

6. China's new security multilateralism and its implications for the Asia–Pacific region

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I. Introduction

Alienated from the regional and global community for much of its early history in the 1950s and 1960s, the People's Republic of China viewed alliances and other multilateral security mechanisms with deep suspicion. Indeed, barely a year after its founding in 1949, China was at war with the international community, with bloody clashes between the Chinese 'People's Volunteers' and United Nations forces under United States command on the Korean peninsula.¹ By the mid- to late 1950s, with the steady establishment of the US alliance structure in Asia, China was increasingly surrounded by the USA's bilateral and multilateral security relationships with: Australia (beginning in 1951); New Zealand from 1951; the Philippines from 1951; the Republic of Korea (South Korea) from 1953; Japan from 1954; Taiwan from 1954; Thailand from 1954; the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) from 1954; and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) from 1959.² China's own 'security system', based on an ill-fated alliance with the Soviet Union, collapsed in suspicions and recriminations in 1960.

With this history behind it, and although it became a UN member state in 1971, China only reluctantly came to take part in some global multilateral security mechanisms in the 1970s and 1980s. Unfamiliar with international bodies, and often perceiving them as 'traps' to tie it into agreements and systems which it had had no hand in creating, China was generally a passive participant or obstructionist presence in security multilateralism during this period.³ At the regional level, China was caught in a cold war bipolar limbo:

¹ For more on the Korean War see Foot, R., *The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950–53*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, N.Y., 1985).

² The Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty (Manila Pact) was agreed on 8 Sep. 1954 by Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the USA. SEATO was disbanded on 30 June 1977. The text of the treaty is available at URL <<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/intdip/usmulti/usmu003.htm>>. CENTO was formed on 19 Aug. 1959 by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and the UK. The USA was an associate member. The predecessor of CENTO—the Baghdad Pact or Middle East Treaty Organization—was formed on 24 Feb. 1955 by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and the UK. CENTO was dissolved on 26 Sep. 1979. The text of the Baghdad Pact is available at URL <<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/mideast/baghdad.htm>>.

³ For an overview of China's approach to the international community and multilateral institutions and norms prior to the 1990s see, e.g., Zhang, Y., *China in International Society since 1949: Alienation and Beyond* (Palgrave Macmillan: Houndmills, 1999); Chan, G., *Chinese Perspectives on International*

siding first with the USA in opposition to Soviet expansionism in the late 1970s and early 1980s, then distancing itself from the USA and seeking rapprochement with the Soviet Union by the late 1980s, but in any event neither encouraging developments in regional multilateral security nor participating in them.

The strategic analysis of China's paramount leader of the time, Deng Xiaoping, played a critical role in the decision to pursue a more multilateralist approach in foreign and security policy. Deng argued that the world was tending towards peace and development, that the possibility of a world war was remote, and that China should work within a stable international environment in which it could carry out much-needed domestic development.

The pattern of reluctance and scepticism began to change following the Sino-Soviet summit meeting on 15–18 May 1989, the June 1989 Tian'anmen Square crisis and China's subsequent diplomatic breakout strategy, and the collapse of the bipolar system with the end of the cold war.⁴ On 29 December 1991 China and Russia signed a protocol expressing the 'mutual desire to develop a "good-neighbourly", friendly relationship' based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.⁵ Since the early 1990s, and in particular since the early 2000s, China has increasingly engaged in a range of multilateral security mechanisms. At the global level, China became a less passive player at the UN Security Council and began contributing to UN peacekeeping operations. It also became an increasingly active adherent of international arms control and non-proliferation treaties and agreements. At the regional level, China participated in the Association for South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) from its launch in 1994, initiated the Shanghai Five process with its Central Asian neighbours and engaged more actively in a host of semi- and unofficial 'track two' security dialogue mechanisms.⁶ The expansion of Chinese participation was reflected in the burgeoning analytical literature on the topic and the active debate among observers of China as to whether the nation's increased multilateral security participation represented a true normative embrace of multilateralism or if it was merely a tactical shift born of short-term, narrow self-interest.⁷

Relations: A Framework for Analysis (Palgrave Macmillan: Houndmills, 1999); and Kim, S. S., *China, the United Nations and World Order* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, N.J., 1979).

⁴ For more on the summit meeting see Norris, R. S. *et al.*, 'Nuclear weapons', *SIPRI Yearbook 1990: World Armaments and Disarmament* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1990), pp. 47–48.

⁵ The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence are: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non-aggression; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefits; and peaceful coexistence. See Chen, Q., 'Sino-Russian relations after the break-up of the Soviet Union', ed. G. Chufirin, SIPRI, *Russia and Asia: The Emerging Security Agenda* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), p. 289.

⁶ For the member states of ASEAN see the glossary in this volume; for the member states of the ARF see note 9. The Shanghai Five became the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001; see section II below.

⁷ See, e.g., Lampton, D. M. (ed.), *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, Calif., 2001); Economy, E. and Oksenberg, M. (eds), *China Joins the World: Progress and Prospects* (Council on Foreign Relations: New York, N.Y., 1999); Johnston, A. I. and Evans, P., 'China's engagement with multilateral security institutions', eds A. I. Johnston and R. S. Ross, *Engaging China: The Management of an Emerging Power* (Routledge: London, 1999), pp. 235–72; and Kim, S. S. (ed.), *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Policy Faces*

Improving relations with major neighbouring states and reassuring smaller regional states of its benign intentions allows China to focus on its domestic modernization and economic development. Chinese strategists have concluded from their experience that security multilateralism suits the country's overall security strategy well. While the debate is not yet closed, today there is increasing evidence not only that China is participating more proactively in security multilateralism—including taking the initiative to establish and sustain new regional security mechanisms—but also that it perceives the value of such mechanisms, both for its own security and for that of the Asia–Pacific region more broadly, from the Korean peninsula to Kashmir. This marks a dynamic shift in China's foreign policy, suggests an increasingly influential political and security role for China in the region, and carries important implications for regional and global security affairs.

