direction in which Moreno was taking the country.⁸

Unique among the ALBA regimes, Moreno's new policy direction has included expanded scrutiny of contracts with PRC-based companies and the renegotiation of prior petroleum and credit agreements, coupled with the selection of relatively Pro-West cabinet officials in key Ministries such as Foreign Affairs, Economy and Finance and Defense (among others) and a reapproachment with traditional Western investors and lending institutions such as the International Monetary Fund.⁹ The Ecuadoran case thus offers potentially important insights, both for the PRC and for other ALBA governments potentially transitioning to alternative regimes in the future. This paper provides such an analysis, both examining the Ecuadoran case in detail, and looking

at the similarities and differences between Ecuador and other ALBA regimes with whom the PRC has had close relations, particularly Venezuela and Bolivia.

History

As the PRC expanded its commercial ties with Latin America in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Ecuador's relationship with the Asian giant principally involved limited but growing trade and investment deals with the conservative Guayaquil-centered business elite, as well as the modest Chinese-Ecuadoran community, whose leaders had business ties to the PRC.

The election of Rafael Correa in November 2006 arguably re-oriented the Ecuador-China relationship and its key players. Initially, the rewriting of the nation's constitutional framework through a constituent assembly from 2007 to 2008, and the 2009 renegotiation of royalty payments for oil operations¹⁰ initially impaired the growth of new Chinese commitments. Nonetheless, the Correa administration's interest in using PRC-based companies and financing as an alternative to Western institutions for developing the country, in combination with Ecuador's self-exclusion from traditional financial markets through its 2008 default on \$3.2 billion in loans drove a rapid expansion of commitments to Chinese projects across multiple sectors, from petroleum, to logistics, to hydroelectric power, to telecommunications. Chinese companies and banks increased their willingness to pursue such projects once the new "rules of the game of the Correa administration appeared to have been established. That engagement was managed and led by a group of left-oriented Correa allies in the Ecuadoran government, including Foreign Minister Maria Espinoza and her successor Ricardo Patiño, and Vice-President Jorge Glas.¹¹ The projects that these figures advanced with Chinese companies drew them into alliances of mutual profit with pragmatic Ecuadoran business figures such as Pablo Campana, son-in-law of business magnate Isabel Noboa.¹²

By 2014, there were 70 Chinese companies operating in the country,¹³ and by 2018, Chinese banks had provided the regime with \$19 billion in financing through 16 separate loans.¹⁴

The rapidity of the Chinese advance, in combination with sensitivities to abuses by extractive industries in Ecuador (particularly among indigenous and other local groups directly affected by such activities), contributed to a significant number of problems for the Chinese projects, delaying or sidetracking many, even while the Correa government was lending strong support to the relationship as a whole.

Early problems included previously mentioned problems in Tarapoa in November 2006 and Dayuma in 2007, a fight with Hutchison-Whampoa over the management of the port of Manta that compelled the company to withdraw from the concession, and a dispute over the terms of Ecuador's first major Chinese-built hydroelectric project, Coca Codo Sinclair, that led to an unusually strong reproach of the Chinese by President Correa himself and the suspension of negotiations for four months, and major protests that forced a three-year delay in the Mirador open-pit mining project, granted under Ecuador's new mining laws. Difficulties in guaranteeing supplies of oil not committed elsewhere for a proposed new refinery proposed in Manabí made Chinese investors hesitant to back that project when the Venezuela' oil company Petróleos de Venezuela (PdVSA) failed to produce the funds to take it forward.¹⁵



Tests begin. On 15 December 2015, the Coca Codo Sinclair business unit of the Ecuadorian Electric Corporation, CELEC EP, starts its first hydraulic tests. The milestone was attended by Vice President Jorge Glas, the Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy Esteban Albornoz Veintimilla, and state authorities. Photo courtesy of ANDES / Micaela Ayala V.

As with the previously noted changes in the policy and legal frameworks with President Correa's 2006 election and Constituent Assembly, lesser, but still important changes made by his successor Lenin Moreno gave Chinese companies and the PRC government further cause for concern. These included a national referendum in February 2018 which put some new restrictions on petroleum and mining activities (areas of significant interest for Chinese investors), and which allowed

Moreno to change leadership of the powerful “Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control,” with the authority to hire and fire judicial officials. It also included an initiative by the new Hydrocarbons minister Carlos Perez to renegotiate the terms of China-Ecuador petroleum agreements, and the initiation of investigations of improprieties involving Chinese loans, petroleum contracts, and other agreements by both the new Ecuadoran Comptroller General Pablo Celi,¹⁶ and the new Attorney General Paúl Perez.¹⁷

Patterns of Engagement

Ecuador's engagement with the PRC in some ways resembles that of fellow ALBA states, as well as other countries in Latin America. Ecuador stands out from those peers, however, in the relatively large number of Chinese projects relative to the country's modest size, and the amount of pushback from mobilized indigenous, community, and other interest groups, delaying or cancelling many of those activities, and obligating the deployment of security forces on numerous occasions.

