# Announcements

- Conference participants are requested to wear their conference passes throughout the conference.

- Each moderator has 2 to 3 minutes to introduce the panel. Each presenter has 15 minutes for his/her presentation. Each discussant has 10 minutes for his/her presentation (regardless of the number of authors). Each Q&A will have three minutes. All presentations, comments, and questions will be timed. The moderators reserve the right to abbreviate or extend the standard time allocations.

- English is the official language of the conference.

- Please turn off your mobile phone during the conference sessions, so as not to disturb the proceedings.

- Smoking is not permitted during conference proceedings but is permitted in designated smoking areas during the breaks.

- In addition to the hard copies in your packets, electronic versions of the conference papers will be available on INPR's website (www.inpr.org.tw).

# Asian Elections 2007-2008:
# Regional Security Implications

***Institute for National Policy Research (Taiwan)***

**Co-sponsors:**

***The Pacific Forum CSIS (US)***

***Institute for Strategic and Development Studies (Philippines)***

***Asia Centre (France)***

**August 10-12, 2008**

**Double Tree Alana Hotel Waikiki, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A**

# Contents

# Agenda

**Sunday, August 10**

| | |
|---|---|
| 18:30 | **Welcome Dinner at Hotel Pool Side Restaurant** |

**Day One** **Monday, August 11**

| | |
|---|---|
| 08:30 | **Continental Breakfast (Room 303)** |
| 09:00 | **Welcome Remarks**<br>Hung-Mao Tien, Institute for National Policy Research<br>Ralph Cossa, Pacific Forum, CSIS |
| 09:10 | **Keynote Speech**<br>James Kelly, Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs |
| 09:40 | **Panel One – Elections in South Korea, Japan, Russia: Security Implications for Northeast Asia** |
| Moderator: | Wen-Cheng Lin, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy |
| Presenters: | Heungkyu Kim, Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security<br>"South Korea's Elections and Security Implications for Northeast Asia" |
| | Yoshifumi Nakai, Gakushuin University<br>"Japanese Politics and the Shaping of Its Security Policies" |
| | Yu-Shan Wu, Academia Sinica<br>"Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy: How Significant is Russia's Power Transfer?" |
| Discussants: | Chih-Cheng Lo, Soochow University<br>Vincent K. Pollard, University of Hawaii<br>Michael McDevitt, Center for Naval Analyses Corporation |
| 11:10 | Coffee Break |
| 11:20 | Open Forum |
| 12:20 | **Luncheon at J-Bistro (lobby level)** |
| Speaker: | Charles E. Morrison, President, East-West Center, U.S. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 14:00 | **Panel Two – Taiwan's Elections and the Implications for Cross-Strait Relations** |
| Moderator: | Ralph Cossa, Pacific Forum, CSIS |
| Presenters: | Wen-Cheng Lin, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy<br>"Taiwan's Elections and the Implications for Cross-Strait Relations" |
| | Denny Roy, East-West Center<br>"Washington's View of Taiwan's 2008 Elections and Referendum" |
| | Lowell Dittmer, University of California, Berkeley<br>"China: Maturing Juggernaut" |
| Discussants: | Yu-Shan Wu, Academia Sinica<br>Heungkyu Kim, Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security<br>Elizabeth Van Wie Davis, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies |
| 15:30 | Coffee Break |
| 15:40-16:40 | Open Forum |
| 18:00 | Transportation to the Residence of Representative Wang |
| 18:30 | **Dinner Hosted by Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, Honolulu** |

| **Day Two** | **Tuesday, August 12** |
|---|---|
| 08:30 | **Continental Breakfast (Room 303)** |
| 09:00 | **Panel Three – Elections in Thailand, Malaysia, and Australia: Security Implications for Southeast Asia and South Pacific** |
| Moderator: | François Godement, Asia Centre |
| Presenters: | Charles Salmon, Jr., Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies<br>"Elections in Thailand and Malaysia and Security Implications for Southeast Asia" |
| | Brendan Taylor, Australian National University<br>"Rudd's Asia-Pacific Community: Dead in the Water?" |
| | Carolina G. Hernandez, Institute for Strategic and Developmental Studies<br>"ASEAN Charter and the Building of a Security Community" |

| | |
|---|---|
| Discussants: | Richard Baker, East-West Center<br>Chih-Cheng Lo, Soochow University<br>John Brandon, Asia Foundation |
| 10:30 | Coffee Break |
| 10:45 | Open Forum |
| 12:00 | **Luncheon at J-Bistro (lobby level)** |
| 13:30 | **Panel Four – Security Implications of the 2008 U.S. Elections** |
| Moderator: | Carolina G. Hernandez, Institute for Strategic and Developmental Studies |
| Presenters: | Brad Glosserman, Pacific Forum, CSIS<br>"The U.S. Elections and Implication for East Asia Security" |
| | Cheng-Yi Lin, Academia Sinica<br>"The U.S. Elections and U.S.-China Relations" |
| | François Godement, Asia Centre<br>"Viewing the New World's response to the new New World: how Europeans view current U.S. debates and positions on Asia" |
| Discussants: | Lowell Dittmer, University of California, Berkeley<br>Yoshifumi Nakai, Gakushuin University<br>Fu-Kuo Liu, National Chengchi University |
| 15:00 | Coffee Break |
| 15:10 | Open Forum |
| 16:10 | **Concluding Panel** |
| Moderator: | Hung-Mao Tien, Institute for National Policy Research |
| Panelists: | Ralph Cossa, Pacific Forum, CSIS<br>Carolina G. Hernandez, Institute for Strategic and Developmental Studies<br>François Godement, Asia Centre |
| 16:40 | Adjournment |

# Keynote Speech

James Kelly
Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Keynote Speech

**James A. Kelly**

Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

With thanks to the sponsors, I am both delighted and humbled to be speaking to this conference as it begins. I am delighted because the topic – in both real and theoretical terms – is so interesting and important. I am humbled, because as a practitioner by long experience, I am venturing into areas of academic reflection that go back far, and in which I have little background and knowledge.

DNA science now verifies just how similar we humans really are. Differences in culture, development, and history can no longer be blamed on inherent distinctions among humans. Now, technology enables broader knowledge of others' practices. Improvements in quality of life give the wherewithal that enable many more people to demand participation in their various political economies. So I would point to a convergence of governmental problems that may not be 'the end of history," but pose what is, in truth, a related set of problems or dilemmas across many nations and cultures.

The problems differ in detail but converge in common. Included are those of prosperity and its imbalances, of protecting independence, avoiding unfair exploitation of people or natural resources or misuse of power by insiders or powerful foreigners, and of protecting the air and water that all need. Peoples are interested in reality not in models. There is a strong tendency of late to view democracy as an end in itself, but, in the worlds where most live, democracy has been chosen not primarily for its essential justice, but as the best way to achieve and assure desirable performance by government such as stable successions of leaders, responsive services, and responsible use of public money.

The common contemporary problems are more obvious among democracies, though by no means limited to such. Yet the persistence and spread of these problems becomes more apparent. Governments seem weaker, even leaderless, and unable to deal with serious issues. The perception and reality of weak governments, unable to act or decide, with leaders and legislators in descending popularity, is remarkably pervasive.

As New York Times columnist David Brooks recently wrote, making the point in broad terms:

"In the late 1940s, global power was concentrated. The victory over fascism meant the mantle of global leadership rested firmly on the Atlantic alliance (and) the United States …

Today power is dispersed. There is no permanent bipartisan governing class in Washington. Globally, power has gone multipolar, with the rise of China, India, Brazil and the rest.

This dispersion should, in theory, be a good thing, but in practice, multipolarity means that more groups have effective veto power over collective action. In practice, this new pluralistic world has given rise to globosclerosis, an inability to solve problem after problem."

This same inability to deal effectively with problems applies even more within nations or states. It is especially true in democracies, but the phenomenon is much broader than that. The effect, which is broadly seen in Asia, is that a leader or set of leaders is chosen by the citizens by a majority or plurality. Often hope and optimism surge, though frequently now – with more jaded populations - the popularity bump is quite small. But before long the newly chosen leader is being blamed for shortcomings that are less personal than they are related to a kind of political systemic paralysis. Often this is really about the action or inaction of other interest groups, who are not strong enough to get support for their own ideas, but who have enough power to block action – good or bad - by others.

This must not be misunderstood, as it often is. These systems do look and are quite unstable and slow to respond to even generally recognized issues. The autocratic leader or clique might be (and sometimes is) so much more effective in responding and governing. But the lesson is that modern problems are too complex for this to consistently work, and that the autocratic leader sooner or later becomes entrapped in his own status and power, and there is no apparent way by which he can be replaced. This recycling of leaders is the great strength – and also a great challenge - of democracy. And though democracy requires much more than elections, these occasions do present a visible marker of countries in very different stages of economic and political development.

As we look at challenges of Asian states, with attention to the effects relating to peace and security of those with elections this year and last, we have to be aware of these very different stages.

Every democracy is constantly under challenge – subtly or obvious – from power and wealth seeking participants. And that is aside from outside or foreign influences.

Also essential is to realize that Asia – and America and the world – in 2008 are at a most significant moment of history. For significant reasons, and led by Asia, supplies of energy, including oil, coal and gas, raw materials, and food have moved from a significant period of plenty at low prices to what I expect to be a near permanent state of higher prices and greater scarcity. Some effects are in sight, but most can scarcely be imagined and have yet to have effect. At the same time, but with seriousness much less obvious to ordinary people, climate change and its effects on the environment, have become more recognized with increasing pressures to do "something."

At another part of our analysis, countries' choice of parliamentary or presidential systems is critical. The legislatures of countries with strong presidents are not necessarily without influence. But the power of individual lawmakers in such a presidential system is indirect at best, and so statements from such representatives vary enormously in importance or seriousness. The party discipline of the parliamentary system does make a difference in how to weigh what was said.

The next two days will bring extensive and informed discussion of the security implications of several Asian elections. But before we enter these critical specifics, it may be useful to offer a personal take on what are the important security questions of East Asia – elections or no.

- North Korea: Nuclear weapons, conventional forces and peace on the Korean Peninsula.
  - DPRK moves to beat of own drum.
  - Other five parties engaged with DPRK, four have elections in 2007/08
  - Shift of military threat nature and a more varied nature

- Cross Straits Tensions: How bad the risks?
  - Apparently better, but…?

- China: Risks in its success or in failure.
  - Key question of Asia
  - No one has stake in failure

- Internal Conflicts
  - Most immediate and persistent
  - Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Burma, et al.

- Jihadists and Terrorism
  - Associations with Arab Conflicts
  - Terror trained individuals
  - Maintaining Southeast Asian moderation critical

- Boundary and Seabed Questions
  - South China Sea more serious
  - China land borders
  - Tokdo/Takeshima; Senkakus/Diaoyutai

The specifics will be covered well, but I cannot resist offering some preliminary comments on places that have been or are being affected by elections:

- Japan: Ten years of transition?
  - How long does it take for an opposition to learn to bear real responsibility?

- Russia: How far is democracy receding? Does high priced oil make a superpower?

- Taiwan: Consensus or Division? The tyranny of (short) distance.

- Korea: Development and partisan politics? Another failed presidency?
  - How long can DPRK persist?

- Thailand: Problems of democracy in **bold face.**

- Malaysia: Changing a comfortable system.

- Philippines: The dilemma of adaptive, incomplete, democracy
- Australia: New comfort in its identity. An Asianist PM.
- New Zealand: Change pending?
- Indonesia: Success under pressure. But how well next time?
- France and the EU: Sovereignty concerns among the complacent.
- USA: Dilemmas of global role amid bitter political polarization.

# Panel I

## Elections in South Korea, Japan, Russia:

## Security Implications for Northeast Asia

Heungkyu Kim, Professor Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security

"South Korea's Election and Security: Implication for Northeast Asia"

Yoshifumi Nakai, Professor, Gakushuin University, Japan

"Japanese Politics and the Shaping of Its Security Policies"

Yu-Shan Wu, Distinguished Research Fellow, Academia Sinica

"Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy: How Significant is Russia's Power Transfer"

# "South Korea's Elections and Security: Implication for Northeast Asia"

**Heungkyu Kim**

Professor

Institute for Foreign Affairs and National Security

## South Korea's Elections

On December 19, 2008, a decade of liberal rule in Korea ended. Lee Myung-bak, the conservative Grand National Party (GNP) candidate, won the presidential election with about 5.31 million votes, the largest margin ever in a direct presidential election. Lee won 11.4 million votes, 48.6 percent of total votes cast while, Chung Dong-young, the liberal runner-up, only received 6.17 million votes, 26.1 percent of total votes cast.

The Korean National Assembly elections on April 9 also slapped the faces of liberals and conservatives ascended to power. The GNP won 153 seats in the 299 seats National Assembly and two conservative minority parties picked up 32 seats with another 20 seats of conservative independents. In all, conservative groups won more than 200 seats, providing Lee Myung-bak government with unprecedented legitimacy and power in the management of state affairs.

The reason for the landslide victories by conservatives came mainly from the failure of the former liberal governments to convince Korean people that Korea could move to an advanced country. Over the past decade, the liberal administration said that they would grow the economy by redistributing wealth, when we looked closely, but the economic growth was stagnant; youth unemployment rose; and social polarization increased.

Therefore, a clear message illustrated by recent Korean elections is that Korean people are concerned about the economy the most. Traditional conservatives in Korea have shared ideas of liberal democracy, market mechanism, support for alliance with the U.S., preference to economic growth, and anti-communist sentiment. However, Lee was neither a liberal nor a traditional right-wing conservative. Korean people chose him because they believed that he, as a former successful CEO, would advance

Korea in economy and elevate it to an advanced-nation status. Although Lee has been under pressure from conservatives to adopt more conservative values in his foreign policy, Lee certainly took a moderate position in foreign policy, reflecting such public demands. He pledged to pursue a pragmatic foreign policy. Thus, Lee's "MB doctrine" (as Lee's foreign policy is called locally) seemed motivated by ensuring a more predictable business environment for both domestic actors and foreign investors.[1] Toward this end, Lee's inauguration-preparation team for foreign policy suggested four-pronged policies: first, "denuclearization, opening, and 3000" program for inter-Korea relations; second, constructing 21st century type of ROK-U.S. alliance (plus restoring ties with Japan); third, a new-Asia cooperative diplomacy; and fourth, engaging a proactive "resource diplomacy" on the world stage.[2]

**Lee's Policy Guidelines in Foreign Policy and Security**

Unfortunately, Lee's foreign policy visions were not fully addressed and understood by the public and bureaucrats as well as foreign policy experts because when the new administration launched in February, the original foreign policy preparation team was replaced by a new group and brought confusion within and outside. Distorted versions of policy from the original one in "denuclearization, opening, and 3000" program and strengthening alliances with the U.S. (plus cooperation with Japan) were relatively stressed as contents of "the MB doctrine."

The North Korean policy in "the MB doctrine" was cited the denuclearization of the North as a precondition for further inter-Korean economic cooperation. If the North meets such conditions, the South would raise the North's GNP to $3,000 within a decade. Contrary to Roh Muhyun's policy, in "the MB doctrine," the denuclearization of the North was understood to come before the establishment of a peace regime.

However, the "denuclearization, opening, and 3000" program was not designed as a precondition but an ambitious plan to revive the North's ailing economy by building up its infrastructure, while nurturing 100 export-oriented companies and a talent base to be used in developing various industries. However, compared to the strategic ambiguity of Roh's engagement policy, the MB doctrine put a clear emphasis on the complete removal of the North's nuclear capabilities. The combination of the above two policies provided a wrong impression to the public on the MB's North Korea policy. Currently, the

[1] Sungho Kim, "Korea's Conservatives Strike Back," *Global Asia* Vol.3, No.1, p, 81.
[2] Inauguration-Preparation Team for Foreign Policy, *Policy Guideline for MB Doctrine* (November 2007), pp. 5-27.

primary focus of the MB policy is on denuclearization, but Lee administration appeared perplexed with seemingly moderate stance of the U.S. in dealing with the North on the nuclear issue and started worrying about bypassing Korea.

Reflecting the traditional view of conservatives, Lee emphasized a stronger relationship with Washington on the belief that a stronger tie with the U.S. would enhance Korean security and help coping with uncertainties increasing in Northeast Asia because of the rise of China, U.S. transformational diplomacy, rising regional nationalism, Japan's normalization, North Korea's nuclear issue, North Korean issues, and so on.

Lee's emphasis on the "21st century type of the Korea-U.S. alliance" envisaged a new ROK-U.S. alliance being able to deal with non-security issues as well as traditional security issues and to extend cooperation beyond North Korean issues and the Korean Peninsula, based upon equal partnership between Seoul and Washington. Lee's administration also figured out that restoration of cooperation with Japan would be indispensable. Both countries shares democratic values and political system, and market economy and needs cooperation in dealing with the North as well as the rise of China. Therefore, Lee sincerely hoped to open a new era with Japan as Roh did in the initial period of his administration. Lee's policy vis-à-vis Washington and Tokyo was interpreted as the main tool by which to redirect Seoul's North Korea policy.[3]

An agenda not yet publicized in the MB doctrine, which has not been well informed to the public, is of a new Asia cooperative diplomacy.[4] This "new Asia cooperative diplomacy" visages extension of partnership with major regional actors in Asia-Pacific area, establishment of East Asian cooperative security community replacing the six-party talks, and constructing a trans-Asian energy cooperative belt. Regional cooperative network will be expanded through multifaceted exchanges and cooperation. The "new Asia" concept has a broader diplomatic range compared to Kim Dae-jung's East Asian cooperation and Roh Moo-hyun's Northeast Asian hub diplomacy.

[3] Sungho, Kim, p. 81.
[4] *Policy Guideline for MB Doctrine*, pp. 18-22.

Initial public perception of Lee's foreign policy as an ideologically-directed foreign policy in spite of Lee's emphasis on pragmatism was lessened when Lee established the "strategic cooperative partnership" with China despite some resistance within Korea on building such relationship.[5] In fact, the establishment of such partnership with China was on the logical extension of the new Asia cooperative diplomacy. Through this strategic cooperative partnership, President Lee made clearly saying the guideline of China policy that the new South Korean government would place its importance on China while strengthening the Korea-U.S. alliance. In his view, strategic partnership with China and the Korea-U.S. alliance are no longer a zero-sum game.[6]

**Shaken Lee's Political Authority:**
**Unanticipated Outcomes after Lee's Visit to the U.S. and Japan**

Lee's confidence launching foreign policy initiatives as well as domestic agendas quickly eroded after Lee's visits to the U.S. and Japan. To begin with, a bold approach to strengthen alliance with the U.S. by making concession on beef import to the U.S. waked up sensitivity on public health of Korean people and brought strong civil resistance. Making the situation worse, a plan of Japanese government to teach the Dokdo (known as Takeshima in Japan) as its own territory in its textbook guideline broke out a few days after Lee and Fukuda declared opening up a new era of Korea-Japan relationship. For Koreans, the Dokdo issue is not merely a territorial issue but a reminiscent of Japanese imperialism, which integrated the Dokdo in 1905 in the process of annexation of Korea.

The reason for deterioration of the situation was certainly related to domestic politics (for example, organized protests of liberals and opposition parties), initial disappointment of Lee's handling on privatization of public corporations, the cross-country waterway project, commodity prices, and reshuffling of the presidential office and his cabinet. However, in many Koreans' views, Lee's efforts for strengthening alliance with the U.S. and cooperation with Japan got stabbed in the back as well.

[5] However, in the initial plan, there was no advanced idea of establishing the strategic partnership with China. It is noteworthy to indicate that China's active attitude toward the establishment for "strategic partnership" with Korea helped Korean government make such a decision. The support of Bush administration for building such relationship comprised of a crucial variable as well (Author's Interviews, 2008-06-09).

[6] Regarding China policy of Lee's administration, see Heungkyu Kim, "Between Ally and Strategic Partner: China Policy of Lee Myung-bak Administration," Korea and World Affairs (Summer 2008), Forthcomming.

Continuing strong civil resistance and protests eventually forced President Lee to hold a press conference on June 19. He stood up before the people two months after the crisis over the deal to import U.S. beef started. Most of all, the president said he was conscience-stricken and deeply regretful about what had transpired. He vowed to make a fresh beginning. Then, he couldn't help replacing Byungkuk Kim, Chief Advisor on Foreign Policy, with a career diplomat. In the presidential election last year, 48.7 percent of the people who voted chose Lee. But after only four months, the people haven't held back from scolding him over his misrule. Clearly they did so because their disappointments and frustrations were as deep as their earlier expectations for the new president.[7]

**Security Implication for Northeast Asia**

Lee's foreign policy team seems paralyzed by consecutive mishandlings and following domestic protests, the rise of the territorial dispute with Japan, the image of inflexibility of North Korea policy and the North's strategy to isolate the South. Lee lost his momentum to push forward his original plans. However, in the long run, the current foreign policy team of Lee's administration will take the measures of the MB doctrine in a rather moderate manner although detailed policies have not yet been floated on the surface.

1. Prospects for Seoul-Washington-Tokyo Trilateral Relations

The objective of "pragmatic diplomacy" under Lee's administration is to play a positive-sum game providing more stable international environments surrounding Korea for business. It pursues a new dimension in the South Korea-China strategic partnership extending beyond security issues on the Korean Peninsula while strengthening alliance with the U.S. and improving friendly relations with Japan. The Korea-U.S. alliance should be the foundation of this diplomatic concept under which South Korea, in cooperation with China and other neighboring countries, would try to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear program.

Lee administration will take a strategic alliance with the United States into the most serious account. In the future, conflicts and competition between China and Japan may continue to be a

[7]See "Regrets, Lee's had a few," *JoongAng Daily* (June 20, 2008), (http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2891318.)

destabilizing factor in the region in spite of recent rapprochement.[8] In such a case, South Korea hopes that the United States will be the balancing force in the region while acting as the cornerstone to Korea's security.

The United States can exercise vital influence on the future of the Korean Peninsula as it copes with the problem of North Korea. While domestic situations of China, Japan and Russia could add uncertainties and complexities to the future of the Korean Peninsula, the United States will be the only power capable of providing regional stability.

The Japanese provocation that broke out a few days later after Lee and Fukuda declared the opening of a new era in the Korea-Japan bilateral relations during Lee's visit to Japan in April, profoundly shattered the dynamism of the MB doctrine. Korean conservatives and Lee placed their priority on strengthening trilateral cooperation among Seoul-Washington-Tokyo to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue and, furthermore, to create East Asian security community. Lee was more willing to take Japanese abduction issues into a serious account in the six-party talks.

However, Japan utilized the "new era" as a new means to change the rule of game in the territorial issues in Northeast Asia. The Senkaku Islets (known as Diaoyudao in China) and Dokdo were annexed into Japanese jurisdiction in the process of Japanese imperialistic expansion in the last 19th century and early 20th century. Those are reminiscent of Japanese imperialism for Korean and Chinese people. However, Japan hope to remove those vestiges of Japanese imperial past in the territorial disputes to put it in a technical and legal one. For Koreans' perspective, it became obvious that Japanese government was more concerned about the *raison d'etre* of 19th century than the regional cooperation toward the future.[9] Japanese addiction to the 19th century's raison d'etre prolongs tension while hurting further efforts to move to a new stage of bilateral cooperation between Korea and Japan and breeds instability in this region. Such a situation obviously has a negative impact on the trilateral cooperation among Seoul-Washington-Tokyo in this region and on further strategic implications and forces the MD doctrine frustrated.

---

[8] Regarding the analysis of such rapprochement, see Heungkyu Kim, "Hu Jintao's visit to Japan and the Sino-Japan Relationship," *Jungse wa Jungchak*(Circumstances and Policies), No. 6 (Seoul: Sejong Institute, 2008).

[9] The new categorization of the Dokdo into a disputed area from a Korean territory by the US Board on Geographical Names reminded Korean people of trauma of the Katsura-Teft secret agreement in 1905 in which Japan recognized the Philippines as an area of the US influence and the US did Korea as the one of Japan. In the same year, Japan annexed the Dokdo into Japanese jurisdiction and deprived of Korea's diplomatic privilege. Fortunately, taking this issue into serious account, the US was able to return to the original position on August 1.

For Koreans' perspective, trust-building with neighboring countries and people is a crucial prerequisite for Japan to strengthen its impact in the region as well as in the world. We hope that Japan is able to liberate itself by liquidating its vestiges of the past imperialism and bear a special responsibility as a great power in the region and play a more active role in the UN.

<Table 1> Seoul's Policy Options based upon Configurations of Great Power Relations

| Future Scenario<br><br>Variables | U.S.-Japan Cooperation to Check China | U.S.-Japan & U.S.-China Cooperation/ China-Japan Conflict | Multi-Security Cooperation | Unstable Balance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Changes of State Capabilities | Keeping U.S.-Korea Alliance & Further Cooperation in the Region | Arbitration in Sino-Japan Relations | Active Participation | Consolidating Korea-U.S. Alliance |
| China's Domestic Crisis and Aggressive Foreign Policy | Strengthening Korea-U.S. Alliance & Neighboring Diplomacy to Manage China | Consolidating Korea-U.S. Alliance & Arbitration in Sino-Japan Relations | Diplomacy to check China | Strengthening Korea-U.S. Alliance |
| Crisis in North Korea | Consolidating Korea-U.S. Alliance & Intensifying China and Russia Diplomacy | Keeping U.S.-Korea Alliance, Intensifying China Diplomacy, Checking Japanese Negative Intervention | Strengthening Multi-Cooperation | Strengthening Korea-U.S. Alliance & Multi-Bilateral Diplomacy |

2. Scenarios for Bilateral South Korea-China Realtionship

Since the formal establishment of Korea-China relations in 1992, the bilateral relationship has recorded a tremendous success in terms of trade volume, cooperation on North Korean nuclear crisis, and the number of exchanges in various areas. However, it is also true that the bilateral relations still remain far from satisfactory in terms of depth and degree of communication, crisis management, and sharing visions. Given Korean's psychological alertness and apprehension formed through a long history of contacts with China, differences in political system, mutual misperception and lack of

understanding, these problems cast serious challenges for better future relations between the two countries.[10]

China is a nation in transformation. Predicting the future of China with a fixed standard risks losing sight of reality. It is necessary to maintain strategic management of relations with China so Korea can adjust its policies to changes currently taking place. China is already a neighbor that cannot be rejected or avoided on the basis of good or bad. South Korea should try to establish complex, multifaceted and full-fledged cooperative relations with China through close communication and mutual adjustment. The substance of its relations will be determinded by policies of each government to consolidate the "cooperative strategic partership."

Pragmatic policy focuses on results without adhering to moral absolutism. The result should be the establishment of cooperative and co-prosperous relations. Creative diplomacy avoids defining China with a fixed concept and takes an imaginative approach considering the trajectories and uncertainties of Chinese diplomacy. In this approach, strategic management capabilities are more emphasized than strategic planning.

<Table 2> Variables for South Korea-China Relations and Scenarios[11]

| (X)<br><br>(Y) Scenario | U.S.-NK Relations/ NK Nuclear Crisis | Sino-U.S. Relations | North Korea Problems | Roles of ROK-U.S. Alliance | China's Internal Problems |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strengthening ROK-China Cooperation | Compromise | Engaging | Soft Landing | Defense of ROK and Ex-regional Cooperation | Stability |
| Complex ROK-China Relations | Uncertain | Hedging | Uncertain<br>No Landing<br>Soft Crash | Strategic Ambiguity | Increasing Instability |
| Deteriorating ROK-China Relations | Confronting | Confronting | Hard Landing | MD and Flexibility applied to Taiwan Issue | Aggressive Nationalism |
| Conflicts between ROK-China | Conflict | Conflict | Contingency<br>Hard Crash | Anti-China Alliance | Conflicts on Territory and History |

[10] Without consideration of these factors, some may argue that Korea has had positive—even unconditionally favorable—views towards China despite China's military intervention in the Korean War (1950-1953). Such a view may unconsciously lead to an impetuous impression that Korea would eventually fall into the orbit of Chinese empire in the future. For example, Jaeho Chung, *Between Ally and Partner* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

[11] The source came from Heungkyu Kim, "The Formation of Korea-China Strategic Cooperative Partnership and the Prospects for Korea-China Relationship," *Analysis for Major International Issues* (Seoul: IFANS, 2008-06-12), p. 13.

The future relations will be affected by foreign factors as well as bilateral ones. In views of Koreans, factors such as U.S.-NK relations/NK nuclear crisis, Sino-U.S. relations, North Korea problems, roles of Korea-U.S. alliance and China's internal problems will be crucial for the Korea-China relations in the future.

An outcome of each variable does not necessarily happen coincidently in line with a similar trajectory with another. However, one variable is likely to affect more a certain scenario than others. For example, if a more hostile North Korean (nuclear) policy were adopted after the Presidential election of the U.S., Lee Myung-bak government is likely to take such a line, in which Korean government might experience unanticipated tensions with China. Although some variables, namely the Sino-U.S. relations, the North Korean problem, and the role of Korea-U.S. alliance, seem to be beyond the control of South Korea, these are still the choices left for South Korean government affecting scenarios. The variable of China's internal stability is likely to be out of Korea's control. However, it is necessary to keep an eye on the progress preparing to take measures according to changing situations.

The best scenario must be the first one, "strengthening South Korea-China cooperation." Given current circumstances, however, a realistic scenario will be the one of "complex South Korea-China relations." While pursuing the best scenario, both countries must strive at least to manage the relationship to be the second-best scenario. The establishment of the "strategic cooperative partnership" helps to make such a constructive progress by allowing both governments to actively engage in communication.

* The contents of this paper do not represent either Korean government's or my institution's view. Please do not refer without author's permission.

# "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy: How Significant is Russia's Power Transfer?"

**Yu-Shan Wu**
Distinguished Research Fellow
Academia Sinica

Domestic politics has an impact on the external behaviors of any country. Theories abound in explaining the linkage between domestic factors and foreign policy. These theories, however, are not readily applicable to the Russian Federation, the world's second most powerful military power and a country with a unique cultural, historical, and geopolitical background. How does domestic politics affect Russia's security outlook? Has the most recent parliamentary and presidential elections in Russia laid any impact on Moscow's foreign policy? One needs to look into the empirical facts in order to answer those critical questions.

In order to explore into the domestic-foreign linkage in Russia, we concentrate on a conspicuous phenomenon in Russia's foreign policy that surprised many observers. Because of the breakdown of the Soviet Union, the traumatic economic transition, the halving of the population, the significant losses in natural resources as well as in military capabilities, and the chaotic democratic performance, Russia remained weak during the 1990s. Its relation with the West was an unequal one.[1] Even with the change of guards at the turn of the decade, one finds no significant difference between Russia's foreign policy in the early 2000s and in the 1990s, i.e. between Vladimir Putin's first term and the reign of Boris Yeltsin. Moscow's protest against the dominance of the West was sheer rhetoric, without being buttressed by real action (Dengxue Huang 2008, 161). When push came to shove, Russia would still not challenge the will of the West. It simply succumbed to the overwhelming pressure from America and Europe. However, the second Putin term (2004-08) witnessed a radical change, particularly towards the end of Putin's rule. Russia became much more assertive, and openly talked about

[1] One finds two distinctive periods in Russia's foreign policy in the 1990s. The early period was characterized by the liberal pro-Western policy under Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev (October 1990-January 1996), and the later period by the more Russia-centered pragmatism of Yevgenii Primakov (January 1996-September 1998) (Casier 2006, 386-387). However, despite Primakov's call for a multi-polar world and anti-hegemonic coalition, he still yielded to the overwhelming power of the West, reflecting the general tendency under Boris Yeltsin.

retaliation to Western actions that encroached on its vital interest.[2] Why was this rise of Russian assertiveness? This is the single most important phenomenon in the foreign policy of post-communist Russia. It holds the key to understanding the linkage between Russia's domestic politics and security policy which in tern can enhance our ability to predict what might happen to Russia's foreign policy under the new president Dmitrii Medvedev.

This paper starts with a description of Russia's foreign policy surge in Putin's second term. Three explanations are offered: electoral competition, rising national power, and increasing pressure from the West. Electoral competition is considered the most powerful explanation because it fits well with the timing of the surge, while rising national power and increasing Western pressure cannot account for the abruptness of the change. Electoral competition can also explain the anomaly that China, with much greater capabilities than Russia and under similar pressure from the West, did not assert itself as much as Russia did toward the end of Putin's term. The lack of political need in China to whip up nationalism for electoral competition is a critical factor that explains the difference between Russia and China in their approaches toward the outside world. Finally, given electoral competition is a key factor in Russia's most recent assertiveness, it is predicted that the security policy of Moscow will become more realistic and self-constrained, as Russian politicians can better afford such attitudes, given suitable international environment. This means one should expect a less challenging foreign policy from Russia under Medvedev, not because of a different personality of the top leader, declining national capabilities, or less menacing Western posture, but a different position in the Russian electoral cycle in which the country finds itself. However, this prediction does not exclude the possibility that Russia may react very strongly when its core interest is directly threatened. It simply suggests that the domestic need for Russia's foreign policy surge is lessened during the inter-election years, and that there is a window of opportunities for international reconciliation and security enhancement.

**Russia's Foreign Policy Surge and Its Explanations**

When Putin formally took over political power from Boris Yeltsin in 2000, he was clearly aware of Russia's weaknesses when he said in his first address to the Russian Federal Assembly: "The growing gap between leading nations and Russia pushes us towards becoming a third world country" (Putin 2000a: 5). His priorities were to rebuild the state and revive the economy. Only when those

[2] Most of the observers agree that there was a major change of Russia's foreign policy toward the end of Putin's rule (Dengxue Huang 2008). However, there are others who think the there was a consistent line throughout Putin's tenure (Lynch 2007).

goals were achieved could Russia be strong again and respected in the world (Putin 2000a: 4). Putin realized that Russia's occasional tough rhetoric in the 1990s proved ineffective as it was not buttressed by any real action (Dengxue Huang 2008, 159). Based on this, Putin laid out the foundation of Russia's foreign policy as "pragmatism, economic effectiveness, and the priority of national tasks." For him foreign policy's main purpose was to serve the country's economic revival and buildup of national strength. Because Russia lacked the means to exert influence in the international arena, it had to turn domestic, implement reform, gain strength, and then come back to the stage (Casier 2007, 384). In a sense, it was not unlike what Deng Xiaoping advised his colleagues to do after the Tiananmen incident: keep a cool head, maintain a low profile, never take the lead, and concentrate on developing the economy (Liu and Cui 2008, 280). From the early 1990s, China concentrated on economic growth and made great progress. One can clearly see a similar mentality in Putin's address to the Russian parliament when he took over in 2000. His goal was to revive Russia's economy by rebuilding the state, protecting property rights, adopting unitary tax rates, fighting corruption, and of course taking advantage of favorable external economic conditions.[3] On all those fronts, Russia has demonstrated impressive records. In short, Putin showed his commitment to the economy from the very start of his presidency, and defined the goals of Russia's foreign policy accordingly. It can be characterized as "economization of foreign policy" (Casier 2006, 389).

If one takes a look at Putin's official statements and Russia's foreign policy since 2000 (Putin 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2005a, 2005b), there appears a consistent line of pragmatism running through his first term and into the second (Casier 2006). Putin's offer of Russian help to the U.S. in the immediate aftermath of 9-11 was a clear sign of this motif. There was a coincidence of interests of the two countries as both were fighting international terrorism connected with radical Islamic movements. Russia even rendered help for NATO's military operation in Afghanistan, and posed no objection when Washington sought to establish military bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan (Goldman 2007, 314). The prevention of the spread of weapons of mass destruction was also a common interest to Russia and the West. In this overall favorable environment, Putin reacted mildly to America's decision to withdraw from the 1972 anti-ballistic missile regime. The exchange of state

[3] In the words of Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Russia has "a sober and realistic view of Russia's place and role in international relations, unencumbered by any ideological prejudices and stereotypes," and "The central goal of Russian foreign policy was and remains creating the optimal external conditions for continued domestic transformation that strengthens the government, improves the economy, and increases the wellbeing of Russian citizens" (Ivanov 2002, 33; 141).

visits by Putin and Bush in November 2001 and May 2002 marked the high point of U.S.-Russian relations at this early stage. The two countries agreed to cut nuclear warheads by two-thirds.[4] NATO-Russia Council was also signed into existence, giving Moscow equal voice in counterterrorism, peacekeeping, and arms control.

The American invasion of Iraq in March 2003 brought about some friction between Russia and the U.S.-led coalition, but Putin was quick to point out in April that he intended to maintain good relations with America and its allies. One can even argue that Moscow's objection to the invasion of Iraq was even milder than France or Germany.[5] Russia took pains to signal to the U.S. that it was a staunch ally in the global fight against terrorism, and that bilateral ties between the two will not be damaged by their differences over Iraq. The Camp David meeting by Bush and Putin in September witnessed the confirmation that the U.S. and Russia are allies in war on terror, and the two countries agreed that Iran should not develop nuclear weapons. The friendly relations extended into 2004, with both Putin and Bush reelected. The "color revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine brought about great concern in Moscow, but the overall relation with Washington was considered much more important in Putin's overall strategy to develop Russia's economy, and keep good terms with the U.S. This basic stance was not even deterred by NATO's second eastward expansion into former satellite and ex-Soviet countries in Central and Eastern Europe, bringing NATO's military bases to right across Russia's borders with those countries.

The relations between Russia and the West took an abrupt turn in mid-2006. The U.S. plan to deploy missile defense system in Central Europe led to Putin's warning of retaliation in June, compared with the meek response from Moscow in 2002 when the U.S. announced its withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. In October the murder of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya who had intensively reported on the atrocities that Russian troops committed in Chechnya revealed the authoritarian nature of Putin's rule, and brought about much criticism from abroad. The killing of Aleksandr Litvinenko, a former Russian security agent and critic of Putin, with large dose of radioactive polonium 210 in London was another blow to Russia-Western relations. In February 2007 Putin criticized the U.S. for its unilateralism and obsession with force at the Munich Conference on

[4] In the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), the U.S. and Russia promised to deploy less than 2,200 operational strategic warheads each by December 31, 2012.

[5] Of course this can also be explained as Moscow's attempt to play pivot between the U.S. and "Old Europe" (as U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld dubbed France and Germany), and gain concessions from both. In any case, Russia's opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq was far less categorical than either France or Germany (Katz 2004, 338).

Security Policy.[6] He particularly condemned the planned deployment of anti-missile systems in Europe and the expansion of NATO. In April the relocation of a Soviet-era memorial to fallen soldiers and war graves in Tallinn provoked anger in Russia, and Estonia, a NATO member, found itself under cyber attacks presumably with the acquiescence of the Russian government.[7] In his annual address to the Federal Assembly, Putin complained about Russia's unilateral observance of the 1990 Conventional Arms Forces in Europe Treaty, and proposed to put a moratorium on it. He also criticized the West for failing to adhere to international law, and for imposing development models on unwilling countries (Putin 2007b). In May Putin accused the U.S. hegemonic policy as a threat to the world.[8] He described the Russia-EU Samara Summit as a dialogue among equals for the first time and then clashed with the EU over the "Polish question" which stalled the drafting of a new Russia-EU Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (Kuznechevsky 2007, 83). In June Putin attacked the international economic system and its main institutions (WTO, IMF, and the World Bank) as controlled by a small number of developed countries and were "archaic, undemocratic, and awkward" (Goldman 2007, 317). For his part, Bush declared that Russia had derailed promised democratic reforms, and put the independence of Kosovo on the agenda in July. Despite the July 1-2 meeting by the two presidents in Maine, Russia's relations with the U.S. and the West went from bad to worse (Boese 2007, 29). In November the Russian parliament approved Putin's plan to withdraw from the Treaty of Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.[9] In December the dispute between Russia and pro-Western Ukraine over gas price was rekindled, sending shock waves throughout Europe as Russia resorted to the practice of cutting supply to Ukraine which is a transit for 80 percent of Russia's gas to Europe. Russia was seen as an energy bully that meets a quarter of Europe's gas and oil needs and would not hesitate to use energy as a weapon. The sense of insecurity among European countries was heightened.

[6] This speech was widely considered a path-breaking piece that defines Russia's new foreign policy. It was also characterized by some as a "Cold War Manifesto" (Obukhov 2007, 2).

[7] The Putin government has shown great concern with ethnic Russians living in Near Abroad. The funding for promoting various programs in this regard in 2007 was seven times as high as in 2000. Of particularly concern was the plight of ethnic Russians in Latvia and Estonia, particularly the 600,000 "stateless people." For that Putin issued harsh words to the two Baltic governments (Putin 2007a, 4).

[8] In Putin's May 9, 2007 speech, he seemed to compare the U.S. with Nazi Germany. He described a "global threat in which, as in the time of the Nazi Third Reich, we saw the same contempt for human life, the same claims to world exclusivity and diktat" (Goldman 2007, 317-318).

[9] In his address to the Federal Assembly on April 26, Putin complained about Russia's unilateral observance of the 1990 Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty when some of the NATO members had not even ratified it. He proposed a moratorium on Russia's observance "until such time as all NATO members without exception ratify it and stat strictly observing its provisions, as Russia has been doing so far on a unilateral basis" (Putin 2007b, 24). Putin declared on July 14 that Russia would withdraw from the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty in 150 days if the treaty limits on Russia and NATO were not altered to Moscow's satisfaction. Putin's plan was endorsed by the Russian parliament, and Russia's Foreign Ministry formally announced the suspension on December 12 (Boese 2008, 46).