This chapter examines and analyses these important developments by describing the range of multilateral security mechanisms in which China takes part. Section II discusses regional multilateral security institutions, and section III describes regional multilateral security negotiations, dialogues and diplomacy. Section IV discusses China's active military engagement, including military-to-military activities and participation in UN peacekeeping operations. Section V examines potential obstacles to the further development of Chinese multilateralism, and the final section offers conclusions on key features of China's security multilateralism and addresses its implications for the Asia–Pacific region.⁸

II. China's engagement in regional security multilateralism

China's new security multilateralism is most evident with regard to two regional security institutions where it is playing an increasingly active role: the ARF and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The ASEAN Regional Forum

The ARF, first discussed seriously by the members of ASEAN in 1992, held its first formal meeting with dialogue partners, consultative partners and observers in July 1994. The ARF began with 18 members and has since grown to 23.⁹ It encompasses virtually all the major countries of the Asia–Pacific

the New Millennium (Westview Press: Boulder, Colo., 1998). For a more recent assessment of China's increasingly proactive foreign policy see Medeiros, E. S. and Fravel, M. T., 'China's new diplomacy', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 6 (Nov./Dec. 2003), pp. 22–35.

⁸ China also increasingly takes part in a range of additional multilateral activities addressing economic, trade, scientific, technological, academic and other issues. However, this chapter primarily addresses those multilateral activities concerned largely with questions of political–military security and stability.

⁹ The first ARF meeting brought together foreign ministers from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, China, the EU (Presidency), Indonesia, Japan, Korea (South), Laos, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, the USA and Viet Nam. Cambodia joined in 1995, India and Myanmar (Burma) in 1996, Mongolia in 1999 and North Korea in 2000. See the Austra-

region from India eastward. It also includes Canada, the European Union (EU) and the USA. The ARF's principal meeting is the annual summer meeting of foreign ministers, which is preceded by a Senior Officials Meeting in May. Inter-sessional meetings (ISMs) are also held throughout the year to work on specific issues of interest to the ARF; the ISMs are co-chaired by one ASEAN and one non-ASEAN country. The ARF gives the highest priority to consultation and consensus where, through dialogue, the goal is to create a high degree of 'comfort' for all participants. The forum has no permanent secretariat, and security is to be strengthened not through collective security or formal defence structures, but rather through the consultative process. The group has set out three phases for its work: (a) the development of confidence-building measures (CBMs); (b) the development of preventive diplomacy mechanisms; and (c) the development of conflict resolution arrangements. Thus far the latter two phases are less well developed than the first.

China became more involved in what would become the ARF process when, in July 1991, it attended for the first time the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference (ASEAN-PMC) as a 'consultative partner'.¹⁰ In contrast to its efforts to create and sustain the SCO, however, China was not particularly supportive of the ARF idea when it was first proposed.¹¹ As Chinese Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen emphasized at the inaugural ARF meeting in Bangkok in July 1994, a slowly evolving, lowest-common-denominator approach was required. He stated:

The Asia-Pacific nations have different historical traditions, cultural origins, political systems, religious beliefs and even value systems and development levels. Naturally they have different views and proposals on the security situation and cooperation. . . . [W]e should fully consider the above historical, and, at the same time, current characteristics of this region. . . . Only if it is based on the common interests and needs of all members, can the forum succeed in promoting healthy development in this region. . . . [D]ifferent values and norms [among ARF members] could best be

lian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Internet site at URL <http://www.dfat.gov.au/arf/arf_members.html> and the ASEAN Internet site at URL <<http://www.aseansec.org>>.

¹⁰ The ARF evolved from ASEAN-PMC, a less formal political and security dialogue group. At its establishment in 1979, ASEAN-PMC included the ASEAN member states plus 7 'dialogue partners': Australia, Canada, the EU, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and the USA. In addition, 'China and Russia were granted guest status by the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in 1991, meaning that they could have separate consultations during the ASEAN-PMC but not observe the actual PMC meetings'. Findlay, T., 'South-East Asia and the new Asia-Pacific security dialogue', *SIPRI Yearbook 1994* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1994), p. 135. China and Russia are now ASEAN consultative partners.

¹¹ According to a prominent Chinese strategic analyst, China's original plan for the ARF, in Feb. 1993, envisioned minimal CBMs, restrictions on the ARF's membership, and a limited role for Russia and the USA in the region. See Yan, X., 'China's security after the cold war', *Contemporary International Relations*, vol. 3, no. 5 (May 1993), p. 15. See also Ding, K., 'ASEAN Regional Forum: its role in Asian Pacific security cooperation', *Contemporary International Relations*, vol. 8, no. 7 (July 1998), pp. 20-25; and Wu, P., 'Shilun woguo yatai diqu anquanguan ji fazhan' [A treatise on China's security concept for the Asia-Pacific region and its development], *Shijie Jingji yu Zhengzhi*, no. 5 (1999), p. 13.

overcome by strengthening bilateral relations with other states and by rigidly observing the principle of equality in all negotiations.¹²

Speaking again before the ARF in 1997, Qian Qichen pointed to the 'diversity' and 'different security experience in history in this region' as reasons why confidence building (as opposed to more ambitious undertakings in preventive diplomacy or conflict resolution) 'should be the central task of the Forum for a considerable period of time'. Qian's successor, Tang Jiaxuan, argued in 1999 that the ARF should maintain its focus on CBMs and not move into preventive diplomacy arrangements. Tang stated that the ARF should 'first discuss fully the concept, definition, principles and scope of preventative diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region so as to reach a basic consensus'.¹³ Even the term 'conflict resolution' was not accepted by China as an official goal of ARF deliberations. Originally set out to characterize the third phase of the ARF's work, at China's insistence the term was changed in official deliberations to 'elaboration of approaches to conflicts' because China feared that the organization was moving too rapidly towards an institutionalized security structure.¹⁴

China's reluctance to support a stronger ARF stemmed first and foremost from a concern that the status of Taiwan and the South China Sea disputes would become a part of the ARF discussions. Second, Chinese officials were also worried that the ARF would become a forum dominated by powerful states such as Japan and the USA, which would shape the organization to meet their interests to China's detriment. Finally, China was apprehensive that the ARF would become a place where countries could 'gang up' on it and criticize it for its military build-up, human rights record and other troubling policies.