Politically, the PRC made significant progress through Ecuador's turn to the left and associated self-imposed isolation from Western finance and investors, including a key 2008 loan default which made Chinese banks one of the country's few sources of financing.¹⁸

In commerce, both Chinese purchases and equity investments concentrated in extractive sectors, particularly petroleum and mining, while loan-based infrastructure projects concentrated in hydroelectric power generation, some road and facilities construction, and initially, in ports and refinery work. The infrastructure projects in particular would in principal, expand PRC access to Ecuadoran resources, while facilitating Chinese access to Ecuadoran markets.

As with many Latin American and other countries trading with the PRC, Ecuador sought to expand exports of its traditional products to the PRC, such as coffee and fruit, with limited success.¹⁹ For its part, the PRC progressively expanded sales of products to Ecuador across a broad range of goods from motorcycles to autos to heavy equipment and consumer electronics.

In the military realm, Ecuador was relatively ahead of its Latin American peers in the purchase or lease of mid-grade Chinese military equipment, from light transport aircraft to radars, to trucks, other military vehicles, and small arms, but as in its commercial dealings with China, did not shy away from engaging in public disputes with the Chinese when such goods did not meet expectations, such as the purchase of radars from the Chinese firm CETC, detailed below.

Arguably the most important characteristic of the Ecuador-PRC interaction, an attribute that it shares with other ALBA regimes,²⁰ is the manner in which political changes, including centralization and the weakening of checks and balances,²¹ combined with economic isolation to allow Chinese companies to capture Ecuadoran elites in questionable deals that benefitted the Chinese companies and arguably the elites involved in the deals,²² often at the expense of the country.

Diplomatic Engagement

Ecuador has maintained a relatively limited high-level official relationship with the PRC since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1980. Left-oriented Ecuadoran President Rafael Correa, who came to power in 2007, made his first state visit to the PRC in January 2015, in conjunction with the summit between the PRC and the nations of the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC).²³ Although Ecuadoran presidents prior to Correa had also periodically visited the PRC, it was not until November 2016, with the trip by Xi Jinping that a Chinese President traveled to the country.²⁴

The 2015 China-CELAC summit was a significant moment in the advance of the China-Ecuador diplomatic relationship, although many of the commercial activities in Ecuador by Chinese companies were mired in problems. During the



Agreements. On 17 November 2016, in the framework of the state visit of the Chinese president Xi Jinping, Ecuador and China signed 11 cooperative agreements in several strategic areas for the development of Ecuador. Photo courtesy of Chancellery of Ecuador.

summit, the PRC recognized Ecuador as a “strategic partner,” a status generally associated with a ministerial level governing body to coordinate projects. This step set the stage for an “upgrade” of the relationship during the November 2016 trip by President Xi to Ecuador, to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership,²⁵ a recognition previously conferred by the PRC principally on larger (and presumably influential) states in the region.

As noted previously, the election of Lenin Moreno in Ecuador changed the tone of the country's relationship with the PRC, through the investigation and renegotiation of contracts by his predecessor, and his improvement of relations with the United States and Western institutions. Yet President Moreno has not changed although it has not fundamentally altered either the presence of Chinese companies or investment contracts in the country. While Hydrocarbons minister Carlos Perez successfully renegotiated terms of some of Ecuador's petroleum and financing agreements with China, the changes were marginal. President Moreno is expected to travel to the PRC and raise the issue of questionable contract terms and behaviors of concern by Chinese companies,²⁶ yet the extent to which he will truly press Ecuadoran concerns is not yet clear.

The prospects for the future of the Ecuador-China relationship under President Moreno is the focus of the final section of this work.

Commerce

The trade balance between the PRC and Ecuador has been significantly and continuously in China's favor, with the \$3.1 billion in goods that the PRC sold to Ecuador in 2016 approximately four times the \$785 million in goods that Ecuador sold to the PRC during the same period.²⁷

In addition to the sheer magnitude of Ecuador's trade deficit with the PRC, as in many other countries in the region, most of Ecuador's exports to China are primary products, including deliveries of oil by Petroecuador to repay loans for projects performed by PRC-based companies.²⁸ By comparison, the PRC only purchases modest quantities of traditional Ecuadoran goods such as coffee, cacao and fruits.²⁹ On the other hand, China exports an ever wider array of high-value added goods to the Ecuadoran market, from motorcycles, autos, and consumer electronics, as PRC-based companies and local partners and importers, become increasingly sophisticated in dealing with the Ecuadoran market.