It is quite clear that the initial pro-Western thrust of Russia's foreign policy could not survive the second Putin term, particularly in the last two years of his rule. One wonders what can best explain this abrupt policy change. To understand the cause of the phenomenon is of great importance, as we can then look into the pattern of policy making in Russia, and extrapolate it to post-Putin period. Depending on which level of analysis (or images, as Kenneth Waltz puts it) one chooses, there can be four explanations: leadership personality, electoral competition, rising national power, and increasing pressure from the West.[10] The first explanation is quite suitable in the Russian setting, because of the overwhelming power of President Putin and his domination in foreign policy. However, to trace a major change of Russia's policy to the personality of its paramount leader is not a promising strategy, as personality persists over time. The second explanation is domestic (Waltz's second image), as it explains Russia's policy change as a reflection of its regime type, and the electoral cycles as derived from it.[11] The third and fourth explanations are international by nature (the third image), citing shifting balance of power and rising external pressure as the main causes for Kremlin's change of policy. In the following discussion, we will concentrate on the relative merits of the last three explanations.

**The Deficiency of International Explanations**

It is plausible that shifting balance of power that favors Russia, and/or rising Western pressure may give rise to a more assertive foreign policy in the Kremlin (Dengxue Huang 2008, 159). The former provides capabilities for Russia to play tough, and the latter enhances Russia's threat perception and prompts it to counteract. However, if one takes a closer look at the situation, the deficiency of these two third-image explanations becomes obvious. The litmus test is the way China responds to a similar situation and how it contrasts sharply with Russia's approach.

Russia's rise under Putin is unquestionable.[12] When he took over from Boris Yeltsin, Russia had experienced a series of trauma from a short-lived shock therapy, hyperinflation, sharp decline in production, a mild recovery in 1997, and a crippling financial crisis the next year that dealt the

[10] For Kenneth Waltz's three images, see Waltz 1959.

[11] For some observers, it is the transitional nature of Russia that brings about the primacy of domestic politics in determining foreign policy (Yuan 2006, 38).

[12] Putin took credit of this economic resurgence, even though one can claim that it was primarily caused by skyrocketing energy prices, or that it owed a lot to the structural reform in the 1990s that laid the foundation of a normal market economy based on private enterprise, and the 1998 financial crash which cleansed the market economy (Åslund 2008).

economy a deadly blow.[13] The country's GDP was down by 50 percent (Dengxue Huang 2008, 165). It was a literal "economic meltdown" (Kramer 1998). Chechnya was in revolt, and two invasions by the Russian forces were unable to quell the rebellion. After Putin became president, he took pains to strengthen the state, clamped down on corruption, reined in the oligarchs, redressed the excesses of hast privatization, and energized the economy.[14] He was able to combine authoritarian political control with a booming capitalist economy, buttressed by ever higher energy prices.[15] In his 2003 annual address to the Federal Assembly, Putin set out the goal of doubling gross domestic product within a decade. This would require an annual growth rate of roughly 7 percent, a target the Russian economy was able to meet in the following years (Putin 2006a). In 2005 Russia regained its pre-transition economic strength. In 2007 Russia grew into the world's eighth greatest industrial power, sat on the third biggest stockpile of foreign exchange reserve, and accounted for the third largest amount of outbound foreign direct investment. As an indicator of foreigners' confidence in Russia, the country attracted the seventh largest amount of investment in 2007 (third among emergent markets), whereas in the 1990s capital flight from Russia averaged US$1 billion a month (Goldman 2007, 314). The dramatic revival of Russia's economy under Putin's watch is clearly demonstrated in the figures in table 1. Russia now provides roughly a quarter of the gas and oil that Western Europe imports, and the energy dependency on Russia by its erstwhile allies in Eastern Europe is even higher. With those facts in mind, it seems only natural that Russia will seek an equal relationship with the West, one that is different from in the 1990s when Russia was weak and had to accept whatever the West dictated to it (Kuznechevsky 2007, 86). For some, Russia's might means that the world is in a bi-polar structure, and Russia should play the role of a guarantor of lasting peace on earth, which will benefit every country.[16]

**Table 1 Russia's Economic Revival under Putin**

| | 1999 | 2007 |
|---|---|---|

[13] For a review of the Russian economic transition, see Wu 2000.

[14] Putin renationalized many of the valuable energy companies that were privatized under Yeltsin in deals that are widely viewed as corruptive. Currently more than half of crude oil is produced by state companies, and even private oil companies behave as if they were state-owned. Foreign energy giants were forced to welcome Russian partners, mainly Gazprom, or surrender their majority ownership. Shell Oil, BP, Exxon-Mobil, Total were all affected. This situation provides the Russian state with capabilities to implement its aggressive foreign policy using energy as the prime instrument. It also intensifies the conflict between Russia and the West (Goldman 2007, 316).

[15] Russia is the world second largest exporter of crude oil, and the largest producer and exporter of natural gas.

[16] Such is the view expressed by Andrei Denisov, Russia's First Deputy Foreign Minister, when responding to Putin's May 10, 2006 address to the Federal Assembly (Piadyshev 2006, 19).

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Gross Domestic Product | RUB 482.3 b. | RUB 3,069 b. |
| Gold and Foreign Exchange Reserves | US$ 12.5 b. | US$ 420.2 b. |
| Inflation | 36.5% | 8.5% |
| Per Capita Income | RUB 2112 | RUB 12,351 |
| Average Monthly Pension | RUB 403 | RUB 2,822 |
| Foreign Direct Investment | US$ 29.2 b. | US$ 70 b. |

Source: Dengxue Huang 2008, 166.

With Russia growing back to the club of great world powers, the West nevertheless continues pushing for enlargement of NATO and European Union, the two organizations that Russia would not be allowed to join by any possibility. NATO's first wave of enlargement into former Soviet bloc countries happened in March 1999 with Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary joining that military alliance. The Alliance in its Prague Summit in 2002 invited Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Rumania and Bulgaria to begin accession talks. As a result, those seven post-communist countries joined NATO in March 2004. The accession of ex-Soviet countries to NATO was particularly menacing, for it implies that other such countries could join the Western military alliance in the future and Russia would be besieged. In terms of European Union, the expansion in May 2004 and January 2007 added twelve new members to the organization, including the ten countries that were previously admitted into NATO. Turkey is a NATO country and has done a lot of reform to qualify for applying for EU membership. Croatia is a candidate for both organizations. Macedonia is further away from the two memberships than Croatia, but is a candidate for EU and has been invited by NATO for accession talks, the dispute with Greece over Macedonia's official name being the main hurdle. Albania was also invited by NATO. From Moscow's point of view, the most offensive American gesture was its interest to include Ukraine and Georgia into NATO, two ex-Soviet states currently led by pro-Western leaders Viktor Yushchenko and Micheil Saakashvilli.[17] A clear trend has emerged that unmistakably points to the expansion of the West into former communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, and ex-Soviet republics. Membership in those Western organizations has been used blatantly to lure potential new members to adhere to Western institutional requirements, state behavioral patterns, and core values. A recent example is the handing over of the most wanted Serbian wartime leader Radovan Karadžić to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague after the EU signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement with Serbia in April 2008, but demanded Belgrade's full cooperation with The Hague as a condition for its implementation (Whitmore 2008).

[17] The U.S. Senate passed a bill to support the accession of Albania, Croatia, Georgia, Macedonia and Ukraine to NATO in November 2006.

Those moves of course looked highly provocative from Moscow's point of view. The U.S. plan to put radar facilities in the Czech Republic and station interceptor antiballistic missiles in Poland further annoys Russia, so are the plans to build military bases in Romania, Bulgaria, and the Baltics (Liu and Wang 2008). Finally the support by the West for Kosovo to declare independence despite strong opposition by Serbia and Russia served as a vivid reminder of how core Russian interests can be easily brushed aside. From Russia's point of view, Kosovo is a "frozen conflict" with a legal status similar to Transdniester in Moldova and Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia. For the West to support national self-determination in Kosovo, while oppose such principle in Transdniester, Abkhazia and South Ossetia is double standard clear and simple (Dengxue Huang 2008, 165). In short, accompanying Russia's friendly gesture towards the West, one finds incessant moves by Western countries that can only be interpreted as containing and isolating Russia. Those moves irritated the leaders in the Kremlin.[18]

It seems natural that with a gradual recovery of capabilities, and continuous encroachment by the West on its traditional spheres of influence, Russia would respond with increasing assertiveness, and that explains the rhetoric from Putin in the last two years of his reign. However, there is a mismatch in time. Russia's power has been rising steadily under Putin's watch for eight years. The surge of anti-Western rhetoric, however, occurred unexpectedly in mid-2006, and intensified in 2007. Obviously the rise of national power cannot explain the abruptness or timing of the surge. On the other hand, the most threatening gesture by the West by far was the enlargement of both NATO and EU in 2004, when the former took seven and the latter took eight post-communist countries as their new members. However, there was negligible response from Moscow to both moves. In short, the abrupt change of foreign policy posture by Russia in mid 2006 did not coincide with either its power growth or with increase of Western threat. One needs to look elsewhere for fuller explanation.

The failure of the power growth and Western threat explanations can also be demonstrated by comparing Russia and China. If either of the two theories holds any truth, one should expect more assertive response from China than from Russia, for the former has accumulated greater capabilities and faced similar, if not more, pressure from the West. In terms of power growth, China has

[18] Verbal criticism and condescending remarks by American leaders and influential think tanks leveled at Russia add to the irritation, for example the Vilnius speech by the U.S. Vice President Richard Cheney made in early 2006, and the Council on Foreign Relations report titled "Russia's Wrong Direction" (Piadyshev 2006, 35).

demonstrated a much more impressive trajectory.[19] Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the country has grown to the third largest industrial power in the world and accumulated foreign exchange reserve of more than US$100 billion which is unmatched by any other country in the world. It attracted more foreign investment than Russia. Because of its huge population size and high growth, China is the only country in the world that has the potential of competing with and even overtaking the U.S. in the foreseeable future, in gross if not in per capita terms.[20] Why has China not being flexing its political muscles with the West, as did Russia?

In terms of threat from the West, not only are there lingering ideological differences that provide easy ammunition for critique of China's communist party dictatorship, and memory of Tiananmen crackdown, but also concrete defense alliances that directly link the U.S. with China's immediate neighbors.[21] The U.S. is interested in deploying missile defense systems in China's neighboring countries, just as it is interested in setting up radar stations and interceptor missiles in Eastern Europe. The Taiwan issue is the most thorny, as the island is claimed by China as its territory and yet literally protected by the U.S. against a Chinese invasion. No such issue exists between Russia and the West. In short, the ideological differences, the bitter memory from the past, the menacing military alliances, the missile defense systems, and the Taiwan issue make it easier for China to burst into anti-Western rhetoric than Russia.[22] Over the years, however, China has exercised much greater constraint compared with Russia, sporadic conflicts a la the missile crisis in 1995-96 and the EP-3 incident of 2001 notwithstanding. The basic attitude of the regime has always been keeping a friendly environment for China's peaceful rise. The question is, if China can put up with Western pressure, why cannot Russia, particularly when the pressure on China is greater than on Russia.

Facing similar threat from the West, Russia and China naturally cuddle each other for strategic support. However, when push comes to shove, China has never infuriated the U.S. or the West by, for

[19] In 1980-1984, Russia was the seventh largest economy in the world, while China was the 10th (in terms of five-year average GDP in current dollars). In 2001-2005, Russia became the 16th after an economic meltdown and a swing back, while China continued its remarkable growth and climbed to the 6th. Currently, Russia is the 8th largest economy, while China has surpassed Germany to become the 3rd. It is apparent that Russia has reemerged as a great economic power, but China has maintained its incessant growth to the top three.

[20] The Russian elite are conscious of the prospect of the world leadership passing to China some time during the current century (Piadyshev 2006, 45).

[21] The increasingly close military cooperation among the U.S., Japan, India, and Australia and the discussion of a North America-Asia treaty organization further raise Beijing's anxiety over a U.S.-led military alliance against China modeled on NATO (Ma 2008; Ziegler 2008).

[22] One may even add the disturbance following the Mongolian elections in July 2008 which is widely considered in China as yet another attempt to make a "color revolution" and build a pro-Western regime there.

example, a critical veto in the UN. A vivid example of China complying with the wish of the West is its changing role in Sudan over Darfur from noninterference and respect for Sudanese sovereignty to putting pressure in concert with the West on Khartoum. In the past, the missile scare of 1995-96 happened when the mainland threatened Taiwan, while the U.S. carriers came to the island's rescue. It was not touched off by Beijing's actions against the U.S. The EP-3 incident was an accident that can hardly be blamed on the Chinese side, as the crux of the matter was how to handle the American crew from a spy airplane that collided with a PLA fighter jet in midair and landed without permission in a Chinese military airbase. Neither Hu Jintao nor Jiang Zemin has ever spoken in a tune like Putin in lambasting the U.S. as a threat to world peace, or threatening retaliation if the U.S. disregards core Chinese interest. When Putin began raising his rhetoric against Western pressure in the latter half of 2006, China succumbed to international pressure and ordered its ambassador to the UN Wang Guangya to pressure the Sudanese government into accepting the hybrid peacekeeping mission in November 2006 (Chin-Hao Huang 2008). When Russia attempted to turn the Shanghai Cooperation Organization into a military bloc for collective security, it was given the cold shoulder by China (Dengxue Huang 2008, 172). In short, the abrupt surge of Russia's foreign policy has never been matched by China's assertiveness against the West, although such concerted acts were desirable from Moscow's point of view (Zhang 2008, 83). The contrast between Russia and China, two similarly situated countries, shows that increasing capabilities and Western pressure cannot fully explain the abrupt surge of Russia's anti-Western rhetoric.

**Looking Into Domestic Factors: The Electoral Cycle**

Domestic politics has an impact on a country's foreign policy. Depending on different regime types, the linkage between domestic and international politics varies. The most important aspects of domestic politics is contestation for power and power transfer, for all political actors are primarily concerned with power. This observation leads us to look into the impact of power contestation and power transfer on foreign policy making in different regime types.

In a democracy, electoral cycle is a critical factor in determining how domestic politics impacts foreign policy. Because political parties are preoccupied with vote maximization during the election season, their stances on foreign affairs reflect popular mood more than international reality. When elections are over, it is also natural for the incumbents to shift back to realism, thus foreign policy

fluctuations are in sync with electoral cycle.[23] However, whether this election-foreign policy cycle can be applied to Russia, a semi-authoritarian country, requires clarification.

Democratization in the former Soviet bloc countries brought about three types of regimes (McFaul 2005, 5). In Poland, the Czech Republic (and later on Slovakia), Hungary, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, one finds nascent democratic regimes that basically stick to the Western pattern. In each of those countries, one finds multiple power turnovers, consolidated democratic institutions, and inclusion into EU as a final seal of approval by the West. Rumania and Bulgaria are the latest additions to this family of "stable nascent democracies." On the other extreme, one finds "presidential autocracies" in Central Asia. Except for Kyrgyzstan, all the other Central Asian states are dominated by former Communist party first secretaries or top leaders. The first secretaries-turned-presidents resorted to a common practice of modifying the constitution to make it possible for them to stay in their current positions for life. Here again except for Kyrgyzstan where the Tulip Revolution in March 2005 brought about inflated hope of democracy, none of the other countries has experienced power turnove following the defeat of the incumbents in the polls. Between stable nascent democracies and presidential autocracies is a group of "competitive authoritarian regimes" that allow competitive elections but curtail political freedoms and manipulate electoral rules to such an extent that the ruling elites are usually guaranteed of their victories. In those countries, the main purpose of elections is to legitimate the regime. Because of the existence of regular multiparty elections, those are not autocracies. However, owing to the concentration of political resources in the hands of the ruling elite, and the unscrupulous use of state power to favor the incumbent party, one cannot characterize those regimes as liberal democracies. Competitive authoritarian regimes are inherently unstable. Sometimes the competitive aspect of the regime is strengthened and one does see a change of government. However, the norm is for the ruling elite to continue its rule. Because there is an inherent huge gap between what the competitive authoritarian regimes promise and deliver, anti-regime emotion tends to accumulate rapidly. This is thus the area where one sees "color revolutions" (Wu 2007).

Russia is a typical case of competitive authoritarianism. Particularly during Putin's rule, one finds serious curtailment of the space for mass media, killing of whistle-blowing journalist (Anna Politkovskaya), imprisonment of disobedient business tycoon (Mikhail Khodorkovskii), murder of overseas critic (Aleksandr Litvinenko), changing of electoral rules to the advantage of the ruling party,

[23] For an example, see Wu 2005; 2006.

and concentration of power in the hands of the president disregarding the separation of government branches and the federal structure of the country.[24] On the other hand, regular elections are held, viable opposition is in existence, and the president did not turn himself into a perpetual ruler of the country by amending or violating the constitution. The regime is genuinely popular for the spectacular rise of the country's wealth and power under Putin's watch. Had there been no bent rules, Putin in all likelihood would have scored the same electoral victories in the past eight years. So if a regime is both authoritarian and electorally competitive, what does that mean in terms of the impact of domestic politics on foreign policy? Would electoral cycle play the same role as in a stable democracy? Does the ruling elite in Russia need electoral support as badly as their counterparts in the West?

It should be noticed that Putin did not win the 2000 presidential election by fraud (nor did his predecessor Yeltsin win the 1996 race by rigging the election). Putin enjoyed high popularity as the country found itself fighting a war on terror and on separatism in Chechnya. Elections are real tests for the incumbents in Russia. Throughout the Yeltsin years, the opposition always posed great threat to the ruling party by denying it majority in the State Duma. It was only in 2003 that the pro-government party won a dominant position in the parliament, and it was only in 2007 that an outright majority emerged directly from the electoral results. The record shows that Putin and his supporters could not be sure of their victories in the elections, and that they needed to appeal to the voters. In national security and foreign policy, nothing can whip up pro-government sentiment better than mobilizing nationalism and playing hardball against domestic and foreign targets. In order to win elections, this was exactly what Putin and his team did, and with great success.[25]

In 1999, Yeltsin found it difficult to nurture a successor with a good chance to win the presidential election the following year. Putin was his fifth prime minister in the last two years, preceded by Viktor Chernomyrdin, Sergei Kiriyenko, Yevgenii Primakov, and Sergi Stepashin. The rapid reshuffles of the government diminished the prestige of Putin, the last prime minister Yeltsin appointed. As a former spy with a stint in Germany and a little-known politician from St. Petersburg, Putin did not have a resume

[24] Other prominent features of Putin's authoritarian regime include concentration of power to the presidential office as a parallel government, transformation of the parliament into an extension of the administration through the dominant role of United Russia, virtual state control over the central election commission, near monopolization of mass media by the state, use of energy and other resources controlled by state enterprises for domestic and foreign policy purposes, direct appointment of local heads of government, and periodical mobilization campaigns (Lynch 2007, 19-20).

[25] Some observers endorse the domestic explanation of Russia's foreign policy, but emphasize Putin was beholden to his defense planners who constitute a critical domestic constituency, and not to the general public who were much more concerned with the consequences of strategic confrontation than their political leaders (Steinbruner and Gallagher 2008).

that commanded national respect. However, Yeltsin's resignation at the end of 1999 turned Putin into acting president, and forced a new electoral schedule on the opposition, catching them by surprise. Above all, the start of the second Chechen War proved a most important factor in rallying Russian voters around their new leader. The war was preceded by a series of terrorist attacks in Moscow, including bombings in the subway and apartment buildings. As the Russian people were horrified by the attacks around them, they looked for a strongman to lead them fight terrorism cum separatism. Putin assiduously played that role and accused other presidential competitors as weakening the government when the nation badly needed unity. That was how he won the 2000 presidential elections, by playing the nationalist card and rallying the Russian voters around him at a time of national crisis.

The surge of anti-Western rhetoric since the latter half of 2006 was also timed to give a boost to Putin's successor in the upcoming elections. Although Putin gained tremendous popularity, and his version of managed democracy seemed able to keep political stability quite well[26], political succession loomed large and troubled everyone. One the one hand, Putin was barred by the constitution to seek a third term in office. On the other hand, the country did not have a set of rules that guarantees smooth power transition, either in imperial, Soviet, or post-Soviet time (Aron 2007, 307). Would Putin change the constitution and get himself the opportunity to bid for the third term? Would he retire from office and power completely? Would he anoint a successor and then exercise ultimate power from behind the scene? Would he remain in the system as an important power wielder but yield presidency to some of his protégés? One finds greater suspension and uncertainty in Russia with political succession this time than in the previous presidential election in 2004 when Putin was pretty much guaranteed to win. This means no matter how Putin would manage his succession, he needed to secure a big win in the 2007-08 parliamentary and presidential elections. Landslide victory was required to lay the foundation of the post-2008 regime which could not be of the same configuration and with Putin playing the same role as in his second term.

It was under those circumstances that one saw a reorientation of Russia's foreign policy. The pragmatist, economy-in-command posture was replaced by hasty utterances of highly nationalistic and assertive remarks, without proper regard to their international impact. It was as if Putin had adopted a different personality, adhered to a different philosophy. The true intention behind the changing

[26] Based on a multi-year panel survey, Putin's popularity rose from 46 percent to 55 percent from 2004 to 2007. In June 2007, 57 percent of the respondents thought that they had enough political freedoms, 25 percent higher than those expressing such view in 1997 (Feng 2007, 25).

behavioral patterns, however, was to whip up domestic support for the regime. Russians were so fed up with the West's patronizing and condescending attitudes throughout the past years that they fell easily into Putin's embrace when he lambasted the West. Such attitude made it more possible that they would support whatever Putin's solution was to his succession, vote for whoever appointed Putin's successor by the popular president. The regime would be the most vulnerable when it goes through a leadership change, hence the need to strengthen its position by an assertive foreign policy, a policy that may not serve Russia's interests internationally.[27] In short, Russia's foreign policy surge went far beyond what its power increases warranted. It was not rational on the international level, but perfectly so on the domestic level.

**The Succession and Beyond**

Putin's succession went smoothly. He chose Dmitrii Medvedev, a first deputy prime minister and chairman of Gazprom's board of directors, as his presidential successor, and turned himself into the prime minister of the government cum chairman of the United Russia party (*Yedinaya Rossiya*) that holds majority in the State Duma. This way Putin would not violate the constitutional term limit, but remain in the power game by taking two commanding heights, the premiership and the chairmanship of the majority party. The successful execution of this plan, however, requires the victory of the United Russia party and candidate Medvedev in the parliamentary and presidential elections. Even though the president and the government enjoyed great popularity, the regime took pains to make sure that the whole process goes smoothly.

Prior to the parliamentary elections, Putin's name was put on top of United Russia's party list as an attraction for voters. This proved a very effective strategy. As the electoral system had now shifted from one that elected half of the 450 members of the State Duma from party lists and half from single-member districts to a fully proportional representation system, the significance of political parties increased and the composition of the party lists mattered a lot. On December 2 United Russia scored a greater victory than four years ago by capturing 64.3 percent of popular vote. The Communist Party was a distant second with 11.6 percent of the vote, followed by Vladimir Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party with 8.2 percent of the vote, and Fair Russia: Motherland, Pensioners, Life (a

[27] For example, to talk about confronting the U.S. militarily if the planned antiballistic missile system is deployed in frontline NATO countries is utterly unrealistic when one realizes that the U.S. overspends Russia in defense by 25 times, a fact recognized by Putin in his 2006 address to the Federal Assembly (Putin 2006a, 13).

staunchly pro-Putin party founded in 2006) with 7.8 percent of the vote (see table 2).[28] A clear majority party has emerged in the State Duma, thanks to the highly popular president. On December 10 the leaders of four pro-government political parties United Russia, Fair Russia, Agrarian Party, and Civil Force met Putin to recommend Medvedev as their presidential candidate and received Putin's endorsement. As many expected, Putin designated his successor at the eleventh hour (Lynch 2007, 20). Medvedev's popularity immediately surged. One day later, Medvedev announced that he would ask Putin to become the prime minister and lead the government. In this scheme the two men would trade their places: Putin would shift from presidency to premiership, while Medvedev would shift from first deputy premiership to presidency. On March 2, 2008, Medvedev received 70.28 percent of popular vote in the presidential election, beating Gennadii Zyuganov of the Communist Party (17.72 percent), and Vladimir Zhirinovskii of the Liberal Democratic Party (9.35 percent) (table 3). Medvedev was inaugurated on May 7, and swiftly appointed Putin as his prime minister. The power transition was complete.

**Table 2 The Russian Parliamentary Elections of December 2, 2007**

| Political Party | Percentage |
|---|---|
| All-Russian Political Party "UNITED RUSSIA" | 64.3 |
| Political Party "Communist Party of the Russian Federation" | 11.6 |
| Political Party "Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia" | 8.2 |
| Political Party "Fair Russia: Motherland, Pensioners, Life" | 7.8 |
| Political Party "Agrarian Party of Russia" | 2.3 |
| Political Party "Russian United Democratic Party "YABLOKO" | 1.6 |
| All-Russia Political Party "Civil Force" | 1.1 |
| Political Party "UNION OF RIGHTIST FORCES" | 1.0 |
| Political Party "PATRIOTS OF RUSSIA" | 0.9 |
| Political Party "Party of Social Justice" | 0.2 |

[28] A party needs to clear the 7 percent threshold to be allotted seats in the State Duma.

| | |
|---|---|
| Political Party "Democratic Party of Russia" | 0.1 |

Source: TsIK 2007.

**Table 3 The Russian Presidential Election of March 2, 2008**

| Candidate (Nominating Parties) | Votes | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Dmitrii Medvedev (United Russia, Fair Russia, Agrarian Party, Civil Force) | 52,530,712 | 70.28 |
| Gennadii Zyuganov (Communist Party of the Russian Federation) | 13,243,550 | 17.72 |
| Vladimir Zhirinovskii (Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia) | 6,988,510 | 9.35 |
| Andrei Bogdanov (Democratic Party of Russia) | 968,344 | 1.30 |
| **Invalid Ballots** | 1,015,533 | 1.35 |
| **Total** | 73,731,116 | 100.00 |

Source: TsIK 2008.

With the succession completed, a major domestic factor that accounted for the surge of Russia's foreign policy was removed. There is no longer the urgent need to whip up Russian nationalism for domestic purposes, at least not for electoral considerations. The Russian voters have diligently cast their votes in ways they were expected to do. Based on this logic, it seems that one may expect toning down of rhetoric and moderation of actions from Moscow vis-à-vis the West. However, there are several caveats that require one's attention.

Putin may have secured a smooth transition of power and yet the new system that he created is so unique and delicate that power contestation may erupt within the regime. Between Putin and Medvedev, the former has little institutional power vis-à-vis his successor, but great informal power, while the latter has great institutional power, but little informal power. Standing on two different power bases, the two men are in a delicate balance, even though the initial position of Putin is much stronger. This

peculiar and delicate balance between the president and the prime minister may later turn out to be a source of conflict, as Medvedev may wish to exercise his formal power to an extent that goes beyond what Putin considers proper, while Putin may wish to remain the ultimate ruler of the country without due respect for Medvedev's formal authority.[29] Already the two have expressed different views concerning where the ultimate ruing power lies: while Putin insisted that the premier-led federal government is the highest executive authority in Russia, Medvedev asserted that according to the constitution the president is the only power center (Xie 2008, 78). One can even detect different power blocs forming around them while pitted against each other, vying for influence. The two power centers may not see eye to eye on foreign policy, with one sticking to the confrontational tone of the last president, while the other attempting to reconcile Russia's differences with the West.[30] It is not untypical that the president and the prime minister in a semi-presidential system collide over foreign policy, especially when the pecking order between the two has not been fully established. Russia may move to that situation. It that happens, one can also point to domestic political competition as the source of foreign policy change. However, as Medvedev was sworn in only in May 7, whether the above conjecture will indeed happen remains to be seen.

Another caveat is whether there is ratchet effect working in Russia's foreign policy making, i.e. whether the assertiveness of Putin's hard-line policy is irreversible once it reaches a high level, particularly with the international factors (rising Russian power and incessant Western encroachment) working in the same direction. Finally, any policy line change needs time. If the electoral cycle explanation proves correct, it still needs time to be confirmed as the balance of forces determining

[29] This is a typical situation when the institutional and informal powers in a political system are pitted against each other. In a sense, what Putin expects may be a Chinese scenario in which a veteran leader calls the shots from behind the scenes, a la Deng Xiaoping. However, in China Deng could afford retiring from all the positions in the party, the government, and the military, owing to his revolutionary credential, whereas Putin in Russia completely lacks such endowment. Putin's assuming premiership and majority party chairmanship suggests he was not confident with his informal power base, and was thus in need of the guarantees offered by institutional positions. It may turn out that Jiang Zemin's failed attempt to stay in the power center after his retirement from the position of first secretary of the CCP is a more appropriate analogy for Putin to draw. Furthermore, if China did experience a period of mentor politics, this does not mean that Russia is also capable to doing the same, as there has never been any secretary general or president in the Kremlin who reigned but not ruled.

[30] There has already been a lot of discussion that Medvedev is more liberal than his predecessor, and is more willing to risk stability with reform that can energize the country (Xie 2008, 78). The fact that Putin chose Medvedev, instead of people from the military-security complex, such as First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov, as his presidential successor suggests that Putin wanted to maintain a manageable relationship with the West. This is a choice of economy over security, pragmatism over nationalism. When Putin was president, the competition between Medvedev and Ivanov to succeed him was also a competition between two trends of thoughts that coexisted during Putin's rule for dominance in the post-Putin era (Lynch 2007, 20, 22). Medvedev represented the energy elite who are not afraid of using energy as a weapon, but mainly for the purpose of developing Russia's economy. Ivanov, on the other hand, represented the security elite who are hyperconscious of the West's encroachment on Russia's traditional sphere of interests. The latter are losers in their bid for presidency, and are obviously disgruntled. They are posed to be against any moderation of Russia's foreign policy line established in the last years of Putin's rule.

Russia's foreign policy gradually shifts toward moderation. Up to this point, there has not been obvious deviation in Russia's foreign policy away from the tone set by Putin toward the West. Russia and China still cuddle each other in their common opposition to American unilateralism and Western interference into other countries' internal affairs, with Moscow speaking out more bluntly than Beijing. Medvedev accused countries that consider themselves "spreaders of civilization and emancipators" as Fascists in thinking they could ignore history and arbitrarily impose solutions to fundamental problems (Huang 2008). Medvedev's first foreign trip was to China, via Kazakhstan. The U.S. plan to deploy antiballistic missile systems in the Czech Republic and Poland angered Moscow as before, and drew severe criticisms, even threat of military confrontation.[31]

As far as East Asia is concerned, one finds the same surge of Russia's foreign policy in the pre-election period, and a possible moderation after the election. There is a need to differentiate between Moscow's attitude toward China and Japan. A surge of Russia's foreign policy vis-à-vis the West directly translates into a drive to seek better relations with China as a counterweight against Western dominance (Ziegler 2008, 139). The same surge meant an entirely different thing for Japan, which is considered a staunch ally of Washington in North East Asia. Because of the great strategic value of China for a resurgent Russia, both in geopolitical and economic (arms sale) terms, Moscow has always suppressed local concerns over demographic invasion by China into Russia's Far Eastern region. The Sino-Russian relations have always been cast in the most positive language by Putin.[32] The Russian foreign policy surge coincided with the "Year of Russia in China" (2006) and the "Year of China in Russia" (2007). The signing of a demarcation pact in July 2008 concerning the border along the Amur River (Heilongjiang) to remove the last territorial dispute between the two countries that had lasted for 40 years is a clear sign of Moscow's intention to strengthen Sino-Russian relations (*Kommersant* July 21, 2008). As China is of great importance to Russia both in strategic and economic terms, one should expect good relationship even if the Putin surge is brought to an end, and moderation reigns in Russia's foreign policy.

[31] In July, Russia's Izvestia newspaper quoted a "highly placed source" as saying Russia could land Tu-160 supersonic bombers nicknamed "White Swans" in Cuba in response to the planned U.S. missile defense shield in Europe that Moscow opposes. The report drew strong response from the U.S. military and was later denied by Russian officials. It could be a veiled threat from Moscow to test the response from the U.S., and draw public attention to the issue.

[32] Putin's characterization of the Sino-Russian relationshp at a meeting with Russia's ambassadors and permanent representatives on June 27, 2006 is typical: "Russia's friendly ties with the People's Republic of China have become all-encompassing in nature. We see our main task as being not to preserve what we have achieved thus far but to take new steps in order to further expand the partnership between Russia and China" (Putin 2006c).

This contrasts sharply with a similar territorial dispute with Japan over the four Kuril islands, the only outstanding political issue between Moscow and Tokyo. In the surge of Russia's foreign policy in 2006-2007, Putin took high-handed attitude over the territorial issue reminiscent of the Soviet policy during the Cold War.[33] He seemed to recognize only the 1956 Joint Declaration which stipulates that the Soviet Union would hand over to Japan only two of the four islands in dispute, Habomai and Shikotan (and not Iturup and Kunashir), after the conclusion of a peace treaty, and not the 1993 Tokyo Declaration which brings the whole territorial issue concerning the four islands into consideration for the conclusion of a peace treaty (Sase 2008). The advent of the post-Putin era bodes well for improvement of Moscow-Tokyo relations. Judging from the two meetings between Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and Medvedev, one notices that the high-handed and coercive remarks of Putin have all but disappeared (Medvedev 2008). The Japanese are anxiously waiting for Prime Minister Putin's visit this summer to see if such change is also evident with the same person, and whether the two countries can move closer on the territorial dispute, following the example of the successful agreement between Russia and China.

☆ ☆ ☆

This paper proposes a domestic electoral explanation of Russia's foreign policy surge during Putin's second term. It argues that it was not the rising power of Russia or the incessant Western encroachment on Russia's core interests that prompted the abrupt surge and shocked observers around the world. Instead it points out the significance of Putin's succession, and the domestic need to appeal to Russian nationalism in electoral competition with an assertive foreign policy. The deficiency of international explanations is demonstrated by the abruptness and timing of the surge that is inexplicable in terms of shifting balance of power and/or advances by the West. A comparison with China, a similarly situated continental power, is also made to demonstrate that if the international factors are dominant, Beijing should have taken a much more assertive attitude towards the West than Moscow. The fact that this has not happened points to a major difference between Russia and China: the lack of electoral competition and the need to whip up nationalism for that reason in China. Even though Russia is not a typical liberal democracy, but a prominent case of "competitive authoritarianism," the regime still needs regular electoral victories to stay in power, and that makes a lot of differences.

[33] In the height of Russia's foreign policy surge, Putin said if the Japanese want to "play samurais and brandish swords, then we can play at this game too, get our swords out and run about and shout" (Putin 2006b).

Given the importance of electoral competition, one expects Moscow's post-election foreign policy would be different from Putin's hard line. This has not happened yet, as the new president has been inaugurated for less than three months. Besides a possible time lag, one also needs to be aware of several caveats that may prevent the emergence of a more moderate foreign policy line in Moscow. One is the delicate balance that Putin created between himself and Medvedev may not survive long, for the great gap between the institutional and informal powers naturally breeds miscalculation, frustration, and competition between the two power centers. Conflict over foreign policy or change of it is a likely result under those circumstances. The other caveat is the ratchet effect through which a jacked-up, assertive foreign policy cannot be moderated, especially with international factors working in the direction against moderation. In order to test the relative validity of the various explanations of Russia's foreign policy, one needs to make steady observation over time. For those in the West who want to encourage Russia to tone down its bellicose rhetoric, they should seize the current window of opportunities, i.e. the inter-election period, to cultivate better ties with Moscow. Although Russia has not simply responded to actions by the West, one can easily appreciate the importance of not tramping on Russia's core interests. Any such move may dampen the possibility of rapprochement offered by reduced political competition in Russia.

## References

Aron, Leon. 2007. “After Putin, the Deluge?” *Current History*, October: 307-313.

Åslund, Anders. 2008. “Putin’s Lurch toward Tsarism and Neoimperialism: Why the United States Should Care.” *Democratizatsia* 16(1): 17-25.

Boese, Wade. 2007. “Arms Issues Divide U.S. and Russia.” *Arms Control Today* 37(7): 29-31.

Boese, Wade. 2008. “Russia Suspends CFE Treaty Implementation.” *Arms Control Today* 38(1): 46.

Casier, Tom. 2006. “Putin’s Policy Towards the West: Reflections on The Nature of Russian Foreign Policy.” *International Politics*, 43: 384-401.

Feng, Shaolei.「2008 俄羅斯總統選舉與中俄關係」(The 2008 Russian Presidential Election and Sino-Russian Relation).《俄羅斯研究》(Russian Studies) 145: 24-31.

Goldman, Marshall I. 2007. “Russia and the West: Mutually Assured Distrust.” *Current History*, October: 314-320.

Goldman, Marshall. 2008. “The New Imperial Russia.” *Democratizatsia* 16(1): 9-15.

Huang, Chin-Hao. 2008. “China’s Evolving Perspective on Darfur: Significance and Policy Implications.” *PacNet Newsletter*, No. 40, July 25.

Huang, Yinan. 2008.「梅德韋傑夫闡述俄羅斯外交新路線」(Medvedev Expounds Russia’s New Foreign Policy Line).《俄羅斯新聞網》(RUSNEWS.CN), July 16. Accessed July 20. http://big5.rusnews.cn/xinwentoushi/20080716/42205293.html.

Huang, Dengxue. 2008.「從退讓到抗爭─試析論俄羅斯對美國外交政策的新變化」(From Retreat to Resistance: An Analysis of the Latest Change of Russia’s Foreign Policy Towards the United States).《國際政治研究》(Studies of International Politics) 2008(2): 159-173.

Ivanov, Igor. 2002. *The New Russian Diplomacy*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

Katz, Mark N. 2004. “Exploiting Rivalries: Putin’s Foreign Policy.” *Current History*, October: 335-341.

Kenneth, Waltz, N. 1959. Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.

*Kommersant*. 2008. "Russia, China Settled Demarcation of Amur Islands." July 21. Accessed July 21, 2008. http://www.kommersant.com/p-12880/r_527/Amur_demarcation/.

Kramer, Mark. 1998. "US Policy and Russia's Economic Plight: Lessons from the Meltdown." PONARS Policy Memo 36, Harvard University. Accessed July 20, 2008. http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pm_0037.pdf.

Kuznechevsky, Vladimir. 2007. "Russia-EU Samara Summit." *International Affairs*, 53(4): 82-86.

Liu, Qingcai and Wang Haibin. 2008.「美俄戰略交鋒及其對中國的影響」(The Conflict of the U.S. and Russian Strategies and Its Impact on China).《當代國際關係》(Contemporary International Relations) 2: 33-39.

Liu, Xinli and Cui Weifeng. 2008.「俄羅斯崛起的風向標─不斷強硬的對美態度」(An Indicator of Russia's Rise—Ever Hardening Attitude Towards the United States).《法制與社會》(Legal System and Society) 3(1st part): 280-281.

Lynch, Alen. 2007.「普京政權交接問題和俄羅斯外交」(The Question of Power Transition for the Putin Regime and Russia's Foreign Policy).《俄羅斯研究》(Russian Studies) 144: 17-23.

Ma, Jianying. 2008.「『亞洲版北約』與中國因應之道」(The Asian Edition of NATO and the Way China Deals with It).《領導科學》(Science of Leadership) 2008(3): 50-52.

McFaul, Michael. 2005. "Transitions from Postcommunism." *Journal of Democracy,* 16(3): 5-19.

Medvedev, Dmitrii. 2008. "Press Conferences, Meetings with the Press, Press Statements." July 9, 2008. Accessed July 21, 2008. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/07/09/2235_type82914type82915.shtml.

Obukhov, Aleksey. 2007. "Russian President Did Not Threaten the West." *International Affairs*, 53(4): 1-12.

Putin, Vladimir. 2000a. "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," July 8, 2000. Accessed July 20, 2008. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2000/07/08/0000_type70029type82912_70658.shtml.

Putin, Vladimir. 2000b. "News Conference Following a Meeting of Heads of State During the G8 Summit." July 23, 2000. Accessed July 20, 2008. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2000/07/23/0000_type82914type82915_128921.shtml.

Putin, Vladimir. 2001. "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation." April 3, 2001. Accessed July 20, 2008. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2001/04/03/0000_type70029type82912_70660.shtml.

Putin, Vladimir. 2002a. "News Conference after the G8 Summit." June 28, 2002. Accessed July 20. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2002/06/28/0000_type82914type82915_150122.shtml.

Putin, Vladimir. 2002b. "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation." April 18, 2002. Accessed July 20, 2008. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2002/04/18/0000_type70029type82912_70662.shtml.

Putin, Vladimir. 2003. "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation." May 16, 2003. Accessed July 21, 2008. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2003/05/16/0000_type70029type82912_44692.shtml.

Putin, Vladimir. 2005a. "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation." April 25, 2005. Accessed July 21, 2008. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/04/25/2031_type70029type82912_87086.shtml.

Putin, Vladimir. 2005b. "Meeting with Russian and Foreign Media Following the G8 Summit." July 8, 2005. Accessed July 21, 2008. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2005/07/08/1132_type82915_91210.shtml.

Putin, Vladimir. 2006a. "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly." *International Affairs*, 52(3): 1-18.

Putin, Vladimir. 2006b. "One Must Always Strive to Attain Big Victories." *International Affairs*, 52(2): 1-7.

Putin, Vladimir. 2006c. "There Are More Benefits to be Gained through Friendship with Modern Russia." *International Affairs*, 52(4): 1-7.