Nevertheless, China did not wish to be the 'odd country out' and realized that non-participation in multilateral security mechanisms was riskier than involvement on a selective and carefully considered basis.¹⁵ Gradually, China began to see that, by participating, it might be able to constrain the role of Japan and the USA in the region, reassure and establish improved relations with its South-East Asian neighbours and help to foster a more stable regional environment conducive to its overall goal of economic development. By 1997, one observer of the ARF noted that China had become a more active participant in the organization, and in March 1997 China co-chaired (with the

¹² Qian, Q., Speech at the opening of the ARF in Bangkok, 25 July 1994, in 'China's position on Asia-Pacific security', *Beijing Review*, vol. 37, no. 32 (8–14 Aug. 1994), p. 21.

¹³ 'China: "text" of Qian Qichen speech to ARF', Xinhua Domestic Service (Beijing), 27 July 1997, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report-China (FBIS-CHI)*, FBIS-CHI-97-219, 8 Aug. 1997; and "'Text" of Chinese FM [Tang] Jiaxuan's speech at the 7th ARF meeting', Beijing Xinhua, 27 July 2000, FBIS-CHI-2000-0727, 28 July 2000.

¹⁴ Acharya, A., *The ASEAN Regional Forum: Confidence Building* (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade: Ottawa, 1997).

¹⁵ Garrett, B. and Glaser, B., 'Multilateral security in the Asia-Pacific region and its impact on Chinese interests: views from Beijing', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 16, no. 1 (June 1994), p. 14.

Philippines) an ISM on CBMs in Beijing. This was the first time China had hosted an official multilateral conference on regional security issues.¹⁶

China's participation in the ARF process may have contributed to the decision to issue the first Chinese White Paper on defence and arms control matters in November 1995.¹⁷ White Papers were also published in 1998, 2000 and 2002.¹⁸ China eventually came to support the development of 'softer' CBMs in the region under the auspices of the ARF, including defence information exchanges, and the exchange of personnel from defence universities and colleges. For example, China hosted the ARF Seminar on Tropical Hygiene and Prevention and Treatment of Tropical Infectious Diseases on 25–27 November 1998, the ARF Professional Training Programme on China's Security Policy on 10–19 October 1999, the Fourth ARF Meeting of Heads of Defence Colleges on 6–8 September 2000, the ARF Seminar on Defence Conversion Cooperation on 20–22 September 2001 and the ARF Seminar on Military Logistics Outsourcing on 25–27 September 2002.

Since the early 2000s, China has taken a more open attitude on the question of addressing 'preventive diplomacy' within the ARF framework. The 2002 Chinese defence White Paper expresses a more favourable view towards preventive diplomacy, stating: 'The ASEAN Regional Forum has made substantive achievements in the transition from confidence-building measures to preventive diplomacy'.¹⁹ Some analysts have cited these developments in the ARF context as a reason for cautious optimism about Chinese approaches to multilateral security mechanisms.²⁰

In another interesting development, at the July 2002 ARF meeting the Chinese delegation submitted a formal 'position paper' which provided a detailed explanation of China's 'new security concept', the first time China had submitted such a paper to the ARF.²¹ The position paper explicitly linked the new security concept to the work of the ARF: 'The line of thought of the [ASEAN Regional] Forum in promoting security through dialogue among equals suits

¹⁶ Foot, R., 'China in the ASEAN Regional Forum: organizational processes and domestic modes of thought', *Asian Survey*, vol. 38, no. 5 (May 1998), p. 426.

¹⁷ *White Paper: China: Arms Control and Disarmament* (Information Office of the State Council: Beijing, Nov. 1995), URL <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/wparms.htm>>.

¹⁸ *China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council: Beijing, July 1998), URL <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/cnd9807/>>; *China's National Defense in 2000* (Information Office of the State Council: Beijing, Oct. 2000), URL <<http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/2000/>>; and *China's National Defense in 2002* (Information Office of the State Council: Beijing, Dec. 2002), URL <<http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20021209/>>.

¹⁹ *China's National Defense in 2002* (note 18), 'I. The security situation'.

²⁰ See, e.g., Wanandi, J., 'ASEAN's China strategy: towards deeper engagement', *Survival*, vol. 38, no. 3 (autumn 1996), pp. 117–28; and Foot (note 16), pp. 431–32. 'It is fair to say that Chinese attitudes have shifted further than those of almost any other participant. And for the first time in 50 years, there is a growing constituency in China, well connected to the outside world, that is rethinking the future of China's international relations.' Evans, P. M., 'Assessing the ARF and CSCAP', eds H. Tien and T. Cheng, *The Security Environment in the Asia-Pacific* (M. E. Sharpe: Armonk, N.Y., 2000), pp. 166–70.

²¹ On the 'new security concept' see section VI. See also the excellent assessment of the motivating factors behind the new security concept in Finkelstein, D., *China Reconsiders its National Security: The 'Great Peace and Development Debate' of 1999* (CNA Corporation: Alexandria, Va., Dec. 2000).

the idea of the new security concept'.²² In another example of China's increasing support for regional security multilateralism, the Chinese Foreign Minister proposed at the June 2003 ARF meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, that the organization establish a new Security Policy Conference, with senior military personnel from ARF participating governments in attendance.²³ China's proposal will in all likelihood be accepted at the ARF meeting in July 2004, and the first meeting of ARF defence ministers is expected to convene in China in 2005.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization²⁴

The SCO's relatively brief history has been marked by a steady intensification of multilateral contact, dialogue and institutionalization of relations among its members, with China as the driving force. The SCO originated as the Shanghai Five in the mid-1990s with China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan as members. The original member states held working meetings in the early 1990s, but the group was formally launched when it held its first summit meeting in April 1996 in Shanghai. The 1996 meeting was followed by summit meetings in Moscow in 1997; Almaty, Kazakhstan, in 1998; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in 1999; Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in 2000; Shanghai, China, in 2001; St Petersburg, Russia, in 2002; and Moscow in 2003. At the 2001 meeting in Shanghai, the group expanded to include Uzbekistan and institutionalized itself more formally under the name the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.²⁵ A formal charter for the organization was issued at its summit meeting in St Petersburg in the summer of 2002 and the SCO Secretariat was opened in Beijing in early 2004.²⁶

The border between China and its Central Asian neighbours extends some 7000 km, from the Sino-Afghan border in China's Himalayan region in the far south-west to Mongolia in the north and, in the north-east, the Sino-Russian

²² Appendix F, 'Text of PRC document on "new security concept"' in 'Special press summary: 35th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, 3rd ASEAN+3 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, 9th Regional Forum, 29 July–1 August 2002', URL <<http://www.vic-info.org/regionstop.nsf/0/ca750046f5909bef0a256c0a000305bf?OpenDocument>>. See also 'China releases position paper, offers new security concept at ASEAN meetings', Xinhua (Beijing), 1 Aug. 2002, FBIS-CHI-2002-0801, 2 Aug. 2002.