Petroleum

Ecuador's oil sector was the first target of major Chinese investment, with a consortium led by China National Petroleum company (Andes) acquiring Canadian company EnCana in 2005 for \$1.42 billion.³⁰ Chinese companies currently control over 25% of Ecuadoran oil production on the ground, but per contracts using oil to repay loans to the Ecuadoran state, have a claim on almost all Ecuadorian oil deliveries for export through 2024.

Chinese companies are among those competing for new Ecuadoran oil concessions to be auctioned in 2018.³¹ Multiple Chinese petroleum service companies including CPEB and Kerui have also followed the larger PRC-based State Owned Enterprises such as Sinopec into the country.

Chinese oil companies, among others, have also been limited in their expansion in Ecuador by restrictions on exploration and development in terrain believed to contain significant amounts of petroleum underlying the Yasuni national parkland, although the PRC-based company Sinopec was contracted by the Ecuadoran state petroleum organization Petroamazonas for exploration activities in the limits of the Yasuni wildlife refuge.³² In January 2016, the Ecuador government licensed CNPC and China Chemicals and Petroleum Corporation to explore a block bordering Yasuni.³³ The February 2018 passage of a referendum by the incoming Moreno government contains a provision expanding the amount of national parkland protected from oil development,³⁴ yet does not appear to impact oilfields currently under development, or areas were targeted for future exploration based on the possibility of containing significant oil.³⁵

Due arguably in part to the rapidity with which Chinese companies entered Ecuador's oil sector, and the sensitivities of indigenous and other parts of the Ecuadoran population to the environmental impacts of petroleum operations,³⁶ PRC-based companies ran into multiple early problems as they expanded their operations in the Ecuadoran amazon, including activists taking control of an Andes-owned oilfield in Tarapoa in November 2006, and protests against the Chinese company Petroriental in Orellana in 2007,³⁷ prompting then president Rafael Correa to declare a state of emergency in the province and deploy the armed forces.³⁸ In the refining sector, reflecting the high costs and deficiencies in Ecuador's refining complex at Esmeraldas, various Chinese companies, including CNPC and Sinomach,³⁹ have considered funding the Refinery of the Pacific, for processing Ecuador's relatively heavy crude, a project worth as much as \$12 billion.⁴⁰ To date, the project has not gone forward, although as much as \$1 billion has been spent on

the effort for site,⁴¹ for studies and the acquisition of land, as well as the preparation of the site.⁴² Petroleum sector analysts suggest the project does not make sense due to local seismic instability, elevated costs relative to alternative refineries, and the need to construct significant additional infrastructure not included in the base price of the project, including new pipelines, storage facilities, and a petroleum products export terminal.⁴³ Nonetheless, the Moreno government continues to express some interest in taking the project forward.

As noted previously, oil deliveries has also been used to secure loans granted by Chinese policy banks, including funding for major infrastructure projects such as the construction of hydroelectric facilities. The terms of the concessions, using linked but separate contracts for the loan, and the associated oil deliveries that repay them, are similar to those employed in Venezuela, and have similarly been criticized for their terms⁴⁴ and the dependency relationship that they facilitate on the PRC.⁴⁵

Beginning with the first oil-backed loan deal in 2010 to fund the construction of the hydroelectric facility Coca Codo Sinclair, through 2017, Chinese banks have supplied an estimated \$19 billion to Ecuador through 16 lines of credit,⁴⁶ obligating the Ecuadoran government to commit 90% of its oil exports to the PRC to service the loan payments.⁴⁷

From 2017 through 2018, the incoming government of Lenin Moreno, its Hydrocarbons minister Carlos Perez, and its Comptroller Pablo Celi investigated the terms of petroleum and associated financing contracts signed between the Chinese and the Correa government,⁴⁸ and in May 2018, Hydrocarbons minister Carlos Perez arrived at an agreement with the Chinese for some modifications to the agreement,⁴⁹ although significantly less than what some activists believed necessary.⁵⁰

Mining

Ecuador's approval of a new mining law in January 2009,⁵¹ and subsequent refinements in 2012, opened the door to an expansion of interest by PRC-based mining companies in exploiting the long-dormant sector. Those advances included the Chinese company Tongling's December 2009 acquisition of the Canadian mining company Corriente, with an important presence in Ecuador.⁵² Soon thereafter, the new owners announced their intentions to invest in a series of mining projects in the Zamora-Chinchi region. Yet environmental sensitivities in the areas to be exploited generated a significant backlash, initially focused on the first of the announced major projects, the open-pit mine project Mirador,⁵³ including a national march against the proposed project in March 2012, led by the indigenous-rights group CONAIE.⁵⁴ Although the government delayed approval of the

project, obliging the new owners to perform a series of environmental impact assessments. In May 2014, as the project prepared to transition to the next stage, 150 protesting workers occupied the site.⁵⁵ In June 2015, opponents launched further protests, including in front of the Chinese embassy in Quito,⁵⁶ and in September 2015 protesters occupied the mine site, producing a violent confrontation with police.⁵⁷