Putin, Vladimir. 2007a. "Ensuring the Rights and Freedoms of Compatriots." *International Affairs*, 53(1): 1-5.

Putin, Vladimir. 2007b. "Annual Address to the Federal Assebmly." Accessed July 18. http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/04/26/1209_type70029type82912_125670.shtml.

Piadyshev, Boris. 2006. "Russia's Priorities." *International Affairs*, 52(4): 8-48.

Sase, Masamori. 2008. "Japan-Russia Relations After Putin." AJISS-Commentary, 38 (August 1). Accessed August 1. http://www.jiia.or.jp/en_commentary/200808/01-1.html.

Steinbruner, John and Nancy Gallagher. 2008. "If You Lead, They Will Follow: Public Opinion and Repairing the U.S.-Russian Strategic Relationship." *Arms Control Today* 38(1): 24-30.

Tsentral'naya izbiratel'naya komissiya Possiiskoi Federatsii, TsIK (Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation). 2007. Accessed July 23. http://www.vybory.izbirkom.ru/region/region/izbirkom?action=show&root=1&tvd=100100021960186&vrn=100100021960181&region=0&global=1&sub_region=0&prver=0&pronetvd=null&vibid=100100021960186&type=242

Tsentral'naya izbiratel'naya komissiya Possiiskoi Federatsii, TsIK (Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation). 2008. Accessed July 23. http://www.vybory.izbirkom.ru/region/region/izbirkom?action=show&root=1&tvd=100100022249920&vrn=100100022176412&region=0&global=1&sub_region=0&prver=0&pronetvd=null&vibid=100100022249920&type=227

Whitmore, Brian. 2008. "Karadzic Arrest In Serbia Shows Power Of Elections." *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Feature*, July 22. Accessed July 22, 2008. http://www.rferl.org/content/Article/1185483.html.

Wu, Yu-Shan. 2000.《俄羅斯轉型 1992-1999：一個政治經濟學的分析》(Russia's Transition 1992-1999: A Politico-Economic Analysis). Taipei: Wu-nan.

Wu, Yu-Shan. 2005. "Taiwan's Domestic Politics and Cross-Strait Relations." *The China Journal* 53: 35-60.

Wu, Yu-Shan. 2006. "Domestic Political Competition and Triangular Interactions Among Washington, Beijing and Taipei: the U.S. China Policy," *Issues & Studies* 42:1 (March): 1-46.

Wu, Yu-Shan. 2007.「顏色革命的許諾與侷限」(The Promises and Limitations of Color Revolutions)《台灣民主季刊》(*Taiwan Democracy Quarterly*) 4(2): 67-112.

Xie, Yiqiu. 2008.「梅德韋杰夫之謎」(The Myth of Medvedev)《雙週刊》(*Biweekly*) 6: 77-79.

Yuan, Shengyu. 2006. 「國內政治與對外關係」(Domestic Politics and External Relations).《俄羅斯研究》(Russian Studies) 142: 35-38.

Zhang, Jianrong. 2008.「普京時期的俄羅斯巨變及其發展趨勢」(The Upheaval in Putin's Russia and Its Trend of Development)《俄羅斯中亞東歐研究》(*Russian, Central Asian, and Eastern European Studies*) 6: 77-79.

Ziegler, Charles E. 2008. "Russia and teh CIS in 2007: Putin's Final Year?" *Asian Survey* 48(1): 133-143.

## Panel II

## Taiwan's Elections and the Implications for Cross-Strait Relations

Wen-cheng Lin, President, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy

"Taiwan's Elections and the Implications for Cross-Straits Relations"

Denny Roy, Research Fellow, East-West Center

"Washington's View of Taiwan's 2008 Elections and Referendum"

Lowell Dittmer, Professor, University of California, Berkeley

"China: Maturing Juggernaut"

# "Taiwan's Elections and the Implications for Cross-Strait Relations"

**Wen-Cheng Lin**

Professor

Institute of Mainland China Studies

National Sun Yat-sen University

## I. Introduction

According to Freedom House, Taiwan has become one of the most democratic countries in Asia.[1] Many observers and political leaders in the world acclaim Taiwan's significant human rights and democratic achievement.[2] For instance, U.S. lawmakers passed House Concurrent Resolution 292 by an overwhelming 418-1 vote on March 28, 2000, praising Taiwan's democratic presidential elections on March 20, 2000 and criticizing China for threatening to use force against the island.[3] President Bush stated in his speech in Kyoto on November 11, 2005 that "modern Taiwan is free and democratic and prosperous. By embracing freedom at all levels, Taiwan has delivered prosperity to its people and created a free and democratic Chinese society."[4] But an increasing number of scholars are concerned about whether Taiwan's democratization would heighten cross-strait tension or, even worse, bring war in the Taiwan Strait.5

To have regular and fair elections is one of the most important criteria to measure whether a country is a real democracy. Taiwan definitely fulfils this criterion. There are on average about two elections on the island every year. After Taiwan amended its constitution in 1994 to have a new article--which states that "the president and vice president shall be directly elected by the entire populace of the free area of the Republic of China"--and conducted the first presidential election

[1]Taiwan's civil rights rating was 1 and political rights rating was 2 in 2005. Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea are the three most democratic countries in Asia. Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2005: The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005).

[2]For instance, the U.S. State Department regarded Taiwan as a "multiparty democracy" in its 2004 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. Its 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices again affirms that the Taiwan government respects and upholds the human rights of its citizens. The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices—2004," in http;//www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/42641.htm; and "2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Taiwan),"released on March 6, 2007, in http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78770.htm, accessed on June 20, 2008.

[3]"Department of State Washington File: Text: Lawmakers Praise Taiwan Elections in March 28 Vote," in http://usinfo.org/wf-archive/2000/000329/epf303.htm, accessed on July 15, 2008.

[4]In http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/11/print/20051116-6.html, accessed July 15, 2008.

[5]For instance, Bonnie S. Glaser, "Will Taiwan's Polls Bring Stability or War?" Center for Strategic and International Studies, pp. 15-17; David A. Newberry, "Democratic Chaos: How Taiwanese Democracy Destabilized Cross-strait Relations," Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California, March 2005.

under this new mechanism, it became a full-fledged democracy. Elections, in particular the presidential and legislative elections in Taiwan, have always attracted a great deal of attention from Beijing. Beijing tried to intervene, though by different strategies, in order to affect the outcome of Taiwan's presidential elections. Cross-strait relations and policy are always the critical issues for debates between presidential candidates. Therefore, this paper studies Taiwan's elections and the implications for cross-strait relations.

## II. Taiwan's incomplete statehood building and Beijing's response

When martial law was enforced in Taiwan from May 20, 1949 to July 15, 1987, elections for the central representative bodies were "frozen." Although presidential elections were held every six years during the rule of martial law, these elections were meaningless because the president was elected by the National Assembly which was overwhelmingly controlled by the Kuomintang and was only a rubber stamp. Only after Taiwan lifted the martial law on July 15, 1987 and returned to real constitutional rule in the early 1990s, did genuine elections become possible on the island. A milestone in Taiwan's democratization was the presidential election of March 23, 1996 because, as mentioned above, it was the first time that people in Taiwan cast their ballots to elect directly the head of their government. Direct presidential elections not only gave new momentum to Taiwan's democratization, but also made Taiwan a new sovereign state, which is based on the idea of popular sovereignty and on the practice of "rule by the will of the people."

According to Article 1 of the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, "the state as a person of international law should process the following qualifications: (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) government ; and (d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states."[6] Taiwan has a population of 23 million, a land area of 36,179 square kilometers, and a democratic government that exercises power independently of other states in the world. It is the 17th largest trading country with a foreign exchange reserve for more than US$260 billion—the fourth largest in the world. No country in the world challenges Taiwan's capability to fulfill its international obligation. Although Taiwan currently has only 23 diplomatic ties, most of the countries in the world accept Taiwan as a de facto independent sovereign state. As Jacques deLisle points out, Taiwan "scores high in terms of the enumerated criteria."[7] But he also suggests that there is a fifth, unstated Montevideo criterion—the state must claim itself a sovereign state and that Taiwan did not make the requisite assertion that it is a state.[8] Taiwan did not claim to be a state until

[6]Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, signed at Montevideo, December 26, 1933.
[7]Jacques deLisle, "Taiwan's Referenda, Constitutional Reform and the Question of Taiwan's International Status," presented to the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission hearing on Military Modernization and Cross-Strait Balance, February 6, 2004, at http://www.fpri.org/transcripts/testimony.20040206.delisle.taiwan.html.
[8]Ibid.

at least 1999. But it gradually moved in that direction beginning in 1993, when Minister of Economic Affairs Pin-kung Chiang mentioned in a press conference that the government of the Republic of China (ROC) had adopted a two-China policy at the current stage aiming at one China. It moved away from the traditional position of "one country, two governments," or "one country, two districts," although one China was still the goal.

Democratization has been the main force encouraging people in Taiwan to promote Taiwan's sovereign status because it opens up Taiwan's society, giving people the freedoms of speech, assembly, and political participation. The idea to build an independent Taiwan state, which was a taboo during the rule of martial law, can be discussed and promoted in a free society. Moreover, a democratic Taiwan is politically quite different from China, which is still ruled by a totalitarian or, at best, an authoritarian regime. The Taiwanese people who would like to be their own boss are unlikely to agree to be ruled by Beijing.

More than 85 percent of the people in Taiwan are native Taiwanese and the political trend is that more and more people support an independent Taiwan state. Most of the people in Taiwan still supported Taiwan's final unification with China and opposed the cause of Taiwan independence in the late 1980s. Democratic changes in the 1990s added momentum to Taiwanese nationalism. Various surveys show that support for Taiwan's independence has become mainstream thinking in Taiwan. Different polls show that the number of people who support unification has never increased beyond 17% of Taiwan's total population, which is less than the number of people who support independence. If we add those who support status quo forever to the category supporting independence, the percentage of Taiwan's people who support Taiwan independence has reached 40%. For instance, the survey conducted by the Election Study Center at National Chengchi University in August 2007 showed that 34.9% of the respondents chose status quo now/decision later; 17.9% status quo indefinitely; 16.5% status quo now/independence later; 12.2% status quo now/unification later; 10.3% independence as soon as possible; and 2.2% unification as soon as possible.[9] Based on this poll, only 14.4% of Taiwan's people support Taiwan's unification with China, while 26.8% support independence for Taiwan. But if we add the 17.9% who support status quo indefinitely to the category of Taiwan independence because status quo infinitely means that Taiwan remains de facto independent forever, there are 44.7% of people in Taiwan who support the establishment of an independent Taiwan state. A survey conducted by the Election Study Center at National Cheng-chi University in November 2006 showed that if China gives Taiwan the freedom

[9] http://www.mac.gov.tew/big5/mlpolicy/pos/9608/9808_1.gif, accessed August 1, 2008.

to make a choice, 62% of respondents supported the option of Taiwan independence.[10]

Most of the serious candidates follow mainstream thinking in elections. Mainstream thinking in Taiwan in the 1990s and the 21st century is to maintain the status quo in the Taiwan Strait or to build an independent Taiwan state. Therefore, it is understandable that President Lee Teng-hui redefined the Taiwan-China relationship as "a state-to-state relationship, or at least a special state-to-state relationship," during an interview with a German radio station on July 9, 1999,[11] and that President Chen went further by suggesting that "Taiwan and China [stand] on opposite sides of the Strait, there is one country on each side" in his speech delivered to the 29th annual meeting of the World Federation of Taiwanese Associations in Tokyo via live video link on August 3, 2002.[12]

Nevertheless, Taiwan is still a divided society both in terms of national and ethnic identity, although Taiwanese consciousness has gradually become a mainstream value among the people of Taiwan (Table 2). Taiwan's state building is still incomplete. Most of the people in Taiwan now believe that Taiwan's future can only be decided by Taiwan's people. But a lot of people still have a special sentiment regarding China due to political socialization under KMT government rule, as well as cultural, historical and blood relations between Taiwan and China. Therefore, some people are still reluctant to cut or oppose cutting ties with China, and the international community does not support the island's move toward de jure independence.

Table 1: Ethnic Identification in Taiwan

| Year | Ethnic Identification | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Taiwanese (%) | Both Taiwanese & Chinese (%) | Chinese (%) | Other (%) | Total% (No.) |
| Feb. 1994 | 29.0 | 43.2 | 24.2 | 3.6 | 100(1600) |
| Apr. 1994 | 22.5 | 49.5 | 23.8 | 4.2 | 100(870) |
| Jul. 1994 | 28.4 | 49.9 | 21.7 | 0 | 100(1209) |
| Nov. 1996 | 24.9 | 49.5 | 20.5 | 5.1 | 100(1205) |
| July 1998 | 34.5 | 41.2 | 18.2 | 6.1 | 100(1098) |
| Aug. 1998 | 38.9 | 38.4 | 16.4 | 6.3 | 100(1097) |
| Apr. 2000 | 42.5 | 38.5 | 13.6 | 5.4 | 100(1085) |

Surveys conducted by the Election Study Center, National Chengchi University.

[10] http://www.singtaonet.com/hk_taiwan/t20061219_423457.html, accessed August 1, 2008.
[11] *Chung kuo shi pao* (China Times), July 10, 1999, p. 1.
[12] "President Chen Delivers the Opening Address of the 29th Annual Meeting of the World Federation of Taiwanese Associations via Live Video Link" in Tokyo on August 3, 2002, in http://www.president .gov.tw/php-bin/prez/showenews.php4, accessed 2005/4/25.

Source: The Council of Mainland Affairs, Executive Yuan, Republic of China

In addition, after Taiwan's government lifted the ban on mainland visits in November 1987 and relaxed the restriction on investment in China, cross-strait people-to-people exchanges have increased dramatically. China has become Taiwan's biggest trade partner and the most popular country to attract Taiwan's investment. In fact, investment in China accounts for more than 70% of Taiwan's total foreign investment.[13] It is estimated that there are more than 70,000 Taiwanese companies investing more than US$150 billion in China.[14] According to the Ministry of Commerce of PRC, two-way trade across the Taiwan Strait totaled $124.48 billion in 2007.[15] Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council estimates cross-strait two-way trade totaled $102.2609 billion in 2006. Taiwan's exports to China totaled $74.2459 billion, imports $28.015 billion.[16] Taiwan enjoyed a trade surplus of $46.2309 billion. Additionally, the Taiwanese made more than 4.63 million trips to China in 2007.[17] In other words, an average of more than twelve thousand Taiwanese traveled to China everyday. By the end of 2007, there were more than 262,421 cross-strait marriages.[18] Those companies that invest or trade with China and those people who have Chinese spouses have a vested interest in China. Taiwan's economic dependence on the Chinese market as well as its people's cultural and blood ties with China give Beijing leverage, making Beijing believe that it can affect Taiwan's politics.

When Taiwan stuck to one China policy, Beijing was not concerned that Taiwan might be permanently separated from China. But when Beijing perceives that Taiwan's leaders are pursuing the establishment of an independent Taiwan state, it decides to revert the trend and to kill the idea when it is still in its initial stages.

## III. Presidential elections and cross-strait confrontation

Electoral victory is the most important goal of every serious candidate in every country. China policy is one of the hot issues for debates in elections at the central level. Many forces such as Tung-pai (those who support cross-strait unification), Tu-pai (those who support Taiwan independence), the business community that supports three links, and blue-collar workers who oppose opening more economically to China, join the debate in order to influence the election. The

[13]Huang Tien-lin, "Why the Investment Cap Matters," Taipei Times, May 14, 2007, p. 8.
[14]Wenweipo, January 18, 2008, p. 1.
[15]http://www.mac.gov.tw/big5/statistics/em/184/5.pdf, accessed on August 1, 2008.
[16]Ibid.
[17]http://www.mac.gov.tw/big5/statistic/ass_lp/Oa/9706/3.pdf, accessed on August 1, 2008.
[18]Liberty Times, July 17, 2008, p. 3.

uniqueness of Taiwan's society encourages candidates to move politically toward Tu-pai and economically toward the establishment of cross-strait three links. Beijing, of course, tries to intervene in Taiwan's elections in order to prevent the island from moving further toward permanent separation from China. Indeed, Beijing has tried to influence every presidential election since 1996 using a variety of strategies.

1. 1996 Presidential Elections

Before President Lee's visit to the United States in June 1995, Beijing was not concerned about Taiwan's trend toward independence because it still believed that the KMT and Lee Teng-hui adopted a one-China policy and held firm control over the whole situation in Taiwan. Beijing's position toward Taiwan's constitutional reform, which is always a sensitive issue that might lead to de jure Taiwan independence, in the first half of the 1990s demonstrated China's perceptions about Lee, the political picture of Taiwan, and cross-strait relations: (1) the ROC government still followed one China policy (but the one China is Republic of China); (2) there were regular, semi-official talks between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait; (3) there were communications between envoys from Taiwan and China; (4) Lee Teng-hui reformed the constitution in order to increase his power;[19] (5) the Kuomintang was still able to control the situation and would not abandon the national title of the Republic of China; (6) forces for establishing an independent Taiwan state had gained strength, but were unlikely to achieve their goal in the near future; and (7) Beijing still placed its hope in the Taiwan authorities.

After President Lee's visit to the United States in June 1995, cross-strait relations deteriorated. In a speech at his alma mater, Cornell University, President Lee mentioned the Republic of China on Taiwan seventeen times and unification only three times. Beijing perceived Lee as a person supporting Taiwan independence, defining Lee's trip to the United States as a well-planned strategy to create two Chinas or one China, one Taiwan. Therefore, Beijing increased its criticisms of the Taiwan authorities and mentioned less about placing its hope in the Taiwan authorities. In his speech on January 30, 1996, China's premier Li Peng criticized the actions of "Taiwan's authorities" as efforts to divide Taiwan from China. He emphasized that no matter how Taiwan's leader was chosen, it would not change the fact that Taiwan is a part of China.

Beijing unilaterally suspended the SEF-ARATS talks in retaliation for President Lee's trip to the United States in June 1995. In addition, China's military conducted a series of exercises in 1995-96 in order to intimidate Taiwan from moving further toward *de juré* independence. Cross-strait tensions reached their peak on March 8, 1996, when the PLA fired four M-9 missiles

[19]http://www.voanews.com/chinese/Archive/a-2001-12-27-4-1.cfm.

into waters about 20 to 30 kilometers off the north and south coasts of Taiwan. China's radical military actions before Taiwan's presidential election in March 1996 had two purposes. One was to show its will to crush any intention by Taiwan to move toward *de juré* independence; the other was to reduce Lee's votes in the presidential elections. Lee Teng-hui was the incumbent running for reelection. He was invincible after he made the historical trip to the United States—Taiwan's first incumbent president ever to make such a trip. Although the KMT was split, the DPP, which received only 21.1% of the popular vote in the 1996 presidential elections, was still too weak to win the presidency in 1996. Two independents, Lin Yang-kang who was the former president of the Justice Yuan and the Taiwanese rival of Lee in the KMT, and Chen Li-an who was the former president of the Control Yuan, were KMT members before they decided to leave the party and run as independents. Lin and his running mate, Hau Pei-tsun, former premier and defense minister, captured 14.9% of the popular vote; Chen Li-an and his running mate Ms. Wang Ching-feng, former member of the Control Yuan, received 9.98% of the popular vote. Taiwan's voters ignored China's military intimidation and supported President Lee, who won in a landslide victory by garnering 54% of the popular vote (Table 2).

Table 2: 1996-2008 presidential elections and outcomes

| Year | Presidential Candidates | VP Candidates | Political Affiliation | Votes Cast | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1996 | Lee Teng-hui | Lien Chan | KMT | 5,813,699 | 54.0 |
| | Peng Ming-min | Frasnk Hsieh | DPP | 2,274,586 | 21.1 |
| | Lin Yang-kang | Hau Pei-tsun | Independent | 1,603,790 | 14.9 |
| | Chen Li-an | Wang Ching-feng | Independent | 1,074,044 | 9.98 |
| 2000 | Lien Chan | Vincent Siew | KMT | 2,925,513 | 23.1 |
| | Chen Shui-bien | Annette Lu | DPP | 4,977,737 | 39.3 |
| | James Soong | Chang Chau-hsiung | Independent | 4,664,932 | 36.84 |
| | Li Ao | Elmer Fung | New Party | 16,782 | 0.13 |
| | Hsu Hsin-liang | Josephine Chu | Independent | 79,429 | 0.63 |
| 2004 | Lien Chan | James Soong | KMT | 6,435,614 | 49.9 |
| | Chen Shui-bien | Annette Lu | DPP | 6,461,177 | 50.1 |
| 2008 | Ma Ying-jeou | Vincent Siew | KMT | 7,658,724 | 58.4 |
| | Frank Hsieh | Su | DPP | 5,445,239 | 41.6 |

Source: Wikepedia, "Republic of China Presidential Elections, 1996-2008."

Beijing had given up hope on Lee Teng-hui and decided not to make any deals with him. Under President Lee's leadership, Taiwan actively carried out the "Go South Policy,"[20] encouraging Taiwanese businessmen to transfer their investments from China to Southeast Asia, and launched the "go slow, be patient" policy, imposing restrictions on Taiwanese investment in China in order to reduce Taiwan's economic dependence on the China market.[21] DPP's victory in the elections for city mayors and country magistrates for the first time since the party was established on September 28, 1986,[22] which showed that DPP could become Taiwan's ruling party sooner than China might have expected, changed Beijing's mind. Beijing decided to deal with Lee's government again because dealing with Lee was deemed preferable to dealing with a DPP government in the future. SEF-ARATS dialogue was resumed in 1998. SEF Chairman Koo Chen-fu led a delegation to visit mainland China and held meetings with Jiang Zemin, Wang Daohan, and Vice Premier Qian Qichen. However, this rapprochement was pronounced dead when President Lee made his famous two-state remarks on July 9, 1999.[23] Beijing again suspended cross-strait dialogues and launched an intensive military campaign to intimidate Taiwan. It conducted military exercises in the Taiwan Strait: its fighter jets crossed the central line in the strait twice; People's Daily carried Commentators' articles attacking Lee Teng-hui; and the People's Liberation Army's leaders reiterated on different occasions that the Chinese military had the capability to defend China's territory. The tension in the Taiwan Strait increased.

2. 2000 presidential elections

The 2000 presidential election was a tri-partite race. Former Taiwan Province Governor James Soong ran as an independent after losing the KMT presidential nomination to then vice president Lien Chan. The split in the KMT was the only chance that the DPP might win the election. DPP's presidential candidate was Chen Shui-bian, a defense lawyer in the famous 1979 Kaohsiung Incident,[24] as well as a Taipei City councilman, legislator, and Taipei City mayor from 1994 to 1998.

[20]The "go south policy" targeted Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Brunei for promoting bilateral economic ties. In 1997, when Asian countries, especially Southeast Asian countries, suffered from the Asian Financial Crisis, Taiwan expanded the policy, adding Cambodia, Burma, Laos, Australia, and New Zealand to the list for bilateral economic cooperation with Taiwan.
[21]Under the policy, Taiwan high-tech industry is not allowed to invest in China. Any individual investment over US$50 million was prohibited. Moreover, Taiwan's companies were not allowed to invest in the construction of China's infrastructure.
[22]DPP defeated KMT by a very narrow margin in this local elections in 1997. It got 43.12% of the popular votes; KMT got 42.12%. Quoted in Christian Schafferer, "The 2001 National and Local Elections in Taiwan," Taiwan Papers, No. 4 (October 2002), p. 15.
[23]On July 9, 1999, President Lee redefined Taiwan-China relations as "a state-to-state relationship, or at least a special state-to-state relationship" during an interview with a German radio station. *Zhongguo Shibao* (*China Times*), July 10, 1999, p. 1.
[24]On December 10, 1979, the universal human rights day, pro-democracy demonstrators clashed with the military and

Beijing never concealed its distaste for the DPP, which aimed at building an independent Taiwan republic, emphasized that Taiwan's future should be decided by island residents, and supported the ideas of referendum as well as a new constitution containing a new name and clear definition of Taiwan's territory.

Beijing favored the KMT's Lien Chan to be Taiwan's new leader although he was Lee Teng-hui's handpicked successor. In order to prevent DPP from winning the presidential election, Beijing intervened again. The Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office of the State Council released a new white paper on Taiwan policy on February 21, 2000, slightly less than one month before the election, designating the following three conditions as grounds for the use of force against Taiwan: (1) if Taipei declares independence; (2) if foreign powers intervene in Taiwanese affairs; and (3) if Taipei continues to refuse to negotiate for unification for a long period of time.[25] China's defense minister Chi Hoatian emphasized that China would never commit not to use force in a meeting with the visiting commander of U.S. Pacific forces, Admiral Dennis Blair, on February 29; Jiang Zemin emphasized on March 4, 2000 that Beijing would take "drastic measures" against Taiwan if delayed reunification talks indefinitely.[26] Moreover, China's premier Zhu Rongji spoke in a news conference on March 15, 2000, three days before the election, to warn Taiwan's voters not to vote for the "wrong" candidate. Otherwise, he warned the Taiwanese people that it might mean war.[27] But Beijing's efforts to prevent the DPP presidential candidate Chen Shui-bian from winning the presidency failed. Thanks to the split in the KMT, Chen won the presidency with only 39.3% of the popular votes (Table 2).

Many public opinion polls before Election Day showed that Lien Chan would win. Therefore, Chen's victory, which marked the first power turnover in Taiwan's history and ushered cross-strait relations into a brand new era, was a surprise to Beijing. Before Chen was sworn in on May 20, 2000, Beijing had taken many opportunities to warn Chen not to support independence. For example, a report in the People's Liberation Army Daily on April 7, 2000 warned that if Taiwan continued to deny the one-China principle, it would end peace. ARATS vice chairman Tang Shubei also mentioned in a speech in Guangzhou that denying one-China would bring war.[28]

---

policemen. More than two dozens opposition leaders were arrested and imprisoned. It was regarded as a serious setback to Taiwan's democratic movement. But a new generation of opposition leaders—the defense lawyers who defended the arrested leaders in the court martial—emerged. Two most famous defense lawyers are Chen Shui-bian and Frank Hsieh.

[25]The Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office of the State Council, "The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue," February 21, 2000, in http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/bps/bps_yzyz.htm, accessed July 15, 2008.

[26]Gerrit W. Gong, "Cross-Taiwan Relations: Cross-strait Cross-fire,"

[27]Ibid.

[28]David Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Groping for a Formula for Cross-strait Talks," pp. 79-80.

Beijing refused to enter into dialogue with the DPP government unless Chen accepted the one-China principle or the 1992 consensus.[29] Instead of accepting Beijing's terms, President Chen made remarks that suggested there was "one state on each side of the Taiwan Strait" on August 3, 2002. In addition, he stated that he would never accept the so-called 1992 consensus, which he viewed as synonymous with the one China principle. Cross-strait relations remained in deadlock.

3. 2004 presidential elections

2004 was another presidential election year. Although President Chen was an incumbent, he was the underdog in this election. There was no longer a split in the KMT. Lien Chan and James Soong, both of whom were defeated in the 2000 presidential election, formed a ticket to challenge Chen. According to various national opinion polls, Chen lagged behind his opponent by a wide margin in the first half of 2003.[30] President Chen needed to create new issues in order to change this unfavorable situation. Holding the first national referendum in Taiwan's history on the same day as the presidential election seemed a good idea. The original idea was to hold a referendum on three public policy issues--the construction of a fourth nuclear power plant, the reduction of the number of seats in the Legislative Yuan (LY) and Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization (WHO). It was believed that those who voted in the referendums, especially those who voted yes on the two issues regarding whether Taiwan should join the WHO and whether the number of seats in the LY should be reduced, were more likely to vote for Present Chen.

When the Referendum Law was passed by the opposition-controlled LY on November 27, 2003, DPP was unable to hold a referendum on presidential Election Day according to legal regulations.[31] But President Chen decided to go ahead and hold a "defensive referendum" because Article 17 of the law empowers the president to initiate a referendum on "national security matters"

[29]The so-called "1992 consensus" refers to an agreement in a meeting between the Strait Exchange Foundation and its counterpart the Association for Relations Across Taiwan Straits in November 1992 in Hong Kong. Both sides agreed that there is one China and that each side maintains its own interpretation of the definition of one China. Ironically, it was Beijing which rejected to sign because it believed that two different interpretations of the definition of one China would create two Chinas. Therefore, there is no written agreement. President Chen argues that there is no "1992 consensus" only "1992 spirit." It means that although Taipei and Beijing disagree with each other, the disagreement does not stop them from negotiations.

[30]For example, a survey by the TVBS Poll Center conducted in mid-July 2003 revealed that President Chen lagged behind his opponent by more than 10% and President Chen's approval rate was only 33%. *Central DailyNews*, July 21, 2993, p. 4.

[31]The law prohibits the Executive Yuan to hold referendums (article 13). Only the citizens over 20 years old with the endorsement of 0.5% of the eligible voters in Taiwan can propose a referendum and the proposition must be sanctioned by a Review Commission whose members are nominated by the political parties based on the proportion of their seats in the Legislative Yuan (articles 7, 8, 10 & 35). It was too late for the DPP to collect enough signatures in order to propose a referendum before March 20, 2004—the voting date of the presidential election. Even if the DPP could collect enough signatures, the Review Commission which would be dominated by the opposition parties might block the referendums on issues favorable to President Chen.

if "the nation… [is] threatened by an external force that could cause a change in the nation's sovereignty."[32]

Beijing has never loved the idea of referendum, in particular a referendum conducted in Taiwan, because it is a symbol of people's sovereignty. Moreover, Beijing believes that the majority of the people in Taiwan would choose the establishment of an independent Taiwan state if a referendum were to be held on the issue of unification versus independence. Politically, the cross-strait relationship in 2004 was like dead water. There was no official or semi-official contact between Taipei and Beijing because the latter refused to resume dialogue with Taiwan. Mutual trust was low. China continued to escalate its military threat by increasing the number of missiles targeting Taiwan and frequently conducting military exercises aimed at the island.

Beijing would have liked to do whatever it could to defeat President Chen in the 2004 election. But it learned from the lessons of 1996 and 2000, and decided to keep a low profile this time. In both 1996 and 2000, as mentioned above, Beijing adopted a hard-line position toward Taiwan in order to intimidate Taiwan's voters and detract support from Lee and Chen. Those harsh actions backfired. President Lee won Taiwan's first direct presidential election in 1996 and DPP's candidate Chen Shui-bian became Taiwan's new president in 2000.

In the 2004 presidential election, Beijing applied an indirect strategy by pressuring Washington to restrict President Chen. Between July 2003 to March 2004, Beijing lobbied Washington to prevent Chen from holding referendums by dispatching delegations, arranging talks at foreign ministerial levels and holding a summit to convince the United States of the serious situation in the Taiwan Strait. In addition, it encouraged Taiwanese businessmen in China who supported Lien Chan to return to Taiwan to vote for Lien, and arrested several so-called Taiwanese spies who were taken to confess in public in order to humiliate President Chen. Washington, which was trapped in Iraq and faced the emerging North Korea nuclear issue, needed China's support and cooperation. The U.S. chose to make concessions to China at the expense of Taiwan.

On March 20, 2004, President Chen was reelected by a slim margin (50.1% vs. 49.9%) (Table 2), while the defensive referendum was invalidated since less than one-half of qualified voters cast

[32]The two questions posed in the March 20, 2004 defensive referendums are as following: (1) The people of Taiwan demand that the Taiwan Strait issue be resolved through peaceful means. Should mainland China refuse to withdraw the missiles it has targeted at Taiwan and to opening renounce the use of force against us, would you agree that the Government should acquire more advanced anti-missile weapons to strengthen Taiwan's self-defense capabilities? (2)Would you agree that our Government should engage in negotiation with mainland China on the establishment of a "peace and stability" framework for cross-strait interactions in order to build consensus and for the welfare of the peoples on both sides?

their ballots due to a boycott by the opposition parties (Article 30).[33] Only 7.45 million voters, or 45.1% of eligible voters, cast their ballots in the defensive referendum.[34]

Beijing was deeply frustrated that its efforts and new strategy did not stop Chen from winning reelection. It decided to escalate its military threat against Taiwan right after the elections. On May 17, 2004, China's Taiwan Affairs Office issued a statement, warning Chen not to play with fire by promoting separatism. Otherwise, China would pay any price to crush separatism on the island.[35] In its 2004 defense white paper, China describes the activities to promote independence in Taiwan as the biggest threat to peace in the region.[36] On March 14, 2005, China's National People's Congress passed the Anti-secession Law, authorizing the State Council and the Central Military Commission to employ "non-peaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity" in the case that Taiwan seeks permanent separation from China.[37] In addition, China escalated its verbal threats against Taiwan and criticisms of Chen for adopting a gradual strategy to promote Taiwan independence.

4. 2008 presidential elections

Both the internal and external environment favored the KMT's presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou. The approval rate of President Chen, who was involved in corruption scandals, was only 17% in 2007, according to a public opinion poll.[38] Taiwan's economy was in recession and the increasing gap between the rich and poor created many social problems. Externally, Washington was very unhappy with President Chen, who failed to fulfill commitments made in his inaugural address in May 2000 and continued to create surprises. Washington-Taipei relations were in deep trouble. Ma enjoyed a comfortable lead over his opponent, DPP's Frank Hsieh, according to various public opinion polls. For example, a poll conducted by TVBS Poll Center in early March 2008 showed that Ma led Hsieh by 19%.[39]

On the eve of the presidential election, the cross-strait relationship was at its nadir. Beijing was very angry over Chen's policy of de-Siniicization, which entailed changing the names of the state-owned enterprises from China to Taiwan and rewriting Taiwan's textbooks. Chen's decision

[33]Article 30 of the Referendum Law states that for a referendum to be validated more than 50% of the eligible voters should cast their ballots and a single majority of them voted yes.
[34]United Daily News, March 21, 2004.
[35]Htpp://www.gwytb.gov.cn/zywg0.asp?zywg_m.d=105, accessed on August 1, 2008.
[36]Http://mil.news.sina.com.cn/2004-12-27/1147254.064.html, accessed on August 1, 2008.
[37]For a full text of the Anti-secessional Law, please visit http://www.gwytb.gov.cn/flfg.htm, accessed on August 1, 2008.
[38]A poll conduct by TVBS Poll Center on May 21, 2007 showed that 17% of the respondents were satisfied with Chen's performance, 57% dissatisfied, and 26% no comment. http://www.rdec.gov.tw/public/Data/78109404371, accessed on August 1, 2008.
[39]Quoted in www.ChinaReviewNews.com, "Newest Public Opinion Poll: Ma Ying-jeou 50%, Frank Hsieh 31%," March 9, 2008.

to freeze the National Unification Council, apply for membership to the WHO and the United Nations under the name of Taiwan, and insist on holding a referendum on the issue of whether "Taiwan should apply for UN membership under the name of Taiwan" on the same day as the presidential election particularly aggravated China. But Beijing decided to keep a low profile. Instead of clearly siding with any candidate, although it understandably favored KMT's Ma Ying-jeou, Beijing decided to focus on opposing Chen's efforts to hold a referendum on the island joining the United Nations under the name "Taiwan." But all Beijing did was voice oral criticisms of Chen and pressure the United States and other countries to express their opposition to the referendum. Instead of increasing its military threat, Beijing made some minor offers to win the hearts of the Taiwanese people, including lowering tuition for Taiwanese students and expanding agricultural zones for Taiwan investment.

Beijing's low profile strategy, of course, was not the critical factor that allowed Ma to win the presidential election. But it is certain that the China factor was not a liability to the KMT candidate this time. Ma garnered 58.4% of the popular vote, a real landslide victory over DPP's Frank Hsieh, who received only 41.6% of the vote (Table 2). Under Ma's leadership, the KMT came back into power after eight years as the opposition.

## IV. The 2008 presidential election and cross-strait relations

The presidential elections in 1996, 2000, and 2004 showed that Taiwan's elections do affect cross-strait relations. First of all, debates over China policy encouraged candidates to take a tough position toward China in order to avoid criticisms that they were not patriotic or that they might sell out Taiwan if they became president. Second, DPP candidates tended to create issues to provoke China, thereby increasing tensions in the Taiwan Strait and reducing mutual trust. Third, Beijing took direct and indirect actions to influence Taiwan's elections. When its efforts failed, Beijing refused to come to the negotiating table. Beijing believed that time was on its side because Taipei is gradually losing leverage in the face of a rising China. Therefore, Beijing was not in a hurry to resume talks with Taipei.

Beijing's attitude toward the 2008 presidential elections in Taiwan was different. Although Beijing favored Ma, it was willing to deal with DPP's Frank Hsieh if he was able to win the presidency. To Beijing, Hsieh is a pragmatic person who follows a different mainland China policy from that of Chen. Indeed, no matter who won the presidential election, Beijing expected to end the age of confrontation. Cross-strait relations were in a deadlock in the Chen era because Beijing refused to have any official contact with the Chen government. Beijing has succeeded in isolating

Taiwan, dividing Taiwan from within, and increasing Taiwan's economic dependence on China. But Taiwan did not move toward unification. On the contrary, various polls indicate that the island has been drifting further away from China. The strategy of Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian to promote Taiwan independence is, of course, an important factor. But Beijing's refusal to talk with Taiwan's government in the past decade was also a factor in driving the island away from China.

Both Ma and Hsieh emphasized the importance of cross-strait economic ties and their desire to change President Chen's "active management and effective opening" economic policy. Both candidates would like to lift the 40% cap on investment in China, allow more Chinese tourists to visit Taiwan, and attract Chinese investment.[40] Indeed, neither Ma nor Hsieh can ignore the reality that cross-strait exchanges have become too intensive to be effectively restricted in an age of globalization. Although both Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian tried to control cross-strait economic ties by restricting Taiwan's investment in China and China's exports to Taiwan, encouraging Taiwanese businessmen to invest in countries other than China, and delaying the establishment of three links, their efforts were not effective. Deadlock in cross-strait political relations did not stop the increase of economic exchanges between Taiwan and China.

One can predict that cross-strait economic integration will continue no matter who wins Taiwan's 2008 presidential elections. But Ma does take a more proactive policy than Hsieh to promote cross-strait economic exchanges. He proposes ways to normalize economic relations, create a common market, and establish direct transportation between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits. Under Ma's leadership, it is expected that cross-strait economic ties would be further upgraded. But the biggest difference between Ma and Hsieh on their China policy is on the issue of Taiwan's sovereignty. Ma is willing to accept the so-called "1992 consensus" or "one China, different interpretations." Namely, Ma agrees with the one-China principle, although he interprets one China as the Republic of China. He said that he supports Taiwan's final unification with China, although he respects the option of independence for the Taiwanese people. Ma proposes a "no unification, no independence, and no war" formula to maintain peace and pursue co-prosperity between Taiwan and mainland China. Hsieh, on the other hand, refuses to accept the one China principle. He emphasizes the importance of not degrading Taiwan's sovereign status in cross-strait negotiations. There is no doubt that Ma's position is more acceptable to Beijing and that Beijing is more likely to cooperate with Ma. Ma's victory was the first time since 1996 that a candidate favored by Beijing won the presidency.

Indeed, President Ma has very actively promoted cross-strait exchanges and China is very

[40]Alan D. Romberg, " Taiwan: All Politics, All the Time," China Leadership Monitor, No. 19, p. 17.

cooperative. In his inaugural address on May 20, 2008, President Ma Ying-jiou pointed out that "the normalization of economic and cultural relations is the first step to win-win solution" between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. He also stated that his government is ready and "with the start of direct charter flights on weekends and the arrival of mainland tourists in early July this year, we will launch a new era of cross-strait relations."[41] In fact, even before President Ma's inauguration, vice president-elect Vincent Siew suggested in his meeting with Chinese president Hu Jintao at the Boao Forum in April 2008[42] that cross-strait three links and economic normalization would be the top priority in the new government's political agenda. Both President Hu Jintao in his several meetings with KMT leaders, and the Chairman of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council Chen Yunlin in his positive comments on Mr. Ma's inaugural address, emphasized that China would actively push for the realization of cross-strait three links.[43]

Ma's new government reached agreements with Beijing on weekend charter flights starting on July 4, 2008. Beijing has given the green light for Chinese tourists to go to Taiwan. In addition, Ma has decided to relax further controls over Taiwan's investment in China by liberalizing regulations on cross-strait securities investments and allowing the 12-inch wafer makers to invest in China.

Observers no longer worry that a war might break out in the Taiwan Strait. But the new concern is whether Ma is too pro-China or leans too much toward China. Japan does not hide its anxiety. Forces for Taiwan independence on the island are angry because they believe that Ma has made too many concessions to Beijing on Taiwan's sovereignty.

Of course, Ma's policy to accept the One China policy, to promote the normalization of cross-strait economic relations, and to pursue the signing of a peace accord and diplomatic truce with China is very effective in reducing tension in the Taiwan Strait. It remains to be seen whether Ma's policy will reverse the trend and momentum created by Presidents Lee and Chen for Taiwan independence.