²³ 'FM stresses Asian security issues in ASEAN Forum', Xinhua, 19 June 2003, URL <<http://www.china.org.cn/english/international/67429.htm>>.

²⁴ For a Chinese perspective on the SCO see Ren, D., SIPRI, 'The Central Asia policies of China, Russia and the USA, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization process: a view from China' (SIPRI: Stockholm, 2003), URL <<http://editors.sipri.se/pubs/CentralAsiaSCO.pdf>>. For a Russian view see Trofimov, D., 'Arms control in Central Asia', Bailes, A. J. K. *et al.*, *Armament and Disarmament in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 3 (SIPRI: Stockholm, July 2003), pp. 46–56, URL <<http://editors.sipri.se/recpubs.html>>.

²⁵ With the exception of China, all members of the Shanghai Five and its follow-on organization, the SCO, are also members of the Partnership for Peace (PFP) initiative established by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Shanghai Five members Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Uzbekistan all joined the PFP in 1994; Tajikistan joined in 2002. The member states of NATO, the PFP and the SCO are listed in the glossary in this volume.

²⁶ For a detailed discussion of China's more active role in Central Asia see Gill, B. and Oresman, M., *China's New Journey to the West: China's Emergence in Central Asia and Implications for US Interests* (Center for Strategic and International Studies: Washington, DC, 2003).

border extending to the Sea of Japan south of Vladivostok. Settling lingering territorial disputes along that lengthy border, and transforming the militarized hostility which characterized much of the post-war Sino-Soviet relationship, were primary motivations for China to push ahead in the Shanghai Five group. In the early stages of the process, particularly between 1998 and 2001, China used meetings of the group to voice its opposition to US international actions and policies. Today, China sees the SCO increasingly as a means to strengthen its hand against Muslim Uighur separatists in and around the far north-western border regions of Xinjiang, both through joint anti-terrorist activities among SCO members and through economic cooperation in the region.

Among the SCO's most significant accomplishments is its package of military CBMs, including a pullback of some troops and equipment to 100 km from the common borders, verification procedures along the border, and pre-notification of exercises and other military activities. These steps were largely achieved by the mid- to late 1990s as border talks eventually resulted in the 1996 Shanghai Five Agreement on Confidence-Building in the Military Field Along the Border Areas and the 1997 Agreement on Reducing Each Other's Military Forces along the Border Regions.²⁷ The 1996 agreement stipulates that the military forces of member states in the border regions will not attack other member states; that their military exercises will not be aimed at other member states and will be limited in frequency and scale; that major military exercises within 100 km of the border require that the neighbouring member state be notified and invited to send observers; and that friendly military-to-military exchanges will be established. The 1997 agreement took steps to implement these measures more fully.²⁸ By the July 2000 Shanghai Five summit meeting, the member states announced that implementation of these two agreements had 'helped build for the first time, in the border belt of more than 7,000 km, a region of trust and transparency where military activities are predictable and monitorable'.²⁹

In addition, the organization has made strong statements regarding its opposition to a range of illegal activities that affect the entire region, such as gun-running, drug smuggling and what the SCO refers to as 'terrorism, separatism

²⁷ The Agreement between Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan (as a Joint Party), and China on Confidence Building in the Military Field in the Border Area (Shanghai Agreement) was signed on 26 Apr. 1996 and entered into force on 7 May 1998. For the text see United Nations, 'Agreement between the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and China on Confidence Building in the Military Field in the Border Area' in 'Letter dated 96/05/13 from the representatives of China, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan to the United Nations', UN document A/51/137, 17 May 1996. The Agreement between Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (as a Joint Party) and China on the Mutual Reduction of Armed Forces in the Border Area was signed on 24 Apr. 1997 and entered into force on 6 Aug. 1999. For excerpts from the agreement see *Sbornik rossiysko-kitaiskikh dogorov. 1949–1999* [Collection of Russian–Chinese agreements, 1949–1999] (Terra-sport: Moscow, 1999), in Russian, translated and reproduced in Goldblat, J., SIPRI, *Arms Control: The New Guide to Negotiations and Agreements* (SAGE: London, 2002), Part II: Agreements and Parties, pp. 653–59.

²⁸ *China's National Defense* (1998) (note 18), 'IV. International security cooperation'.

²⁹ 'Xinhua: "full text" of Dushanbe Statement of "Shanghai Five"', Xinhua Domestic Service, 5 July 2000, FBIS-CHI-2000-0705, 7 July 2000. In July 1998, China and Kazakhstan reached a final agreement on the remaining border disputes along their 1700-km border. 'China: Jiang Zemin on nuclear arms race, Sino-Kazakh border pact', Xinhua Domestic Service, 4 July 1998, FBIS-CHI-98-187, 7 July 1998.

and extremism'. To deal with such trans-border security challenges, the organization has stepped up and institutionalized cooperation among member states' political, defence, security, customs and military forces. Since 1996 the SCO has held annual summit meetings. The SCO foreign and defence ministers have each held separate annual meetings since 2000. The first annual meeting of heads of government (prime ministers) was held in September 2001.