Like Tongling, the Rio Blanco mine, near Cuenca, operated by the Chinese company Junefield, has also been the focus of protests, including two in 2018, forcing the temporary suspension of operations at the mine.⁵⁸ In June 2018, questions of compliance with environmental regulations led the Ecuadoran government to temporarily suspend the project.⁵⁹

Protests have also occurred at the San Carlos-Panantza copper mine, owned by the PRC-based firm ExplorCobres, including an incident in December 2016 which resulted in a death and multiple injuries, and prompting the government to declare a state of emergency in the province of Morona Santiago where the mine is located.⁶⁰

Construction

Chinese construction companies have been very active in Ecuador, principally in building hydroelectric facilities as part of a wave of infrastructure investment promoted by the government of Rafael Correa, and funded (as noted previously) by oil-backed loans from Chinese banks. Yet virtually all of these projects have encountered difficulties which have delayed their progress. With the exception of the \$900 million 487 MW Sopladora facility built by China Ghezouba Group,⁶¹ and Coca Codo Sinclair (which is in the process of addressing serious defects identified in an audit of the project),⁶² none have been completed.

As noted previously, the first and largest of the Chinese hydroelectric projects was Coca Codo Sinclair, a \$2.25 billion facility designed to generate 1.5 GW of electricity (30% of the needs of the entire country), with \$1.682B financed by China Export-Import Bank.⁶³ From the beginning, the project was mired in controversy, with then President Correa suspending negotiations over the project for several months, publicly reproaching the Chinese for demanding sovereign guarantees for debt repayment, and accusing them of being more demanding than the Western lending institutions such as the International Monetary Fund.⁶⁴ The project was also mired by a serious accident in December 2013, killing 13 workers.⁶⁵

Although the facility was formally inaugurated⁶⁶ during the November 2016 visit to Ecuador of Chinese President Xi Jinping,⁶⁷ as noted previously, Ecuadoran authorities continue to address multiple defects identified in the work.

Other major Chinese hydroelectric projects in various stages of completion include the \$506 million Minas San Francisco project, the \$100 million, 96 MW Termoesmeraldas II (both contracted to the Chinese firm Harbin Electric),⁶⁸ the 115 MW \$206 million Delsitansagua project (contracted to Hydrochina), and the \$240.4 million 1.12 GW Toachi-Pilaton facility. The later was contracted to China Water and Electric, with a role for the Russian firm RAO, after being taken from Odebrecht.⁶⁹

Some of the most notable problems associated with these projects include February 2015, when China Water and Electric, was fined \$3.25 million by the Ecuadoran government in conjunction with its work on the Toachi-Pilaton project for non-compliance with its work schedule and violations of workplace and safety regulations.⁷⁰ Similarly, China National Electric Equipment Corporation, responsible for the \$51 million 21 MW Mazar Dudas facility,⁷¹ and the 50 MW Quijos plant, has had problems with both projects, and was removed from the later in January 2016 by the Ecuadoran government for non-compliance with the established schedule.⁷² In July 2014 three Chinese workers were killed in Delsitanisagua by flooding of the Zamora River⁷³ (which ironically would have been managed by the completed dam).

Beyond just hydroelectric facilities, the Chinese firm Tiesijiu was awarded a \$52 million contract for the construction of a dam in Chone, but then had the government revoke its contract in June 2013, due to delays and problems arising from protests by the local community there.⁷⁴

In other electricity projects, a PRC-based firm was involved in constructing the \$34 million Villonaco wind farm in Loja, with 11 1.5 MW turbines,⁷⁵ while the Chinese firm State Grid has been involved in electricity transmission work to help connect the Coca Codo Sinclair facility to the national power grid.