## V. Conclusion

Beijing tried to influence every presidential election in Taiwan. It was disappointed with the outcomes of Taiwan's presidential elections in 1996, 2000, and 2004. Beijing believed that time

[41]Office of the President, Republic of China (Taiwan), "President Ma's Inaugural Address," May 20, 2008, in http://www.president. Gov.tw/en.
[42]"In Historical Meeting, Vicent C. Siew Rasied Four Requests and Hu Jintao Positively Responded," Lienhe Zaobao (Singapore), April 13, 2008, in http://www.zaobao.com/zg/zg080413_501_1.shtml.
[43] "Chen Yunlin Positively Answered Ma Ying-jiou," Sina-com.tw, May 23, 2008, in http://news.sina.com.hk/cgi-bin/nw/show.cgi/246/3/1/746618/1.html.

was on its side and that cross-strait stagnation would cost Taiwan more. Therefore, it adopted a tough policy toward Taiwan when Lee and Chen ruled Taiwan and refused to resume dialogue with Taiwan.

Beijing is happy that Ma won the presidency and is ready to cooperate with Taiwan's new government. Cross-strait dialogue has been resumed and agreements on weekend charter flight and Chinese tourists to Taiwan have been signed. The two sides are very optimistic that the normalization of cross-strait economic relations can be established in the near future.

Ma's policy, of course, will effectively elevate unification relative to Taiwan independence. But how far Ma can go depends on several factors. First, can the forces for independence in Taiwan tolerate Ma's policy? If not, can Ma resist the criticism and pressure? In fact, Ma is very careful to emphasize that his China policy is based on three No's—no unification, no independence, and no use of force. He also comments that he won't see unification in his lifetime. Second, can cross-strait economic cooperation really solve Taiwan's economic problems? More than 7.65 million voters support Ma in the hope that Ma can improve Taiwan's economic condition, create jobs, and increase their income. Some of those who voted for Ma might not support Ma's policy to sacrifice Taiwan's sovereignty. If Ma's China policy can bring prosperity to Taiwan, they might keep silent. Unfortunately, Ma has failed to deliver his promise so far. The unemployment rate continues to climb, inflation is still increasing, the stock market has dropped more than 2000 points since Ma was sworn in on May 20, 2008, and Chinese tourists do not really bring big business to Taiwan. Ma's approval rate has continued to decline. According to a recent TVBS poll, only 32% of respondents were satisfied with Ma's performance, while 47% were unsatisfied. Opposition forces have organized demonstrations to challenge Ma. This decrease in support might force Ma to be more cautious on his policy toward China. Third, although the United States is satisfied with the reduction of tension in the Taiwan Strait, will it be happy to see Taiwan lean too much toward China?

President Ma has only been in power for less than three months. It is still too early to tell whether he is strong enough to implement his China policy. But one thing is for sure: Ma's victory has ushered cross-strait relations into a brand new era.

# "Washington's View of Taiwan's 2008 Elections and Referendum"

**Denny Roy**

Senior Fellow

East-West Center, Honolulu

The overriding U.S. interest in the Taiwan Strait has been to maintain stability (i.e. avoid tensions that could increase the possibility of a military conflict) while, on the one hand, preserving a working relationship with China and, on the other hand, helping Taiwan obtain security as well as a modicum of dignity and respect for its achievements in economic and democratic development. The U.S. interest in peace in the Taiwan Strait is not solely strategic, but also reflects both the traditional friendship between the peoples of Taiwan and America and the U.S. ideological interest in the success and survival of democracy in Taiwan, since Washington hopes other countries (including China) will follow a similar path. In practice, this has dictated for the USA a delicate role of providing dual deterrence and dual assurance: assuring Taiwan and deterring China through arms sales and the threat of intervention against a PLA attack; and assuring Beijing and deterring Taiwan through the one-China policy. This policy package was always potentially contradictory: what if a democratically-elected leadership on Taiwan opted to pursue a policy that looked to Beijing like "separatism"? This would pit two U.S. goals, cooperation with China and encouragement of democratization in Asia, against each other, while at the same time threatening a disastrous regional war. To complicate the picture, Taiwan itself is split over the issue of the island's ultimate relationship with China. The tension between U.S. objectives emerged under Lee Deng-hui's presidency in the 1990s, and it deepened after Chen Shui-bian's election in 2000.

## Context: U.S. Relations with China and with Taiwan

U.S. reaction to the 2008 elections in Taiwan took place within a political context formed by two major forces: U.S.-PRC relations and U.S.-Taiwan relations. Washington's respective relationships with China and with Taiwan moved in opposite directions during the Bush presidency. There is a narrow range of possible movement in U.S. policy toward Taiwan, bounded on one side by the Taiwan Relations Act and on the other by the one-China policy. If the Clinton Administration's

"three no's" policy placed it near the pro-China end of this range, the Bush White House was initially near the pro-Taiwan end. In 2001 the Bush team offered Taiwan an unusually large $11 billion arms sale package. The package included submarines, a potentially offensive weapon that no American president since Nixon had been willing to give Taiwan. The Bush Administration allowed higher-level bilateral contacts than its predecessors, including an informal meeting of the U.S. deputy secretary of defense and the Taiwan minister of defense in 2002—the highest level meeting between U.S. and Taiwan officials since Washington de-recognized the ROC in 1979. Bush himself publicly committed in 2001 to do "whatever it takes" to defend Taiwan in the event of a cross-Strait military conflict. These were the kinds of actions the Chinese have always argued would endanger all three parties' interests by emboldening "separatism" on Taiwan. Soon, however, U.S. officials were publicly rebuking Taipei for provoking China. By Bush's second term it was clear the U.S.-Taiwan relationship had suffered substantial damage. By contrast, this same period saw the U.S. relationship with China rise from the skepticism expressed by incoming Bush Administration officials and the bilateral nadir following the EP-3 aircraft collision incident to descriptions of bilateral relations being "the best they have been since President Nixon's first visit" to China in 1972.[1]

At least three important factors accounted for this improvement in U.S.-China relations. First, Chinese leaders signaled that China was not anxious to push U.S. influence or alliances out of Asia. Second, the prominence of the U.S.-led War On Terror and the consequent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq turned the focus of American strategists away from China as a potential American adversary. Third, Bush Administration officials realized how much they needed the cooperation of a rising China in the resolution of several strategic issues, most notably the North Korean nuclear crisis.

With regard to Taiwan, on the other hand, many U.S. officials were displeased with what they saw as a pattern of provocative acts by the Chen government that strained cross-Strait relations and complicated U.S.-China relations. Chen was the first democratically-elected non-KMT president in Taiwan's history. Many of his supporters had a strong sense of Taiwanese nationalism and deeply resented China's efforts to restrict Taiwan's international citizenship and to pressure Taiwan into unification on Chinese terms. The wishes of this constituency shaped Chen's agenda.

Chen advanced a set of ideas that underpinned his cross-Strait policy. It was an obvious fact, he said on many occasions, that "Taiwan is an independent, sovereign country." Chen rejected basing cross-Strait relations on the one-China principle that the KMT supported and the PRC demanded.

Chen argued that to the mainland Chinese, "one China" means "one country, two systems" as practiced in Hong Kong, including the expectation that Taiwan's elected leaders accept the status of a local government subordinate to the central government in Beijing. Chen's government held that Taiwan's future should be decided by Taiwan's inhabitants rather than the mainland Chinese—the exact opposite position of Beijing, which maintains that since Taiwan belongs to "China," Taiwan's 23 million people cannot act against the wishes of the PRC's 1.3 billion people (who heavily favor unification).

These ideas formed the rationale Chen offered both domestically and internationally for his policy of distancing Taiwan from China. He rejected the ground rule of the one-China principle as undemocratic because it forced a particular conception of nationality on Taiwan's people without their approbation. Chen's government defined the cross-Strait "status quo" as an already-independent Taiwan, with China trying to force reunification through military coercion. Thus the rollback of symbolic ties to the mainland could be described as reaffirmations of the status quo as Chen characterized it. Although the proposed constitutional changes and the holding of referenda had direct, negative consequences for cross-Strait relations, the Chen's Democratic Progress Party (DPP) government styled these acts as integral parts of Taiwan's democratization, of which the United States was a long-time supporter.

Chen further asserted that "consolidating" democracy in Taiwan would enhance Taiwan's security against the military threat from China. "I think democracy, and insisting on having a democratic Taiwan, are the greatest defense and the best arms that we have in the face of China's military threat. . . . solidifying and deepening Taiwan's democracy is our best Theater Missile Defense," Chen has said.[2] Chen maintained that the holding of referenda is in itself a step in the consolidation of democracy, and therefore has value beyond the content of the referenda and should be a goal of the Taiwan government. "A referendum represents a concept and belief that I have pursued throughout my more-than-20-year political career," Chen said on one occasion. "It is a universal value and a basic human right. Moreover, I believe that it is also a dream long pursued by the 23 million people of Taiwan. As the leader of this country, [carrying out a referendum] is my responsibility, my mission and duty to shoulder."[3] Chen tried to turn the Chinese deterrence strategy on its head, threatening that if China's military attacked Taiwan, his government would immediately declare formal independence.

The U.S. understood Chen as having promised not to take substantial steps toward formal independence. In his first inaugural address in 2000, Chen said that absent an "intention to use military force" on the part of China, he would not "declare independence," change the name Republic of China, add the concept of a "state-to-state" cross-Strait relationship to the constitution, hold a referendum on independence, or abolish the National Unification Council or National Unification Guidelines. In his second inauguration speech in 2004 Chen reiterated his intention to abide by these "five no's." For Washington, respect for Taiwan's democracy did not necessarily imply sympathy with Taiwanese nationalist sentiments. In any case these were a far lower priority than maintaining cross-Strait stability and a working relationship with China. The U.S. government did not accept the Chen government's characterization of Taipei's cross-Strait policy as driven by a compelling logic or morality. Chen was engaging in equivocation by arguing that Taiwan was already independent, and therefore could do away with its symbolic connections to the mainland without changing the status quo. This trampled the crucial distinction between *de facto* and *de jure* independence. From Washington's point of view, the status quo was an autonomous government on Taiwan that maintained enough strands of the legal fiction of being part of China to give Beijing assurance that the possibility of eventual political unification is not foreclosed. Cross-Strait stability and a constructive U.S.-China relationship were largely premised on preserving this delicate equilibrium. To say that Chen did not seem to share the commitment to maintaining this equilibrium is an understatement. Rather, Chen's apparent goal was to force the Chinese to accept the eventual possibility (if not probability) of a formally independent Taiwan, relieving Taiwan of the burden of assuring China in order to maintain peace across the Strait. A common interpretation was that Chen was pursuing a narrow, partisan domestic political agenda not only without taking account of U.S. interests, but indeed in defiance of U.S. warnings. U.S. officials redefined the guiding principle of American cross-Strait policy as opposition to "unilateral changes in the status quo" by either side. The perceived need by Washington to discipline Taipei was dramatically illustrated by Bush's public statement in December 2003, with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao at his side, that "We oppose any unilateral decision by either China or Taiwan to change the status quo. And the comments and actions made by the leader of Taiwan indicate that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally to change the status quo, which we oppose."[4]

This did not have the effect Washington desired. In 2006 Chen announced that the purely ceremonial National Unification Council and its Guidelines, which provide for unification on the condition that mainland China democratizes, would "cease to function," despite Chen's earlier promise

that while he was president he would not abolish the Council or the Guidelines. The U.S. State Department called on Chen to affirm that he had not broken his pledge and was not trying to unilaterally alter the status quo. As widely noted in the Taiwan press, Bush was reportedly "infuriated."[5]

In fairness to Chen, there are at least two reasons to question the basis for the Bush Administration's apparent exasperation with him. The first is the argument that the White House did not evince a sophisticated understanding of Taiwan politics. Some analysts have argued that contrary to the picture of him painted by PRC propaganda, Chen was not a committed separatist. Rather, he was trying to steer a relatively moderate course in cross-Strait relations while fending off pressure from pro-independence hardliners within his party. According to this argument, condemning Chen weakened the moderate faction and strengthened the "deep green" hardliners who were less averse to the risks of angering China. The second point in Chen's defense is that he got mixed signals from the U.S. government. A former military aide to then-Secretary of State Colin Powell said the U.S. Defense Department and certain other high-ranking "neocon" officials privately supported Taiwan independence and on multiple occasions encouraged Chen's government to move Taiwan politically further away from China. This allegedly continued until Bush had repeatedly ordered Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to re-establish military-to-military exchanges with the PRC. Former American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) Director Douglas Paal, as well, has affirmed that Washington was sending Chen mixed signals during the early part of his administration.[6] Paal's predecessor Therese Shaheen was widely regarded as a supporter of Taiwan independence and often charged with undercutting the White House's warnings to the Chen government not to take steps Beijing was likely to view as separatist. Shaheen once famously said in public that Bush was Taiwan's "secret guardian angel."[7]

**The Legislative and Presidential Elections**

Taiwan's 2008 elections had three distinct elements: the legislative election in January, the presidential election in March, and the referendum held concurrently with the presidential poll. American reaction to the referendum, which the U.S. government characterized as a policy question, was distinct from the response to the elections for political offices, and I will deal with it separately

later. As for the legislative and presidential elections, U.S. officials tried to avoid public comments that could be construed as attempts to boost the chances of particular parties or politicians, which would have exposed them to charge of interfering in Taiwan's political process. "We are pro-democracy, and therefore do not favor one or another political party," said AIT Director Stephen M. Young. "The U.S. looks forward to working closely with whomever the people of Taiwan elect as their next president. . . . Taiwan serves as a model for democratization in the region and around the world, perhaps most importantly, just across the Strait in the PRC."[8]

There is no question the Bush Administration was unhappy with Chen's DPP government by the beginning of 2008 and that many U.S. officials saw advantages in the prospect of a transfer of political power in Taiwan to the Pan-Blue. Nevertheless, the presumption of a pro-Kuomintang (KMT) bias among U.S. officials is easy to exaggerate. In fact, the main interest of the American government was for a trouble-free election, unmarred by controversies such as vote-buying or the refusal of losing candidates to accept the results—a hope that was realized. Even behind the scenes, the U.S. government had no institutional position on supporting either the KMT or the DPP in the elections. The general consensus among U.S. observers was that Ma would be less likely to generate the kind of unwelcome surprises for which Chen had become infamous. A KMT administration might also be able to pursue enhanced cross-Strait economic links and semi-official dialogue (both of which the U.S. government had openly encouraged) more quickly than a DPP administration because of the KMT's acceptance of the one-China precondition. A win by DPP candidate Frank Hsieh, however, was not expected to be disastrous for U.S. interests. Observers widely viewed him as a more moderate figure than Chen and perhaps a stronger leader than the KMT's Ma Ying-jeou. That the United States had no a priori favoritism toward Ma is evidenced by the observation that the U.S. government was slow to react to the change from DPP to KMT rule. Washington was not prepared, for example, to accommodate Ma's expressed wish to visit the USA as president-elect before taking up his duties as president. Indeed, at the highest level, the U.S. leadership was not fully aware of the policy implications of a change of government in Taiwan from a Chen administration to a Ma administration.[9] This was partly due to Taiwan fatigue caused by the negative experience with Chen, and partly due to the continuing preoccupation with the war in Iraq.

In January 2008, The Pan-Blue (mostly KMT) won a super-majority of 86 seats in the 113-seat legislature. The DPP, which hoped to retain 50 seats, got only 27. Some insight into the U.S. official attitude toward the legislative election may be gleaned from a report to the U.S. Congress by Kerry

Dumbaugh of the Congressional Research Service. Dumbaugh wrote of the election: "While carefully stating they have no preferences in Taiwan's political races, officials in the Bush Administration have been vexed by President Chen Shui-bian's unpredictable political style, his confrontational tactics with the People's Republic of China (PRC), and by the difficulty of getting substantive action out of Taiwan's former grid-locked legislature. As a result, U.S. policy may seem to be well-served by any developments that could tend to calm Taiwan's political waters and facilitate a mature policy discourse. Such developments would appear to include a more effective legislative process."[10] This commentary hinted at the common perception that a legislature split roughly evenly between Pan-Blue and Pan-Green politicians made the passage of new laws difficult because all bills were subject to getting bogged down in partisan trench warfare. One of the apparent victims of the alleged gridlock was the arms package offered by the USA in 2001, funding for which many Pan-Blue politicians opposed, partly for the strictly partisan reason that the Green executive branch favored it. The Legislative Yuan finally approved funding to buy the weapons in late 2007. With its commanding majority after January 2008, the Pan-Blue could now push ahead with its legislative program over Green opposition. Dumbaugh's assessment of a "calming" and "maturing" effect suggested an expectation by Washington that the KMT-controlled Legislative Yuan would act as a restraint on provocative cross-Strait policies, to the benefit of U.S. interests.

Some observers saw a difference in the White House's reaction to Chen's re-election in 2004 and Ma's victory in March 2008 that seemed to indicate Bush was pleased with the transition from Chen to Ma. Bush's congratulatory statement after Chen's victory in 2004 came six days after the election and included a repetition of the warning against taking "unilateral steps that would alter Taiwan's status." In contrast, after the 2008 presidential poll Bush immediately sent a congratulatory statement to Taiwan and to Ma (in that order) reiterating the U.S. government's call for cross-Strait peace talks. "I believe," Bush said, "the election provides a fresh opportunity for both sides to reach out and engage one another in peacefully resolving their differences."[11] The slower response to the 2004 election likely reflected the fact that Chen's win was highly controversial in Taiwan and immediately came under legal challenge by the KMT. The White House wanted to avoid the appearance of taking sides in a domestic dispute before the dust had settled. In any case, public statements by U.S. officials added little if anything to the conventional wisdom on Washington's attitude, which was that the Bush Administration was nearly as relieved as Beijing to see the perceived

provocateur Chen yield the presidency to Ma, whose party was committed to the one-China principle and promised reduced tensions across the Strait. Young did, however, publicly note one advantage in the change from a DPP to a KMT regime. "I guess I'll say there is going to be one real difference between this and 2000," he said. "The KMT has ruled before, and they'll be able to tap into a lot of experience. . . . [W]hen the DPP for the first time came out of opposition and had to form a government, they didn't have the great reservoir of experience and talent to tap into that Ma Ying-jeou enjoys today."[12]

**The 2008 Referenda**

Referenda are a particularly prickly matter in the trilateral relationship. Chen's government and his DPP party have emphasized the importance of holding referenda as a milestone of democratic consolidation. China, however, is generally opposed to referenda in Taiwan, seeing all of them as precursors to an eventual referendum on Taiwan independence. Reinforcing this perception, Chen said he planned to use a referendum to gain public approval for the "new" constitution he promised to produce by the end of his second term. Formulating the goal as a "new" constitution rather than a "revised" one seemed to increase the possibility of removing or changing the clauses that maintained Taiwan's symbolic linkages to the Chinese mainland and thereby formalizing Taiwan independence. Referenda are therefore among the domestic Taiwan political activities most alarming to Beijing. The holding of referenda in Taiwan has created great stress for the U.S. government, which has come under pressure from the Chinese to persuade Taipei not to proceed even as Taiwanese and their sympathizers appealed to America's democratic values.

Taiwan held its first referendum, with two questions, in March 2004. The proposed wording went through several drafts as Chen Shui-bian toned down the content under U.S. pressure. The final draft asked voters (1) whether they favored strengthening Taiwan's anti-missile defenses and (2) whether they supported efforts to establish a "peace and stability framework" for cross-Strait relations. U.S. officials were cool toward 2004 referendum. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said the proposed referendum "raised questions" because the questions dealt with issues that were "neither divisive nor difficult."[13] Therefore they appeared unnecessary if evaluated on the basis of content. Secretary of State Colin Powell said the U.S. government "doesn't really see a need" for the planned referendum and "is not expressing support" for either question.[14]

The second referendum in March 2008 was more sensitive. The subject matter of the two questions was Taiwan's membership in the United Nations. The DPP was clearly the driving force behind the idea of a UN referendum, with the KMT offering a less volatile version as an alternative. Both questions asked if the people of Taiwan supported joining the UN, although Taiwan's government had already been seeking UN admission since 1991. The key difference in the two questions was whether to apply under the name "Taiwan," as the DPP-sponsored question specified, or under a "pragmatic" name, as in the KMT-sponsored question. The DPP's question played on Chinese fears by discussing an aspiration of Taiwan's people to engage in state-like behavior under the name "Taiwan." The Chen government and other proponents of the referenda offered several arguments in support of their position. The unsentimental political argument was that Taiwan needed to push back against the Chinese, particularly in reaction to the PRC's 2005 Anti-Secession Law (which requires the Chinese government to employ "non-peaceful means" to incorporate Taiwan if "peaceful" efforts do not succeed), to convince Beijing to shift its strategy from intimidating Taiwan to winning over Taiwan. More commonly put forward and discussed were the moral arguments. The people of Taiwan have a right to choose their own identity and political destiny and to be represented in important international organizations, supporters maintained. The referenda were a democratic activity in line with the international norms of civic empowerment and self-determination. By contrast, China's behavior was in violation of global standards. By siding with a large and bullying illiberal state against a small and threatened democracy, the USA was caving in to pressure from the PRC and betraying the principles America claims to uphold.

The second round of referenda proposed for March 2008 drew stronger U.S. criticism than the first round, and more official U.S. commentary than either the legislative elections or the presidential election. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on several occasions the referendum "shouldn't be held," calling it a provocative step that would not help Taiwan. "We think that Taiwan's referendum to apply to the United Nations under the name `Taiwan' is a provocative policy," she said. "It unnecessarily raises tensions in the Taiwan Strait and it promises no real benefits for the people of Taiwan on the international stage--that is why we oppose this referendum."[15]

It fell to Thomas J. Christensen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and AIT's Young to explicate the U.S. position in greater detail. Like Rice, Christensen and Young

directed their criticisms specifically toward the DPP-sponsored question on using the name "Taiwan." Christensen was somewhat apologetic for the open criticism of Taipei, reflective of the generally friendly character of the bilateral relationship in recent history. He said this was a last resort, the U.S. government having "exhausted every private opportunity through consistent, unmistakable, and authoritative messages over an extended period of time" before deciding to "express our views directly to the Taiwan people."

In public statements during 2007, Christensen and Young made several distinct points.[16] First, Washington refused to be constrained by liberal guilt. Christensen characterized the referendum as a policy choice rather than a critical step in Taiwan's democratic evolution. And, he said, it was a bad policy choice. "[W]hen bad policies are being pursued through democratic means, it does not matter that the democratic means are in play if the policy is a damaging one. We reserve the right to speak out against damaging policies, regardless of whether democratic means are being used."

Second, the United States expected Taipei to act "responsibly" and with "moderation." This meant Taiwan's leaders had to take Chinese sensibilities and American interests into account while engaging in domestic political activity that might have repercussions for cross-Strait relations. Christensen argued that Taiwan's leaders have two responsibilities to help keep the island secure. The first is maintaining a reasonably strong defensive military capability. The second is "the avoidance of needlessly provocative behavior. This does not mean that Taipei should or can be passive in the face of PRC pressure. But it means that responsible leadership in Taipei has to anticipate potential Chinese red lines and reactions and avoid unnecessary and unproductive provocations."

Third, Washington characterized the referendum plan as a violation of the pledge Chen made in his two inaugural speeches. This involved a degree of interpretation. On neither occasion did Chen specifically promise not to hold a referendum on Taiwan joining the United Nations under the name "Taiwan." Rather, he specified five other actions he would not take. U.S. officials took the position that Chen's "five no's" were tantamount to a commitment not to "unilaterally change the status quo" (a U.S. phrase that Chen's government subsequently used to describe China's cross-Strait policy). Thus Christensen asserted that "aspects of the referendum appear inconsistent with President Chen's inaugural pledges," and Young said the referendum "appears inconsistent, at the very least, with the spirit of President Chen's public commitments to maintain the status quo."

Fourth, for all its risks of worsening tensions across the Strait, the referendum would offer no tangible benefit to Taiwan. Even the expected outcome of overwhelming support among Taiwan's people for joining the United Nations would not increase Taiwan's chances of getting a seat in the UN General Assembly, since the obstacle for Taiwan was PRC opposition. Indeed, Christensen argued, the referendum could work against Taiwan's interests. It "will do the exact opposite of what it promises: it will limit, not expand, Taiwan's international space," he said. "[N]eedlessly provocative actions by Taipei strengthen Beijing's hand in limiting Taiwan's space and scare away potential friends who might help Taiwan. Whether we like it or not, most countries in the world accept Beijing's characterization of Taiwan, and, when energized, the PRC can call in overwhelming support to marginalize Taipei. . . . Taipei needs to push back intelligently and in a sophisticated manner that plays to its strengths."

Finally, although it had international implications, the planned referendum was motivated by strategically short-sighted domestic political considerations. Young said the referendum plan was part of a pattern of "actions and rhetoric by Taiwan politicians designed to secure domestic advantage during elections," a course he said "can be problematic and even risky." Christensen said "support for such a referendum would only be useful in domestic political posturing in Taiwan." In a stinging rebuke to a government that claimed to be motivated by the welfare of Taiwan's populace, Christensen said "supporters of the referendum" appear "willing to ignore the security interests of Taiwan's most steadfast friend, and are ready to put at some risk the security interests of the Taiwan people for short-term political gain."

Young argued further that the Chinese leadership had moved into a passive mode on the Taiwan issue, a positive development that Taipei should try to preserve rather than overturn. PRC leaders, Young said, are pre-occupied with domestic political challenges such as rising income inequality, pollution and rampant corruption. Therefore they are not committed to reunification with Taiwan according to a pre-determined timetable, but rather are "largely defensive and reactive at this stage" on cross-Strait relations. They still remain sensitive, however, to "political moves and rhetoric" on Taiwan, which have the power to force China to react belligerently. "Therefore, in the run up to the presidential election, it is imperative that Taiwan's politicians do not carry their actions and rhetoric to the point of closing off future possibilities."

By law, a referendum passes only if gets "yes" votes from at least 50 percent of Taiwan's eligible voters. Although the great majority of votes on both referendum questions were in the affirmative, both failed because they did not achieve the 50 percent threshold (both got votes from about 36 percent of the electorate), the same outcome as in 2004. It is difficult to measure the effect of these U.S. expressions of disapproval on the outcome of the referendum vote. It is likely that U.S. opposition reduced the number of people who chose to take a referendum ballot. It is unlikely, however, that Washington was responsible for the defeat of the referendum (i.e., that at least 14 percent of the eligible voters declined to vote because of what American officials said).

**Consequences for Regional Security**

As many U.S. officials hoped, the 2008 elections paved the way for a rapid improvement in cross-Strait relations by clearing the way for implementation of more cross-Strait travel and economic exchanges as well as the resumption of quasi-official talks between representatives of Taipei and Beijing. The long-term prospects for cross-Strait relations remain unclear, but tensions were clearly lower in mid-2008 than they were during any part of the Chen Administration. Needless to say, a military conflict in the Taiwan Strait would be disastrous for the region, and not only because of the damage to parts of the regional economy that are based in China and Taiwan. The region also welcomes a decline in the likelihood of a serious downturn in U.S.-China relations as well as the resultant requirement of regional states to take sides in a long-term political standoff that would linger long after the war, regardless of the outcome of the conflict.

The damage the bilateral relationship suffered during the Chen presidency may have the lingering effect of making it easier for the White House to put aside the Taiwan issue in the interest of maintaining favorable relations with China. This phenomenon may have been at work when in the summer of 2008 the *Washington Post* reported that the sunsetting Bush Administration had decided to temporarily suspend arms sales to Taiwan to avoid antagonizing China during a sensitive period (negotiations with North Korea over de-nuclearization, cross-Strait negotiations over direct airline flights, and the upcoming Olympics in Beijing), a report that Admiral Timothy Keating, commander of all U.S. military forces in the Pacific, seemed to confirm during a subsequent public appearance. [17] In taking this course, the U.S. government opened itself to the charge that it is violating the Taiwan Relations Act by basing an arms sale decision on extraneous political considerations rather than strictly on the cross-Strait military balance.

On a deeper level, Taiwan's 2008 elections demonstrated that democratic polities are capable of placing pragmatic concerns ahead of emotional issues such as ethnic nationalism. There is little doubt that absent the threat of military and political retaliation by China, a majority of Taiwan's people would vote for independence. But while some Taiwanese are willing to push closer to formal independence despite the risk of antagonizing China, opinion polls consistently show that most of the island's residents are willing to keep the status quo of *de jure* independence indefinitely, tempering their nationalism with concerns about security and economic prosperity.

The interaction between Taiwan and the USA also showed that democratic countries do not necessarily share the same interests vis-à-vis authoritarian countries. It is important to note that the general U.S. ideological commitment to Taiwan survived the downturn in U.S.-Taiwan relations and persists through today. As then-AIT Director Douglas Paal put it in 2004, "The U.S. and Taiwan share mutual interests and are part of an `alliance of values'--the recognition that the freedom, democracy, human rights and peace we all seek for our citizens are interrelated."[18] Despite these common values, the interests of the United States and Taiwan are not identical. Under certain conditions the differences may remain mostly obscured, but some of Taipei's policies under Chen Shui-bian forced these differences into the open. This episode illustrates how the interests of democracies can diverge even vis-à-vis an authoritarian China. Contrary to some expectations, democracies do not always flock together. Taiwan's people are well accustomed to seeing fellow democracies side against them and with the authoritarian PRC. In this case it was Taiwan's democratic quasi-ally and long-time supporter. Being a part of the "zone of democracy" does not liberate the small nations of the world from the condition that Thucydides described: "the strong do what they will, and the weak suffer what they must."

## Endnotes

[1]Willy Wo-Lap Lam, "China seeks payback for N. Korea efforts," CNN, Sep. 16, 2003, http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/east/09/15/willy.column/index.html, accessed July 28, 2008.
[2]"BBC Interview with President Chen Shui-bian," Aug. 22, 2007, Office of the President of the ROC (Taiwan) web site, http://www.president.gov.tw/en/prog/news_release/document_content.php?id=1105499497&pre_id=1105499278&g_category_number=145&category_number_2=145&layer=&sub_category=, accessed July 25, 2008; "Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian," interview with *Washington Post*, Mar. 29, 2004, http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A33322-2004Mar29?language=printer, accessed July 25, 2008.
[3]Chen Shui-bian interview with *The New York Times*, Dec. 5, 2003, posted at http://taioaan.org/column/Abian/abianTalks.html, accessed July 25, 2008.
[4] "President Bush and Premier Wen Jiabao Remarks to the Press," The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Dec. 9, 2003, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/12/20031209-2.html, accessed May 12, 2008.
[5] "MOFA denies President Chen angered Bush," *The China Post*, Feb. 6, 2006, http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/detail.asp?id=76458&sY=2006&sM=02&sD=06&sN=MOFA-denies&GRP=B&sPeriod=30, accessed July 31, 2008.
[6]The former aide is Lawrence B. Wilkerson. Douglas Feith, former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, and Rumsfeld's former spokesman Lawrence DiRita deny Wilkerson's claims. Jeff Stein, "Defense Officials Tried to Reverse China Policy, Says Powell Aide," *Congressional Quarterly*, June 1, 2007, http://public.cq.com/docs/hs/hsnews110-000002523531.html, accessed July 30, 2008.
[7]"Chen hails easing public restrictions during U.S. visit," *Taipei Times*, Nov. 3, 2003, http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/2003/11/03/42767/Chen-hails.htm, accessed July 30, 2008.
[8]Young, "Opportunities and Challenges."
[9] This assertion is based on the author's discussions with important figures in the U.S. policy-making community, which must remain confidential.
[10] Kerry Dumbaugh, "Taiwan's Legislative Elections, January 2008: Implications for U.S. Policy," CRS Report for Congress, Jan. 22, 2008, http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/RS22791_20080122.pdf, accessed July 29, 2008.
[11] "Statement on Taiwan Elections," The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Mar. 26, 2004, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/03/20040326-6.html, accessed July 25, 2008.; George W. Bush, "Statement by the President on Taiwan Election," The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Mar. 22, 2008, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/03/20080322-4.html, accessed May 12, 2008.
[12]"Press Conference, Stephen M. Young, Director, American Institute In Taiwan," May 8, 2008, AIT web site, http://www.ait.org.tw/en/news/officialtext/viewer.aspx?id=2008050804, accessed July 30, 2008.

[13]China News Agency, "Referendum Significant, Part Of Democracy: Cabinet Spokesman," Jan. 31, 2004, http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/taiwan/2004/taiwan-040131-cna05.htm, accessed July 24, 2008.
[14] David Gollust, "US-China-Taiwan," Voice of America news report, Feb. 11, 2004, http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/china/2004/china-040211-35e7c0e1.htm, accessed July 24, 2008.
[15] Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Beijing, China, Feb. 26, 2008, http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2008/02/101325.htm, accessed May 8, 2008; Reuters News Service, "U.S. opposes "provocative" Taiwan referendum bid: Rice," Dec. 21, 2007, http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSN21601291200712 21?feedType=RSS&feedName=politicsNews, accessed July 30, 2008.
[16] References for the statements are as follows: Thomas J. Christensen, "A Strong and Moderate Taiwan," Speech to U.S.-Taiwan Business Council, Defense Industry Conference, Annapolis, Maryland, September 11, 2007, http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2007/91979.htm, accessed May 9, 2008; Thomas Christensen, "Roundtable Briefing with Taiwan Media," Dec. 6, 2007, http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2007/96691.htm, accessed July 30, 2008; Stephen M. Young, "Opportunities and Challenges in U.S.-Taiwan and Cross-Strait Relations," Dec. 3, 2007, American Institute in Taiwan web site, http://www.ait.org.tw/en/news/officialtext/viewer.aspx?id=2007120302, accessed July 22, 2008.
[17] Glenn Kessler, "Top U.S. Officials Stalling Taiwan Arms Package," *The Washington Post*, June 12, 2008, p. A14.
[18] "Remarks of AIT Director Douglas H. Paal at the China Euro-Asian Foundation Conference: Taipei-Washington-Beijing Relations Today," American Institute in Taiwan web site, May 23, 2004, http://www.ait.org.tw/en/news/officialtext/viewer.aspx?id=2004052701, accessed July 24, 2008.

# "China: Maturing Juggernaut"

**Lowell Dittmer**

Professor

University of California at Berkeley

Approaching its sixtieth birthday since Liberation and the thirtieth anniversary of the launching of its eminently successful "reform and opening to the outside world" policy, China at the debut of its first Olympics exhibits a surprisingly tense and uneasy mood. After opening itself to the most intense press scrutiny since June 1989 (when the press came to report a Sino-Soviet summit and stayed to cover a hunger strike and associated protest activities culminating in the June 4 crackdown), the government imposed constraints on the Olympiad media that has only generated a chorus of complaints. Relieved of further critical public scrutiny of its harsh crackdown on Tibetan demonstrators and its aggressive Olympic torch run by a wave of sympathy in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake, Beijing remains determined go give no quarter. At its debut the world thus beholds a mixed picture, of a China coming of age as "workshop of the world" and a mature and responsible newly industrialized country (NIC), and of a China whose pattern of arrival has frozen it into behavior patterns that engender a defensive foreboding belying the "peaceful development" publicity. China's reception to the international establishment is increasingly qualified: yes, China is growing incredibly fast sparing the international community any risk of a failing mega-state, but will the emerging dynamo help or suffocate its rivals? Yes, China has become the world's mightiest trading state, whose low-cost exports dampen inflation and raise lower-class living standards, but by creating unsustainable current account imbalances and soaking up the globe's foreign exchange surplus. True, China is now a huge importer as well, but by doubling oil consumption since 2000 and consuming more iron, copper, wheat and so forth than anyone else it drives up commodity prices, setting off world-wide inflation. And what is the new stakeholder prepared to do about its booming contribution to global warming? Are all these nagging queries merely a tribute to the tenacity of the "China threat theory" and the enduring jealousy of the world's superpower? Or is China somehow still missing one of the tricks of the public relations/trade on how to mollify the establishment and get to a "win-win" deal?

And are these the sole alternatives? Though CCP paramount leader Hu Jintao sailed through his mid-term exams, the problem may be more basic than that, though often misunderstood. The contrasting images of China are not due in the present case to the complexity of the subject matter, for Chinese political behavior has been very straightforward of late. After decades of profound and unsettling change, China has undergone a transition from transformational to adaptive leadership. China's political economy is running so strongly and growing so fast that notwithstanding its flaws, any course correction that might possibly upset it is simply not worth the risk and must be avoided. The CCP leadership, having solved the succession dilemma that historically disequilibrated Leninist regimes at the end of the leadership life cycle (where necessary leadership changes tended to pile up), has found a plateau of smooth executive competence from which no bold new ideas dare emerge. No more Great Leaps Forward, but no more reform and opening breakthroughs either. Stability supersedes the need for change. Lacking the political imagination to conceive syncretic solutions or the political will to implement them, the leadership's typical response to problems is to employ Madison Avenue image manipulation techniques to assuage public opinion while tinkering with, deferring or otherwise mitigating the issue. Announcements of the death of ideology have thus been premature, but ideology is not used to lead but to shield the leadership from adverse public opinion. The risk is that China's governing elite once again finds itself caught in a "high-level equilibrium trap,"[1] an eventuality to be discussed in due course.

This snapshot of the CCP leadership approaching its sixtieth anniversary seeks to showcase the interesting combination of high organizational competence and institutional sclerosis that has brought it to its current pass. It consists of two parts. The first reviews briefly the runup to the 17th Party Conference, illustrating the nature of the issues that are bruited and those that are not, in this massive political will-building exercise. The second reviews the main personnel and political decisions reached at the Congress itself and their policy implications. The second looks at the 11th NPC held in March 2008, and its corresponding personnel and policy decisions, to attempt to measure the efficacy of the institutional follow-through to the executive mandate of the 17th Congress. In conclusion, we reflect on the implications of these well-plotted developments for the future evolution of the CCP juggernaut.

[1] Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanrord University Press, 1970).

*Preparations*

The National Party congresses, the most authoritative public events in Chinese politics, have a mandate to select a new Central Committee (CC), issue an authoritative report on the Party's once and future goals, and adopt revisions to the Party constitution, thereby setting the leadership agenda for the next five years. The newly elected CC in turn holds its first Plenum the day after the Congress adjourns to elect the next leadership of the Party, including the Politburo (PB) and its Standing Committee, (PSC) the Secretariat, the Central Military Committee (CMC) and the Central Disciplinary Inspection Committee (CDIC). Constitutional revisions represent officially endorsed changes in the Party's guiding ideology. The date for holding the 17th Congress (October 15-21, 2007) was publicly announced by a Politburo meeting in late August 2007, though organizational preparations had already been well underway for the previous year. Selection of the 2,217 delegates from 38 sectors of the Party was announced on August 2, employing a more elaborate procedure designed to make selection more democratic. It may be inferred that selected members of the ruling group also met at Beidaihe in July-August 2007 to discuss final preparations for the 7th Plenum and the 17th Congress (e.g., Hu Jintao was out of the public eye from August 2-14, and among other PBSC members Wen Jiabao and Li Changchun made only one public appearance apiece during that period), though in deference to Hu's 2002 public disclaimer of Beidaihe's elitist cronyism the name no longer appeared. Hu Jintao's work report for the Congress, including the themes of "scientific development" and "harmonious society," were anticipated in speeches at the Central Party School and commentator articles in *Renmin Ribao*, then went through at least five iterations eliciting suggestions at various tiers of the CCP hierarchy followed by subsequent revision before a final draft was prepared.

During this preparatory period the Party sometimes allows ideological discussion where the new themes to be presented at the Congress can be aired, a window through which enterprising public intellectuals can insert some of their own ideas. The idea most prominently featured during the runup to the 17th Congress was "democracy." This discussion may perhaps be traced back to Hu Jintao's speech to the report meeting called to launch the study of Jiang Zemin's *Selected Works* in August 2006, in the context of which he vows: “We will continue to . . . actively and yet prudently advance reform of the political system; perfect the democratic system; enrich the forms of democracy; build a socialist country ruled by law; promote socialist democracy in the system, standards, and procedures; expand

citizens' orderly political participation; and guarantee the people's conduct of democratic elections, democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic supervision of the law."[2] This comment seems to have created an atmosphere that spurred a wider-ranging discussion. In late December, Yu Keping, deputy director of the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau and head of the Center for Chinese Government Innovations at Beijing University, wrote "Democracy Is a Good Thing," in the paper of the Central Party School. Though vague about the precise content of the term, Yu boldly declared that "among all political systems that have been invented and practiced by humankind so far, democracy is the one having the fewest defects," calling (as Yu has consistently called) for "incremental" democratization.[3] In late February 2007, shortly before the annual session of the NPC, Premier Wen Jiabao also published an article pointing out that the "socialist system and democratic politics are not mutually exclusive" and that it is "entirely possible for us to build a democratic country with the rule of law under socialist conditions," later echoing these sentiments at his press conference at the end of the NPC.[4] *Yanhuang Chunqiu*, [China through the Ages], one of the most liberal contemporary journals of opinion, published a series of unusually outspoken articles on this topic. Perhaps the boldest article was written by Xie Tao, former vice president of People's University, which praised democratic socialism as practiced in Europe for realizing the true ideals of Marxism. "Why is it," Xie asks, "that we are still worshipping Leninism, something the Russians have discarded, like a deity and like a banner to be hoisted?" Xie's articles inspired several large academic symposiums, and a later article by a CASS academician supporting his arguments.[5] By this time the discussion had exceeded ideologically acceptable bounds, and Hu Jintao's speech to the Central Party School on June 25 firmly rejected further discussion of democratic socialism and brought the focus back to "socialism with Chinese characteristics," within which he emphasized four "steadfasts": emancipation of thought (*jiefang sixiang*), reform and opening, scientific development and social harmony, and building a well off society (*xiaokang shehui*).[6] Spurning opinions that "negate the

[2] Hu Jintao, "Speech at the Report Meeting to Study Selected Works of Jiang Zemin," Xinhua, 15 August 2006 (translated by Open Source Center [OSC], CPP20060815706009).

