



Pacific Forum Update

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Issues & Insights is Pacific Forum's publication series that includes special reports (SR), conference reports (CR), and working papers (WP). These in-depth analyses cover a range of topics and are published on an occasional basis. The following have been published in 2020 and are available online [here](#).

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, WP 1 – Maritime Issues in the Indo-Pacific: Building a Shared Vision of “Free and Open”](#) By John Bradford

Pacific Forum, the Yokosuka Council on Asia Pacific Studies (YCAPS), and Tama University's Center for Rule-making Strategies, with support from the US Embassy in Japan, organized a conference discussing maritime issues in the Indo-Pacific as they relate to the “Free and Open” concept, hosted by the Center for Rule-making Strategies in Tokyo Nov. 21-22, 2019. Approximately 35 senior officials, scholars, scientists, and security specialists attended in their personal capacity for an off-the-record discussion. The closed-door conference covered an array of maritime challenges including territorial conflicts, erosion of the rule of law, piracy and other criminal activities, unsustainable fishing practices, and environmental destruction. Synchronizing the efforts of uniquely qualified experts, this conference and its initiatives developed important messages for regional and global thinkers. The conference provided a platform for professionals to address a multitude of growing concerns while creating an environment encouraging creative problem framing and problem solving. Much of the conversation focused on China maritime activities, which were generally seen as detrimental to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. Other discussions focused on the actions that states might take to address the range of regional maritime challenges. Finally, energy considerations for the US-Japan alliance were considered in light of challenges to the flow of resources by sea and improved coordination in infrastructure investment and regional cooperation building was suggested.

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, WP 2 – Preparing for the Worst: Was North Korea's Decision to Develop Nuclear Weapons Rational?](#) By Sanghoon Kim

North Korea's foreign policy decision-making procedure is highly centralized to a single leader or, at most, a few political/military elites. While democratic governments are restrained both horizontally and vertically, authoritarian regimes are relatively free of constraints from the public. This paper examines the motivations behind North Korea's

nuclear weapons development in light of the rational deterrence model, then discusses the strategic implications of a rational, or irrational, North Korea. It concludes that North Korea's decision to develop nuclear weapons was rationally motivated by the deteriorating security environment surrounding the state, but that this will not guarantee deterrence.

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, CR 1 – Deepening Progressive Partnerships: TAYLE & PF Young Leaders](#) By Ariel Stenek

Under the TAEF's TAYLE program, select Pacific Forum Young Leaders and peers from Southeast and South Asia are invited to Taiwan to participate in the annual *Yushan Forum: Asian Dialogue for Innovation and Progress*, which takes place in October and coincides with the country's National Day celebrations. The theme, “Deepening Progressive Partnerships in Asia,” focused on the progressive partnerships and achievements in the areas of economic and technological exchange, talent cultivation, sustainable development, civil society development, think tank collaboration, cultural exchange, and youth leadership within the region. For the 2019 TAYLE-Young Leader cohort, nine promising youths from Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and the United States, were given the opportunity to attend the Yushan Forum's seven thematic sessions over a span of two days, affording them the opportunity to engage international leaders and subject matter experts, as well experience Taiwan from a different lens. Before returning to their countries, the Young Leaders discussed among themselves their key takeaways from the experience as well as possible areas of cooperation between Taiwan and their countries.

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, CR 2 – Far, Far More Than Meets the Eye: Extended Deterrence in Complex Crises in Northeast Asia](#) By Brad Glosserman

The Pacific Forum, with support from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), brought 41 officials and experts from the United States, Japan, and the Republic of Korea (ROK), along with eight Pacific Forum Young Leaders, all attending in their private capacity, to Maui, Hawaii, Sept. 5-6, 2019 to explore the three countries' thinking about extended deterrence and prospects for and obstacles to strengthened trilateral security cooperation. A two-move tabletop exercise (TTX) was focused on

concerted and coordinated efforts by China and North Korea to revise the status quo in Northeast Asia.

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, WP 3 – The Role of Regional Organizations in Building Cyber Resilience: ASEAN and the EU](#) By Eugenio Benincasa

This paper explores the role of regional organizations in crafting solutions that are able to address both the scale and cross-border nature of cyber threats, as well as the challenges inherent to an anarchical international system. It focuses on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union (EU) and the cybersecurity frameworks they have developed in the last few years. The EU has significantly improved regional cyber resilience and cooperation by setting out ambitious goals, enhancing information sharing, and harmonizing practices across its member states. In contrast, ASEAN has a lack of a strong unifying governance or legal framework, which limits the collective capability of the region to capitalize on shared knowledge to prevent and mitigate cyber threats. The paper aims to elaborate on relevant measures that could be implemented in ASEAN based on a comparative analysis with the EU. Despite the stark differences between the two organizations, there is common ground in some areas for the development of policy recommendations aimed at enhancing ASEAN's cyber resilience, eliminating the need to reinvent the wheel in key policy areas. To this end, this paper analyzes the two organizations' cybersecurity frameworks in line with the four pillars of cyber capacity building identified by the European Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) and adjusted to a regional context: overarching regional strategy, institutional framework for cyber threat prevention and response, harmonization of cybercrime and data privacy legislation, and cyber awareness and hygiene.