Beyond electricity, as in Bolivia⁷⁶ and a number of Caribbean countries, Chinese construction companies have been involved in the improvement of Ecuador's highway infrastructure. In 2011, the Chinese firm Guangxi Road & Bridge Engineering Corporation completed a \$100 million 1.25 mile-long bridge over the Babahoyo River in Guayas province.⁷⁷ In 2013, the Chinese company Sinohydro was given a \$204.5 million contract for a three year project to extend and improve the Simon Bolivar thoroughfare in Quito, supported by an \$80 million loan from China's Ex-

port Import Bank.⁷⁸ In the year 2014, Chinese companies worked on 10 highway projects in the country, with a contract value of \$312 million. In 2015, Chinese firms worked on three highway projects, for a total value of \$85.7 million.⁷⁹

Chinese companies have also been involved in building hospitals and schools in Ecuador, also with problems. Perhaps the most visible and polemical case in this regard is the Millennium project, in which China Railway Corporation was contracted in 2016 by the Correa regime to build 200 prefabricated schools,⁸⁰ but after significant delays and cost overruns, stopped work having only completed 30.⁸¹

Perhaps the biggest failed construction project of the Correa presidency involving (although not exclusively) Chinese companies, was the planned university/technology city “*Ciudad del Conocimiento*” (city of knowledge) in the northern city of Yachay. Partially funded in 2016 through a \$198.2 million loan from China Export-Import bank, with contemplated investment in the site by Chinese companies such as JAC Automotive, which indicated intentions to build an automotive assembly facility there.

The project was ultimately sunk by a combination of the failure of the anticipated investment to materialize, plus poor structuring of the project,⁸² including water and sewage infrastructure which was not completed by the Chinese contractor Ghezouba in time to support the buildings. As Yachay was delayed and scaled back, even the handful of firms located to the site began to pull out.⁸³

Yet other construction projects reportedly include a \$55.6 million contract to the Chinese firms CAMC Engineering, Gezhouba and Hydrochina to change the course of the Bulubulu, Cañar and Naranjal rivers.⁸⁴

Perhaps the Chinese construction project in Ecuador with the best prospect for success is the Posorja port project, on the southern Pacific coast, awarded in June 2016 to DP World. DP World and its Ecuadoran partner Isabel Noboa,⁸⁵ has contracted China Harbor Engineering Corporation to do the work, potentially valued at \$1 billion.⁸⁶

Agriculture

As with most other countries in Latin America, with the exception of exports of bananas and shrimp, Ecuador has had limited success in selling its traditional agricultural products to the PRC. As in other parts of the region, the cost of transporting perishable Ecuadoran agricultural products over long distances to the PRC (typically in refrigerated shipping containers, or by air), increases the price in ways that undercut the competitiveness of Ecuadoran goods against alternatives located

closer to China in countries such as the Philippines. Nor has Ecuador been able to establish the strong brand identity to make Chinese consumers willing to pay a premium for its products as the Chileans have done in marketing their cherries, table grapes and other fruits in the PRC.

For Ecuador, the most significant successes in exporting agricultural products to the PRC have occurred with bananas and shrimp. With respect to bananas, 26% of Chinese imports come from Ecuador,⁸⁷ which compete with closer suppliers such as the Philippines. In 2014, shipments of Ecuadoran bananas to the PRC expanded when demand and prices in China took off relative to an inflexible supply from the Philippines whose own ability to expand its sales to the PRC is limited by relatively inflexible long term contracts.⁸⁸ The other exception was the takeoff of Ecuadoran shrimp exports to the PRC and other Asian markets, to \$362 million, in 2016, when the shrimp population in Asian waters was decimated by disease in 2016.⁸⁹

Chinese investments in Ecuador itself have been limited by the lack of large tracts of land usable to grow crops of the type, and in quantities of interest to Chinese markets. Nonetheless, during recent years, private Chinese investors have explored small-scale projects in the country, including investments in the shrimp industry in the province of Manabí, and in African palm tree plantations in the vicinity of Santo Domingo for the production of palm oil.⁹⁰

Manufacturing

Chinese consumer goods have been imported into Ecuador principally by multinational firms or Latin American partners, who have sold them through their own distribution networks. Examples include Chinese motorcycles marketed under the brands Shineray and AKT,⁹¹ as well as various brands of Chinese cars. In 2017, for example, Ecuador's Maresa group added the Chinese car brand Chery to its repertoire.⁹²

Beyond retail sales and distribution, by contrast to countries such as Mexico and Brazil, Ecuador's relatively small market and the limited potential for selling manufactured goods to other countries in the region has arguably limited incentives for Chinese and other companies to locate manufacturing operations there. Nonetheless, in recent years, a handful of Chinese investors have considered small scale operations in the country. In 2016, for example, the auto manufacturer JAC proposed a \$3 million investment for an assembly facility for SUVs associated with the previously mentioned "City of Knowledge" project in Yachay.⁹³ The project failed to materialize, however, when the Yachay project itself fell apart.⁹⁴

Logistics

Ecuador's geographic position on the Pacific with important markets to both the north and south, in combination with a relatively functional government, good infrastructure, and low rates of insecurity, give the country potential value as a logistics hub for trade between Asia and south America (although every other country in South America with a Pacific coast, particularly Chile and Peru, arguably have similar aspirations). For many years, Ecuador's ability to realize its potential as such a hub was limited by the nature of its principal Pacific Coast port in Guayaquil, located substantially upstream along the Guayas River. That position limited the size of ships that could use the port, and implied significant continuous dredging costs, were the facility to accommodate the new generation of very large container and bulk cargo ships transiting the Pacific by increasing its channel depth.