[3] Yu Keping, Zengliang minzhu yushanzhi [Incremental democracy and good governance], (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2003); see also Yu Keping, "A Few Theoretical Issues Concerning Citizens Participation," *Xuexi shibao*, 18 December 2006 (translated by OSC, CPP20061226332002).

[4] Wen Jiabao, "A Number of Issues Regarding the Historic Tasks in the Initial Stage of Socialism and China's Foreign Policy," *Xinhua*, 26 February 2007 (translated by OSC, CPP20070226045002).

[5] He Fang, "Wo kan shehui zhuyi" [My views on socialism], *Yanhuang chunqiu*, no. 7 (July 2007): 12–17; see also Li Rui, "Open letter to the 17th Congress: An opinion on the Party's reform", *Yanhuang Chunqiu*, no. 10, October 2007.

[6] "Hu Jintao zai zhongyang dangxao shengbuji ganbu jinxiuban fabiao zhongyao jianghua" [Hu Jintao amakes an important talk to provincial and bureau level officials studying at the Central Party School], retrieved from http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64093/64094/5910868.html.

general direction and achievements of 29 years of reform and opening up," Hu refers instead to the "scientific development concept," a term that conveys a less populist tone than his other slogan of building a "socialist harmonious society," something now seen as more a goal than a call to action.[7] Having defined its limits, Hu then outlined further steps "actively and appropriately" to push forward inner-Party democracy and "deepening political structural reform."[8] All of this discussion coincided however with the systematic turnover of provincial and local CCP officials, which seems to have been conducted via traditional top-down *deng'o* procedures designed to enhance strong leadership hence quite oblivious to new experiments with democratic openness, underscoring (as Joseph Fewsmith notes) the limits to the leadership's interest in democratization.[9]

*The 17th CCP Congress*

Governed by the current informal norms of term and age limits, the 17th is a mid-term event, as the incumbent CCP General Secretary is now conventionally conceded two 5-year terms, and the beginning of the second marks the crescent of his power (and the onset of "lame duck" status). A Party Congress allows ambit for this power to be exercised in two ways: the first is through personnel retirements and new appointments, and the second is by adding a gloss to the inherited ideological legitimating formulae to set forth general policy guidelines (specific policies are then introduced later, at the 11th NPC).

When the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) 17th Congress convened from October 15-21, on behalf of the 73.4 million strong CCP membership, the 2,213 Congress delegates elected 204 new Central Committee members; these elections may be said to be somewhat more "democratic" in that there were 5% more candidates than vacant seats (*cha'e*)--220 candidates ran for 204 seats--though this margin for dissent did not apply to the election of the PB or PBSC. At the PBSC level, rumors that Wen Jiabao would step down, or that the number of incumbents would be cut from 9 to 7, were both inaccurate—Hu reportedly wished to retain the larger size to permit promotions of more younger members. After Huang Ju's unexpected death (of cancer), three PBSC members retired because of age,

[7] "Hu Jintao zai zhongyang dangxao;" see also "Hu Jintao, Wu Bangguo, Jia Qinglin, Zeng Qinghong fenbie canjia shenyi he taolun" [Hu Jintao, Wu Bangguo, Jiang Qinglin, and Zheng Qinghong participate separately in examination and discussion]. *Renmin ribao*, 7 March 2006, p. 1.
[8] Ibid.
[9] See Joseph Fewsmith, "The 17th Party Congress: Informal Politics and Formal Institutions," *China Leadership Monitor*, no 23 (Winter 2008); also "A New Upsurge in Political Reform? Maybe," *CLM*, no. 24 (Spring 2008).

the informal age limit having dropped from 70 to 68 at the 16th Congress: Wu Guanzheng (69), secretary of the CDIC; Luo Gan (72) secretary of the politics and law small group; and Zeng Qinghong (68), executive secretary of the Secretariat and head of the Party School. Five incumbents having remained on the PBSC--Hu Jintao (65), Wu Bangguo (66), Wen Jiabao (66), and Li Changchun (63)--this left four empty seats. These were filled by Xi Jinping, 54, Party Secretary of Shanghai; Li Keqiang, 52, a CYL veteran and CC member; Zhou Yongkang, former minister of Public Security, who took the place of Luo Gan as chief of the Political and Legal Leadership Small Group; He Guoqiang, already in charge of the Organization Department, was promoted to the Standing Committee to replace Wu Guanzheng as head of the Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC). Zhang Dejiang, 61, former party chief of Guangdong province will replace Huang Ju as executive vice premier, Wang Zhaoguo, 66, a first vice chairman of the CPPCC will replace Wu Guanzheng to head to CDIC; Zhou Yongkang, 65, Minister of Public Security was selected to replace Luo Gan to oversee law enforcement.

The new central CCP leadership may be analyzed from several different perspectives. From the perspective of factional affiliation (see Appendix), Hu Jintao's CCYL group made some gains, promoting one member to the PBSC: Li Keqiang, whose CCYL years overlapped with those of Hu Jintao (1983-1998 and 1982-1985, respectively), six members of the Politburo: Wang Yang, Anhui (1981-1983), Wang Lequan, Shandong (1982-1986); Wang Zhaoguo (1982-1984), Li Yuanchao (1983-1990), Liu Yandong (1982-1991) and Liu Yunshan, Inner Mongolia (1982-1984), But their biggest gain was in the CC, where 27 CCYL veterans gained seats. In the media the *tuanpai* are conventionally juxtaposed to the "princelings" or *taizidang*, in which context the latter would seem to have retained a strong position, particularly at high ranks, with four members of the PBSC[10] and six members of the PB.[11] Their greatest triumph was in choosing the successor to Hu, Xi Jinping, now very well positioned to succeed Hu Jintao at the 18th Congress in 2012. This flew in the face of expectations that Hu would use his position to push CCYL protégé Li Keqiang into the position, but Li is now slated to succeed Wen Jiabao as premier. As Li Cheng has noted, these two groupings have distinguishable backgrounds and career patterns, the *tuanpai* in support of neo-Maoist fiscal redistribution on behalf of those left behind by reform (particularly in the NE and interior regions)

[10] Viz., Xi Jinping, son of veteran Xi Zhongxun; Wu Bangguo, son of Major General Wu Zhongxing; He Guoqiang, nephew of Mao's ex-wife He Zizhen; and Zhou Yongkang, son of Zhou Yiping, senior official of COSTIND (plus his wife is Jiang Zemin's niece).

[11] Viz., Bo Xilai, son of Bo Yibo; Wang Qishan, son-in-law of Yao Yilin; Yu Zhengsheng, son of Yu Qiwei, former minister of mechanical industry; Zhang Dejiang, son of Zhang Zhiyi, PLA general; Li Yuanchao, son of Li Gancheng, deputy mayor of Shanghai; and Liu Yandong, daughter of Liu Ruilong, former vice minister of agriculture. The last two are also *tuanpai* members.

while *taizi, or gaoganzedi,* are more prone to have career trajectories on the east coast and favor free marketization. But they can overlap (e.g., Li Keqiang is a local taizi), and strictly speaking the "princelings" are not a faction (no patron) but an ascriptive category similar to the European aristocracy or, in the American context, to such political dynasties as Adams, Kennedy, or Bush. The only other factional network is the now headless "Shanghai gang" bequeathed by Jiang Zemin and then Zeng Qinghong, which has retained leverage at the top, appointing Zhou Yongkang, He Guoqiang, and Zhang Dejiang to PBSC or PB positions for example, but took a well-publicized hit with the purge of Shanghai Party Secretary Chen Liangyu and, without control of the Organization Department, seems to have lost traction at the CC level and below. This leaves us with a picture of a leadership oddly out of joint, with Hu's group having made strong gains but unable to control leadership succession; thus if Xi succeeds in 2012 as he is currently slated to do he is apt to inherit a factional majority opposed to his own..

From the perspective of institutionalization, we also have a mixed picture. On the one hand it would appear that meritocracy remains a dominant trend, with many advanced educational credentials, still mainly technocratic (12 of the 25 new PB members were trained in engineering or the natural sciences) but with somewhat more tolerance for educational diversity. Term and age limits have kept the average age quite low: The average age of the 16th CC member was 62.1, while the average age at the 17th CCis 62.3; the average PB member's is now 61.5 years old. There is also emerging a number of stable and consistent patterns in the allocation of positions, in which certain posts in the division of labor/authority are deemed to have reserved seats. The head of the Propaganda Department is always named to the CC, as is the deputy head of the organization department (the head has a PB seat), as does the head of the Xinhua News Agency, the editor in chief of People'es Daily, the head of the CCYL, the head of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Acadamy of Social Sciences. The heads of critical Central Committee departments, State Council positions and other key posts all get seats on the PB (40 ministers and heads of State Council commissions were named to the 17$^{th}$ Central Committee). The PBSC in turn reserves seats for all of the major hierarchies in the PRC political order—the PRC president and chairman of the Party and PRC CMC (concurrently in the person of the general secretary), the NPC chairman, the PRC premier, the chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), and the executive secretary of the Party Secretariat. Incumbents of all these posts may expect serious consideration for inclusion on the Politburo and its Standing Committee. Since

1987, there has been a division of PB representation to members serving concurrently in the Party apparatus, in the NPC and State Council government system, among regionally based Party secretaries, and to representatives of the military: 249 PLA cadres attended the 17th Congress (10% of the total), 42 of the 204 CC members were PLA, and the two vice-chairmen of the Central Military Commission (Xu Caihou, general political department; Guo Boxiong, chief of general staff) were both elected to the PB (but not to the PBSC, following the 1997 pattern). Yet this picture of a meritocracy with a clear-cut technocratic division of labor is offset by two countertrends, first, the growing power of the cadre aristocracy (as noted above), which though lacking leadership has high name recognition, family networks and interlocking connections in the SOE sector. Second, despite these trends the dominant career pattern is still partisan politics, routed through the local and provincial apparatus. The number of PB members with experience as provincial Party secretaries has increased from 50% in 1992 to 76% in 2007; all four new PBSC members had substantial experience as provincial Party bosses. Of the 371 full and alternate CC members, 154 (41.5%) have experience as local Party leaders: 62 provincial Party secretaries, 62 deputy secretaries, 30 municipal or prefectural leaders—compare that with only 84 (22.6%) from the ministries, 65 (17.5%) from PLA, 46 from mass organizations, and 22 (5.9%) from central Party organizations. While provincial Party secretaries are virtually guaranteed at least CC positions (some provinces get more than 2 seats), many State Council technocrats (viz., Ma Kai, NDRC; Zhou Xiaochuan, PBC; Liu Mingkang, State Banking Regulatory Commission) are passed over; Chen Yuan (son of Chen Yun, former PBC Chair) rated only an alternate CC seat.

Here, then is the new Politburo:

Standing Committee, Position

Hu Jintao, CCP General Secretary, CMC Chair, PRC President
Wu Bangguo, Chairman, National People's Congress
Wen Jiabao, Premier, State Council
Li Changchun, Propaganda chief
Jia Qinglin, Chairman, CPPCC
Xi Jinping, Executive Secretary, Central Committee Secretariat
Li Keqiang, Executive Vice-Premier (in waiting)
He Guoqiang, Head, Central Discipline Inspection Department
Zhou Yongkang, Minister of Public Security; State Councilor

Regular Members, Position

Wang Gang, Former Director, Central Committee General Office (subsequently transferred to Guangdong to replace Zhang Dejiang, slated to become Vice Premier)
Wang Lequan, CCP Secretary, Xinjiang-Uighur Auton. Region
Wang Zhaoguo, Exec. Vice-Chair, National People's Congress S.C.
Wang Qishan, Mayor, Beijing
Hui Liangyu, Vice-Premier, State Council
Liu Qi, CCP Secretary, Beijing
Liu Yunshan, Director, Propaganda Dept.; Member, Secretariat
Liu Yandong, Director, United Front Department
Li Yuanchao, Director, CCP Organization Department
Wang Yang, CCP Secretary, Chongqing Municipality
Zhang Gaoli, CCP Secretary, Tianjin Municipality
Zhang Dejiang, CCP Secretary, Guangdong Province
Yu Zhengsheng, CCP Secretary, Hubei Province
Xu Caihou, Vice-Chairman, Central Military Commission
Guo Boxiong, Vice-Chairman, Central Military Commission
Bo Xilai, Minister of Commerce (subsequently transferred to Chongqing to replace Wang Gang, transferred to Guangdong)

The CCP Secretariat represented the leadership core during the pre-Maoist period and was strengthened after 1956 in the hands of Deng Xiaoping, but was eclipsed during the Cultural Revolution years as all power gravitated to Mao as CCP CC Chairman. At the Party's 12th Congress in September 1982, the 1956 Politburo-Secretariat structure was restored in the revised Party constitution, abolishing the position of Party chairman. The 12th Central Committee's First Plenum appointed a 12-member Secretariat (10 members and 2 alternates) assigning each secretary specific policy sector responsibilities. Formally the general secretary was even stronger than in 1956, including authority to convene the PB in the wake of the abolition of the chairman position. Following Hu Yaobang's removal as general secretary in 1987 for inflating the role of the secretariat and usurping PBSC decision-making authority, at the 13th Party Congress the secretariat was reduced to 4 members with more responsibility limited to the Party apparatus, for which the Party Secretary (then Zhao

Ziyang) delegated responsibility to the executive secretary (then Hu Qili). Responsibility for specific substantive issue areas such as finance, law, security and so forth devolved to the leading small groups [*xiaozu*]. The 17th Congress follows this split center pattern, in which Hu Jintao presides over the Politburo and nominally over the Secretariat but leaves operational control in the hands of his executive secretary, currently Xi Jinping replacing Zeng Qinghong.[12] The other members are Hu's protégés: Li Yuanchao, Hu's colleague from the CYL and his choice to head the Organization Department; Ling Jihua, Hu's former secretary, and Wang Huning, brought to Beijing by Jiang Zemin but survived as a policy advisor and speechwriter for Hu. Politburo member Liu Yunshan, who headed the Propaganda Department since 2002, will continue on the Secretariat, as will He Yong, deputy secretary of the CDIC. The implications of the PLA not having a representative on the Secretariat, notwithstanding impressive recent increases in the military budget, are not yet clear.

*CCP Secretariat*

| Present Secretary | Other positions | Policy sector |
|---|---|---|
| Xi Jinping | Politburo Standing Committee; President, Central Party School; PRC vice president (2008–) | Executive secretary |
| Liu Yunshan | Politburo; Director, Central Ideology & Propaganda Dept | propaganda |
| Li Yuanchao | Politburo; Director, Central Party Org Dept | personnel |
| He Yong | Deputy secretary, Central Committee Discipline Inspection Commission | discipline |
| Ling Jihua | Director, Central Committee General Office | logistics |
| Wang Huning | Director, Central Committee Policy Research Office | research |

[12] For a capsule history of the Party Secretariat, see Alice Miller, "Xi Jinping and the Party Apparatus," *CLM* no. 25 (Summer 2008); also Li Lin ( 李林), "The Organizational Evolution and Changing Functions of the CCP Central Committee Secretariat" ( 中共中央书记处组织沿革与功能变迁), 中共党史研究(Studies in Party History), 2007 No.3, 13–21.

The documents that emerged from the Party Congress—principally Hu Jintao's Report and the Resolution on the Amended CCP Constitution—broke little new ground theoretically. Hu's 2 ½ hour opening address, divided into twelve sections, reveals essentially a summary of policies initiated and undertaken over the past five years. While the Resolution adds Hu's "Scientific Outlook on Development" (*Kexue Fazhanguan)* to the Party Constitution's ideological canon along with "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, and the Important thought of the Three Represents," mentioning "socialist harmonious society" as well, the emphasis was on the former. The Resolution included a long discourse on enhancing "socialist democracy," "inner-Party democracy," "consultative democracy," "democratic oversight and supervision of cadres," and "developing grass-roots democracy and democratic rights," mentioning democracy no less than 62 times, representing a continuation of the pre-Congress preoccupation with this topic. In other parts of the report, Hu candidly assessed many challenges and problem areas, such as cadre corruption, environmenal abuse, the rural-urban and the coastal-inland developmental gaps, stagnant rural incomes, inadequate medical care, and corruption. Though liberally sprinkled with anecdotes of various grassroots approaches to such problems Hu advocated continuing experimentation without embracing one approach or overarching set of policy solutions. In foreign affairs he sounded the familiar themes of "Peaceful Development," and "harmonious world"; with respect to Taiwan he called for "dialogues, consultations and negotiations on any issue with any political party on Taiwan, as long as it recognizes that both sides of the Strait belong to one China"; he also made an unprecedented offer to negotiate a "peace agreement" to "formally end the hostile situation across the Strait."

The interpretations of the political implications of the Party Congress have been mixed. After only 5 years at the helm Hu succeeded in altering the Party Constitution to "reflect the scientific development concept and other major theoretical developments" since the 16th Congress. But as in the case of Jiang's Three Represents, these emendations were made to the Party canon unattached to Hu's name. It has also been noted that unlike his two reformist predecessors, Hu is not referred to as the "core" of his generation of leadership. In fact, the term "fourth generation" is not used in Chinese media, but "generation of the republic," and since his selection in as general secretary in 2002 Hu has been referred to only as "the 16th CC leadership collective with comrade Hu Jintao as general secretary." Given Hu's long and close working relationship with Li Keqiang, it was generally assumed that Li would be his heir apparent, so the selection of Xi Jinping has been construed as a signal of Hu's

weakness. Xi's name reportedly rose to the top in a meeting of the 16th Central Committee held on June 25, the day Hu gave his speech to the Central Party School outlining the major themes that would be included in the political report to the 17th Party Congress. The 400-some full and alternate members of the 16th Central Committee, a body necessarily weighted with more people promoted by Jiang Zemin than the 17th Central Committee would be, considered the names of people to be named to the 17th Central Committee, and it was at this meeting that Xi's name came out on top. But then Jiang Zemin was not able to name his own successor either, nor according to one authoritative source was Deng Xiaoping himself.[13]

**Conclusions**

To recap, we found that the introduction to the 17th Congress was quite contentious, in which alarums about the desultory, lagging progress of political reform featured quite prominently. One might be expected to approach the Congress with subdued expectations given that this is a midterm affair in which most of the decisions are foregone conclusions, but we did have several surprises. The first is the strong emphasis on reform in the authoritative documents of the congress, particularly political reform, suggesting that this goal had been in question. The second is the choice of Xi Jinping as Hu's successor, a selection that has since the Party Congress been strengthened by ancillary assignments. The overall makeup of the CCP elite at the end of the 17th Party Congress and the ensuing 11th NPC has been favorable to the presumed followers of Hu Jintao, but not overwhelmingly so, and the next five years may also have mixed results as Xi Jinping seeks to use his new leverage to appoint his own followers. We put these discrete puzzles together to raise a more general question about the direction of the CCP leadership at a time of rising expectations. At the approach of China's first Olympics, when China has embraced the most Western of all public symbols, the response of much of the West has remained cool. Various heads of state have declined to attend the opening ceremonies. The emissaries of Western public opinion reproach the CCP leadership with breach of the promises made at the time of the Olympic site selection. Is China's tumultuous and ambivalent love affair with the West bound for a tragic breakup amid embittered recriminations? And if so, why should it be?

[13] According to Zhang Liang, *Tiananmen Papers*, ed. by Andrew J. Nathan and Perry Link (New York: Public Affairs Press, 2002), Jiang Zemin was selected by an informal group of CCP elders led by Chen Yun and Li Xiannian in May 1989. Deng's first choice, after having made what he himself considered erroneous choices in two previous cases, was reportedly Li Ruihuan.

The tentative answer suggested at the outset is that much of the fault lies in Western expectations. These inflated expectations were encouraged by the extraordinary nature of the Chinese achievement over the past thirty years. These achievements seem to have begged the question, if China can do so well at X, why can it not do Y and Z? Why such an extraordinary performance at economic reform and such an anemic one at political reform? Why the continuing growth of corruption and pollution, why the continuing neo-mercantilist amassing of foreign exchange? The answer implied to such queries is that China's commitment to such reforms is half-hearted or even fake, a swindle.

The answer tentatively suggested at the outset is that too much is expected. China's approach to modernization has actually been quite simple and easy to read: it is to focus almost exclusively on economic growth while tending to neglect or give only superficial consideration to any demands that might conceivably jeopardize or destabilize this priority. In all fairness it should be conceded that it is this focus that is largely responsible for China's extraordinary economic achievement. In response to demands for expanded human rights, press freedom, pollution control, democratization, liberalization of national minority controls, more balanced foreign exchange accounts, and so forth the typical response has been yes but only if growth is not in any way put at risk.

Yet this monomaniacal focus must in the end give way to other considerations, resulting in a need for reasonable and appropriate adjustments. China simply continue with a net trade imbalance with the rest of the world without amassing so much currency that domestic inflation and asset bubbles become problematic, and this has indeed occurred. Rising air pollution, endemic corruption, growing gaps between rich and poor and urban and rural, wasteful energy consumption and so forth cannot simply be permitted to increase at their present rates without eventually precipitating disastrous consequences. It is in response to these imperatives that the Hu-Wen administration's response has been faulted. On the one hand, the Hu-Wen team in 2002 promised a new deal, using skilled public symbolism to promise greater press freedom (in response to the SARS crisis), more attention to the Western and Northeast regions which were left behind by China's reforms, a crackdown on corruption, and yes, political reform. The rhetoric was excellent, but the follow-through has been disappointing. With regard to China's need to alleviate the plight of the rural and poor and the left behind, the numbers have not yet followed the rhetoric, and the income and fiscal gaps remain large. The SARS crisis allowed Hu to sack some political opponents but the attendant press liberalization was short-lived.

The attack on corruption also provided opportunity to eliminate Chen Liangyu but again, there have been no major structural changes in enforcement machinery and macrostatistical results are not yet convincing. Complaints of the trade imbalance resulted in a creeping float gauged to creep so slowly that critics were not assuaged—although the revaluation against the dollar has resulted in a cumulative 16% revaluation since July 2005, the sinking of the dollar means the Chinese currency remains undervalued against most other trade partners (especially the euro) and the inflow of foreign exchange continues.

Thus while progress continues, China generates criticism from abroad and even from at home, despite continuing intensification of pressure for favorable media coverage. And complaints come from both left and right: Party conservatives assail privatization via management buyouts (MBOs) on behalf of the elite while reformers decry state appropriation of farm property without adequate compensation. Both can agree only that the Hu-Wen response has been inadequate, too little too late. There are several possible responses to such complaints. The first is that the administration has been fundamentally correct in maintaining a balanced, middle-of-the-road posture, that decisive gains have been achieved (e.g., in foreign policy, in Taiwan policy), that reforms and adjustments are certainly necessary but the regime response has been reasonable and moderate under the circumstances and that the next five years should be granted to see whether the numbers follow the rhetoric more convincingly during the second term. The second possible response is that yes, the Hu-Wen regime response to the need for course adjustment has indeed been inadequate but that it is not the fault of Hu and Wen. The political picture is clouded, opposition is mounting, and the central leadership simply cannot mount an effective response. It is inhibited in part by internal opposition but also by its attachment to the procedural formulae dictated at the outset of reform by Deng Xiaoping: any change must be incremental. Thus we have institutional ossification, the high-level equilibrium trap, a leadership that cannot change because it is many respects so overwhelmingly successful.

Such a characterization of the reform regime at thirty years would surely be premature. And it also risks mischaracterizing the whole reform approach. Deng Xiaoping introduced the Chinese people to the virtues of moderate reform, but if we review the late 1970s and early 1980s when reform was first introduced it was arguably not purely incremental and obsessed with stability. The reform course clearly set by Deng at the 3rd Plenum of the 11th Party Congress represented a fundamental, 180 degree reversal of Maoist qua Cultural Revolution policies, and this entailed major, wrenching changes throughout the 1980s and 1990s. To some extent this characterization may fly in the face of Deng's own characterization of his approach. But I would argue that though in substance Deng represented a

sweeping reversal of late Maoism, his approach was in some respects quite Maoist. Disjointed incrementalism, crossing the river by feeling for stones was adopted rhetorically in retrospect in order to stabilize the new and still fragile reform regime and to defend it from calls for sweeping reversal, particularly after Tiananmen, when there were such calls. Is it possible that the Hu Wen administration has been trapped by this rhetoric? After all, despite all the paeans to the virtues of disjointed incrementalism, there are some problems with a purely adaptive leadership style. Tiny steps tend to be discounted by opponents as well as supporters. In other words, it runs the risk of incurring the credibility gap with which the current regime is currently burdened.

# Panel III

## Elections in Thailand, Malaysia, and Australia: Security Implications for Southeast Asia and South Pacific

Charles Salmon Jr., Foreign Policy Advisor, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies

"Elections in Thailand and Malaysia: Security Implications for Southeast Asia"

Brendan Taylor, Professor, Australian National University

"Rudd's Asia-Pacific Community: Dead in the Water?"

Carolina G. Hernandez, President, ISDS, Philippines

"The ASEAN Charter and the Building of an ASEAN Security Community"

# "Elections in Thailand and Malaysia: Security Implication for Southeast Asia"

**Charles B. Salmon Jr.**

Foreign Policy Advisor

Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies

Malaysia and Thailand are original members of ASEAN. Thailand is a treaty ally of the United States. U.S.-Malaysia relations are good. The United States is particularly admiring of Prime Minister Badawi's moderate efforts within the Organization of the Islamic Council. Both countries have made impressive economic progress. Thailand and Malaysia are well known international tourist destinations. Both countries contribute to international peace keeping.

In mid 2008, however, Malaysia and Thailand face profound and probably systemic political challenges. It is still unclear whether these countries can surmount these difficulties. If they do not, this will diminish ASEAN credibility and possibly attenuate regional security. This paper reviews the recent elections in both countries, discusses the current domestic situation, and speculates on the impact on regional security.

The Thailand Elections in December 2007 returned that country to democratic rule, but eight months later the Thai political situation remains profoundly unsettled. The government of Prime Minister Samak who is widely viewed as a surrogate for former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted by the coup, is beset with problems including the forced resignation of its Foreign Minister Noppodol Pattama on the eve of Thailand assuming the Chairmanship of ASEAN. The Foreign Minister was forced to resign after a Thai court questioned the 1962 ICJ decision awarding the Preah Vihear temple to Cambodia, and the Thai government's acquiescence in a UNESCO decision to declare the land around the Temple a heritage site. Both Thailand and Cambodia increased troop presence in the area. Efforts to resolve the issue on the margins of the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in Singapore proved unavailing. Negotiations should take place after the July 27 Cambodia elections. The Samak government has also made little headway in resolving the insurgency situation in Southern Thailand. Investor confidence in Thailand has declined.

Thaksin and his successors' success in mobilizing large sections of the Thai populace, particularly the rural poor, is a fundamental challenge to the Bangkok based military and political elite who have ruled Thailand for more than six decades. This challenge is complicated by national concern about the health of Thailand's revered monarch King Bhumibol Adulyadej and the succession.

Malaysia's general election of March 2008 represented an historic shift in Malaysian politics. The ruling coalition won 51.3 percent of the popular vote. The opposition garnered 37 percent. The current ruling coalition has a simple majority in the Parliament rather than the two thirds majority it held since 1957. The coalition lost control of four Malaysian states and now controls 8 of the 13 states. The elections were scheduled for early March to prevent former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim from running for Parliament, but the advocate of "reformasi" dismissed from government a decade ago succeeded in galvanizing an opposition comprised of multi-ethnic parties. Despite the overwhelming defeat, Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmed Badawi refused to resign and formed a new government. In a subsequent meeting of the United Malays National Organization Badawi agreed to hand over to Deputy Prime Minister Najib in 2010.

Malaysia's turbulent political situation was further roiled by the temporary arrest of Anwar Ibrahim on charges of sodomy. This same charge resulted in his previous imprisonment but was later dismissed. There is a widespread belief that the charges and arrest were primarily political and aimed at preventing his return to parliament. To add further to the current unsavory atmosphere of Malaysia's domestic politics the Prime Minister's likely successor Deputy Prime Minister Najib's name has arisen in connection with the murder of a Mongolian model with whom he is alleged to have had a sexual relationship; a charge Najib strenuously denies. A former political aide is on trial for the murder.

**Elections and Political Environment:**

**Thailand:**

Prior to the December 23, 2007 elections - Thailand had been ruled since September 2006 by the military under the Council for National Security (CNS). This followed a coup which removed the government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his Thai Rak Thai (Thais' Love Thais, TRT) party for alleged corruption. Fifteen months later, however, the military revised the Thai constitution and returned power to an elected body.

The political landscape has been altered but the ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is still an important factor. The constitutional court had banned Thaksin and 111 other members of the TRT from participation in government for five years and ultimately dissolved the Thai Rak Thai Party. But the TRT morphed into the Peoples' Power Party (PPP).[1] The current Prime Minister and leader of the Peoples' Power Party before the election, Samak Sundaravej, stated that he was a "Thaksin nominee."[2] Thus many believe that the PPP is a vehicle for Thaksin's return to active politics.

In addition to the PPP and the Democratic Party, the December elections were contested by several other prominent political parties. Many were factions that had developed from the dissolved TRT party. These include the Puea Pandin Party (PP), Ruam Jai Thai Chart Pattana Party (RC), and Matchimathipataya Party (MCM). The PP performed the best winning 24 seats in the 480 seat parliament. However, overall these factions only accounted for 44 seats. The main opposition to the PPP, the Democratic Party, under the leadership of Abhisit Vejjajiva won 164 seats, well short of the PPP's 233 seats.

| Party | Seat(s) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Proportional Basis | Constituency Basis | Total |
| People Power Party (PPP) | 34 | 199 | 233 |
| Democrat Party (DP) | 33 | 131 | 164 |
| Chartthai Party (CTP) | 4 | 30 | 34 |
| Puea Pandin Party (PP) | 7 | 17 | 24 |
| Ruam Jai Thai Chart Pattana Party (RC) | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| Matchimathipataya Party (MCM) | 0 | 11 | 11 |
| Pracharaj Party (PRP) | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| **Total** | **80** | **400** | **480** |

Source: Office of the Election Committee of Thailand, http://www.ect.go.th/english/2007%20Mp.html.

Despite the best efforts of the Democratic Party, Thaksin and the PPP had strong support in the north and north-east sections of Thailand. This was due to Thaksin's pro rural poor economic policies

[1] Itoh, Will. "Democracy Returns to Thailand?" PACNET No. 50 (20 December 2007).
[2] Head, Jonathan. "Unraveling Thailand's political turmoil." BBC News Online, 24 June 2008.

including cheap health care, debt restructuring, and infrastructure programs.[3] This, however, has not stopped the opposition parties and activist groups like the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) from seeking to remove Samak and the PPP. Samak survived a no confidence vote, introduced by the Democratic Party, in parliament with 280 votes out of 470 mostly due to the two-thirds majority that the PPP holds within the Parliament.[4]

Samak's government, which is a coalition with five other parties including the Chart Thai Party (which was essential for the two-thirds majority), has been criticized for ineffectiveness due to factionalism, a weak economic policy, mismanagement of the campaign against southern Muslim insurgents, and other issues including most recently agreeing to the Preah Vihear temple's inclusion on the UNESCO list of heritage sites (which led to the resignation of the foreign minister). People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) protests, similar to those that helped topple Thaksin's TRT government,[5] have brought more turmoil to an already unstable political scene. The PAD, which has been protesting since May 2008, marched on the streets of Bangkok and besieged the Government House demanding that Samak step down. [6]

Marginalizing Thaksin and the PPP, however, has been difficult for those responsible for the coup. After the 2006 coup Thaksin went into exile. Many charges of corruption and abuse of power were unsubstantiated by sufficient evidence in courts. Thaksin returned to Thailand in February of 2008 risking over ten years imprisonment if the charges are sustained.

These charges were finally brought to court in July 2008. Thaksin faces charges for illegally acquiring real estate for his wife, asking his legal advisors to bribe a judge, and advancing his personal business interests by having Samak's government approve the UNESCO agreement with Cambodia.[7] Moreover, a PPP party boss, Yongyuth Tiyapairat, was ousted from office by the Election Commission for vote-buying.[8] This could lead to an investigation of the whole party and its dissolution if found guilty.

[3] Note: For more details read; Pye, Oliver and Wolfram Schaffar. "The 2006 Anti-Thaksin Movement in Thailand: An Analysis." Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol. 38, No. 1 (February 2008) 38-61.
[4] Head Jonathan, "Embattled Thai PM survives vote." BBC News Online, 27 June 2008.
[5] Note: More on these protests in; Pye, Oliver and Wolfram Schaffar. "The 2006 Anti-Thaksin Movement in Thailand: An Analysis." Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol. 38, No. 1 (February 2008) 38-61.
[6] Head, Jonathan. "Unraveling Thailand's political turmoil." BBC News Online, 24 June 2008.
[7] "In the dock." The Economist, 10 July 2008.
[8] Ibid.

**Malaysia:**

Malaysia's government is based primarily upon ethnic party groups. Although there are multi-racial parties (like Anwar's People's Justice Party), the ethnic Muslim Malays who make up 65% of the population dominate the smaller ethnic groups of Chinese (25%) and Indians (8%). Ethnic Malays under UMNO (United Malays National Organization) and their coalition (Barisan Nasional) have dominated politics in Malaysia since independence in 1957. Besides UMNO, the Barisan Nasional Coalition or BN is composed primarily of two other ethnic parties; the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC). This coalition has usually received a two-thirds majority at the polls which has given them control over the government and over the election process which has maintained their dominance.

The March 8th 2008 general election challenged the long established Malaysian political system. Opposition gains are due to the charisma and leadership of the ousted former deputy prime minister (under Mahathir) Anwar Ibrahim. Anwar, though weakened by political attacks including previous sodomy charges, united the opposition. According to the South Asia Analyst Group, he persuaded them to support one candidate for constituencies regardless of race.[9] Anwar's key alliance of opposition parties includes his own multi-racial People's Justice Party (PKR, Party Keadilan Rakyat), the Democratic Action Party (DAP; mostly Chinese), and the Malay dominated Islamic Party or Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (Pas). This alliance made a strong showing and garnered 82 out of 222 seats in parliament, as opposed to the 140 won by the Barisan Nasional. Of those won by the opposition Anwar's PKR made the strongest showing with 32 seats won. This may seem relatively insignificant, but contrasted with 2004's election in which the opposition won just a combined twenty seats to the BN's 198, the gain is impressive. More importantly, Anwar's alliance has prevented the BN from acquiring their long held two-thirds majority, a feat not achieved by any opposition since 1969. Also, the opposition has won four more states; Penang, Kedah, Perak, and Selangor. Previously the opposition only held one state, Kelantan.

[9] Kuppuswamy, C. S. "Malaysia: General Elections 2008- An Analysis." South Asia Analysis Group, No. 2627 (16 March 2008).

| | 2008 (Seats 222) | 2004 (Seats 219) |
|---|---|---|
| **Barisan Nasional** | | |
| **UMNO** | **79** | **109** |
| **MCA** | **15** | **31** |
| **MIC** | **3** | **9** |
| **Others** | **43** | **49** |
| **Total** | **140** | **198** |
| **Opposition** | | |
| **DAP** | **28** | **12** |
| **PAS** | **23** | **7** |
| **PKR** | **31** | **1** |
| **Total** | **82** | **20** |
| **Grand Total** | **222** | **219 (includes Indep 1)** |

Source: South Asia Analysis Group, Kuppuswamy, C. S. "Malaysia: General Elections 2008- An Analysis." South Asia Analysis Group, No. 2627 (16 March 2008).

If Anwar is the key to renewed "reformasi" in Malaysia, Anwar is also the political candidate in the most difficulty. During the 22 year long reign of former Prime Minster Mahathir Mohammed, Anwar served as deputy prime minister and finance minister. However, after disagreeing with Mahathir on issues related to the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997, he was asked to resign. On September 2, 1998, after refusing to step down, Anwar was charged with five counts of sodomy and corruption.[10] Without a trial, Anwar was arrested and served a six year term and suffered a beating by police.[11] Anwar's arrest sparked mass protests throughout Malaysia.[12]

[10] More on the events of Anwar's arrest in; Abbott, Jason. "Vanquishing Banquo's Ghost: The Anwar Ibrahim Affair and its Impact on Malaysian Politics." Asian Studies Review, Vol. 25, No. 3 (September 2001) 285-308.
[11] Ibid.
[12] "World: Asia-Pacific Malaysian police move against protestors." BBC News Online, 28 September 1998.

Due to a lack of evidence, these charges were overturned in September 2004 and Anwar was freed from jail. The ban from holding political office, however, is only now lifted in 2008. After the success of the opposition parties in the 2008 elections, Anwar was again charged with sodomy in June by a former aide. He was arrested on 16 July 2008[13] and then released. Anwar asserts his innocence. He stated that, "This slander is a major issue particularly because it involves a sexual crime, and the attempt is, of course, to mislead the Muslim population to attack me and my character."[14]

Despite Anwar's problems, he is not the only Malaysian political figure in trouble. As mentioned previously, the current Prime Minister and leader of the BN, Abdullah Badawi, is under pressure to resign over poor results at the polls as well as his failure to lower high fuel prices.[15] He recently stated that he will step down and hand over power to his deputy, Najib Razak, in 2010. This is well ahead of his expiration of term in 2013. He stated at a news conference that his wariness to immediately resign is to due to reforms that he wishes to see through. According to that BBC report, Badawi stated, "There are many things and programs I want to achieve before I hand over and I hope that Najib will continue as my deputy in carrying this out."[16] However, considering Najib's alleged entanglement in the Mongolian model murder case, trouble may develop in this respect before or after Badawi's resignation.

Due to the current state of Malaysian politics, the 2008 elections are an especially significant indicator of perhaps changes to come. These results demonstrate mounting pressure for reform from an opposition party and challenges to the ethnic status quo represented by the Barisan Nasional. The BN, since independence, maintained a two-thirds majority and therefore had access to make revisions to the constitution to further propel their dominance.[17] Jason Abbot in his article, *Vanquishing Banquo's Ghost: The Anwar Ibrahim Affair and its Impact on Malaysian Politics*, analyzes several mechanisms the BN employs to limit internal opposition. These include the ISA (Internal Security Act), which gives the police the right to arrest without a warrant anyone who threatens national security; the Official Secrets Act, which regulates what journalists publish by requiring official authorization to

[13] "Malaysia's Anwar Ibrahim arrested." BBC News Online, 16 July 2008.
[14] "Anwar challenges sodomy accuser." BBC News Online, 9 July 2008.
[15] "Malaysia's PM 'to quit in 2010.'" BBC News Online, 10 July 2008.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Abbott, Jason. "Vanquishing Banquo's Ghost: The Anwar Ibrahim Affair and its Impact on Malaysian Politics." Asian Studies Review, Vol. 25, No. 3 (September 2001) 285-308.

publish official information; and the Societies Act, which states that any group that wishes to organize must be approved by the government.[18] Furthermore, when it comes to campaigning, these mechanisms plus the sheer size and resources of the Barisan Nasional make it difficult for the opposition to win votes. Claudia Derichs in her article, *Bottom-up Travel of Ideas for Political Reform in Malaysia*, lists a number of other tactics that the BN utilizes to deter opposition. These include such tactics as placing government staff in a constituency community to make sure votes are aligned with the correct party, and directing the police to threaten areas with lax security to ensure correct votes are in line.[19] The fact that despite these safeguards an opposition was able to do so well indicates the strength of the reform movement.

**Implications for Regional Security:**

While the current Thai Cambodian standoff over Preah Vihear is troubling, it is unlikely to result in a border war. Still, the nationalism the opposition stirs up to embarrass the Samak government is disquieting. More importantly however, Thailand's current disinclination to have ASEAN play a mediating role undermines ASEAN credibility. Thailand's political situation also appears to preclude any positive role it might play in helping to resolve the issue of Burma, an embarrassment to ASEAN and a complicating factor in ASEAN relations with the United States, Australia, and the European Union.

It is also unlikely that Malaysia's sordid domestic politics will have any immediate adverse effects on the larger security situation in Southeast Asia. But as the ground on which Malaysian politics has rested for more than a half a century shifts the possibility of domestic unrest and ethnic violence cannot be excluded. This in turn might have a negative impact on Malaysia's neighbors and, like the Thai situation, undercut ASEAN credibility. Anwar Ibrahim also has strong support in the U.S. and Australia. Should he again be imprisoned, this would complicate Malaysia's bilateral relations with both countries.

[18] Ibid. 288.
[19] Derichs, Claudia. *The Power of Ideas: Intellectual Input and Political Change in East and Southeast Asia*. Copenhagen: NIAS, 2006.