The SCO has also established a Joint Monitoring Group to oversee the implementation and verification of its various military CBMs, especially the 1996 and 1997 agreements. In December 1999, in Bishkek, the Shanghai Five held the first joint meeting of officials concerned with public and state security. Convening under the name the Bishkek Group, they have held annual meetings since that time. In statements from the 2000 Dushanbe summit meeting, the Shanghai Five members called for the establishment of various joint, interdepartmental groups among the countries, set up to combat cross-border criminal activities such as drug trafficking, arms smuggling and illegal immigration. The SCO Counter-Terrorism Centre, originally to be located in Bishkek, opened in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in January 2004. In the military sphere, China and its SCO neighbours have participated in at least two joint military training exercises: the first in October 2002 between China and Kyrgyzstan; and the second in August 2003 involving China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan (discussed below).³⁰

A major achievement of the June 2002 SCO summit meeting was the completion of the SCO Charter. The document was not made available publicly—suggesting at the time that it was still a work in progress—and it needed to be ratified by the parliaments of the member states to enter into force. Still, it was promoted as a significant step in establishing a formal, legal framework for the organization. A Chinese report on the charter noted that it 'expounds on the principles, purpose and task of the organization, procedures for adopting new members, legal effects of the organization's decisions and the means of cooperation between the organization and other international organizations'.³¹ Press reports also indicated that the charter would expand and upgrade cooperation among the six countries across a range of fields, including security and defence, economics, finance and trade, science and technology, education, transportation and energy. Combating illicit cross-border activities, including problems related to 'terrorism, separatism and extremism', also received prominent mention in the charter, according to press reports.³² The charter also made clear that the SCO is not aimed at any other

³⁰ On the SCO and China's relations with Central Asia more generally see Gill and Oresman (note 26).

³¹ 'Shanghai Cooperation Organization approves center of anti-terror,' *China Daily* (Internet edn), 8 June 2002, URL <<http://www.china.org.cn/english/FR/34120.htm>>. As of 31 Dec. 2003, the charter had not yet been ratified by all of the parliaments of the SCO member states.

³² 'Charter for Shanghai Cooperation Organization adopted at summit in Russia', Xinhua News Agency, 8 June 2002, URL <<http://www.china.org.cn/english/2002/Jun/34117.htm>>. See also Blagov, S., 'The St Petersburg summit: good intentions', *Asia Times Online*, 7 June 2002, URL <<http://www.atimes.com/c-asia/DF07Ag02.html>>.

country or international organization. To further institutionalize the organization, the charter envisioned the establishment of an administrative secretariat which would oversee the coordination of SCO activities.

China was and continues to be the driving force behind the SCO, and its SCO activities provide some of the most prominent examples of the country's more proactive security multilateralism. With the formal establishment of the SCO Secretariat in Beijing in early 2004, headed by experienced Chinese diplomat Zhang Deguang, the Chinese Government can be expected to give continued strong attention to strengthening the SCO and China's role within it.

III. Regional multilateral security negotiations, diplomacy and dialogues

In addition to participation in the ARF and the SCO, China has stepped up its participation in a range of issue-specific multilateral regional security negotiations, diplomacy and dialogues. Its effort to resolve the nuclear stand-off that began in 1994 with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea) is particularly noteworthy. China has also initiated or taken an active part in a series of important multilateral discussions with its South-East Asian neighbours aimed at addressing mutual security concerns, including an agreement to alleviate territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

Talks to resolve the North Korean nuclear stand-off

A more proactive security multilateralism is increasingly evident in China's approach to resolving differences related to the tensions associated with North Korea's nuclear weapon programme and other outstanding problems between North Korea and its neighbours. For much of the 1990s, China was largely content to keep a low profile in dealing with North Korea, preferring instead to let the USA and other states, such as Japan and South Korea, bear the diplomatic brunt of negotiating a more constructive relationship with North Korea. During the first North Korean nuclear imbroglio, in 1994–95, China was willing to play only a behind-the-scenes, but important, role in urging North Korea to negotiate with the USA. China eschewed formal membership in the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), the most prominent multilateral security instrument to engage North Korea at the time.³³

However, at the urging of the USA and South Korea, China did agree to participate in the short-lived Four-Party Talks with North Korea, South Korea and the USA. Six sessions were held between December 1997 and August 1999. These talks were intended to foster North–South dialogue, with China and the USA acting as convening partners to bring the two Korean states

³³ For more information on KEDO see URL <<http://www.kedo.org>>; and Kile, S. N., 'Nuclear arms control, non-proliferation and ballistic missile defence', *SIPRI Yearbook 2003: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003), pp. 578, 585.

closer to resolving their differences. These talks became increasingly difficult as North Korea sought the benefits of a more direct bilateral dialogue with the USA. China remained quietly on the sidelines as bilateral negotiations with North Korea gained momentum, highlighted by the historic North–South summit meeting between President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea and President Kim Jong-il of North Korea in June 2000 and the visit to Pyongyang by US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in October 2000.

It was not until the Chinese Government fully understood North Korea's unpredictability and the potential threats posed to Chinese interests that China more actively pursued the course of multilateral dialogue to resolve tensions on the Korean peninsula. By mid-2001, it had become clear that the USA under the Administration of George W. Bush was not prepared to negotiate bilaterally with North Korea—but that it might take unilateral military action. Chinese concerns about the stability of its neighbour had already been heightened with the increasing flow of North Korean refugees into China in 2001 and 2002 and the embarrassingly public efforts of some of them to seek asylum in foreign diplomatic compounds in Beijing and other major Chinese cities.³⁴

As concern about North Korea's nuclear weapon ambitions mounted in 2003, and North Korean–US relations deteriorated further, China became more engaged in seeking a diplomatic solution.³⁵ In April 2003, at the three-party talks involving China, North Korea and the USA, North Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Li Gun reportedly told US officials that North Korea possessed nuclear weapons and threatened to prove their existence or possibly export them.³⁶ In May 2003, North Korea announced that it was also withdrawing from the 1992 Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula agreed with South Korea, in which the two sides pledged that they would not 'test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy or use nuclear weapons'.³⁷

These events prompted China to work more actively with the USA to bring North Korea to the negotiating table, using its unique (especially economic) leverage. At first, China continued to insist on bilateral discussions between the USA and North Korea (which was the latter's preference) and was willing to act merely as a convener of the talks in Beijing. However, with US insistence, and as China's exasperation with North Korea grew, the Chinese Government became more openly supportive of a multilateral approach. By the end of 2003, Beijing had hosted two sets of multilateral talks. The first, involving China, North Korea and the USA, was held in April 2003. It was at these talks that North Korea claimed for the first time to possess nuclear weapons. The second set of talks was held in August 2003 and was expanded

³⁴ See, e.g., 'N Korean defectors arrive in South', BBC News Online, 12 Oct. 2002, URL <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/2322025.stm>>.