In 2006, the Ecuadoran government sought to overcome the limitations of Guayaquil as the country's principal Pacific coast port by giving a concession to the Hong Kong based company Hutchison Whampoa to operate and develop Manta, a natural deep-water port to the northwest of Guayaquil on the Pacific coast. The vision included making Manta into a multi-modal transportation hub, with road and railway links to the Ecuadoran amazon.⁹⁵

In February 2009, an ongoing dispute between Hutchison and the Ecuadoran government regarding the concession holder's obligation to invest in improving the port and the government's corresponding responsibility to invest in enabling infrastructure drove Hutchison to withdraw from the concession,⁹⁶ sidelining the development of the port, and by extension, the associated logistics corridor. Despite the setback, PRC-based firms continued to maintain a modest presence in Ecuador's logistics sector. The Chinese shipping company COSCO, for example, used the private port of Fertisa, owned by Grupo Wong, and principally employed for the export of bananas.⁹⁷

Currently, the role of PRC-based companies in the Ecuadoran port sector is poised to take off with the development of the new port of Posorja in the south of the country; the Concession owner DP World and their local partner Isabel Noboa⁹⁸ have contracted China Harbor to do a significant portion of the port construction work,⁹⁹ with other opportunities for Chinese construction and shipping companies likely to follow.

Technology

Little noticed outside the region, PRC-based firms have been remarkably active in Ecuador's technology sector. The telecommunications firms Huawei and ZTE have captured a major portion of the Ecuadorian market for telephones and communications components. Huawei has become an important contractor for the national telecommunications firm *Corporación Nacional de Telecomunicaciones* (CNT).¹⁰⁰

In the space sector, although eclipsed by Chinese work with Brazil, Venezuela and Bolivia,¹⁰¹ in 2013, the Chinese launched a microsatellite for Ecuador. It was, unfortunately damaged by space debris shortly after being put into orbit.¹⁰²

As noted previously, Chinese companies have also been contracted to build Ecuador's "*Ciudad de Concimiento*" in Yachay, which (if it does eventually go forward, even in a reduced-scale form) will include not only physical construction work for Chinese companies, but supporting technology infrastructure provided by them, as Ecuador's first "city of knowledge."¹⁰³

More menacing than telecommunications and smart cities, in 2011, China National Electronics Import and Export Corporation (CEIEC) was contracted to construct the national emergency response system ECU-911. Although superficially represented as a system for responding to accidents,¹⁰⁴ in reality it is a public security system modeled on those used for public surveillance and control in the PRC, including cameras with facial recognition technology, two national command and control centers, five regional centers, and eight provincial centers.¹⁰⁵ In April 2014, the Ecuadoran government let a second contract to the Chinese for ECU-911, for \$42.6 million in services in support of the operation of the centers. In November 2016, the Centers started operating in Cuenca, Quito, and Guayaquil.¹⁰⁶

Military

Ecuador has purchased a number of Chinese military systems in recent years, including a 2009 negotiation to acquire two MA-60 military transport aircraft.¹⁰⁷ In the same year, it also signed a \$60 million contract with the China Electronics Technology Group Corporation (CETC) for the acquisition of YLC-2V long range and YLC-18 mobile radars, which it intended to deploy principally in strategic locations in the north of the country. The Ecuadoran military subsequently entered into a contractual dispute with the Chinese provider regarding the unsuitability of the equipment and its inability to integrate the systems into the national surveillance and response architecture. CETC eventually agreed to construct a cyber-defense system as part of its remediation of the dispute, yet attempts to resolve

the disagreement were unsuccessful and in 2013, CETC brought a lawsuit against the Ecuadoran government seeking \$280 million, almost five times the value of the original contract.¹⁰⁸

Despite the dispute with CETC, Ecuador continued to acquire equipment from Chinese military vendors. In July 2015, for example, the government purchased 709 military land vehicles, mostly by Sinotruk, in a contract worth \$81 million, including 226 4x4 trucks, 93 6x6 vehicles, 18 water tankers, 20 gasoline tanker trucks, 62 other vehicles, plus associated parts.¹⁰⁹ In 2016, Ecuador's military took delivery on 10,000 Ak-47 rifles from the PRC,¹¹⁰ as well as a small number of patrol boats.