**These are the personal views of the author and should not be attributed to the APCSS. Gregory Walter of Wittenberg University contributed substantially to this paper's preparation. Submitted July 30, 2008.*

# "Rudd's Asia-Pacific Community: Dead in the Water?"

**Brendan Taylor**

Professor

Australian National University

When initially commissioned to write this paper, I was asked to produce 7-8 pages examining the implications of Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's November 2007 election for security in the South Pacific region. Prior to entering office, Rudd certainly promised to take a very different approach to this part of the world. While still Leader of the Opposition, for instance, Rudd in a July 2007 speech to the Sydney-based Lowy Institute for International Policy was highly critical of the Howard Government's approach to the South Pacific and proposed "a long-term partnership for development and security."[1] Yet the South Pacific has been given surprisingly little prominence in Australian foreign policy during the period since Rudd's 2007 election. Rudd did move quickly to close the controversial detention centre on Nauru which was the centrepiece of the Howard Government's so-called 'Pacific Solution'.[2] He has enunciated a new Port Moresby Declaration promising to provide additional aid to fight HIV/AIDS in Papua New Guinea and heralding the beginning of a new era in that important, yet recently troubled bilateral relationship. He has signalled a long-term commitment to the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). And Rudd has also proposed a pilot program for a South Pacific guest worker scheme.[3] Admirable as these initiatives each are, however, it would be difficult to construct even 7-8 meaningful sentences pointing to their broader strategic significance. Thankfully, therefore, President Tien has been most gracious in affording me some latitude in terms of the subject for this paper.

Part of the challenge Rudd faces in re-invigorating Australian relations with the South Pacific is that the Howard Government was already so deeply engaged with this part of the world – both in terms of aid and intervention – particularly during its latter years in office.[4] But the primary reason

[1] See Jenny Hayward-Jones, *Australian Financial Review*, 23 January 2008.
[2] Paul Maley, "Aid for Nauru with closure of centre", *The Australian*, 25 February 2008.
[3] Greg Sheridan, "Melanesia on our radar", *The Australian*, 15 March 2008.
[4] For an assessment of Australia's approach toward the South Pacific during the Howard years see Hugh White, "Australia-South Pacific", in Brendan Taylor, ed., *Australia as an Asia-Pacific Regional Power: Friendships in Flux?* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp.117-128.

for the lack of prominence Rudd has thus far afforded to the South Pacific stems from the fact that his overriding foreign policy preoccupation has been the management of Australia's position in Asia's evolving political and strategic order. Australia's relations with Asia's great powers have been of primary concern here- everything else has been treated largely as a second order issue. Rudd has already received much praise for his management of the China relationship, particularly during a high profile visit there earlier this year as part of his first major overseas trip.[5] After many in Tokyo interpreted this visit as a snub to Japan, however, recent months have been spent trying to repair the Australia-Japan relationship – including the recent announcement of an ambitious joint Canberra-Tokyo expert commission on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.[6] Australia's relations with Asia's great power relations have even been afforded prominence in the context of Rudd's South Pacific policies. Foreign Minister Stephen Smith, for instance, recently announced a Japanese offer to contribute to RAMSI, while Rudd himself has signalled a desire to better integrate Japanese, European Union and Australian aid policies toward the region.[7]

Against that backdrop, the Rudd foreign policy initiative which has received the most attention thus far has been the Prime Minister's proposal to establish an 'Asia-Pacific Community' – in the spirit of, although by no means replicating the European model. Rudd's proposal is significant not only because it proposes to favourably position Australia in the evolving Asian political and strategic balance, but because it also ambitiously sets out to positively shape relations between Asia's great powers. If successful, its implications for regional security would undoubtedly be profound and it is therefore the Rudd initiative that is most likely to be of interest to the current audience. But the proposal has also been subjected to a high level of criticism – both within Australia and throughout the broader region. This paper outlines Rudd's proposal to establish an Asia-Pacific Community and the motivations driving it; it analyses the weaknesses of the initiative which have drawn such a high degree of indignation; and it briefly considers the future prospects for Rudd's Asia-Pacific Community concept.

**Explaining Rudd's Asia-Pacific Community:**

Prime Minister Rudd's proposal to establish an Asia-Pacific Community was formally announced, somewhat unexpectedly, on 4th June 2008 at the annual dinner of the Asia Society

[5] Greg Sheridan, "PM makes great leap on China", *The Australian*, 12 April 2008; and Rowan Callick, "Friend on Message", *The Australian*, 12 April 2008.
[6] Patrick Walters, "Evans pushes for new nuclear accord", *The Australian*, 11 June 2008.
[7] Greg Sheridan, "Japan's troops welcomed for peaceful mission in the Pacific", *The Australian*, 19 July 2008.

AustralAsia Centre, Sydney.[8] Speaking before approximately 500 guests, Rudd called for the establishment of "a regional institution which spans the entire Asia-Pacific region – including the United States, Japan, China, India, Indonesia and the other states of the region." The scope of this institution should be broad-ranging, he suggested, and "able to engage in the full spectrum of dialogue, cooperation and action on economic and political matters and future challenges related to security." The Prime Minister designated 2020 as the year by which this vision for an Asia-Pacific Community should be implemented. And he appointed Richard Woolcott, a former Secretary of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, as a high-level envoy charged with taking the proposal to the capitals of the wider region for further discussion.

At least four motivations would appear to underpin Prime Minister Rudd's proposal. First, the plan needs to be viewed in terms of the Australian domestic context. Rudd has signalled a renewed focus on Asia as a major pillar of his government's foreign policy approach. He has been portrayed as something of an Asian expert back home, not least due to his highly publicised fluency in mandarin language. Yet comparisons with his regionally-focused Labour predecessors – Bob Hawke and Paul Keating – have been almost inescapable. Given the role these played in helping to establish the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) process, the APEC Leaders meeting and arguably evening the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Rudd has big shoes to fill here. Even the Asia credentials of his immediate predecessor, John Howard, have been reviewed fairly favourably in Australia, with Howard and his Foreign Minister Alexander Downer given much credit for securing Australia a seat at the East Asia Summit, as well as executing a simultaneous strengthening of Australia's bilateral relations with the US, China, Japan and Indonesia.[9] Having consistently criticised the predominantly dyadic orientation of his predecessor's approach to the Asian region, the imperative for Rudd to be seen to be moving beyond the bilateralism of the Howard era thus also constitutes part of the explanation for his Asia-Pacific Community initiative.

Second, and perhaps most importantly, the fact that Rudd's Asia Society speech was made immediately prior to visiting Japan and Indonesia is revealing. During his early months in office, Rudd has come under increasing criticism both at home and abroad for what many commentators regard as an unhealthy bias towards Beijing.[10] Rudd's mandarin fluency, his longstanding scholarly

[8] Prime Minister of Australia Hon Kevin Rudd, "It's time to build an Asia-Pacific Community", Address to the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre, Sydney, 4 June 2008.

[9] See Michael Wesley, *The Howard Paradox* (Sydney, NSW: ABC Books, 2007).

[10] Greg Sheridan, "Region notices bias for Beijing", *The Australian* 3 May 2008.

interest and professional experience in China, coupled with the fact that he visited China - but no other Asian nation - on his first major overseas trip have contributed towards this perception. It is a foreign policy prejudice which commentators have cast in zero-sum terms, coming at the expense of Australian ties with Japan, India and Southeast Asia. The Asia society speech appears to have formed part of a larger effort to counter this mounting criticism. Much of the speech itself was devoted to discussing what Rudd explicitly termed Australia's "critical bilateral relations" with Japan and Indonesia. And the order of the wording which Rudd employed when sketching out his vision for an Asia-Pacific Community – listing Japan ahead of China - was also highly symbolic.

Yet despite the emphasis given to the symbolic purposes of the Asia-Pacific Community proposal, Rudd clearly intended it to be more than merely an expedient political gesture. The fact that Foreign Minister Stephen Smith recently devoted several pages to further detailing the proposal during a high profile address to the Lowy Institute confirms this.[11] It also reflects the third consideration motivating Rudd's proposal: a growing sense of trepidation that the institutional landscape of the Asia-Pacific is evolving in ways which may be increasingly anathema to the implementation of any effective regional 'architecture' and the sense of regional consensus which must ultimately underpin it. A large part of the problem here stems from the fact that the great powers of the Asia-Pacific have shown an increasing tendency to use regional institutions not as sites for cooperation, but as instruments of competitive influence – Beijing through ASEAN-plus-three and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO); Moscow through the SCO; Washington in APEC and through its own ad hoc mechanisms such as the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) and the Proliferation security Initiative (PSI); and Tokyo through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and, increasingly, through the East Asia Summit as it strives to check China's growing influence in the ASEAN-plus-three grouping. Taken together, this has created a situation where, as Lowy Institute Director Allan Gyngell recently observes, "The Asia-Pacific region has too many regional organisations, yet they still cannot do all the things we require of them."[12] The Asia-Pacific Community proposal might thus also be read as a genuine attempt to remedy these 'design flaws' in the region's emerging 'architecture.'

The fourth factor motivating Rudd's initiative is related more directly to Australia's own national interest and place in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia has long harboured a deep sense of insecurity vis-à-vis this part of the world. The former head of the Australian Department of Foreign

[11] Stephan Smith MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, "Australia, ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific", Speech to the Lowy Institute for International Policy, 18 July 2008, pp.19-22.
[12] Allan Gyngell, "Design Faults: The Asia-Pacific's Regional Architecture", Policy Brief, Lowy Institute for International Policy, July 2007, p.1.

Affairs Alan Renouf, for instance, once described Australia as a "frightened country" – a country that literally lives in fear of its own Asian neighbourhood and that typically seeks out a 'great and powerful friend' to compensate for those insecurities.[13] The Harvard Political Scientist Samuel Huntington later described Australia as a "torn country" – a society divided over whether or not it belongs to Asia.[14] Such fears continue to inform Australia's view of the region's emerging architecture. In particular, Canberra remains deeply fearful that it could - whether because it its size, cultural composition or geographical location - potentially yet find itself excluded from the region's most influential institutional processes. The two most worrying potentialities from an Australian standpoint are an institutionalisation of the Six Party Talks process into a formal and highly influential regional security mechanism, or a deepening of cooperation between the members of the ASEAN-Plus-Three process leading to the formation of a genuine East Asian Community which excludes Australia. By playing the role of entrepreneur in putting forward the idea of an Asia-Pacific Community, and by proposing this as the peak institution in the Asia-Pacific, Canberra could thus be seen to be guarding against the possibility of its exclusion from the emerging regional architecture.

**Dead in the Water?**

Rudd's controversial initiative has been the subject of regional denigration and domestic ridicule. Perhaps the most colourful of criticisms was delivered by the influential Singaporean commentator Barry Desker, who when speaking before a Canberra audience in July described the proposal as "Dead in the Water".[15] On at least four counts, the likelihood of Rudd's Asia-Pacific Community eventuating does not look particularly good at this early stage. First, the harried style in which the initiative was announced would appear to have severely damaged its prospects. In the days following the Asia Society speech, for instance, media reports surfaced that Woolcott heard of his mission as special envoy only hours prior to its announcement.[16] There also appears to have been a complete absence of consultation conducted with other interested parties throughout the region. Little thought appears to have gone into how the new body will relate to existing structures, such APEC, the ARF, and the EAS. The inevitable dilemmas surrounding membership of the new

[13] Alan Renouf, *The Frightened Country*, (Melbourne: MacMillan, 1979).
[14] Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs*, vol.72, no.3, Summer 1993, p.42; and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), pp.151-154.
[15] Patrick Walters, "Rudd Asia plan 'dead in water'", *The Australian*, 4 July 2008.
[16] Greg Sheridan, "The new Mad Hatter", *The Australian*, 12 June 2008.

grouping have also been glossed over. What, for instance, would be the membership status of Taiwan? Would the small island states of the South Pacific be invited to join? The hastiness in which the proposal was delivered has, by not considering these obvious dilemmas, not only irreparably damaged its prospects in the eyes of many, but has also severely undermined Rudd's Asia policy credentials.

Interestingly, Washington's response to the proposal has been amongst the more open-minded. While calling for further detail, for instance, US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte has emphasized the need "to be open to new ideas and suggestions."[17] Prominent Republican advisor Michael Green also recently indicated that a McCain presidency would support the idea, provided it affirmed the role of values and the "rightness of democracy."[18] That the proposal was announced in the shadow of a US Presidential election, however, at a time when Washington still appears distracted by developments in the Middle East, could just as equally be seen as a factor inhibiting its prospects. This issue of timing relates also to China. With that country's economic and strategic weight in the Asian region still on the rise, one could argue that it might not be in Beijing's interest to set in concrete an institutional structure reflecting today's power realties, when those of tomorrow may be weighted even more heavily in its favour and thereby enhance its capacity to shape that structure.

Third, the prospects for Rudd's proposal are further diminished by his alienation of two other influential actors – ASEAN and Japan. As Desker's earlier comments reflect, the Asia-Pacific Community idea has not been particularly well received throughout Southeast Asia. Canberra's lack of consultation with its Southeast Asian neighbours is seen as especially problematic and has been read as a lack of gratitude, in particular, by those governments who were so influential in helping Australia to secure a seat at the EAS.[19] While it is possible that ASEAN may no longer occupy the driver's seat of regional diplomatic processes by the year 2020 - particularly as economic and strategic weight shifts increasingly in favour of Asia's great powers – ASEAN presently still retains a central role in each of the region's most prominent multilateral processes. Its blessing is therefore arguably critical to the success of Rudd's Asia-Pacific Community idea. Likewise, Japan remains a leading and influential supporter of the same open and inclusive vision of regional architecture advanced in Rudd's proposal – as opposed to the narrow, more exclusive approach championed at times by China and Malaysia[20]. Yet Tokyo's wounds remain raw over what it perceives as Rudd's

[17] Daniel Flitton, "US diplomat wary of Rudd's big idea", *The Age*, 30 June 2008.
[18] Peter Hartcher, "Rudd Asia plan stirs tensions with US, China", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 June 2008.
[19] Rory Medcalf, "Rudd's Asian aria sounds familiar", *Australian Financial Review*, 10 June 2008.
[20] See, for example, Patrick Walters, "Beijing plays spoiler on Asia summit", *The Australian*, 6 April 2005.

by-passing of Japan on his first major international trip – so much so, that Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda recently made but one passing reference to Australia in his own major speech on the future of Asia-Pacific security.[21]

A final major shortcoming of Rudd's proposal is that it threatens to exacerbate some of the same 'design flaws' in the emerging Asia-Pacific 'architecture' that it aspires to alleviate. It could, for instance, further fuel the competitive approach to institutions which is becoming a feature of great power politics in the region. Rudd was sufficiently careful in his Asia Society speech to specify that his proposal "does not in itself mean the diminution of any of the existing regional bodies." But even Woolcott himself was later forced to concede that comparisons will be all but inescapable. In his terms "One of the issues that needs to be addressed is the link between the Prime Minister's concept of an Asia-Pacific community and the variety of existing organisations in the field. There will be arguments I suppose, is it better to tinker with or adjust existing institutions or is it better to have a new overarching body?"[22] The real risk in all of this, of course, if that Rudd's Asia-Pacific Community proposal will become yet one more fixture on an already overcrowded institutional landscape.

**Conclusions**

Rudd's envoy Richard Woolcott will spend between now and the end of this year taking soundings on the proposal from around the Asia-Pacific region. Contingent upon the success of that process of consultation, Rudd has foreshadowed a further high-level conference of government and non-government representatives to advance this proposal. However, even the Prime Minister himself does not appear overly confident about getting to that stage and he has recently begun to show some early signs of backing away altogether from the initiative. Of the proposal, Rudd in an interview only weeks ago described it as "a modest evolution of what already exists."[23] Any such drawback would be highly problematic for Rudd, however, given that he has now staked so much of his regional standing and influence upon it. His one glimmer of hope may be that the APEC process emerged in somewhat similar fashion, and with even less prior consultation from then Prime Minister Hawke. As Hawke's APEC envoy, Woolcott also has that valuable experience upon which to draw. Yet coming at the ending of the Cold War and in an Asia-Pacific characterised by a near absence of multilateral dialogue, the region of today is obviously a very different place. So while

[21] Greg Sheridan, "Rudd can fix Japan shambles", *The Australian*, 7 June 2008.
[22] Cited in Paul Kelly, "Time may not be ripe", *The Australian* 9 July 2008.
[23] Greg Sheridan, "Rudd at home in the centre", *The Australian*, 19 July 2008.

the proposal may not be quite yet ‘dead in the water’, as Desker suggests, based upon the foregoing analysis the prospects for its advancing significantly further would seem rather remote at this juncture.

# "THE ASEAN CHARTER AND THE BUILDING OF AN ASEAN SECURITY COMMUNITY[1]"

**Carolina G. Hernandez**

President

Institute for Strategic and Development Studies

## Introduction

When the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted in October 2003 the Bali Concord II seeking to realize an ASEAN Community by 2020, observers of regionalism especially in Southeast Asia cheered. Several even dared to allow euphoria to get the better of them but most shared a feeling of cautious optimism, knowing that ASEAN's track record of four decades although quite remarkable in keeping regional peace is discouraging and spotty at best in institution-building and implementation of decisions reached by consensus.

When the ASEAN Charter was made public, the cautious optimists were proven right. Although the declarations of its Leaders provided hope for an ASEAN enabled to deal effectively with the multifaceted and complex challenges it faces in its fifth decade and beyond, the Charter, beyond its purposes and principles and seeking to become a legal entity proved to be predominantly a codification of the ASEAN way of doing things, making decisions still based on consensus and enforcement questionable, as well as adding other bureaucratic layers in its already unwieldy structure.

The Bali Concord II seeks to realize an ASEAN Community of three pillars: an economic community, a security community, and a socio-cultural community. Since its adoption, its Leaders appeared to be sending strong signals that the ASEAN Charter would facilitate the realization of the ASEAN Community of three pillars as well as enable ASEAN to hold the center or core of East Asia community building. Community building both in Southeast and East Asia is intended to achieve a wider security community, one where the use of force in settling inter-state disputes would no longer be resorted to by the parties. In the exuberance and optimism of the ASEAN Leaders, they even moved

[1] Prepared for the 12th Asia Pacific Security Forum, Honolulu, Hawaii, 10-12 August 2008.

the timetable for the realization of such a community from 2020 to 2015 for the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) for which a blueprint has also been adopted.

It is the task of this paper to determine whether and how the ASEAN Charter would be able to contribute to the building of a security community in the ASEAN region and the broader East Asia. The paper first discusses the ASEAN Security Community, followed by the development of the ASEAN Charter. It then analyses the issue of whether the ASEAN Charter would be able to empower ASEAN to build a security community, including the opportunities and challenges building such a community presents. It concludes with an analysis of future prospects.

## The ASEAN Security Community

Views on community building within ASEAN began to heat up especially after the Asian financial crisis of 1997. The ASEAN region was seen as the economically fastest growing region in the world, having benefited from the "flying geese" model of economic development fostered by Japan.[2] Combined with Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, the ASEAN region gained some weight in international relations during this period. In fact, Europe's attraction to the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) was driven by economic opportunities offered by this fast-growing region.

### *The ASEAN Vision 2020*

However, the financial crisis hit key economies in this region hard – Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and South Korea in particular. Concern that its erstwhile chief magnet to the outside world – its fast-growing economy – now weakened by the financial crisis would undermine its value, ASEAN adopted its Vision 2020 in November 1997 as a signal to its resolve to recoup its pre-crisis standing. The Vision sought to make ASEAN "a concert of Southeast Asian nations" governed by the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), the Treaty establishing Southeast Asia as a Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and a Zone of Peace Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) where its partners also abide by these norms of interstate conduct; "a partnership in dynamic development" through measures to narrow the development gap among its member states and deeper economic integration among them; "a community of caring societies" enriched by the region's cultural diversity but redressing in common

[2] Footnote here.

regional problems; and "an outward-looking ASEAN" espousing open regionalism and made more effective through institutional reform of the ASEAN Secretariat.[3]

The member states adopted the Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA) setting forth the measures they will take during the first six years of the Vision's implementation. Driven by the desire "to narrow the development gap" among its members, the HPA did very little to address the other aspects of the vision, particularly those required in building a security community. However, they also sought to address the issue of meeting a similar financial crisis in the future through improved regional financial and economic cooperation at a wider level by adopting the ASEAN+3 process together with China, Japan, and South Korea. Joining the larger economies of Northeast Asian states also served to avert ASEAN's being sidelined in inter-regional cooperation such as in ASEM, at the same time that it crafted a role in East Asian community building for itself. ASEAN was well-aware that the plus three countries (China, Japan, and South Korea) have outstanding historical, strategic, and other divisive issues between them and would require an interlocutor to prosper regional cooperation.

Thus, ASEAN became an active player in the forging of an East Asia community through the South Korean-led East Asia Vision Group (EAVG) and the East Asia Study Group (EASG). The latter made a number of recommendations, both for the short and long terms for the building of an East Asia community. The first ten years of ASEAN+3 cooperation focused on economic and financial cooperation, but also included cooperation in non-traditional security issues such as global terrorism (after 9/11) and maritime security, as well as social issues such as poverty and gender. Habits of cooperation and interaction are considered important in the building of a security community.

In the meantime, ASEAN soon recovered from the political and economic effects of the financial crisis, restoring its self-confidence as a regional player. Further integration into the larger East Asia especially the rapidly growing Chinese economy was a major factor for such recovery. On the domestic front, Indonesia began to regain stability with its peaceful succession of leaders after Suharto; Malaysia effected a transition from Mahathir to Badawi; and Thailand's democratization appeared on track with the popular election of Thaksin and the seeming inhibition by the Thai military to take power.

[3] ASEAN Vision 2020, Kuala Lumpur, November 1997.

***The Bali Concord II***

Thus, in October 2003, the ASEAN Leaders adopted the Bali Concord II already noted above. This was preceded by their decision to set up an ASEN Economic Community (AEC) as a response to a study commissioned by its finance ministers on ASEAN competitiveness. The McKinsey study showed that to recover its competitiveness, ASEAN needs to become a single production base and a single market. Indonesia signaled its resolve to take on the informal leadership of ASEAN by proposing the establishment of an ASEAN Security Community (ASC), the rationale being that an economic community would not be realized without a security community. Not to be outdone, the Philippines proposed the establishment of a third pillar – the socio-cultural community (ASCC). Thus, was born the Bali Concord II. It is notable that these pillars reflect the elements of the ASEAN Vision 2020 adopted in 1997.

When born as a concept, the ASEAN Security Community reflects some form of acceptance by the Leaders that ASEAN regionalism cannot prosper if the gaps between and among its members are not narrowed sufficiently. If in the European Union, candidate members needed to become democratic polities and market economies for which cohesion funds are provided before formal admission, in ASEAN, because there are no pre-admission requirements other than falling within the ASEAN geographical footprint, the leveling off in political regime types and economic systems would take place after admission through the ASEAN Security Community.

Thus, the Bali Concord II put the ASC ahead of the AEC and ASCC. The ASC (1) is envisaged to bring the grouping's political and security cooperation to a higher level so that the Southeast Asian countries can live at peace with each other and with the outside world in "a just, democratic, and harmonious environment"; (2) subscribes to the principle of comprehensive security and is not intended to be a defense pact; (3) adheres to the principle of non-interference; (4) abides by international norms of interstate conduct, including those in the UN Charter; (5) promotes maritime security; (6) recognizes the Declaration on the ZOPFAN, the TAC and SEANWFZ as pivotal to CBMs, preventive diplomacy, and conflict resolution; (7) includes the High Council of the TAC as a dispute settlement mechanism; (8) maintains the ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN's role as "the primary driving force" in regional peace and security in the Asia Pacific based on "a pace comfortable to all"; (9) is open and outward looking embracing ASEAN's dialogue partners; (10) shall use existing ASEAN mechanisms to strengthen national and regional capacity for counter terrorism, trafficking in drugs and natural persons, and other forms of transnational crime, to maintain the region safe from WMDs: (11) explores

cooperation with the UN and other international bodies to promote peace and security; and (12) explores "innovative ways" to enhance regional security and set up modalities for the ASC including norms-setting, conflict prevention, approaches to conflict resolution, and post-conflict peace-building.[4]

***The Vientiane Action Programme***

As in the ASEAN Vision 2020, ASEAN adopted forthwith the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP)[5] representing measures to implement the Bali Concord II. For the ASC, the VAP listed specific areas of activities for its five elements, namely, political development, shaping and sharing of norms, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, post-and conflict peace-building. To bring political and security cooperation to a higher plane, political development "to achieve peace, stability, democracy and prosperity" shall be the highest political commitment by the Leaders since these shared values are required by the new domestic dynamics in ASEAN countries. In this context, the ASEAN countries "shall not condone unconstitutional and undemocratic changes of government or the use of their territory for any actions undermining peace, security and stability" of other ASEAN member states.

The shaping and sharing of norms, on the other hand seeks to achieve a standard of common adherence to norms of good conduct, consolidate and strengthen regional solidarity, cohesiveness and harmony as well as contribute to building "a democratic, tolerant, participatory and transparent community" in the region. Annexed to the document is a list of specific activities for each of the elements. However, the adoption of the Blueprint for the AEC, apparently signaled the substitution of the blueprints for the VAP in each of the three pillars. The blueprints for the ASC (now called the ASEAN Political and Security Community of APSC, following the signing of the ASEAN Charter at the 13th Summit in Singapore in November 2007) and the ASCC are still in the process of being formulated. Consultations with "civil society groups" including think tanks and academic institutions continue until they are ready for adoption later in 2008.

The VAP is seen as a progressive step towards building a security community and advancing the cause of human rights promotion in the region. It included strengthening democratic institutions and popular participation, the rule of law, judicial systems, and legal infrastructure; preventing and combating corruption, building networks among human rights institutions and protecting vulnerable

[4] The Bali Concord II, 7 October 2003.
[5] The cited parts of this section are from the Vientiane Action Programme, adopted on 29 November 2004.

groups; among a long list of measures. The ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) even tasked a track two group within the region seeking to establish an ASEAN human rights mechanism[6] to assist ASEAN in developing concrete proposals for the establishment of regional bodies for the promotion of the rights of women (under CEDAW) and children (under the CRC) and a regional human rights body.

## The ASEAN Charter: A Brief Background

During the 11th Summit held in Kuala Lumpur in November 2005, the Leaders decided to appoint a group to study the issue of developing an ASEAN Charter with the understanding that such a document would not only make ASEAN an intergovernmental organization with a legal personality, but also to prosper community building as articulated in the Bali Concord II, as well as make the association "a people-centered ASEAN". In one of the recent speeches of the current ASEAN Secretary-General, Dr. Surin Pitsuwan,[7] he discussed the role of ASEAN in East Asia community building. He noted the contribution of the ASEAN+3 process with ASEAN as the driving force in enabling the plus three countries to interact directly with each other, no longer with ASEAN interlocution. He noted that while this is a welcome development, it also runs the risk of ASEAN's role in East Asia community building to be weakened. He said that ASEAN's answer to this situation is the ASEAN Charter. He however, did not elaborate how this might be so.

### *The EPG Report*

Given this background, the Leaders formed the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on the ASEAN Charter. Chaired by Malaysia's former Deputy Prime Minister Tun Musa Hitam, the EPG included such eminent personalities as former Philippine President Fidel V. Ramos, former Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, and former Singaporean Foreign Minister Professor S. Jayakumar. The EPG conducted consultations with ASEAN civil society groups, including the Working Group on a Regional Human Rights Mechanism (WG) and the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN ISIS).

[6] This is the Working Group for a Regional Human Rights Mechanism interacting with the ASEAN SOM and Foreign Ministers since the late 1990s. The WG is composed of human rights advocates, members of national human rights institutions, and national focal points for this advocacy.

[7] Dinner address on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur International Convention Center, 2 June 2008.

The EPG Report[8] submitted to the 12th Summit in Cebu in January 2007 was well received by the relevant civil society groups and by analysts and observers of ASEAN affairs. Among its recommendations relevant to community building include "expressing the resolve to realize an ASEAN Community and ultimately an ASEAN Union"; and the establishment of separate councils for each of the three pillars to implement and attain their respective purposes and objectives. Relevant to the building of a security community are some principles that should be included in the ASEAN Charter such as mutual respect for national sovereignty, territory and independence, non-use of force and exclusive reliance on peaceful processes in dispute settlement, non-aggression, non-recognition of unconstitutional and undemocratic changes of government, upholding generally recognized principles of international law including international humanitarian law, rejection of acts of genocide, ethnic cleansing, torture and rape as an instrument of war, rejection of discrimination based on gender, race, religion or ethnicity, etc.

To prosper the building of an ASEAN Community, the Report included recommendations for the Leaders "to meet more often [at least twice a year] to give greater political impetus" to community building; to set up three ministerial level councils reporting to the Leaders to verse the three pillars of the ASEAN Community; "to harmonize regional economic policies and strengthen regional linkages and connectivity". Noting that ASEAN is not deficient in vision, ideas, or action plans, the Report made recommendations on "taking obligations seriously" including the establishment of dispute settlement mechanisms in all fields of ASEAN cooperation; empowering the ASEAN Secretariat with monitoring compliance by member states and reporting its findings to the Leaders; take measures against failure to comply with obligations including "suspension of any rights and privileges of membership [but no expulsion without the Leaders' agreement].

To strengthen organizational effectiveness, the Report recommended many measures, including giving more power to the Secretary-General; setting up full time Permanent Representatives of member states in Jakarta; increasing the Secretary-General's deputies from two to four with oversight functions in various aspects of regional cooperation, external relations, administrative and budgetary matters; recruitment of professional staff for the Secretariat; conferring legal personality to ASEAN; and to improve the efficiency of meetings.

[8] The cited parts of this section are from the Report of the Eminent Persons Group on the ASEAN Charter.

More effective decision making could be achieved, according to the Report if ASEAN were to adopt more flexible decision making mechanisms as it upholds consensus decision making not to impede, but to aid ASEAN cohesion and effectiveness; the adoption of voting in the absence of consensus based on rules made by the Leaders; and a flexible application of the "ASEAN minus X principle" or "2 plus X" upon discretion of the three communities.

Finally, the Report urged ASEAN "to shed its image of being an elitist organization comprising exclusively diplomats and government officials" and to do more "to consult ASEAN institutions, Parliamentarians in ASEAN Member States (AIPA) and the people of ASEAN in all sectors of society". Towards this end, the EPG recommended that ASEAN be cultivated "as a people-centered organization and to strengthen the sense of ownership and belonging among its people", and for ASEAN's principal organs to "undertake regular consultations" with all relevant stakeholders such as AIPA, civil society representatives, business, human rights groups, academic institutions and other stakeholders in ASEAN. The Report included in its Annex B a scheme for these regular consultations.

The Report provided several avenues to empower ASEAN in ensuring that its charter when formulated community building would be facilitated especially in decision making processes and implementation or enforcement of agreements reached.

***The High Level Task Force***

Following the submission of the EPG Report, the ASEAN Leaders appointed the High Level Task Force (HLTF) to draft the ASEAN Charter. Chaired initially by retired Philippine Ambassador Rosario Manalo who served as consultant to President Ramos in the EPG work and subsequently by retired Singapore Ambassador Prof. Tommy Koh, the HLTF was composed of ASEAN Directors-General and retired diplomats. Its mandate was circumscribed by "marching orders" from the ASEAN Foreign Ministries that the Charter should be visionary but practical, maintain consensus decision making, not include sanctions, but to include an enabling provision for the setting up of a "regional human rights body".

Like the EPG, it also conducted consultations with civil society groups in numerous ASEAN capitals and other regional locations. However, the composition of the HLTF ensured that however "progressive" the EPG Report and recommendations might have been especially in empowering

ASEAN for community building and related purposed, the ASEAN Charter when finished reflected the lack of political will of the overwhelming majority of its Leaders to empower ASEAN so that its vision which the Leaders themselves agreed to adopt through the ASEAN Vision 2020, HPA, Bali Concord II, and the VAP in particular would be realized.

**The ASEAN Charter and the Empowerment of ASEAN**

The ASEAN Charter as drafted by the HLTF was signed by all the ten heads of state/government of the ASEAN member states in Singapore in November 2007. It requires the ratification of all ten of them to come into effect. So far, three out of the ten have not yet ratified the document. It is not coincidental that these three member states happen to be polities in various stages of transition to democracy in which the ratification of any international agreements requires the consent of their parliament. These are Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

The Charter has codified the ASEAN processes and practices, including the ASEAN way of doing things (Chapter I – Purposes and Principles). It ignored many of the key recommendations of the EPG that would have empowered ASEAN including in the building of a security community, such as holding member states accountable for non-compliance to agreements, using other modalities beyond consensus in decision making, empowering the ASEAN Secretary-General and the Secretariat to monitor and report on the progress of community building, and omitting various principles that would have discouraged unconstitutional and non-democratic changes in government and helped promote peace at the domestic and regional levels.. It added new layers of bureaucracy, instead of streamlining its work for greater efficiency. It reinforced the pre-eminent position of the Foreign Ministries, through the ASEAN Coordinating Council (Article 8) within the ASEAN structure as second only to the ASEAN Summit (Article 7) consisting of the Leaders. It divided ASEAN civil society groups in numerous ways including in responding to the enabling provision for the establishment of an ASEAN Human Rights Body. By failing to empower ASEAN, it undermined community building and keeping ASEAN at the center or the driving force in East Asia community building.

***Empowerment of ASEAN as Precondition for the ASEAN Community***

Without an empowered ASEAN that is capable of curing one of its major deficits – that of implementation and enforcement – it is not likely that community building both at the ASEAN and East Asian levels would be facilitated. ASEAN member states are keen to reap the benefits of economic growth and economic integration, among which is the narrowing of the development gap. However, they are not keen to undertake measures that would ensure the realization of a security community in Southeast Asia. One only has to revisit the ASEAN way and how it is enshrined in a legal document such as the Charter, one that proponents of ratification claim as binding on its members (even as there is no prescribed punitive action in case of violation even of the Charter itself!) to realize that ASEAN can conduct business-as-usual even without the Charter coming into force!

Moreover, a revisiting of the ASEAN Security Community's five elements as described in the Bali Concord II would already tell us that conducting business as usual will not lead to the realization of this envisioned security community. These five elements, particularly political development and the shaping and sharing of norms are extremely challenging tasks for a group of countries that until the end of the Cold War might be classified as "a club of dictators".[9] They are generally averse to any dilution of national sovereignty as seen in their resistance to the international character of human rights, the responsibility to protect as a new interpretation of national sovereignty in an age of globalization that has shrunk the world in fundamental ways, and measures that would increase the arena of regional and global joint action infringing on their autonomy as state actors.

Note for example that the Bali Concord II included under the section on political development the commitment (seen in the use of "shall") of member countries "not to condone unconstitutional and undemocratic changes of government". Yet while the EPG Report retained this commitment, it was omitted from the Charter. Might it not be the case that when the member states agreed to its inclusion in both the Bali Concord II and the EPG Report that they knew it could be "dealt with" by the HLTF? This is a case of the left hand taking back what the right hand of the same person has given!

Moreover, shaping and sharing of norms would require going beyond existing norms already practiced in ASEAN so long as they do not contradict the 5 fundamental principles enumerated in the Bali Concord II. These principles are (10 non-alignment; (2) fostering of peace-oriented attitudes of ASEAN member states; (3) conflict resolution through non-violent means; (4) renunciation of the use

[9] This term is borrowed from M.R. Sukhumbhand Paribatra, former Thai MP and member of the faculty at Chulalongkorn University

of WMDs and avoidance of an arms race in the region; and (5) renunciation of the threat or use of force.[10] Obviously, the building of a security community would require new norms that would have to be developed, shaped, and shared widely in the region. It should include popular participation both in the shaping and the sharing of these norms.

To empower ASEAN is to include its stakeholders as recognized in ASEAN's various vision statements and by the EPG Report. However, instead of providing for mechanisms for regular consultation, the Charter simply said that "ASEAN may engage with entities which support the ASEAN Charter" listed in Annex 2. This list will hardly yield the kind of civil society engagement necessary for building an ASEAN communicy, including a security community. The relevant provisions in Article 16 – Entities Associated with ASEAN are neither encouraging nor empowering. Not encouraging because the prescription for the rules of procedure and criteria for engagement lies in the Committee of Permanent Representatives – the member states' ambassadors to ASEAN – upon the recommendation of the Secretary-General. These ambassadors are unlikely to go against the directive of their government which are not likely to empower ASEAN as seen in the above discussion, even with a progressive Secretary-General as Dr. Surin. Not empowering because there are no provisions for regular consultations included in the Charter. Again, this is left to the Committee of Permanent Representatives, thus ensuring the control by ASEAN governments in the matter of consultation with stakeholders.

Moreover, decision making remains basically by consultation and consensus, although in the absence of consensus, Article 20 leaves the matter to the ASEAN Summit to decide on "how a specific decision can be made". In the absence of any clear guidance on how the Summit is likely to act in deciding how a specific decision can be made in the absence of consensus, one might derive some clue from how the Charter appears to have been shaped by UN practice, i.e., the establishment of its legal personality and the creation of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (such as those in the UN). In the UN, the determination of whether a matter is substantive or procedural is a substantive matter requiring the unanimity of the Perm-5!

What is to prevent the ASEAN Leaders to use consensus in deciding "how a specific decision can be made"? Assuming that they decide on a simple majority instead of by consensus (this is a case

[10] Bali Concord II.

of very wild imagining on my part!), which are the 6 ASEAN member states that might support a measure that would prosper and empower ASEAN on issues like democracy, human rights, and such? Incidentally, Article 20 also says that decision over matters not reached by consensus to be made by the Summit does not supersede the modes of decision making "contained in the relevant ASEAN legal instruments". These legal instruments predated the coming into force of the ASEAN Charter and are likely to prescribe consultation and consensus! Fortunately, the mode of decision making for the economic commitments prescribed by the Charter is "flexible participation" including "the ASEAN Minus X formula".

Finally, Article 20 also says that the Summit will decide what action to take when there is "a serious breach of the Charter or noncompliance". Would the ASEAN Leaders of the ASEAN member states as presently constituted have the boldness of heart and strength of will to prescribe, in this case, the application of "sanctions" by whatever term these might be called?

ASEAN aspires to remain at the center or the driving force in East Asia community building. This is seen in numerous documents including the ASEAN Charter which includes among its purposes: "To maintain the centrality and proactive role of ASEAN as the primary driving force in its relations and cooperation with its external partners in a regional architecture that is open, transparent and inclusive".[11] However, this aspiration is likely to be frustrated were ASEAN to fail in realizing the ASEAN Community envisioned in the Bali Concord II.

***Opportunities and Challenges***

There is an opportunity to avert the negative implications of the ASEAN Charter in its present form for community building. And that opportunity is presented by the continuing non-ratification of the Charter by Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Such state of non-ratification is not likely to stall the activities ASEAN officials wish to undertake in any field of their concerns. In fact, the United States has already appointed its Ambassador to ASEAN (Article 46), ahead of the Charter's coming into force. As a codification of the ASEAN way, the Charter does not need to come into force to set ASEAN in motion towards any activity its officials and Leaders agree to undertake. Without ratification by anyone of the remaining three (Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand), a new charter

[11] Article 1, The ASEAN Charter.

can be drafted, one that can meet the challenges facing ASEAN today already acknowledged in ASEAN's various documents, including this present draft ASEAN Charter.

Critics of this view would say that the Charter can be amended. But of course it can. Imagine the process of amendment mirroring the harrowing negotiations that led to this watered-down draft! Instead of going through this process each time an amendment is raised, why not reject the Charter altogether at this point and go through this harrowing process only once more to produce a decent document that meets the vision of an ASEAN community of three pillars to secure ASEAN's role in building a security community in Southeast and East Asia.. This time, the drafters should not hurry to meet deadlines set by the Chair of the ASEAN Standing Committee always and ever - regardless of which country is involved – mindful of one-upmanship, besting the performance (initiatives, etc.) of previous chairs regardless of the overall impact on ASEAN, its people and their future.

The challenges are many, but the most important is political. There are individuals and groups seeking ratification of the ASEAN Charter within the three hold-out countries. Politics will play out on the issue of whether the Indonesian Parliament, the Philippine Senate, and the Thai Parliament would ratify the Charter. The unfortunate thing is that many of the members of these bodies may not be fully informed about ASEAN. It is hoped that they would "say **NO** to what they do not **kNOw**".[12].Human rights NGOs saw the inclusion of the enabling provision on the ASEAN Human Rights Body and they already want the Charter ratified, without fully realizing the implications of this charter for ASEAN and its peoples. In the case of the Philippines, President Ramos has been lobbying fellow politicians in the Senate to ratify the Charter. In a country where politics reign supreme, this presents a huge challenge to the view expressed above.

**Future Prospects and Concluding Remarks**

Given the above, the ASEAN Charter is unlikely to bring about the ASEAN Community, including the ASEAN Security Community envisioned in the Bali Concord II. \ASEAN cannot conduct

[12] Congressman Teodoro "Teddy Boy" Locsin, Jr. on what politicians and other relevant Philippine actors should do in regard to the MOU brokered by Malaysia between the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front regarding ancestral domain.

business as usual to realize this community of three pillars. The Charter embodies the mentality of conducting “business as usual” as shown above.

Without the realization of the ASEAN Community, ASEAN cannot hold the center or remain a driving force in East Asia community building as part of the ASEAN vision of the region. As noted above, the plus three countries would reach a level of great comfort in enhancing their cooperation without the agency of ASEAN. It has begun in the bilateral meetings they hold directly, as well as in their separate summit meetings held during ASEAN annual events. If the ASEAN Charter is the answer to this development then it has failed in its response to this challenge.

# Panel IV

## Security Implications of the 2008 US Elections

Brad Glosserman, Executive Director, Pacific Forum CSIS

"The U.S. Election and Implication for East Asia Security"

Cheng-yi Lin, Research Fellow, Academia Sinica

"The US Elections and US-China Relations"

François Godement

"Viewing the New World's response to the new New World: how Europeans view current US debates and positions on Asia"

# "The U.S. Election and Implication for East Asia Security"

**Brad Glosserman**

Executive Director

Pacific Forum CSIS

The most important implication of the November 2008 U.S. elections does not depend on who actually wins the presidential vote. Rather, the key development is the departure of George W. Bush, which provides the U.S. with a fresh start and a new image. While many non-Americans would likely cast their ballots for Barack Obama, even the election of John McCain would signal a new beginning for the country in the region and the world.