³⁵ See also chapter 15 in this volume.

³⁶ Kessler, G., 'N. Korea says it has nuclear arms', *Washington Post*, 25 Apr. 2003, p. A1.

³⁷ 'Joint Declaration [on] the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula', 20 Jan. 1992, URL <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/rok/1992/appendix17.htm>>.

to include Japan, South Korea and Russia. A six-party session of talks was planned for December 2003, but it was postponed until 25 February 2004. Through shuttle diplomacy, especially in the USA and in North Korea, and with the appointment of a special coordinator for the North Korea issue in its foreign ministry, China is likely to continue its active multilateral diplomatic effort to resolve the North Korean impasse.

Dialogues and diplomacy with South-East Asia

Although it does not face the same pressing and immediate security concerns in South-East Asia as it does regarding North Korea, China has recently been even more active in promoting a range of multilateral security-oriented consultations with its neighbours in the region. One of the most interesting aspects of this diplomacy is that China has established a set of CBMs with partners in South-East Asia, but *outside* of the formal ARF process, where it has a more direct stake in shaping the content and outcome of such discussions.

For example, China helped to establish the ASEAN+3 forum, which involves the 10 ASEAN states plus China, Japan and South Korea and began to meet in 1997. In November 1999 the forum issued the Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation, which underscored its commitment to cooperate on political, economic, social and security-related matters. ASEAN+3 also appointed a special task force—the East Asia Vision Group—which issued a report that presented a framework for future ASEAN+3 cooperation on economic, financial, political, security, environmental and energy-related matters.³⁸ In the political–security area, the report called for the eventual establishment of an annual East Asia summit meeting and the strengthening of the ARF as a more effective multilateral cooperative security mechanism.

The ASEAN+3 summit meetings led to the associated annual ASEAN–China summit meetings, which have produced a number of important security-related agreements.³⁹ For example, in 2000 the two parties established the ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs, a detailed plan of action with a particular emphasis on cooperation among China, Laos, Myanmar (Burma) and Thailand. The plan encompassed the development and implementation of cooperative civic awareness, demand reduction, law enforcement, rule of law and crop eradication programmes to combat illicit drug activities.⁴⁰

The November 2002 ASEAN–China summit meeting resulted in the Joint Declaration of ASEAN and China on Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Issues. This agreement highlights mutual concern over

³⁸ 'Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation', 28 Nov. 1999, URL <<http://www.aseansec.org/5469.htm>>; and *Toward an East Asian Community: Region of Peace, Prosperity and Progress*, Report of the East Asia Vision Group, 31 Oct. 2001, URL <http://www.aseansec.org/pdf/east_asia_vision.pdf>.

³⁹ In addition to the security-related agreements discussed below, the China–ASEAN summit meeting of Nov. 2002 also announced that the parties would seek to establish a free trade area by 2012.

⁴⁰ 'ASEAN and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (ACCORD)', Bangkok, Thailand, 13 Oct. 2000, URL <<http://www.aseansec.org/645.htm>>.

'trafficking in illegal drugs, people-smuggling including trafficking in women and children, sea piracy, terrorism, arms-smuggling, money-laundering, international economic crime and cyber crime' and commits the parties to combat these challenges through such activities as regularized consultations, information exchanges, training and research.⁴¹

Perhaps most importantly, the November 2002 ASEAN–China summit meeting resulted in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea to govern the activities of parties regarding their claims to various parts of the sea, and reduce the potential for tension and conflict there.⁴² The most important points in this agreement were the parties' commitment to 'resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force . . . in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea' and 'to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability'.⁴³ The parties agreed to undertake consultations with appropriate security and defence personnel; provide notice, on a voluntary basis, of military exercises; and engage in cooperative activities such as marine environment protection and scientific research, search-and-rescue operations and combating transnational criminal activities in the region. The declaration marks a considerable shift from previous Chinese positions. Prior to 2002, China had insisted that disputes among claimants in the South China Sea should be settled through bilateral negotiations only and that outside parties should not be involved.

In October 2003, ASEAN–China multilateral security relations were further cemented by several other key agreements. Having requested accession in March 2003, China acceded to the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia in October 2003.⁴⁴ At the same summit meeting, China and the ASEAN states also signed an agreement establishing a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity, which commits the 11 countries to work together on international and regional political, economic, social and security issues of mutual concern.⁴⁵

⁴¹ 'Joint Declaration of ASEAN and China on Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Issues, 6th ASEAN–China Summit', Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 4 Nov. 2002, URL <<http://www.aseansec.org/13185.htm>>.

⁴² Since the 1970s, ownership of a number of islands in the South China Sea has been disputed. The dispute has led to a militarization of some islands and on more than one occasion led to armed clashes, notably between China and Viet Nam.

⁴³ 'Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea', 4 Nov. 2002, URL <<http://www.aseansec.org/13163.htm>>.

⁴⁴ 'Instrument of Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia', 8 Oct. 2003, URL <<http://www.aseansec.org/15271.htm>>; and 'Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, Indonesia, 24 February 1976', URL <<http://www.aseansec.org/1217.htm>>.

⁴⁵ 'Joint Declaration of the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the People's Republic of China on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity', 8 Oct. 2003, URL <<http://www.aseansec.org/15265.htm>>.