Beyond arms sales, as with many other Latin American and Caribbean militaries, personal from Ecuador's military have regularly gone to study in Chinese military institutions, as part of various courses (although the content is seen as having only incidental relevance to Ecuador, which continues to rely principally on US and European doctrine). For its part, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has sent instructors to Ecuador's Armed Forces University.¹¹¹ There are also periodic institutional visits by the PLA to Ecuadoran institutions and vice versa.¹¹²

Education

Ecuador has made strides in developing its knowledge about the PRC to support its commercial and other engagement, yet Ecuadorans in general perceive that, for most academics and businessmen, knowledge about China is relatively limited.¹¹³ Leading institutions such as FLACSO University in Quito, and ESPOL in Guayaquil have professors conducting research and offering courses about the PRC, but not initially degree programs in China studies per se.¹¹⁴ The only Masters-level China studies program in Ecuador is reportedly at the *Instituto de Altos Estudios Nacionales* (IAN), initially established as a university for strategic level military education under the military government of Juan Velasquez Alvarado, but transformed into a civilian school, principally for government bureaucrats, during the Correa administration.¹¹⁵

Although various universities and institutes in Ecuador offer Chinese language programs, the University of San Francisco outside Quito was the first to offer a China-studies program, although oriented more toward Chinese culture than business. It was also the first (and to date, the only) university in Ecuador to establish a Confucius institute for study of the Chinese language and culture using instructors officially sanctioned and sponsored by the Chinese government.¹¹⁶

Comparisons and Contrasts with ALBA Countries

Ecuador's path bears both similarities to and contrasts with other ALBA countries. As noted in the previous section, as in Venezuela and Bolivia, most of China's imports from Ecuador have concentrated in the extractive sectors, and in particular, oil and mining, while proceeds have been used to support loan-financed infrastructure projects done by Chinese companies. Ecuador has concentrated a relatively greater portion of its work projects in the PRC on re-orienting its energy matrix toward hydroelectric power, although Chinese work with Bolivia also includes a mixture of hydroelectric facilities, road construction and other projects.¹¹⁷

The pattern of commercial engagement which most clearly emerges in comparing Ecuador to Venezuela and Bolivia is a destructive combination of populist elites coming to power in a manner that centralized power, including public contracting, while weakening transparency and checks and balances by the political opposition. In all of the countries, these changes opened the door for Chinese companies and the PRC government, operating under different ethical rules than their Western counterparts, to capture new populist elites in need of their cash, producing deals that were "win-win" for the Chinese companies and financial interests of the populist elites, but ultimately, not for the countries.

In comparing the patterns of Chinese engagement with Ecuador to that of Venezuela and Bolivia, each newly elected populist regimes initially reached out to the PRC and was met positively but cautiously. In each case, the relationship then passed through periods of political turmoil in which the Chinese became more cautious, before moving forward with the relationship as they gained comfort with the new legal and political framework for interaction. In this sense, the period of Ecuador's revising of oil royalties and the broader legal framework via the 2007-2008 constituent assembly may be compared to the period in Venezuela from the 1999 revision of that nation's constitution, through the 2003 end of the Venezuelan general strike, and to Bolivia's 2007-2008 period of constitutional dispute with the lowland (*medio luna*) states.

In the case of Ecuador, the populist government of Rafael Correa inherited a uniquely strong Chinese presence on the ground in the oil sector, by comparison to the more modest CNPC presence in Venezuela when Hugo Chavez came to power, and almost no commercial presence in Bolivia when Evo Morales came to power there. In Ecuador, from the beginning of the Correa administration, the government had both a framework from the presence of the Andes consortium, plus the example of loans-for-oil contracts being established by China in Venezuela.

In mining, the Ecuadoran government opened up the sector to the Chinese (and other) mining investors as soon as it had revised the legal framework for the sector, and the Chinese expressed an almost immediate interest in investing, as seen by the acquisition of the mining company Corriente by the Chinese firm Tongling. This early focus on mining in Ecuador contrasts to Venezuela, where petroleum investment always overshadowed mining.