I'm not suggesting that it doesn't matter who wins the November ballot, but I am not inclined to handicap the candidates. Most attempts to identify substantive differences in the two candidates' positions on key Asian security issues have been unsuccessful.[1] Both foreign policy teams include a range of views and identifying which will prevail on a particular issue is tough. Moreover, U.S. interests don't change with administrations and the conditions and constraints within which any president must make policy are the same. Finally, who could have predicted that the George W. Bush presidency would take the course it has at this stage in the 2000 campaign?

To my mind, the most important task for the next U.S. president is reasserting U.S. leadership in Asia. He must quiet concerns about U.S. policies and priorities. As ever, that means thinking about issues that matter to Asians and anticipating key regional developments. Most significantly, the next U.S. president must fashion a policy that engages East Asia more widely and uses a broader array of U.S. assets in doing so.

## The issues

It is an item of faith the elections turn on bread and butter issues – the economy -- rather than more distant and abstract concerns, such as foreign policy. It is not clear if that logic still applies in the post-9.11 era: not only have terrorism and security concerns risen to the top of the domestic agenda, but the economy on the whole has been performing well, minimizing the salience of that

[1] See, for example, "Obama vs. McCain on National Security Issues," http://nukesofhazard.blogspot.com/2008/07/mccain-vs-obama-on-national-security.html and "Which candidate is best equipped to deal with China?" www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1322&Itemid=31

issue for voters. Thus, at the beginning of the year, the 2008 ballot was expected to turn on policy toward Iraq and perceptions of which candidate would be the more capable "commander in chief" in a era of global terrorism.

The uncertainty created by the mortgage crisis and the economic downturn tests the conclusion that Americans have developed a new mindset in the voting booth. Polling data shows that voters are again focusing on their wallets: a recent poll shows respondents preferring a candidate "whose greatest strength is fixing the economy" (56 percent) to one "whose greatest strength is protecting the country from terrorism" (39 percent). [2] In five of five polls conducted in June and July 2008, the economy topped the list of voter concerns; in four of the five, energy and gas prices were second, with the war in Iraq sandwiched between energy and health care.[3] Bread and butter concerns are back.

Of course, a clear and firm distinction between foreign and domestic issues is nearly impossible in an era of economic interdependence and transnational security threats. Even the crudest formulation of energy policy must accommodate domestic and foreign policy dimensions. Economic anxieties are reflected in debates over trade agreements and relations with China. The primary obstacle to action on global warming is the perceived economic costs of aggressive measures. Terrorism has transformed the security debate and eroded, if not eliminated, the belief in Fortress America: for many, there is no longer a choice between being a "shining city on the hill" and "the search for monsters abroad." Immigration is alternatively an economic issue and a security concern.

This blurring of the line between foreign and domestic policy complicates decision making in the U.S. At the same time, however, it affords the next U.S. president an opportunity to reclaim U.S. stature and reassert its claim to global leadership, partially through the management of domestic concerns.

**The opportunity**

The defining characteristic of U.S. foreign policy in the last eight years has been the precipitous decline in the U.S. image and authority. After a brief moment following Sept. 11, 2001 at which the world rallied behind the U.S., there has been vicious slide in sympathy and support for the U.S. By 2007, a BBC global poll revealed "that in the 18 countries that were previously polled, the average percentage saying that the United States is having a mainly positive influence in the world has dropped seven points from a year ago -- from 36 percent to 29 percent -- after having already dropped four points the year before. Across all 25 countries polled, one citizen in two (49

[2] USA Today/Gallup poll, June 15-19, 2008 at http://www.pollingreport.com/wh08.htm
[3] http://www.pollingreport.com/prioriti.htm

percent) now says the U.S. is playing a mainly negative role in the world."[4]

There are many explanations for the plunge in America's standing: a perception of unilateralism and indifference to the concerns of other nations; a feeling among Muslims that the U.S. is waging war against Islam; concern about the values the U.S. promotes in its foreign policy; opposition to U.S. policies generally; and hostility to U.S. President George W. Bush personally. Special attention belongs on that last variable: in one poll, "16 of the 20 publics surveyed say they lack confidence in US President George W. Bush. Only Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf is rated negatively in more nations. … Bush also got the highest average percentage of negative ratings (67 percent)."[5] The feelings attached to Bush are visceral, evidenced by the poll numbers and continuing animus despite the abandonment of the neocon positions of his first four years in office. If this analysis is correct, then the fact that the Bush is leaving office is far more significant than whoever replaces him.

Conventional wisdom identifies China as the rising power of Asia, a superpower in the making that will contest – and in some formulations, best – the U.S. in the competition for regional supremacy. An impressive economic performance is the foundation of Beijing's new influence and leverage in the region; nimble diplomacy has helped quiet fears of China's rise, and burnished its credentials as a responsible stakeholder. The gains are unmistakable, but the regional balance of power has not shifted. Measured assessments conclude that China's gains within the region are, while impressive, considerably more limited.[6]

I would argue that much of China's success and rising stature in the region results more from U.S. missteps than Beijing's own behavior. U.S. disregard for Asian sensitivities and the overly narrow focus of its foreign policy have alienated many regional governments. At times, it seems like the provenance of an idea – the fact that a proposal originated in Washington – rather than its substance determines the reaction of other governments to it. That is a damning comment on the U.S. status in the world, but this sad state of affairs need not be permanent. While there is no desire for Washington – or any other capital – to dominate East Asia, it is clear that most governments in the region still look to the U.S. for leadership. The response to the December 2004 tsunami was a pointed reminder of what the U.S. – and perhaps only the U.S. – can do in a crisis; the U.S. rebound in regional opinion polls is proof that those efforts are appreciated.

---

[4] "World view of US goes from bad to worse," Jan. 22, 2007, www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/international_security_bt/306.php?lb=btvoc&pnt=306&nid=&id=

[5] "World poll finds global leadership vacuum," June 16, 2008, www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/views_on_countriesregions_bt/488.php?lb=btvoc&pnt=488&nid=&id=

[6] See for example Robert Sutter and Chin-Hao Huang, "China-Southeast Asia relations: China's activism faces persistent challenges," *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 9, No. 2, July 2007 pp., 83-86.

By this logic, the most important challenge for the next U.S. president is identifying the issues that define U.S. relations with Asia and fashioning responses that advance U.S. interests *and* reflect new international realities. This process will have profound implications for East Asian security, even though some of these key issues are not "security" as traditionally defined. That alone speaks to the new mindset that must be nurtured.

**Think big**

Indeed, the first step for the next administration is to think about security more broadly – to embrace truly strategic thinking. U.S. policy toward Asia has tended to focus on security concerns, and then has defined security even more narrowly, usually emphasizing military and defense issues. (In this lexicon, "strategic" usually means "nuclear.") It should come as no surprise then that Pacific Command bears the burden of U.S. government engagement in the region; alliances – at least the military component of those alliances – are the primary instrument of U.S. engagement with East Asia; Southeast Asia is seen as the second front on the war on terrorism and the military dimension of that response dominates U.S. planning.

To its credit, Pacific Command recognizes that its partners in the region increasingly prioritize other nontraditional security challenges and is working out ways to respond to them. Disaster and humanitarian relief, search and rescue ops and the like are now the focus of multilateral exercises. This broadening of mil-mil engagement must continue; the U.S. should be working with allies', friends', and partners' militaries to address the issues that we both are concerned with, raise their capacity, and establish the habits of cooperation that build trust, confidence and the capability to respond in times of crisis. But the military cannot do this on its own.

That mentality must extend throughout the rest of the bureaucracy. Other agencies of the U.S. government must be brought into this effort and more U.S. assets deployed to build stronger, deeper, and more resilient relationships. In particular, the State Department and USAID should play bigger roles, along with law enforcement agencies, the scientific community, and trade and commercial entities. A "whole of government approach" should be the foundation of U.S. policy toward East Asia.

**Accept Asia**

A second critical component of U.S. policy is recognition that East Asia is trying to create a distinctive political and economic community. There has been considerable agnosticism – some would call it antagonism – toward this process in the U.S.; this should stop. The next U.S. government must acknowledge Asian aspirations to develop their own voice and international presence and contribute to its articulation. Of course, this has to be an Asian effort; finding the right

level of U.S. involvement is part of the challenge. At a minimum, Washington cannot be seen as blocking this effort.

This process will raise fundamental questions about the U.S. relationship to East Asia, the new "community," and many of its members. This obliges U.S. policy makers to get serious about thinking about "the architecture" of Asia-Pacific security and economic relations. The U.S. has to be more systematic in its approach, looking for ways to integrate various regional structures and respond to them in a coherent fashion. This means paying particular attention to ASEAN and the Northeast Asian security mechanism/institution that emerges from the Six-Party Talks. It is unclear what that latter institution will look like, it seems pretty clear that some structure will be created. The U.S. must work to ensure that it fits into a larger strategic vision.

At the same time, the U.S. has to devise ways to insulate and protect its alliances as this process unfolds. Washington must work with its allies to ensure that the creation of an Asian community does not undermine U.S. security interests – and Asian security generally. The two do not have to conflict: the European Union is proof of that. Equally significant is the need to reassure allies and friends that our understanding of Asia's need to establish an identity does not mean that the U.S. is turning its back on the region. We will continue to be involved in Asian affairs and committed to working with friends, allies, and partners to provide for the region's security, stability and prosperity. American interests will not diminish as the region emerges as a coherent entity.

One way this process can work is by adopting the strategic mindset identified above. Take U.S. relations with Korea. The Korea-U.S. free trade agreement (KORUS) is an attempt to broaden and deepen the foundation of that bilateral relationship. It aims to redistribute the weight born by the various components of the relationship – in particular to strengthen economic ties and lessen the load on the military pillar.[7] Sadly, however, this is seen in the U.S. as a mere trade agreement, rather than a strategic deal. The U.S.-Japan alliance would benefit from a similar reconceptualization and attempt at "broadening."[8]

**Getting Asia 'right'**

It is important to recognize what this new approach does not include. First, there is no mention of values. While the U.S. has pushed to spread democracy since the country's founding, making "democratization" the driving force of its foreign policy has alienated many countries in the region. There is suspicion of U.S. motives not only because of fears that democracy can be used as

[7] See for example Brad Glosserman, "U.S.-Japan-ROK Relations for the 21st Century," Pacific Forum CSIS, *Issues & Insights*, Vol. 7, No. 5, May 2007.
[8] Brad Glosserman and Katsu Furukawa, "A New U.S.-Japan Agenda," Pacific Forum CSIS, *Issues & Insights*, Vol. 8, No. 4, March 2008.

to interfere in domestic affairs, but because the application of that policy has been inconsistent, opening the door to charges of hypocrisy and eroding U.S. moral authority. At the same time, this language is often viewed as code, a way of dividing the region (and the world) between democratic and nondemocratic governments and laying the foundation for a policy of containment and confrontation. This too alienates and antagonizes regional governments that have no desire to be forced to take sides within the region.

While the U.S. should support democracy and democratic governments, it should frame that policy within the context of broader international norms and institutions. The U.S. should also elevate "good governance," another all purpose term that enjoys regional approval, is not freighted with the suspicions that surround use of the word "democracy," and includes many of the same principles and aims to achieve the same outcomes.

Second, this strategy does not focus on China. Too often, security analysts – especially those in the U.S. – begin their assessment of Asia policy with China. China's rise is a fact – although it is by no means guaranteed – and the integration of Asia into a community will redefine relations among its members; as a core member of this group, China will have a more prominent role than it currently does. But America's China policy should be part of a broader regional strategy: a component, not its focus. If the U.S. "gets Asia right," the proper approach toward China will follow.

**Create an enduring order**

If the decades following World War II are viewed as "the halcyon days" of U.S. leadership, it is because U.S. policy helped create an institutional order that provided security and prosperity for those who joined it. The world has changed substantially since then and those institutions need renovation. The greatest failure of U.S. leadership in the post-Cold War era has been the failure to update those institutions and build new ones that reflect today's political and economic realities. (The current U.S. administration may have recognized the inadequacies of those institutions, but it has done little to fix them. In fact, the animus the Bush administration has engendered would likely render stillborn any such attempt.) The next U.S. president needs to take up this challenge. But institutional renovation is part of a bigger assignment: he must, in the words of the second Armitage-Nye report, create "an environment in which the region's leaders define their own national success in terms that are consonant with U.S. political and economic objectives."[9] That means invigorating security mechanisms to address new challenges and reducing suspicion and mistrust by extending participation to all who have an interest in seeing problems solved. It means building an economic framework that is inclusive, liberalizes trade and investment rules, promotes development, and provides institutional safeguards against financial and economic instability. It

[9] Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye, "The U.S.-Japan Alliance through 2020: Getting Asia Right," CSIS, February 2007, p. 1. I take heart by noting that the authors are senior advisors to McCain and Obama, respectively.

means addressing the vital issues of the future – energy security and climate change top the list – that demand leadership and compromises from all nations. Most of all, it requires vision, patience and determination.

That effort will have profound security implications for East Asia. Is it a "consequence" of the 2008 U.S. election? I believe the answer is "yes." There is widespread belief among Asia experts in the U.S. that the next administration *must* develop an Asia strategy; its predecessor pointedly failed – or refused – to do that. Even if the administration managed to get Asia right, an ad hoc policy that merely responds to developments will no longer suffice. Rather, the region demands an integrated approach that looks over the horizon. The next administration not only has to catch up, but it has to get ahead of the curve. The next U.S. president must respond to the regional developments identified above and do more to shape the environment in which political decisions are being made – or risk being marginalized. The question is no longer that of military predominance, but relevance to regional concerns. That is a profound implication, indeed.

# "The US Elections and US-China Relations"

**Cheng-yi Lin**

Research Fellow

Institute of European and American Studies, Academia Sinica

Introduction:

In terms of foreign policy, the war in Iraq has received the most attention in the US presidential elections. Senator Barack Obama pledges to complete troop withdrawal from Iraq within 16 months.[1] On the other hand, John McCain would further support the war and avoid setting a timetable for pullout. After the Iraq war, the next president will need to spend more time facing the rise of China and tackling challenges from China. Senator John McCain has more experience in foreign affairs and is regarded as one who will continue President Bush's existing course of action. Obama declares a plan for change but American voters and overseas political leaders have questioned the feasibility of his policies. McCain speaks more on China and is well-informed on cross-Strait relations, whereas Obama's position on China is not as firm as McCain's.

## I. US Elections

In the US general election on November 4, the Senate (51 Democrats, 49 Republicans) is unlikely to have a change of party control. The Republican Party has 23 seats with five incumbents retiring. Therefore, Larry Sabato, a political scientist of University of Virginia predicted in June 2008 that "it will be a major surprise if Democrats fail to add at least three or four seats."[2] Sabato also believes that the House of Representatives (236 Democrats, 199 Republicans) will remain blue, and he even sees November 2008 "as probably the best year Democrats have had in many a moon."[3] However, the outcome of the gubernatorial elections remains unpredictable with the current split of governorship at 28 Democrats and 22 Republicans.

From the daily tracking of Gallup Poll, there exists only a narrow margin between voters' preferences for John McCain and Barack Obama, although the former is a little bit behind the latter

[1] "The Blueprint for Change: Barack Obama's Plan for America," p. 51, cited in http://www.barackobama.com/pdf/ObamaBlueprintForChange.pdf.
[2] Larry J. Sabato, "Senate Sensibilities—the Update," June 19, 2008, cited in http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/article.php?id=LJS2008061901.
[3] Larry J. Sabato, "Congressional Combat, Continued," June 12, 2008, cited in http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/article.php?id=LJS2008061201.

by an average of 1.6% since the beginning of May 2008. More than 30 different US national polls have shown Obama's lead with a margin of 5.2% points.[4] Poll results at this point do not necessarily reflect the winner of the popular vote in November 2008. However, President Bush's low approval rating, the US economy's slow growth rate and the president's party's control of the White House for two terms have created many challenges for John McCain in this campaign.

There have hardly been any US presidential candidates that have run in such an unfavorable political and economic environment as the one McCain is facing, but the race factor may still make McCain a default candidate among white voters.[5] For white voters over 50 years of age, they might "be the most resistant to [Obama's] message of change," so Charlie Cook predicts that Obama needs to have between "31 percent and 37 percent of the vote" of this age group to win in November 2008.[6]

According to a poll conducted by the NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll, American voters' foremost concern is as follows: job creation and economic growth (23%), energy and the cost of gas (20%), the war in Iraq (16%), health care (11%), terrorism (8%), illegal immigration (6%), the environment and global warming (5%), and the mortgage and housing situation (4%). If the issues of economic growth and gas prices were combined together, economic factors would amount to around 50% of the concerns of American voters, while the Iraq war would come a far second.[7] How to exit the war in Iraq in an orderly and gracious manner is most problematic for McCain and Obama. On most issues, however, Obama is favored over McCain, especially with regards to the economy, immigration, federal budget deficit, health care and other social issues. With regards to the war in Iraq and anti-terrorism, McCain is more favored and is perceived as a strong leader for America.[8]

**II. China and the Candidates**

The results of US elections, particularly the outcome of the presidency, will have a series of policy implications for leaders in China and Taiwan. Therefore, a serious examination of what John

[4] Alan I. Abramowitz, "Tracking the 2009 Presidential election," July 23, 2008, cited in *http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/article.php?id=AIA2008072402*.
[5] In July 2008, Barack Obama is trailing John McCain by an average of nine points among white voters, see Alan I. Abramowitz, "Does Obama Have a Problem with White Voters?" July 17, 2008, cited in http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/article.php?id=AIA2008071701.
[6] Charles Cook, "Comfort Zone," July 22, 2008, cited in http://www.cookpolitical.com/node/2777.
[7] NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll, July 18-21, 2008, and CBS News/New York Times Poll. July 7-14, 2008, cited in http://www.pollingreport.com/prioriti.htm.
[8] ABC News/Washington Post Poll. July 10-13, 2008, and Time Poll, June 18-25, 2008, cited in http://www.pollingreport.com/wh08.htm; Gerald F. Seib and Laura Meckler, "Voter Unease with Obama Liners in U.S.," *Wall Street Journal*, Asia , July 25-27, 2008, p. 1, 12.

McCain and Barack Obama have remarked about China and Taiwan is needed for later analyses. John McCain criticized Chinese human rights records, from the lack of political reform to the control of Internet. He believed that leaders in Beijing talked about "order, not democracy, [and] the supremacy of the party not of the people."[9] Taking the same stance as President Bush, McCain encouraged China "to be a responsible stakeholder in the modern world, [for] a government must also be responsible at home in protecting, not trampling, the rights of its people."[10]

McCain announced that he would not attend the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics if he were in office because of China's suppression of Tibetan protest. He deplored the violent crackdown by Chinese authorities and the continuing oppression in Tibet. He urged Beijing "to ensure [that] peaceful protest is not met with violence." [11] In a speech delivered at the Hoover Institution in May 2007, McCain portrayed the gap between Chinese international responsibility and economic development as follows:

> China recognizes its vital interest in economic integration with the democratic world. But it has also joined Russia in hindering international efforts to put pressure on dictators in Iran, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Burma, and other pariah states. China expresses its desire for a stable peace in East Asia, but it continues to increase its military might, fostering distrust and concerns in the region about Beijing's ambitions. We must insist that China use its newfound power responsibly at home and abroad.[12]

John McCain is straightforward in labeling China and Russia as two of American potential strategic competitors. In order to deal with these two countries, the United States "requires a larger and more capable military" to protect American vital interests and deter challenges to US security.[13] McCain went further to argue that "when China builds new submarines, adds hundreds of new jet fighters, modernizes its arsenal of strategic ballistic missiles, and tests anti-satellite weapons, the

---

[9] "Senator McCain Addresses the Hoover Institution on U.S. Foreign Policy," May 1, 2007, cited in http://www.johnmccain.com/informing/news/Speeches/43e821a2-ad70-495a-83b2-098638e67aeb.htm.
[10] "Statement By John McCain On China And The Olympic Games, April 10, 2008, cited in http://www.johnmccain.com/Informing/News/PressReleases/b7a26d26-c42f-4936-b22d- 31a844019136.htm
[11] Alex Spillius, "John McCain 'would confront Russia and China'," *Telegraph*, April 14, 2008, cited in http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1584755/John-McCain-'would-confront-Russia-and-China'.html#article; "Statement By John McCain On China And The Olympic Games, April 10, 2008, cited in http://www.johnmccain.com/Informing/News/PressReleases/b7a26d26-c42f-4936-b22d- 31a844019136.htm.
[12] "Senator McCain Addresses the Hoover Institution on U.S. Foreign Policy," May 1, 2007, cited in http://www.johnmccain.com/informing/news/Speeches/43e821a2-ad70-495a-83b2-098638e67aeb.htm.
[13] "A Strong Military in a Dangerous World," cited in http://www.johnmccain.com/Informing/Issues/054184f4-6b51-40dd-8964-54fcf66a1e68.htm.

United States legitimately must question the intent of such provocative acts."[14] Therefore, McCain strongly supports the deployment of a missile defense system "to hedge against potential threats from possible strategic competitors like Russia and China."[15] For McCain, it is necessary that the US not only engage China, but also hedge it as well.[16]

Compared to McCain, the Illinois Senator Barack Obama is less critical of China's military modernization. Although Obama pledges that he "will not hesitate to use force, unilaterally if necessary, to protect the American people," he does not emphasize the use of hard power to hedge China.[17] Instead, Obama uses political and economic instruments to compete with China in some areas and cooperate with China in others. Obama mentions the rise of China and states that Americans, more than ever, need to compete with the Chinese in years ahead in every aspect. Therefore, he perceives China as a competitor, rather than an enemy or a friend, of the United States. Obama pledges that he will continue to make sure that China "plays by international rules" and be held responsible for regional security. In addition, Obama will ensure that Americans "have enough military-to-military contact and forge enough of a relationship with them [the Chinese]."[18]

Obama eschews the traditional balance-of-power approach to regional security arrangements through the strengthening of bilateral security alliances. For Obama, multilateralism or liberal institutionalism is more appropriate for Asian security. In comparison to McCain's proposal of a "quadrilateral security partnership among the major Asia-Pacific democracies: Australia, India, Japan, and the United States," which is perceived by China as an unfriendly gesture, Obama declares that he will:

> "Work to forge a more effective framework in Asia that goes beyond bilateral agreements, occasional summits, and ad hoc arrangements, such as the six-party talks on North Korea. We [Americans] need an inclusive infrastructure with the countries in East Asia that can promote stability and prosperity and help confront transnational threats, from terrorist cells in the Philippines to avian flu in Indonesia."[19]

---

[14] John McCain, "An Enduring Peace Built on Freedom," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 6 (November/December 2007), p.29.
[15] "A Strong Military in a Dangerous World," cited in http://www.johnmccain.com/ Informing/ Issues/054184f4-6b51-40dd-8964-54fcf66a1e68.htm.
[16] "Sen. McCain Addresses Committee of 100 Annual Dinner," 11 April 2005, cited in http://www.conference.committee100.org/2005/files/McCain_transcript.pdf.
[17] Barack Obama, "Renewing American Leadership," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 4 (July/August 2007), p. 7.
[18] "The Democrats' First 2008 Presidential Debates," *New York Times*, April 2007, cited in http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/27/us/politics/27debate_transcript.html?_r=1&oref=slogin.
[19] Obama, "Renewing American Leadership," p. 12; McCain, "An Enduring Peace Built on Freedom," p. 29.

In the context of China's human rights practices, Obama's position is aligned with McCain's. Obama also suggests President Bush not to participate in the opening ceremony of Beijing Olympics. McCain believes Sino-American relations are conditional upon how China treats its own people. Therefore, for McCain, "until China moves toward political liberalization, our relationship will be based on periodically shared interests rather than the bedrock of shared values."[20] What Obama is concerned with the most is not China's military threat or human rights records but the potential ramifications of Chinese economic might. Obama does not support free-trade agreements with Asian countries and commits to bringing Americans more jobs and reducing the trade imbalance with China. Obama once stated that he would stop the import of all toys from China and then clarified his position to be for only those toys containing more than a trace amount of lead. Obama co-sponsored a Senate bill (Fair Currency Act, S. 796) in May 2008 to pressure China to revalue its currency by amending the Trade Act of 1974 "to include exchange-rate misalignment by the People's Republic of China as a condition in determining market disruption to the domestic producers of a like or directly competitive product from products imported from China."[21]

Observers in Beijing are paying more attention to Obama and his future China policy than McCain as a presidential candidate. Beijing deems that Obama is likely to exert more pressure on China over human rights, environmental protection, WTO rules, trade deficit, intellectual property, exchange rate, and other areas. Beijing knows McCain and his records as a senator but may find Obama much more difficult to deal with in comparison to George W. Bush or John McCain. As Obama has a timetable to withdraw US troops from Iraq, Beijing might begin to feel the heat from a more China-focused US foreign policy, as the US has currently been more preoccupied with the Middle East.[22] One Chinese observer stationed in the US argues that Beijing tends to believe that Obama might "pursue a dovish foreign policy that is more tolerant and more open to negotiations." This might imply that Obama would have a new approach to the Sino-American relations and the Taiwan issue.[23]

## III. Taiwan and the Candidates

Both Obama and McCain believe in the one China policy but both highly regard Taiwan's democratic performance. McCain has deeper sympathy for Taiwan's predicament beside a giant

[20] McCain, "An Enduring Peace Built on Freedom," p. 29.
[21] "S796," cited in http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d110:SN00796:@@@D&summ2=m&.
[22] Roger Cohen, "Asia's Republican Leanings," *New York Times*, April 10, 2008.
[23] Yawei Liu, "Guessing at Obama's China Policy," June 5, 2008, cited in http://www.chinaelections.org/NewsInfo.asp?NewsID=128869; Sean Ding, "Does China Like Obama?" June 13, 2008, cited in http://en.chinaelections.org/newsinfo.asp?newsid=18024.

neighbor, but he also warns Taiwan that the "costs of unilaterally declaring independence plainly outweigh the benefits."[24] McCain praises Taiwan for "the peaceful transfer of political power from one government to another based on ballots in an election that was free and fair" and its testimony to "the press freedoms, democratic process and the rule of law."[25] McCain once even stated that if he were in Taiwan, he will be more suspicious of Beijing's commitment, because he, along with people in Taiwan "just saw what happened to Martin Lee in Hong Kong," and "would be very nervous about a peaceful integration into China."[26]

Similar to McCain's article in *Foreign Affairs* in pointing out the Chinese missile buildup and threat to Taiwan, Obama, in his congratulatory statement to President-elect Ma Ying-jeou, urged Beijing to draw back "the missiles it has deployed in southeast China and [implement] other security confidence-building measures." In contrast, McCain is more aware of the significance of the rise of China which is "rising faster than nearly any observer thought possible." McCain argues that managing the rise of China still "remains the single greatest long term challenge to US foreign policy," and he warns Beijing that attacking Taiwan "would be catastrophic for China's other interests."[27] In short, McCain tends to adopt a traditional approach to the security in the Taiwan Strait, through the strengthening of US military presence in East Asia and its alliance with Japan.

Obama, in comparison, pays more attention to the feasibility of upgrading Taiwan's international profile. He persuades Beijing to give Taiwan more international space, particularly in the World Health Organization.[28] Obama pledges to "reopen blocked channels of communication with Taiwan officials." Obama sent a personal letter, via former AIT chairman Richard Bush, to Ma during his inaugural ceremony on 20 May 2008, in which Obama hopes for a further reduction of cross-Strait tensions and urges Beijing to adopt a "constructive and forward-leaning way" of responding to Taipei's "practical and non-confrontational approach."

Obama also commits to "continuing to provide the arms necessary for Taiwan to deter possible

---

[24] "Sen. McCain Addresses Committee of 100 Annual Dinner," 11 April 2005, cited in http://www.conference.committee100.org/2005/files/McCain_transcript.pdf.
[25] "Statement by John McCain on the Presidential Election in Taiwan," cited in http://www.johnmccain.com/informing/news/PressReleases/3884de58-2b05-4fe0-b1bc-3463b8d9851f.htm.
[26] Abby Livingston, **"**McCain on Middle East, China, Russia," cited in http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2007/10/30/438778.aspx.

[27] "Sen. McCain Addresses Committee of 100 Annual Dinner," 11 April 2005, cited in http://www.conference.committee100.org/2005/files/McCain_transcript.pdf.
[28] Sam Graham-Felsen, "Obama Statement Congratulating Taiwanese President-Elect Ma Ying-jeou," cited in http://my.barackobama.com/page/community/post/samgrahamfelsen/gGBnPT.

aggression."[29] Ironically, Rich Bush, an Obama foreign affairs advisor (see appendix 1), once stated that holding off on Taiwan's F-16 request until after the Olympics was "a good way to balance our various interests."[30]In 2001, President George W. Bush's proposed an arms package that factored Taiwan's capacity for self-defense and the US-China Spy Plane Incident into consideration. This revealed US's perception of China as a strategic competitor. However, in the process of conducting arms sales to Taiwan, Bush received tremendous pressure internally and externally.

With President Bush's term coming to an end, the items that he has approved for sales have been placed on a hold, excluding the P3C antisubmarine warfare aircraft. This too casts doubt on other items, including the design and feasibility review of the diesel submarines. This development invites elements of uncertainty and criticism of President Bush for allowing Beijing to "exercise veto over U.S.-Taiwan relations."[31] Whether President Bush will announce the sales of 66 F-16 C/D aircrafts to Taiwan or leave this decision to Obama or McCain is uncertain. Taiwan and the U.S. are quickly entering into a crucial moment in the area of arms sales.

With the ascent of Ying-jeou Ma into presidency, Bush's view of the Taiwanese leader has improved and is likely provide support to enhance Taiwan's security. But the US will need to observe, re-evaluate and communicate with the new Taiwanese administration, one which has quickly re-shaped its policy on cross-strait relations. The US presidential and congressional elections are on the way. Domestically, Washington is facing a sub prime mortgage crisis, rising fuel prices, Iran nuclear developments, and is challenged by the pressure of ending war in Afghanistan and Iraq; the US can only divert so much attention to Taiwan.

Should Taiwan choose peaceful unification with China or refuse to purchase weaponry, the US will be forced into a passive role. However, Ma's announcement of "no unification and no independence," and his request to China for "no war," indicate that Taiwan needs the backing of the US and Japan in its negotiations with China for a better position. Regardless of John McCain or Barack Obama's foreign policy articles or letter to President Ma (see appendix 2), all propose arms sales to Taiwan under the framework of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). Similarly, McCain and

[29] "Obama's Letter to Ma," cited in http://jting.wordpress.com/2008/05/23/obamas-letter-to-ma/; CNA, "Obama Pledges Support for Taiwan," *Taipei Times*, May 25, 2008, p. 3; CNA, "Obama Send Personal Note to Ma," *China Post*, May 22, 2008.

[30] Reuters, "Taiwan urges US to sell it F-16 jets," June 11, 2008. http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/theworld/2008/June/theworld_June579.xml&section=theworld.

[31] Gary J. Schmitt and John Tkacik, "Bush Administration Decision Weakens Taiwan's Position," July 21, 2008. http://www.aei.org/publications/filter.all,pubID.28350/pub_detail.asp

Obama have called for China to desist threatening Taiwan through missiles. However, the new American president will confront a rising China, a weak Taiwan, and a military balance tipping decisively in favor of China. Without including the diesel submarines in the arms package, the US and Taiwan will have more difficulties in maintaining a military balance in the Taiwan Strait.

Due to Bush's delay in notifying the Congress regarding the arms sales to Taiwan, the relations between the US and Taiwan and cross-Strait relations exhibit much suspiciousness and ambiguity. Similarly, this freeze and postponement of sales may exert a negative impact on the existing relations between the US and Taiwan. Beijing will use the excuse of improving cross-Straits relations to press Washington to discontinue arms sales to Taiwan according to the joint communiqué on 17 August 1982. Beijing could also convince the European Union to lift its arms embargo against China, a measure which McCain and President Bush both oppose.[32] The Ma government, under domestic financial constraint and expansion of social welfare programs, is likely to adopt a more moderate arms procurement package from the US in exchange for Chinese reduction of missiles targeting Taiwan. Furthermore, the arrangement of confidence-building measures across the Taiwan Strait may too influence the future of arms deals.

**Conclusion**

Both McCain and Obama regard China as a strategic competitor of the United States, a stance which George W. Bush had taken in his 2000 presidential campaign. Bush later abandoned this position after the 911 terrorist attack and declared a candid, constructive and cooperative relationship with China, expecting China to be a responsible stakeholder. Both McCain and Obama want a deep engagement with China and urge Beijing to bear greater international responsibilities. Obama is more inclined to take non-military approaches to convince China to play by international rules. However, that does not mean that the Obama presidency will face fewer challenges from China. Beijing will be better adjusted to the US' new administration if McCain were elected, for his policies are regarded as a continuation of those of George W. Bush.

Taiwan is well spoken of in the policies of McCain and Obama. They praise Taiwan's democratization and support strong defense for the island under the one China policy. But they will be relieved to not face the assertive Chen Shui-bian government experienced by their predecessor President Bush, which constantly surprised and angered Washington. What they might encounter is

[32] "Sen. McCain Addresses Committee of 100 Annual Dinner," 11 April 2005, cited in http://www.conference.committee100.org/2005/files/McCain_transcript.pdf.

the increasing pace of lessening tension across the Taiwan Strait under the shadow of China's rise. An Obama presidency might encourage both sides of the Taiwan Strait to develop a long framework of peace and stability in which Taiwan is militarily secure; however, in return, Taiwan's shift towards independence will be compromised.

## Appendix 1-1 Foreign Advisors for Barack Obama

| | |
|---|---|
| Jeffrey Bader | head of Brookings's China Center |
| Mark Brzezinski | a partner at law firm McGuireWoods |
| Zbigniew Brzezinski | President Carter's national security adviser |
| Richard Bush | Brookings Institute |
| Richard A. Clarke | head of Good Harbor Consulting and an ABC News contributor |
| Gregory B. Craig | a partner at law firm Williams & Connolly |
| Roger W. Cressey | Good Harbor Consulting president and NBC News consultant |
| Ivo H. Daalder | a Brookings senior fellow |
| Richard Danzig | former Secretary of the Navy |
| Philip H. Gordon | a Brookings senior fellow |
| Maj. Gen. J. (Jonathan) Scott Gration | CEO of Africa anti-poverty effort Millennium Villages |
| Frank Jannuzi | a East Asia specialist |
| Lawrence J. Korb | a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress |
| W. Anthony Lake | a professor at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service |
| James M. Ludes | executive director of the American Security Project |
| Robert Malley | International Crisis Group's Middle East and North Africa program director |
| Gen. Merrill A. ("Tony") McPeak | former Air Force chief of staff |
| Denis McDonough | Center for American Progress senior fellow |
| Samantha Power | Harvard-based human rights scholar and Pulitzer Prize winning writer |
| Susan E. Rice | a Brookings senior fellow |
| Bruce O. Riedel | a Brookings senior fellow |

| | |
|---|---|
| Dennis B. Ross | a Washington Institute for Near East Policy fellow |
| Sarah Sewall | director of Harvard's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy |
| Michael Schiffer | a program officer in Policy Analysis and Dialogue at the Stanley Foundation, |
| Daniel B. Shapiro | a lobbyist with Timmons & Company |
| Mona Sutphen | managing director of business consultancy Stonebridge |

Sources**:** http://www.cfr.org/publication/16188/foreign_policy_brain_trusts.html#4; http://www.thomascrampton.com/china/ obama- mccain-advisors- for-china- and- asia- know-them/.

## Appendix 1-2 Foreign Advisors for John McCain

| | |
|---|---|
| Richard Lee Armitage | an international business consultant and lobbyist |
| Bernard Aronson | a managing partner of private equity investment company ACON Investments |
| William L. Ball III | managing director of lobbying firm the Loeffler Group |
| Stephen E. Biegun | Ford Motors vice president of international government affairs |
| Dan Blumenthal | Vice Chairman of U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission |
| Max Boot | Council on Foreign Relations editor |
| Lorne W. Craner | International Republican Institute president |
| Lawrence S. Eagleburger | a senior public policy adviser with law firm Baker Donelson |
| Niall Ferguson | Harvard historian and Hoover Institution senior fellow |
| Rich Fontaine | McCain personal staffer |
| Michael J. Green | Japan chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies |
| Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr. | President Reagan's secretary of state |
| Robert Kagan | senior associate with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace |
| Robert Michael Kimmitt | current deputy Treasury secretary |
| Henry A. Kissinger | President Nixon and President Ford's secretary of state |

| | |
|---|---|
| Col. Andrew F. Krepinevich | president of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments |
| William Kristol | The Weekly Standard editor |
| Adm. Charles Larson | chairman of consulting firm ViaGlobal Group |
| Robert "Bud" McFarlane | a principal with Energy & Communications Solutions |
| Maj. Ralph Peters | writer and retired Army officer |
| Gen. Colin L. Powell | President George W. Bush's secretary of state |
| Peter Rodman | senior fellow at the Brookings Institution |
| James R. Schlesinger | President Nixon and President Ford's secretary of defense |
| Randy Scheunemann | a lobbyist |
| Gary Schmitt | an American Enterprise Institute scholar |
| Randy Schriver | Armitage International |
| Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft | founder of business consultancy the Scowcroft Group |
| George P. Shultz | a Hoover Institution Fellow |
| Richard S. Williamson | U.S. special envoy to Sudan |
| R. James Woolsey | a vice president at consulting company Booz Allen Hamilton |

Source: Compiled from http://www.cfr.org/publication/16194/foreign_policy_brain_ trusts. html;; http://www.thomascrampton.com/china/ obama- mccain-advisors-for-china-and-asia-know-them/.

# Appendix 2:

Senator Barack Obama's Letter to President Ma Ying-jeou

Dear President Ma:

Please accept my warmest congratulations on your inauguration as the new President of Taiwan. This is an important event in the political history of the island, one which can deepen the ties between the United States and Taiwan. A sound U.S.-Taiwan relationship will certainly be the goal of my Administration. Your inauguration also holds promise for more peaceful and stable relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits, in no small measure because you have extended the hand of peace and cooperation to Beijing.

Your election is the latest step in consolidating a democracy that has advanced over the last two decades. The people of Taiwan showed great maturity by endorsing a track of peace, prosperity, and good relations with the United States.

I sincerely hope the People's Republic of China will respond to the beginning of your presidency in a constructive and forward-leaning way. It is important for Beijing to demonstrate to the people of Taiwan that the practical and non-confrontational approach that you have taken towards the Mainland can achieve positive results. I hope that there will be progress on issues including development of economic ties, expanding Taiwan's international space, and cross-Straits security, on which you have made proposals that deserve a good-faith response.

I support the "one China" policy of the United States, adherence to the three U.S.-PRC Joint Communiqués concerning Taiwan, and observance of the Taiwan Relations Act. On that foundation, I believe that the United States should strengthen channels of communication with officials of your government. We should continue to provide the arms necessary for Taiwan to deter possible aggression. And we should support your efforts to build closer ties with the Mainland that will lay the groundwork for a mores table and predictable relationship.

Your election on March 22nd and your inauguration on May 20th were good days for the people of Taiwan, for the forces of democracy around the world, and for peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and western Pacific. I will do all that I can to support Taiwan's democracy in the years ahead.

With best wishes,

Barack Obama

Source: "Obama's Letter to Ma," cited in http://jting.wordpress.com/2008/05/23/obamas-letter-to-ma/;

# "Viewing the New World's response to the new New World: how Europeans view current US debates and positions on Asia"

**François Godement**

Professor and director, Asia Centre at Sciences Po

Senior research fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations

The world economy and international trade have just gone through an unprecedented phase of growth, and although the "emerging economies" and other terms like BRIC have registered in our consciousness, the magnitude of changes involved is not fully perceived. Nor is the fact that Asia is at the centre of a revolutionary change in world economy, and therefore also putting in question the primacy of many strategic concepts which originated in the European Old world, or in the American old New world. "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses who yearn to breath free", wrote Emma Lazarus in 1883, speaking about the "Golden Door" to the United States. The statues of liberty still stand in New York Harbour and along the Seine; one was briefly erected by Chinese students on Tiananmen in 1989. Today, according to a Pew opinion survey[1], the Chinese are the most optimistic nation in the world when it comes to their government and economy – with approval ratings above 85 %, even if this optimism does not extend to their individual livelihood[2]. For good measure, one might add that the PRC government has devised a "golden shield", China's technological answer to the open door created by the worldwide web and its 253 million Chinese netizens.

China does not capture the entire growth process of either Asia or the emerging economies. In fact, it is less unique in its explosive growth than was the case in the post-Asian financial crisis years of 1998-2002. India has taken off with 8-9 % growth rates (and after China, its GDP will pass France's, the 5th or 6th economic power, in less than a decade). The recent breakdown of the WTO Doha Round talks, pitting Europe and the United States against a coalition of the moment by China and India, gave an indication of the power shift happening in international organizations: those who cannot work a consensus with the two emerging giants, or at least with one of them, run increasingly the risk of becoming irrelevant. And almost every other Asian economy has passed the

[1] http://pewglobal.org/reports/pdf/261.pdf . The report acknowledges that the survey sample is disproportionately drawn from China's urban areas.