Other important multilateral initiatives

China has recently helped to initiate other multilateral security discussions, including a dialogue with NATO and trilateral consultations among China, Japan and South Korea. It has also helped to facilitate India–Pakistan dialogue. These discussions are at a relatively early stage, but are indicative of China's more proactive and supportive approach towards security multilateralism. In October 2002, the Chinese ambassador to Brussels proposed to Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary General, the establishment of a China–NATO strategic dialogue. The two sides held their first formal consultations in early 2003.⁴⁶ The establishment of China–EU summit meetings in the mid-1990s has led to deeply institutionalized dialogue channels across a range of issues. At the sixth China–EU summit meeting, held in October 2003, the Cooperation Agreement on a Civil Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS)–GALILEO between the European Community and its Member States and the People's Republic of China was signed.⁴⁷ A Memorandum of Understanding between the National Tourism Administration of the People's Republic of China and the European Community on Visa and Related Issues Concerning Tourist Groups from the People's Republic of China (the Memorandum of Understanding on Approved Destination Status) was discussed at the October 2003 summit and was signed on 12 February 2004.⁴⁸ In addition, the Framework Agreement for Establishing Industrial Policy Dialogue between the Commission of the European Community and the People's Republic of China was concluded on 30 October 2003.⁴⁹

Since 1997, China, Japan and South Korea have forged a new set of trilateral consultations by holding annual summit meetings on the sidelines of the ASEAN+3 meetings.⁵⁰ The three countries have agreed to establish a number of cooperative 'soft security' programmes, including working groups on environmental and information technology issues. In late 2003, there were increasing reports that China had become more active in encouraging and

⁴⁶ For an analysis of China–NATO relations see, e.g., Zhang, Z., 'Beijing calling', *NATO Review*, autumn 2003, URL <<http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2003/issue3/english/special.html>>; and Gill, B. and Oresman, M., 'NATO's border with China', *PacNet Newsletter*, no. 50 (25 Nov. 2002), URL <<http://www.csis.org/pacfor/pac0250.htm>>.

⁴⁷ The agreement was signed on 30 Oct. 2003. As of 31 Dec. 2003, it had not yet been ratified. See Commission of the European Communities, 'Proposal for a Council Decision on the Signing of the Cooperation Agreement on a Civil Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS)–GALILEO between the European Community and its Member States and the People's Republic of China', COM (2003) 578 final, Brussels, 30 Oct. 2003. For more information on the 2001, 2002 and 2003 China–EU summit meetings see European Union, Directorate General External Relations, 'EU–China summit', URL <http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/china/summit/index.htm>.

⁴⁸ The text of the Memorandum of Understanding is available at URL <http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/china/intro/mou_291003_en.pdf>.

⁴⁹ The text of the Framework Agreement is available at URL <http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/china/intro/ipd_291003_en.pdf>.

⁵⁰ Cha, V. D., 'Ending 2000 with a whimper, not a bang', *Comparative Connections*, vol. 2, no. 4 (fourth quarter 2000), URL <http://www.csis.org/pacfor/cc/004Qjapan_skorea.html>.

facilitating dialogue between India and Pakistan in an effort to peacefully resolve the dispute over Kashmir and other outstanding issues.⁵¹

IV. Active military engagement

Regional military-to-military activities

Since the mid- to late 1990s, China has become more open to initiating and participating in a range of multilateral military-to-military CBMs and other security-oriented activities. These moves are particularly significant given the secrecy that has traditionally shrouded and still obscures Chinese military affairs. Nevertheless, China has taken steps to conduct joint military exercises with its neighbours, to allow foreigners to observe Chinese military exercises, to take part as an observer in foreign military exercises, to step up its military diplomacy in the Asia–Pacific region through port calls and other military exchanges, and to expand its participation in international peacekeeping operations.

The two joint military exercises in the framework of the SCO noted above are the largest known joint activities which China has carried out with foreign militaries since the Viet Nam War, when Chinese anti-aircraft batteries helped in the defence of North Vietnamese cities in the late 1960s and early 1970s. They are probably also the first major peacetime military exercises which it has carried out in the name of confidence building and security preparedness. The first exercise was held with Kyrgyzstan in October 2002 and simulated an operation against terrorist cells in the mountainous region that forms the countries' border. It involved about 100 soldiers from each side, operating at high altitudes and using light weapons, anti-tank weapons, helicopters and armoured personnel carriers. The exercise took place in southern Kyrgyzstan, near the Irkeshtam border with China, and involved military and border troops from China's Xinjiang Military Region and the Kyrgyz military and some observers from the other four SCO member states.

The second exercise was held in August 2003 and involved troops from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. The first half of these exercises was held in the Taldy-Qorghan region of Kazakhstan's Almaty Oblast, and mainly involved Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Russian troops. The second half was held outside the town of Inyin in Xinjiang, involved mostly Chinese and Kyrgyz troops, and focused on destroying a mock terrorist camp and liberating hostages.⁵²

The Chinese Navy took part in back-to-back bilateral exercises with the Pakistani Navy in late October 2003 and with the Indian Navy in November

⁵¹ See, e.g., Hasan, K., 'Indo-Pak peace moves attributed to global pressure', *Daily Times* (Lahore) (Internet edn), 16 Dec. 2003, URL <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=story_17-12-2003_pg1_8>.

⁵² Carlson, C., 'Central Asia: Shanghai Cooperation Organization makes military debut', *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 5 Aug. 2003, URL <<http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2003/08/05082003154708.asp>>.

Table 6.1. China's participation in United Nations peace operations, as of 31 December 2003

Operations (dates of operations)	Date of China's entry	Type of contribution	Personnel
<i>Completed operations</i>			<i>No. of slots filled</i>
UNIKOM (Apr. 1991–Oct. 2003)	May 1991	Military observers Troops	11 1
UNAMIC (Oct. 1991–Mar. 1992)	Dec. 1991	Military observers	3
UNTAC (Mar. 1992–Sep. 1993)	Apr. 1992	Military observers Troops	47 400
UNOMOZ (Dec. 1992–Dec. 1994)	Feb. 1993	Military observers	10
UNOMIL (Sep. 1993–Sep. 1997)	Oct. 1993	Military observers	10
UNMIBH (Dec. 1995–Dec. 2002)	Sep. 2001	Civilian police	15
Subtotal		Military observer slots Troop slots Civilian police slots	81 401 15
<i>Current operations</i>			<i>No. deployed</i>
UNTSO (June 1948–present)	Nov. 1989	Military observers	4
MINURSO (Sep. 1991–present)	June 1991	Military observers	19
UNOMSIL/UNAMSIL (July 1998–present)	June 1999	Military observers	6
UNTAET/UNMISET (Oct. 1999–present)	Jan. 2000	Civilian police	16
MONUC (Nov. 1999–present)	Apr. 2001	Military observers Troops	9 221
UNMEE (July 2000–present)	Sep. 2001	Military observers	6
UNMIL (Oct. 2003–present)	Oct. 2003	Military observers Troops Civilian police	4 68 5
Subtotal		Military observers Troops Civilian police	48 289 21
Totals^a	Nov. 1989– Dec. 2003	Military observer slots Troop slots Civilian police slots Military observers served Troops served Civilian police served	135 690 96 700 1 100 200