In the case of Venezuela, whose transition to Bolivarian populism occurred earlier, the political struggle and consolidation of populist rule was more drawn out, affecting the parallel advance of the Chinese position; it was not until 2007, almost a decade after Venezuela's populist leader Hugo Chavez took power, that the PRC established the first tranche of loans with the Venezuelan government, in return for petroleum from oilfields over which it had been given control.¹¹⁸ In Bolivia, although the government had conversations with Chinese companies about mining and oil concessions from the outset of the Morales regime (and to some extent prior to it), the granting of highway and hydroelectric construction projects did not expand in earnest until almost seven years after the government's implementation of a new constitutional order and the resolution of challenges against it.¹¹⁹

The level of violent resistance generated by Chinese companies commencing operations on national territory has varied significantly between Ecuador, Bolivia and Venezuela (particularly in the extractive sectors, and with respect to construction projects). Among these three, the highest level of public social resistance appears to have occurred in Ecuador, with violent protests that produced states of emergency in Orellana in 2007 and in Morona Santiago in December 2016, among other challenges. In Bolivia, if mentions of incidents in news stories is a guide, there appear to have been relatively fewer protests against projects by communities against Chinese projects, and more protests by workers on projects being run by Chinese companies.¹²⁰

In Venezuela, it is not clear whether there have actually been fewer incidents of violence against Chinese projects and operations than in Ecuador, but it appears that certainly fewer high-profile national incidents have been publicized. While the reasons for these differences are unclear, hypotheses worth exploring include that Venezuela's populist government achieved relatively greater control over the means of communication than that of Ecuador, and more completely organized or suppressed civil society to its own ends (e.g. Through the "*collectivos*,"), whereas under the Correa regime in Ecuador, the opposition continued to have some space to communicate and mobilize.

A second, complimentary explanation worth exploring is that Ecuadoran communities are more oriented to mobilization against Chinese and other outside interests than are their Venezuelan counterparts. Ecuadoran community and indigenous groups, sensitized to the contamination of lands by foreign multinationals, may have been particularly disposed to oppose the incoming Chinese companies, which could often manage community relations in an insensitive fashion, whereas in Bolivia, where mining in particular had long been a reality throughout the country, communities had become more resigned but workforces more radicalized. In Venezuela, by contrast, there were arguably fewer indigenous groups in the Orinoco belt where the new petroleum operations were occurring, a more relaxed political culture, and arguably less sense in Venezuela that political intervention could make a difference.

Prospects for Change under the Moreno Administration

President Moreno has pursued Ecuador's gradual reconciliation with the United States and the West, and by extension, less of an impulse to use the PRC as a vehicle for maintaining political and economic independence from them. His Hydrocarbons minister has renegotiated contracts with China in a fashion that, while less ambitious than hoped for, are a step in a new direction. The commitments by his Attorney General Paúl Perez, and his Comptroller General Pablo Celi to investigate the administrative and possibly criminal dimensions of past contracts with PRC-based companies¹²¹ highlight a new willingness to increase oversight over deals with China, in the interest of the country.

Aside from such symbolic gestures, President Moreno has also, to a degree, signaled an interest in continuity in the relationship with the PRC, including a possible November 2018 trip to China. With the exception of temporarily halting the Rio Blanco mining project on environmental compliance issues, his government has not taken significant legal action against PRC-based companies, nor moved to block them from bidding on projects and contracts. Even the successful February 2018 referendum, which expanded limits on some petroleum and mining activities, neither explicitly targets Chinese companies, nor significantly impacts their ongoing operations or areas in which they appear to be interested. Projects with Chinese firms appear to be going forward without interruption in the construction sector (including \$1 billion of work for China Harbour on Posorja), in telecommunications (Huawei contracts with CNT).

If anything, President Moreno seems to be pursuing a relationship with China that seeks better terms through greater transparency and oversight, and the development of alternatives with Western institutions, such as the Inter-American Development Bank,¹²² Ecuador's ability to rebuild a relationship with the United States and Western institutions,¹²³ and the degree to which that rapprochement pays off for Ecuador on trade and other issues,¹²⁴ will likely condition how receptive Ecuador is to PRC requests to "bend its rules" to attract Chinese investment and other forms of support.

Conclusion

This study is preliminary, but serves to highlight the value of examining China's relationships with other populist socialist regimes. The analysis herein is largely anecdotal, highlighting the need for better, more objectively comparable information on key dynamics and behaviors involving the Chinese government and its companies, including investments, incidents of social protest, and government policies.

Key questions for future work include: "why do Chinese companies succeed more in some populist countries in the region than in others," and "why do some populist regimes do better than others in leveraging Chinese resources against the temptations of corruption and bad deals?"

The political path being followed by Ecuador under Lenin Moreno is arguably the first instance of a country formally part of ALBA transitioning from a path of populist socialism heavily financed by the PRC, with associated issues of corruption and questionable contracts, to an alternative trajectory.¹²⁵ Ecuador thus offers important insights for both the PRC, and those in the hemisphere observing the PRC's behavior, regarding the dynamics and pitfalls of that transition, and how the PRC responds if its economic and other equities are questioned by the new regime. **JIPA**

Notes

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