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, WP 4 – Conflict and Coronavirus: How COVID-19 is Impacting Southeast Asia's Conflicts](#) By Jennifer Howe

Since COVID-19 spread out of China in January 2020, it has caused unprecedented damage to the global economy and national health systems. The virus also has serious ramifications for conflicts throughout the world. This paper reviews the literature up to its time of writing in July 2020 in order to assess how the coronavirus crisis has impacted conflicts in Southeast Asia. The paper found that the pandemic has been detrimental to conflict resolution in the region—it has hampered peacebuilding efforts and contributed to rising tensions. Moreover, the outbreak has enabled extremist organizations to operate more freely and make government lockdowns and the economic downturn a part of their recruitment messaging. Conflict-affected populations are confronted by the dual impact of disease and violence—health systems have been weakened by years of conflict, violence is obstructing the delivery of aid, and

forcibly displaced communities are living in unsanitary and crowded camps, incapable of handling a viral outbreak. Women in unstable settings are particularly vulnerable as gender-based violence increases, while services essential to their health and wellbeing are being forced to close. The paper concludes with policy recommendations in view of the effects the virus is having on Southeast Asian conflicts. Recommendations emphasize the importance of supporting local peacebuilders and implementing response and recovery measures that work towards a fairer post-pandemic society.

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, WP 5 – Securing the Sonobuoy Supply Chain: How Australia Can Help Underwrite Anti-Submarine Warfare Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific](#) By Tom Corben

This paper highlights the challenges afflicting the sonobuoy supply chain, a key item in the prosecution of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) operations by the United States and many of its key allies. After a brief post-Cold War hiatus, significant improvements in the submarine fleets of China and Russia have seen ASW revived as a core mission for the United States Navy. However, growing demand for ASW operations has exposed shortcomings in the maintenance, procurement, and readiness of US maritime aircraft fleets essential to prosecuting those missions. This paper argues that, as a result, US allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific—many operating US-made maritime aircraft—will likely be required to step-up their own contributions to regional ASW operations. However, serious vulnerabilities in the sonobuoy supply chain accessed by all of these states threatened to undermine collective efforts, challenges which predate the global COVID-19 pandemic. In its current form, any disruption to the sonobuoy supply chain would disproportionately impact allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific at the same time they are being asked to step-up their contributions to collective ASW. This paper argues that Australia is well-positioned to address these challenges, given its history of innovation and manufacturing in advanced sonar technologies; recent investments in sovereign defense industry capabilities and military infrastructure; deep alliance relationship with the US; and growing network of ASW-oriented regional security partnerships.

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, SR 1 – On the Value of Nuclear Dialogue with China](#) By David Santoro and Robert Gromoll

Sponsored by DTRA and managed by the US Air Force Academy (USFA), this special report provides an assessment of the Track-1.5 “China-US Strategic Nuclear Dynamics Dialogue” based on the observations and experiences of two long-time participants, David Santoro and Robert Gromoll, as well as information provided by meetings reports compiled by the Pacific Forum and Naval

Postgraduate School, the two principle US convening organizations. The report begins with a discussion about the structure and utility of the Track1.5 dialogue before moving to examine the efforts to move to a Track-1 process. Next, the report explains that, during the course of the Track-1.5 dialogue, the broader US-China strategic relationship changed considerably, with China gaining more power and influence in the world, and therefore more ability to assert itself vis-à-vis the United States, including on strategic nuclear issues. Finally, the report reviews the key topics discussed by the two sides and explains how that discussion has evolved over time. It reviews the following topics: strategic stability, notably the concepts of mutual vulnerability and no-first use; ballistic missile defense; extended deterrence; escalation and crisis management; arms control; transparency; and nonproliferation. The paper closes with a short conclusion and prospects for the future.

[Issues & Insights Vol. 20, WP 6 – The Belt and Road Initiative: The Sources of China’s Conduct, and India and Japan’s Responses](#) By Hao Nan

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is now more than seven years old, projecting ever-increasing influence throughout the world while stimulating growing concerns about China’s motives and behavior. This large-scale and multifaceted program benefits China, and not only economically, but in the politico-security sense. In response, India has stuck to its stance of distancing itself from the BRI while Japan has evolved past its initial rejection to selectively engage with the initiative. Tracing Chinese motives and conduct, along with the Indian and Japanese responses, back to the respective countries’ long-existing schools of strategic thought enables us to better decode current affairs and predict future dynamics.