[2] Incredibly, a recent poll about France gives the opposite results: the French are pessimistic about government (bi a margin of 70 %), while 85 % are individually satisfied.

5% level for yearly economic growth. Only Japan, the last of the industrialized countries but today the most aged, sputters along at 1% + average growth; Facing this trend, the United States has been caught up – at last, many will say – with its current account deficit, spending and debt bubbles. Americas' expansion in the years 1992-2007 was the longest phase in its history. But now the American economy is down to European slow growth, with a prospect of stagflation. Europe, because of the intertwined nature of the financial market system, is also caught in the downward spiral: we never rode on the uptake from subprime credit, but we are now sliding on the downside. Meanwhile, China for its second quarter of 2008 suffered its slowest growth in more than years: "only" 10,1 %.

The point of this paper is not to explain why the world economic outlook is what it is: that task is beyond this writer's capacity - and we know of few economists who have predicted either China's explosive growth or the current subprime crisis in its breadth and depth. It is rather to explain how this, and other trends, are changing the political climate in Europe and the United States towards Asia in general, and China in particular. Certainties, identities, sense of security are deeply shaken by these trends. We may well think that the Asian golden years before 1997 saw a preview of this – including the ascent of the "Asian values" debate from Singapore and the neo-authoritarian school in China. But the doubts about the West's attractiveness at the end of the Clinton win-win market democracy phase were small, compared with the demoralization of the West after two terms of President G.W. Bush's brand of public diplomacy, and several setbacks for European institutions.

We might start by clips from the US presidential campaign, viewed from a popular European perspective and analysed with a hopefully more discerning lens. Barack Obama's incredible popularity in Europe is an inverted mirror image of Europeans dislike for GW Bush and his team. Obama is perceived as a world president, as a charismatic and generous mobilizer, as someone who transcends race and class – while deeply satisfactory to the liberal, post-modern culture of middle class Europe. One might add, perversely, that through an incredible degree of misunderstanding, he literally appears to be un-American, or a product of the American dream. It is only very recently, after his trip to Germany, France and the UK, that questions have been raised by the press about the lack of answers to questions Europeans might have in many areas. Whatever good or bad things may be said about this presidential candidate, it is form over content that have been appraised first.

The same vision applies, unfortunately, to John McCain. Never mind that McCain is actually a liberal and highly heterodox Republican – who would never have risen if the rank and file

GOP had not been turned desperate by the unpopularity of George W Bush. Never mind that he is a survivor and a loner, the stock image is that of a war prone conservative, a Cormack MacCarthy Arizonan character. This was not yet the case during the primaries, because the European media focused much more on the Clinton-Obama duel. Mrs. Clinton then got all the bad spin for her social, conservative, blue-collar, protectionist statements. The feminist argument never caught on with Europeans, - perhaps because Mrs Clinton so clearly shows off her brain before her legs. It is fascinating that the same Europe which was in the middle of a China-Tibet debate never caught on her trade protection line with China. Now that Clinton has receded from view, McCain has attracted all the trappings of the ugly American.

These caricatures are worth reflecting upon, because they are revealing of deeper opinion trends. Europe is conflict-adverse , shy to the use of force abroad. The Iraqi civil conflict, the long stand-off between Israel and Palestinians, the increasingly uncertain trend of events in Afghanistan reinforce an across the board aversion to military projects. Obama's polished stand – against Irak, for Afghanistan – has not caught on with European public opinion, which is as much opposed to what many politicians call an "adventure" into Afghanistan, conveniently forgetting they generally approved it. And there is minimal notice of the fact that after 5 long years and finally the "surge", the tide is shifting in Iraq: John McCain receives no credit for predicting that outcome. All European states have further diminished their military budgets in recent years – including France, where the current President and a new White Book heavily underline its necessity. These perceptions might in fact lead to a rude awakening if and when B. Obama is elected: on many issues, he might prove to be much more middle-of-the-road than his European admirers believe. The fact is also that the GW Bush administration, in its waning years, has proven much more cooperative with Europeans than in its heyday[3]: although the gap with European public opinion remains huge, relations between governments are much improved. The turn from Schroeder to Merkel, the positions taken by Sarkozy from Nato to Afghanistan, the basic continuity of a –weak – Gordon Brown cabinet to name but a few, are signs from the European perspective. From an Asian perspective, Chinese analysts often mention the surprising extent of convergence between European and American points of view, and it is a source of worry to them. Yet among democracies, can government to government cooperation be completely separate from the public opinion support that gives legitimacy?

[3] An example of which was the endorsement by the US ambassador to Nato of a « a stronger, more capable European defense capacity" (see www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/February/20080222183349eaifas0.5647394.html. )

Going beyond these opinion markers, it is striking that both candidates have in fact struck a middle-of-the-road approach to military spending and strategic issues. In early pronouncements, Obama actually sounded like a "defence Democrat": "*We must retain the capacity to swiftly defeat any conventional threat to our country and our vital interests. But we must also become better prepared to put boots on the ground in order to take on foes that fight asymmetrical and highly adaptive campaigns on a global scale (…) We should expand our ground forces by adding 65,000 soldiers to the army and 27,000 marines. We must also consider using military force in circumstances beyond self-defense in order to provide for the common security that underpins global stability -- to support friends, participate in stability and reconstruction operations, or confront mass atrocities.*"[4]. Although Obama's points have to be considered against the backdrop of his stated intention to withdraw from Iraq at a set date, it is still language that would not appear in electoral campaigns around Europe. Nor would his stand to increase by 7000 the number of US soldiers in Afghanistan – one struggles with memory to remember a campaign where a leading candidate announced a military escalation process if he was elected. One single contrast will suffice: France's Nicolas Sarkozy, who has recently pledged during the Nato Bucharest summit to send an additional 1500 soldiers to Afghanistan, has actually come out during his own presidential campaign with a statement that France would withdraw from Afghanistan: such was the political pressure. It is unclear whether Obama's recent trip to Iraq has served to deflect criticism about his stand on a set date for withdrawal – or whether it has prepared the ground for a softening of his position, should he come into office. McCain, of course, uses his military record and military issues as a backdrop for his campaign. His campaign platform includes the odd pledge that "*he will ensure that the war against terrorists is fought intelligently*", a statement which should be put in context.

Judged from a European perspective, another striking aspect appears: Asia is not figuring prominently in either candidate's campaign, nor is the China debate that was so evident in every presidential campaign since 1980 and Ronald Regan's election (and before that, of course, with the single exception of Jimmy Carter's campaign it had been the Vietnam War). Mrs. Clinton was in fact the only major candidate who took a shot at these issues, from a core Democrat concern about the economy, job loss and blue collar hostility to free imports from China. Some of Mrs. Clinton's stand has seeped into Obama's campaign, since he has pledged to "finally confront China on issues of trade", and has signalled he would oppose a free trade pact with South Korea. If one believes a June 2008 Nelson Report, his advisers on China reflect both engagement policies and strong defence credentials. Obama has also come down several times on human rights in China.

[4] Barack Obama, « Renewing American Leadership », *Foreign Affairs*, July-August 2007.

By contrast, John McCain has sprung to the defence of free trade – in a joint op-ed with cross-over Senator Joseph Lieberman, maintaining that trade with Asia had actually created "millions of jobs"[5] in the United States. His team on Asia, headed by Richard Armitage, weighs even more on the side of defence, but does not include a single hold-over from the Cheney-Rumsfeld entourage, and seems to include as informal advisers both Schulz and Kissinger. Yet his Asia piece quoted above is a ringing endorsement of US policy towards Asia, judging that Asia is the only region where the US has become more popular, not less, since 2000. It did emphasize, however, "putting allies first" in America's Asia policy. This was in fact the title chosen for a variation on the same op-ed that appeared in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*: it sounds like vintage Armitage policy from 2000 and the first GW Bush campaign. To some extent, John McCain is also credited with a reversal to a tougher line on North Korea and nuclear proliferation. It may be only good practical sense for the campaign to dissociate oneself from the bumpy negotiation process with North Korea. And we should take notice that Obama, too, had earlier said about both Iran and North Korea: "*we must never take the military option off the table*"[6].He has also met with the Dalai-Lama in Aspen, Colorado: a move which cannot please Beijing, in full campaign all over Europe against such meetings[7]. Very much like the Bush administration in its early stage, McCain has no visible use for South-East Asia. Obama, of course, has received tremendous endorsement from some Indonesian pundits by virtue of having spent some time there in his youth, but it does not seem to influence his public views. McCain has strongly endorsed the civilian nuclear energy agreement with India, something which should not endear him to Beijing. Obama voiced reservations and voted on a clause supplying the quantity of nuclear fuel supply, but after July 12 came out as saying he had always endorsed the agreement[8].

Overall, these nuances, and the trade debate, have not really entered public consciousness, unlike of course the Afghanistan and Iraq debates. So much so, that a seasoned observer can wonder whether the American presidential candidates ignore Asia at their own peril.[9] There is indeed a contrast with the way Defence secretary Robert Gates spoke at the Asian Security Summit in Singapore in May 2008. Gates, who was careful to put his presentation in the context of "*any future administration*", hardly mentioned Iraq and Afghanistan, explaining that these conflicts did not

[5] John McCain & Joseph Lieberman « Renewing America's policy », *Wall Street Journal*, May 27, 2008.
[6] Remarks to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, April 23, 2007.
[7] McCain is quoted as having regretted China's misrepresentation of the DL's ideas; but no statement about the encounter appears on the John McCain website.
[8] According to India's *Economic Times* of India, July 12, 2008; the partial contradiction was immediately seized on by the McCain campaign as a case of "flip-flop".
[9] Victor Mallet for the *Financial Times*, June 11, 2008.

distract the United States from Asia[10]: yet they are what the two presidential candidates speak about today. Interestingly, neither Gates, nor Obama nor McCain mention the Taiwan or cross strait issue. Gates skipped it in his Singapore speech. McCain's campaign site merely cites his congratulation, message to president elect Ma Ying-jeou. Obama's website is the most opaque – like some French administrative websites, there is no "search" function, which is not very apparent but exists on McCain's website. He did congratulate Ma, and there exists an "American –Asian from Taiwan" that supports him, but we could find no other mention. It would seem the Taiwan issue is now too serious, or too plain complicated, or too sensitive, to be played by either candidate.

In view of this, one may be surprised by what comes through the grapevine from places as far away, politically at least, than Tokyo, Beijing or Singapore: that governments there would much prefer a victory by John McCain rather than face the consequences of a victory by Barack Obama. In actuality, the distance does not appear as huge between the two candidates – and almost all Asian countries would seem to be reassured, at least at the level of public opinion, by a quick withdrawal from Iraq. Are we missing something?

The debate about Asia during the presidential election campaign must seem very limited. But after all, if no Asian trend after the Vietnam War has ever moved a US election, and if Iraq and perhaps Afghanistan obscure the scene, this understatement is politically understandable. By contrast, European politics might be said to be playing a game of "China and the rest".

This is not to say that are no other policies, and policy debates, than about China. Afghanistan leads to much heated public debate – with oppositions either taking a pacifist and non-interventionist stand (Germany) or accusing the government to have kept citizens in the dark about the military commitment: indeed in 2001 there was no parliamentary debate, but an intervention against the Taleban government was supported by almost all political forces. The EU Commission and other European institutions have in some way balanced the China relationship with other ties. The East Asia Guidelines, adopted in 2005 by the European Council (under British presidency) have finally been published. They read perfectly as a clone of main-stream US strategic thinking; in fact, the concluding paragraph of its introduction says: "*The US's security commitments to Japan, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan and the associated presence of US forces in the region give the US a distinct perspective on the region's security challenges. It is important that the EU is sensitive to this. Given the great importance of transatlantic relations, the EU has a strong interest in partnership and cooperation with the US on the Foreign and Security policy challenges arising*

[10] Speech by Robert Gates, 7th Asia Security Summit, may 31, 2008, Singapore, www.iiss.org .

*from East Asia.*"[11] Dated as they are – December 2005, after the embargo debate - , the Guidelines reflect conciliation and strategic dialogue with the United States – which has abated since in part because there is less worry in Washington about European action. The very fact that their publication was blocked for two years raises the interesting issue of their true level of acceptance. Following the guidelines, the EU has developed a strategic dialogue with Japan "on East Asia" that in effect balances its unspecified strategic dialogue with China, and complements a strategic dialogue with the US, also "on East Asia". It also has a strategic partnership with India. At the 17th Japan-EU Summit in May 2008, Barroso and Fukuda came out with a 38 point statement[12] which reaffirms a strategic partnership, and ranges over many sectoral and global issues. The Eu has also launched a political dialogue with Korea on development. It has established with Australia a Partnership Framework in April 2008 – the agreement seems to be a substitute for a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which proved difficult on some counts. We'll see that the EU is stuck in a negotiation with China about a PCA since January 2007 – while it has signed one with each of three Central Asian States (Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan and Uzbekistan) in 1999. Perhaps the most important turn in recent years for EU is the decision to open trade negotiations for free trade pacts with India, Thailand and Korea. Europe, which has championed multilateral trade negotiations in successive GATT and WTO rounds, had intense suspicion for bilateral free trade pacts which create a "spaghetti bowl" effect and may diminish the chances for effective multilateral concessions. In view of the rise of these pacts across the Asia-Pacific, the EU's DG trade finally joined the race: with as yet unknown results.

In at least one European country, a major political party in power has expressed the wish to balance China, by relativizing some aspects of the relationship, and by drawing a firm line between politics and economics It is Germany's CDU, which issued in October 2007 an East Asia policy document[13]. In an odd way, the paper has not been heard about since: the storm about Mrs Merkel's meeting the Dalai-Lama, with SPD members in the union government and the business wing of her own party disapproving her gesture, has probably also sidelined the CDU's policy paper. Yet Germany, the world's first exporter with many government and non-government tools, is probably the only European country which can afford a fully-blown strategy in Asia.

[11] Council of the European Union, « GUIDELINES ON THE EU'S FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY IN EAST ASIA », undated, Council Press Office.
[12] The equivalent China EU statement on November 28, 2007 had 43 points. The 6th EU-India summit statement, in November 2007, had 37 points, and much stronger language about the strategic partnership, including detailed views on the subcontinent.
[13] *Asia as a Strategic Challenge and Opportunity,* Asia-Strategy of the CDU-CSU Parliamentary Group Decision of October 2007.

But none of the above matters as much as the only game in town – relations with China. It is difficult to repeat analyses published elsewhere on European attitudes to China for the purpose of this paper[14]. The following elements are emerging.

Optimism about the European relationship with China has given way to doubts, questions and a reassessment. The causes are manifold: they include a huge trade deficit, whose rise was absolutely not forecasted by mainstream economists, and which, coupled with trends in exchange rates, surpasses the US deficit with China. Although there exsists in Europe a theoretical and political debate about the merits and demerits of free trade, some countervailing trends that arguments for free trade in the China-US relationship are missing from the European situation: monetary and financial counter-investment by China is much less important towards Europe (to wit: the gigantic sums China has already lost on the exchange rate, and is about to lose in Fanny Mae and Feddy Mac, in the grand tradition of Saudi Arabia and Japan as surplus investors on the US quasi-public markets…); the European market, however unified, is still not as deregulated and efficient as the US market, and the benefits of the low "China price" are not fully passed on to consumers; Europe does not have the kind of strategic leverage with Beijing that makes Chinese leaders sit up and listen – if not satisfy all American requests.

Another factor, of course, has been indeed the lack of traction for Europe in the political and strategic area. For this, Europeans are also to blame: disunity and competition, especially among the key states in Western Europe, the constitutional setbacks that are still preventing a – more – effective foreign an d security policy from being put in place, are key factors. As a realist power, China has not so much played European disunity as simply taken good notice of that disunity. The change of the guard in 2007 for France, Germany and the UK has not really patched up these gaps among the principals, although this caused a great deal of worry to Beijing when it happened.

At the same time, dissatisfaction is ripe about the way the relationship has been going, and this is true from the Commission and Council to the level of important member-states. It is hard to

[14] See : François Godement, (2008) « China rising: can there be an effective European strategy? », pp. 63-76 in *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. 20, n° 1, March;
(2008) « The EU and China: a necessary partnership » pp. 59-76 in *Cahiers de Chaillot* n° 109, *Partnerships for effective multilateralism*, Paris, Institut d'études de sécurité de l'Union européenne; (2008) «Europe-Asia : The Historical Limits of a "soft" Relationship» pp 27-46 in *Europe-Asia Relations* Edited by Richard Balme and Brian Bridges, Palgrave Macmillan; (2008) «How much is China's foreign Policy Shifting towards International Norms and Responsibilities- And How Should China's Partners Respond? » pp123-136 in David Shambaugh & Gudrun Wacker (editors), *American and European Relations with China* , Berlin, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, June.

assess if the recent flaps over Tibet, the Dalai-lama and attendance of the Olympic Games have increased this dissatisfaction, or if it is the dissatisfaction that fuelled unusual responses by some European leaders. But two things strike Europeans. President GW Bush can afford to meet with the Dalai Lama, criticize China on human rights, announce a high-profile gesture towards religion while attending the Olympics, without so much of a yawn from China: it seems the two strategic elements of the China-US relationship – monetary and financial symbiosis, cooperation and even co-management of the north Korean and Taiwan issues – protect the overall situation from deterioration. One constantly hears in China how much President George W. Bush will be regretted: of course, China in the past has feared every single incumbent, and has regretted every single departing President. This time, though, the trend has gone farther than at any previous moment in history. Europeans notice a second fact: although China is cooperative on issues where it has its own immediate interests, often beefed up by European cooperation programs, it has usually not moved an inch on issues where Europe has its own demands. This includes governance criteria for international cooperation in Africa (again, a dialogue with unspecified results exists with Washington, although Europe is far more present than the United States are on the ground); demands on the ratification of the first political rights covenant which were raised during the embargo debate; demands on ceilings for CO2 and climate warming emissions, on which Europe (and Japan) take a more active stand than the US so far. And of course, demands for further deregulation and liberalization of China's markets, although China claims market economy status from Europe.

None of this completely upsets a vision of China's path that is fundamentally different today from what it is in the United States – the East Asia Guidelines notwithstanding. Europeans had no beef in the Taiwan independence bid, do not feel they have any direct strategic competition with China (although some in defence circles do worry about the increasing range of China's military potential in some areas). Although Europe's trade and aid have a global reach, the reality of Europe's hard power is regional, and that lessens both the incentive and the risk of strategic dialogue with China – as with any other Asian power.

It remains to be seen if the advent of the next administration lessens, or furthers, the actual transatlantic gap over China-related issues. For the time being, it seems that the US and Europe have traded roles. While the departing Bush administration dots on its strategic dialogue with China, Europe is dissatisfied with the content of the political relationship. While a predominantly free trade attitude persists in the US administration and in the media, if not always in Congress , China's

singular lack of response to the new issues raised by Europe's trade imbalance are building up discontent.

Europe, generally thought to have found a "soft approach" to China and marginally involved in the Asia-Pacific scene is looking for ways to balance the relationship with China. The US has built what some Chinese experts call a "strategic condominium" with Beijing: it is hard to say how much of it is circumstantial (Washington's need for all the help it could get, or for non-interference, on the Middle East, and common irritation at Taiwan's politics in the past few years), and how much will endure with a new administration. What is sure, however, is that the European views on the two candidates vying for voters until November hardly consider that part of their views.

# Participants' Bios

(Arranged Alphabetically)

## Baker, Richard

Richard W. Baker is a former U.S. Foreign Service officer who has served in various Asian countries including Singapore and Indonesia. Furthermore, he was the head of the political section at the U.S. Embassy in Canberra in 1984-87. Currently, he is the special assistant to the President. His research focuses on U.S. foreign policy and policymaking and Asia Pacific regionalism, including the APEC regional forum, Southeast Asian politics and foreign policies, and Indonesia's political economy. Mr. Baker received his MPA degree in international relations from Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University.
Dr. Baker can be reached at: BakerR@EastWestCenter.org

## Brandon, John

John J. Brandon is the director of The Asia Foundation's International Relations programs, as well as the associate director of the Washington, D.C. office. Mr. Brandon managed the Foundation's "America's Role in Asia" project in 2004, which examined U.S.-Asian relations in-depth and made recommendations on U.S. policy. Mr. Brandon's other responsibilities include monitoring U.S. policy toward the Asia-Pacific region and managing program activities in Washington.

A Southeast Asia specialist by training, Mr. Brandon's opinion pieces on the region have appeared in The International Herald Tribune, The Christian Science Monitor, The Los Angeles Times, and other newspapers around the United States. He is the editor of Burma/Myanmar Towards the Twenty-First Century: The Dynamics of Continuity and Change (New York: Open Society Institute, 1997) a contributor to Burma: Prospects for a Democratic Future (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1998) and co-author of The 1990 Election in Myanmar (Washington, D.C.: The International Human Rights Law Group, 1990). He also served as a member of the Council of Foreign Relations Task Force study, chaired by former Senator Robert Kerrey, titled, *The United States and Southeast Asia: A Policy Agenda for the New Administration* (July 2001). In 2004-2005, Mr. Brandon served as a member of The Stanley Foundation's project that addressed "United States Policy in Southeast Asia: Issues and Options."
Director Brandon can be reached at: jbrandon@asiafound-dc.org.

## Cossa, Ralph

Ralph Cossa is president of the Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu, Hawaii. He is also the senior editor of the Forum's quarterly electronic journal, Comparative Connections. Cossa is a board member of the Council on U.S.-Korean Security Studies and the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, as well as a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and the ASEAN Regional Forum Experts and Eminent Persons Group. He is also a founding member of the Steering Committee of the multinational Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP).

Cossa served in the U.S. Air Force from 1966 to 1993, achieving the rank of colonel and lastly serving as special assistant to the commander in chief, U.S. Pacific Command. He previously served as the deputy director for strategic studies at the National Defense University's Institute for National Strategic Studies and earlier as a national security affairs fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. Cossa holds a B.A. in international relations from Syracuse University, an M.B.A. from Pepperdine University, and an M.S. in strategic studies from the Defense Intelligence College.
Dr. Cossa can be reached at: RACPacForum@cs.com

## Davis, Elizabeth Van Wie

Dr. Elizabeth Van Wie Davis is a professor in the College of Security Studies, Department of Regional Studies. She focuses on Chinese domestic, foreign, and defense policies as well as issues of international law.

Her work includes looking at China's role in the international community and in the Asia Pacific region. This involves looking at US-China relations, Chinese foreign policy, the security environment in Northeast Asia, and the development of China's domestic agenda.

Dr. Davis holds both a Ph.D. and M.A. in Foreign Affairs from the University of Virginia. While engaged in graduate studies, she conducted research at Beijing University, China, and completed Chinese language courses at Harvard University. Educated in the University of Chicago's Great Books program at Shimer College and Oxford University, she received her B.A. from Shimer College and completed economics courses at Harvard University and diplomacy courses at the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy.
Dr. Davis can be reached at: davise@apcss.org

## Dittmer, Lowell

Professor Dittmer received his Ph.D. from The University of Chicago in 1971. His scholarly expertise is the study of contemporary China. He teaches courses on contemporary China, Northeast Asia, and the Pacific Rim. His current research interests include a study of the impact of reform on Chinese Communist authority, a survey of patterns of informal politics in East Asia, and a project on the China-Taiwan-US triangle in the context of East Asian regional politics. Professor Dittmer's recently published books and monographs include Sino-Soviet Normalization and Its International Implications (University of Washington Press, 1992), China's Quest for National Identity (with Samuel Kim, Cornell University Press, 1993), China Under Modernization (Westview Press, 1994), and South Asia's Nuclear Crisis.
Dr. Dittmer can be reached at: dittmer@berkeley.edu

## Glosserman, Brad

Brad Glosserman is the executive director of the Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu, Hawaii, which has provided policy-oriented analysis and promoted dialogue on regional security, political, economic, and environmental issues in the Asia-Pacific region for over 25 years. He oversees all Pacific Forum programs, conferences, and publications and also directs the Pacific Forum's Young Leaders program. Glosserman is editor of *Comparative Connections*, the Pacific Forum's quarterly electronic journal, and originally wrote the section on U.S.-Japan relations; he now coauthors the regional overview with senior editor (and Pacific Forum CSIS president) Ralph Cossa.

He is coauthor of numerous monographs on U.S. foreign policy and Asian security relations and appears regularly at conferences on Asian security and foreign policy held around the world. His articles have appeared in scholarly journals throughout the region, and he has contributed chapters to various books on regional security. Prior to joining Pacific Forum, he was a member of the *Japan Times* editorial board for 10 years and wrote a weekly column on technology; he continues to serve as a contributing editor. While in Japan, he lectured on Japanese politics at the Institute for the International Education of Students. Glosserman holds a J.D. from the George Washington University, an M.A. from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, and a B.A. from Reed College.
Dr. Glosserman can be reached at: bradgjt@yahoo.com

## Godement, François

François Godement is president of Asia Centre, Centre études Asie. He is also professor at Sciences Po, Paris and the founder and former director of Centre Asie Ifri at the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, Paris (1985-2005). He helped found the European committee of CSCAP (Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific) which he chairs, and is a cofounder of CAEC (Council for Asia-Europe Cooperation). He is a consultant to the Policy planning staff of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He specializes in East Asian international relations and strategy, regional integration and Chinese contemporary affairs.
François Godement is a graduate of the Ecole Normale Supérieure de la rue d'Ulm (Paris), where he majored in history, and a former postgraduate student at Harvard University. He holds a Ph.D. in contemporary history, has received teaching appointments at the University of California (Irvine) and Inalco. He has also been a consultant to OECD, the European Union and the World Bank. Prof. Godement writes frequently on Chinese and East Asian strategic and international affairs, issues of integration and conflicts.
Dr. Godement can be reached at: f.godement@centreasia.org

## Hernandez, Carolina G.

Dr. Hernandez is currently Professor of Political Science at the University of the Philippines and the holder of its Carlos P. Romulo Professorial Chair in International Relations. She is the founder and President of the Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, an independent, non-profit think tank on foreign policy, domestic politics, and security concerns and development issues. In 1989-1990, she served as a member of the presidential Commission that investigated the failed coup of 1989 and produced a final report that is seen as a critically important document in Philippine re-democratization. Dr. Hernandez has widely published in international, regional and Philippine academic journals and has written in the fields of regional security and foreign relations; military in politics, democracy and development, and Philippine domestic politics and foreign policy.

Professor Hernandez holds a B.S. in Foreign Service (cum laude) from the University of the Philippines, and a M.A. in International Relations from the University of Karachi where she finished first in her class. She also did graduate work in political philosophy at Duke University and holds a Ph.D. degree in Political Science from the State University of New York at Buffalo.
Dr. Hernandez can be reached at: carol_g_hernandez@yahoo.com

## Kelly, James

James A. Kelly is a former assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs from 2001 to 2005. From 1994 to 2001, Mr. Kelly was president of Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu. Pacific Forum, the autonomous Pacific arm of CSIS in Washington, D.C, has analyzed and led dialogue on Asia-Pacific political, security, and economic/business issues since 1975. From 1989 to 1994, Mr. Kelly was president of EAP Associates, Inc., of Honolulu, which provided international business consulting services with an Asia/Pacific focus to private clients. Earlier, he served at the White House as a special assistant for national security affairs to President Ronald R eagan and as the senior director for Asian affairs for the National Security Council from 1986 to 1989 under Presidents Reagan and George H.W. Bush. From 1983 to 1986, Mr. Kelly was at the Pentagon as the deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs (East Asia and Pacific). He earned an M.B.A. from the Harvard School of Business Administration 1968. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy (B.S., 1959) and the National War College (1977). He served in the U.S. Navy from 1959 to 1982, concluding his active duty as a captain in the Supply Corps.
Former Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly can be reached at: kellypacf@aol.com

## Kim, Heung-Kyu

Heung-kyu Kim (Ph.D., University of Michigan) serves as professor at the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Korea. Dr. Kim also worked as an advisor to the Presidential Advisory Commission on Foreign Affairs and National Security and a participant at ROK-China Strategic Dialogues. His other assignments currently include Chair of Chinese Foreign Affairs and National Security Committee of Korea-China Think-net and a Standing Member of China Forum, the Korean Federation of Industries.

Dr. Kim has written various articles regarding Chinese politics, foreign policy, and security issues including “The Anti-Secession Law and Taiwan Straits Relations.,” “China's Military Buildup and Its Implication,” “Chinese Foreign Policy and Sino-North Korean Relations under Hu Jintao's Leadership,” “China’s Strategic Views toward U.S. Security Policies in East Asia,” and others.

Dr. Kim holds both a B.A. (1987) and a M.A. (1989) in International Relations at Seoul National University. Also, he studied at the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of Michigan during the period of 1992-1993. He completed his Ph.D in Political Science at the

University of Michigan in 2002. Dr. Kim speaks Korean, Chinese, and English fluently. He is married with one son and one daughter.
Dr. Kim can be reached at: hkkim63@gmail.com

## McDevitt, Mike

Rear Admiral Michael McDevitt, US Navy (ret) is a vice president and director of the Center for Strategic Studies, a division of the Center for Naval Analyses (CAN).

McDevitt held four at-sea commands; including an aircraft carrier battlegroup. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in U.S. history from the University of Southern California and a master's degree in American diplomatic history from Georgetown University. He is also a graduate of the National War College in Washington, DC.

He was the director of the East Asia Policy office for the Secretary of Defense during the first Bush Administration. He also served for two years as the director for strategy, war plans and policy (J-5) for U.S. CINCPAC.

McDevitt concluded his 34 year active duty career as the commandant of the National War College in Washington, DC. In addition to his management and leadership responsibilities as the founder of the Center for Strategic Studies he has been an active participant in conferences and workshops regarding security issues in East Asia.
Admiral McDevitt can be reached at: MCDEVITM@cna.org.

## Lin, Cheng-Yi

Dr. Lin is currently a research fellow at The Institute of European and American Studies of the Academia Sinica, in Taipei and the coordinator of programs at the Institute for National Policy Research (INPR) in Taipei. His areas of specialization are international relations, national security policy and Sino-American relations. His most recent publications include "China, the US and the Security of Taiwan," Asian Affairs, 2004: "Taiwan's Campaign for United Nations Participation," *Krakoskie Studia Miedzynarodowe*, 2004, and *Assessing the Lee Teng-hui Legacy in Taiwan's Politics* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002). He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Virginia, USA.
Dr. Lin can be reached at: cylin@sinica.edu.tw

## Lin, Wen-Cheng

Wen-cheng Lin is President of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy and Editor-in-Chief of the Taiwan Democracy Quarterly. He is also Dean of College of Social Sciences and the acting director of the Institute of Mainland China Studies at the National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan. He has been a supervisory board member of the Strait Exchange Foundation from December 2002 to December 2005 and an advisor to the Jia-yi County Government since 2001. He was a Senior Advisor (a government ministerial-level position) to President Chen in the National Security Council in 2003-2004. Before joining the National Security Council, he was the director for both the Institute of Mainland China Studies and Sun Yat-sen America Center at the National Sun Yat-sen University. He received his Ph.D. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. His research interest includes China's foreign policy, cross-strait relations, negotiation, national security, and East Asia security. He has published one book, edited one book, co-authored three books, and published more than fifty articles in both Chinese and English. Some of his publications include *China's Strategy in Negotiations*, "China's Policy toward Multilateral Security Mechanisms in East Asia", *China's Voting Behavior in the United Nations Security Council*, and "China's Policy toward United Nations Peacekeeping Operations".
Dr. Lin can be reached at: wencheng@mail.nsysu.edu.tw

## Liu, Fu-Kuo

Fu-kuo Liu is currently a Research Fellow at the Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, Taipei. He served over two years in the government as Chairman, Research and Planning Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He received his doctoral degree in politics from the University of Hull, the United Kingdom.

His overseas academic affiliation includes visiting fellowship at the Department of International Business, Economics, and Politics, Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo (2000), Research Associate, Asian Studies Program, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University (2000-2001) and Visiting Scholar, Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C (2006-2007)

He has been involved in regional security dialogue (track two process) for many years and is one of Taiwan's active members. His research covers regional security issues, comprehensive security, Taiwan security and foreign policy, and the cross-strait peace progress. He worked closely on possible CBMs across the Taiwan Strait. His co-edited book "Regionalism in East Asia: Paradigm Shifting?" was published by Curzon-Routledge in London in 2003. He is

presently working on Terrorism in Southeast Asia and the security of South China Sea. His book Terrorism in Southeast Asia and the Security of Asia Pacific was published by Cross-Strait Interflow Prospect Foundation in Taipei in 2007.
Dr. Liu can be reached at: fkliu@nccu.edu.tw

## Lo, Chih-Cheng

Chih-cheng Lo is Associate Professor and Chairman of Political Science Department at Soochow University and Secretary General of Taiwan-Russia Association. He is currently an executive committee member of Taiwan Thinktank and was the executive director at the Institute for National Policy Research (2002-2005). He was the host of CTS's *Global Newsweek* TV program (2004-2006) and Public Television Service's *World News Tonight*. (2003-2004) Since July 2002, Professor Lo has been a board member of the International Cooperation and Development Fund, Taiwan's foreign aid agency. Dr. Lo previously held the post of Chairman of the Research and Planning Board at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2000-2002). He also served as Secretary-General of the Taiwanese Political Science Association during 1997-98. His research interests include East Asian security, cross-Strait relations, and U.S. foreign policy. His most recent publications include *Deconstructing "One China"* (Taipei: Taiwan Thinktank, 2007), "New Leadership Team, New Approaches to Taiwan?" in Tun-Jen Cheng et al., eds., *China Under Hu Jintao* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co., 2005) and *The New Leadership: Challenges and Opportunities after the 16th Party Congress* (co-eds with Yun-han Chu & Ramon Myers, Cambridge University Press, 2004). He received his Ph.D. from the Political Science Department at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1995.
Dr. Lo can be reached at: lo@scu.edu.tw

## Morrison, Charles E.

Charles E. Morrison has been president of the East-West Center since 1998. He has had extensive involvement in the conceptualization, organization and funding of policy-oriented educational research and dialogue projects in both Japan and the United States, and has long been involved in promoting the concept of an Asia Pacific community.

In September 2005, he was elected as the international chair of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC). In addition, he is a founding member of the U.S. Asia Pacific Council, the U.S. National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation and a member of the U.S. Committee for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific, a past chair of the U.S. National Consortium of APEC Study Centers. A former director of the Center's Program on

International Economics and Politics, he is also a former U.S. Senate aide and a research adviser to bi-national Japan-U.S. commissions.

He holds a Ph.D. in international relations from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.
Dr. Morrison can be reached at: morrisoc@EastWestCenter.org

## Nakai, Yoshifumi

Yoshifumi Nakai has been teaching Chinese Politics and International Relations at the Department of Political Studies, Gakushuin University, Tokyo, Japan since 2003. From 1997 to 2003, he had been a Senior Researcher, Area Studies Department I, at the Institute of Developing Economies. In 2000, Dr. Nakai spent a year at the Asia/Pacific Research Center, Stanford University and the year 2001 at the Research Center for Contemporary China, Beijing University. He graduated from Tohoku University with a B.L. in Politics and from Indiana University with an M.A. in comparative politics. He earned a Language Certificate (Chinese) from Beijing University in 1981. He has received a Ph.D. in comparative politics at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He was Researcher at the Consulate General of Japan in Hong Kong in 1991-1994, and Senior Researcher, Center for Asia-Pacific Affairs at the Japan Institute of International Affairs in 1994-1997. His recent publications include "Japan's views toward the U.S.-China relationship: Where have all the China threats gone?" in Jane Skanderup ed., *Toward a Stronger Foundation for the U.S., Japan, and China Relations*, The CSIS Pacific Forum Internet publication, *Issues & Insights*, Vol. 04-06, October (2004); "The Undercurrents in the Chinese-Japanese Relations," *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies* (2005) Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 1-22; "Japan's Views on the Rise of China and Its Implications: Bureaucratic Interests and Political Choices," *forthcoming*.
Dr. Nakai can be reached at: yoshifumi.nakai@gakushuin.ac.jp

## Pollard, Vincent

Vincent K. Pollard specializes in comparative politics. He teaches Asian Studies, politics and research design courses in the University of Hawai'i System. Dr. Pollard has been a Visiting Research Fellow (and Fulbright Scholar) at the University of the Philippines-Diliman. Earlier in 2008, he was a Short-term Visiting Scholar in the Center for Cold War International History Studies, East China Normal University. He examined case studies of power sharing in society and foreign policy making, Pollard's book Globalization, Democratization and Asian Leadership (Ashgate, 2004) is an application and a critique of democratic theory. He is author

of fifty reviews of books or films for professional newsletters and journals. Pollard also edits several Asian politics Internet projects <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~pollard/>. Among these are the Taiwan Cross-Strait Directory and the Chinese Cultures Abroad WWW Virtual Library.
Dr. Pollard can be reached at: pollard@hawaii.edu

## Roy, Dennis

Denny Roy's work has focused mostly on Asia Pacific security issues, particularly those involving China. His interests include not only traditional military-strategic matters and foreign policy, but also international relations theory and human rights politics.

Before joining the East-West Center in 2007, Roy worked at the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu for seven years, rising to the rank of Professor after starting as a Research Fellow. In 1998-2000 Roy was a faculty member in the National Security Affairs Department at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. There he taught courses on China, Asian history, and Southeast Asian politics. He also designed and taught an innovative course titled Human Rights and National Security in Asia.

Roy has five years of work and residency experience in Taiwan, Korea and Singapore. He has made presentations at academic conferences in China, Thailand, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Japan and Australia. He received his Ph.D. in political science from University of Chicago.
Dr. Roy can be reached at: RoyD@eastwestcenter.org

## Salmon, Charles

Ambassador Charles B. Salmon, Jr., joined the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in August 1996 after he retired from the Department of State. He provides advice on U.S. foreign policy, specifically as it relates to Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean area nations. Ambassador Salmon is also a member of the Center's academic department.

Ambassador Salmon's career with the Department of State began in 1964 when he served as Foreign Service Officer in the Bureau of Public Affairs, and in 1966 as Staff Assistant in the Bureau for Far Eastern Affairs. In 1967, he served in Vienna, Austria as Consular Officer. From there, he moved to Saigon where he was Assistant Mission Coordinator in 1969. In 1971, he returned to Europe for assignment as Political Officer in The Hague, Netherlands. From 1974-77, he served as Political Officer in Manila. In 1978, he became Director of the Office of Human Rights, Department of State, Washington D.C. In 1980, he returned to the Asia-Pacific region as Deputy Chief of Mission, Wellington, New Zealand. He received a

Bachelor of Arts in History from Fordham University and a Master of Arts in History from Columbia University. He is also a graduate of the National War College, Washington D.C. Mr. Salmon served two years as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army.
Ambassador Salmon can be reached at: salmonc@apcss.org

## Taylor, Brendan

Dr. Taylor is currently a lecturer at the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University. He has served as a lecturer at the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University and the course coordinator for the Graduate Studies in Strategy and Defence program elective, "The US and East Asian Security" from 2004 to 2005. Professor Taylor's specialties include theories of Northeast Asian security, American foreign policy, economic statecraft and alliance politics. His recent major publications include: "US-China Relations After September 11: A Long Engagement or Marriage of Convenience?" *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol.59, no.2, June 2005; "Instability in the US-ROK Alliance: Korean Drift or American Shift?" Working Paper No. 392, SDSC; *Economic Statecraft and the Sole Superpower: More State than Craft*, Ph.D thesis, Australian National University, Canberra, August 2002. Professor Taylor obtained his Ph.D. from the Australian National University.
Dr. Taylor can be reached at: brendan.taylor@anu.edu.au

## Tien, Hung-Mao

Dr. Tien is the president and chairman of the board of the Institute for National Policy Research (INPR). Dr. Tien has also served as the minister of foreign affairs, representative to the United Kingdom and senior policy advisor to former President Lee Teng-Hui. He is the author and editor of ten books in English, he has been invited to speak at Harvard, Stanford, UC Berkeley, Oxford, Cambridge, University of Chicago, the Council on Foreign Relations (New York), and the French Institute of International Relations, among others. His publications include *Democratization in Taiwan, Implications for China* and *China Under Jiang Zemin*. Dr. Tien received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin.
Dr. Tien ca be reached at: inpr2@ms1.hinet.net

## Wang, T.Y. Philip

Philip Tzann-Yeu Wang is currently the Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Honolulu. Director Wang entered the Foreign Service in 1980, in which he worked as a senior staff at the Department of North American Affairs, MOFA. Since then, he has taken up posts in various Taipei Economic and Cultural Offices in the United States and the Embassy of the Republic of China at the Commonwealth of Dominica. Prior to his current position in Honolulu, he was the Deputy Director of the Department of Archives and Information Management at the Taiwanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Director Wang is actively involved with Rotary Club in countries where he previously served. He has been a Rotary Member for the past 22 years. He received his undergraduate degrees from Fu-Jen Catholic University, with a degree in Sinology.
Director Wang can be reached at: wang54@gmail.com.

## Wu, Yu-Shan

Yu-shan Wu is a distinguished research fellow and director of the Institute of Political Science at Academia Sinica, Taiwan. He is also a jointly appointed professor at the Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University. His research is focused on comparative socialist transitions (both political and economic), democratic consolidation and constitutional engineering in nascent democracies, cross-Strait relations, and international relations theories.
Dr. Wu can be reached at: yushanwu@gate.sinica.edu.tw