MINURSO = UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; MONUC = UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UNAMIC = UN Administration Mission in Cambodia; UNAMSIL = UN Mission in Sierra Leone; UNIKOM = UN Iraq–Kuwait Observer Mission; UNMEE = UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea; UNMIBH = UN Mission in Bosnia–Herzegovina; UNMIL = UN Mission in Liberia; UNMISSET = UN Mission of Support in East Timor; UNOMIL = UN Observer Mission in Liberia; UNOMOZ = UN Operations in Mozambique; UNOMSIL = UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone; UNTAET = UN Transitional Authority in East Timor; UNTAC = UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia; UNTSO = UN Truce Supervision Organization.

^a Estimated. China has filled a total of *c.* 921 past and current peacekeeping 'slots'. The total number of troops, military observers and civilian police rotated through to fill the slots amounts to *c.* 2000 personnel.

Sources: UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations Internet site, URL <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/home.shtml>>; Author interviews with Chinese military personnel at the UN in New York; Data obtained from Birger Heldt, Folke Bernadotte Academy, Sweden; and Author's estimates. Some earlier Chinese data, which may not correspond exactly with data from UN sources, are provided in *China's National Defense in 2002* (State Council Information Office: Beijing, Dec. 2002), 'VI. International security cooperation' and 'Appendix IV. Participation in UN peace-keeping operations', URL <<http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20021209/>>.

2003. In China's first-ever joint naval exercise, 'Dolphin 0310', Chinese and Pakistani naval forces conducted a search-and-rescue and counter-terrorism simulation off the coast of Shanghai, deploying warships and helicopters. Three weeks later, three ships from the Indian Navy joined Chinese naval forces off the coast of Shanghai to carry out a search-and-rescue exercise involving over 1500 troops.⁵³

Chinese Army participants also took part in small search-and-rescue exercises involving the US Coast Guard and Air National Guard and the Hong Kong Government Flying Service in December 2001. China, invited to participate by the government of the Hong Kong Special Autonomous Region, contributed a helicopter and a frigate to the four-day exercise, which had been taking place annually between the USA and Hong Kong since the 1970s.

In another first, in August 2003 China allowed 27 foreign military personnel from 15 countries—including Canada, France, Germany, Israel, Pakistan, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, the UK and the USA—to observe military exercises involving 5000 Chinese troops at the country's large tactical training base in Inner Mongolia. The exercise involved an armoured brigade-sized unit from the Beijing military area and the 'blue army' trainers at the facility. It included the use of tanks, armoured vehicles, artillery and combat helicopters.⁵⁴

⁵³ 'Yearender: joint military drills draw attention worldwide', *People's Liberation Army Daily* (Internet edn), 15 Dec. 2003, URL <http://english.pladaily.com.cn/english/pladaily/2003/12/15/20031215001011_TodayHeadlines.html>.

⁵⁴ 'China invites foreign observers to military exercises', Xinhua News Agency, 25 Aug. 2003, URL <http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-08/25/content_1044252.htm>; and 'We saw highly qualified Chinese soldiers', *People's Daily* (Internet edn), 2 Sep. 2003, URL <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200309/02/eng20030902_123564.shtml>.

Since the late 1990s, China has become a more frequent observer of military exercises held by its Asia–Pacific neighbours. China sent observers to the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises in 1998 and the first ‘Pacific Reach 2000’, a joint search-and-rescue exercise for submarine forces hosted by Singapore in October 2000 with participants from Japan, South Korea and the USA. In January 2002, Chinese military officers observed a naval mine clearance exercise in Singapore and in April 2002 they observed a Japan-sponsored submarine search-and-rescue exercise. In May 2002, China also participated for the first time as an observer of US-led ‘Cobra Gold’ military exercises in Thailand, sending six military personnel.⁵⁵ China again sent observers to Cobra Gold in May 2003, joining 10 other countries watching the annual Singaporean–Thai–US exercises.⁵⁶ In 2003, China observed military exercises conducted by France and by Russia.

China has also become far more active in dispatching naval vessels abroad for friendly port visits. The country’s first naval crossing of the Pacific took place in early 1997 with a visit to the USA, followed by visits to Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, the Philippines and Thailand. In 1998–99, Chinese naval vessels, made friendly port calls to Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa and Tanzania. The Chinese Navy completed its first circumnavigation in 2002, visiting 10 countries.⁵⁷ In October and November 2003, a Chinese destroyer and a supply ship undertook a 37-day voyage, paying port visits to Brunei Darussalam, Guam and Singapore.⁵⁸ In 2003 alone, Chinese military delegations traveled to more than 50 countries and hosted 68 delegations from over 50 countries.⁵⁹

Contributions to UN peacekeeping operations

In recent years, China has also demonstrated its increased support for multi-lateral security activities by enlarging its support for and contributions to UN peacekeeping operations.⁶⁰ While the Chinese Government remains wary of interventionism, it no longer blocks UN Security Council decisions to establish peace operations and has increasingly supported well-defined international peacekeeping operations backed by a firm UN mandate. China has also volunteered contributions in its own region. It provided a total of 800 engineering troops to the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia

⁵⁵ ‘Cobra Gold’ is the largest multinational exercise and movement of forces in the Pacific. In 2002, observers of the exercise included Australia, Cambodia, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea (South), Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka and Tonga.

⁵⁶ In 2003, 11 countries sent observers: Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea (South), Mongolia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.

⁵⁷ *China’s National Defense in 2002* (note 18), ‘VI. International security cooperation’.

⁵⁸ ‘Chinese Navy fleet back at port after overseas visit’, Xinhua News Agency, 21 Nov. 2003, URL <http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-11/21/content_1192547.htm>.

⁵⁹ Chen, G., ‘Military diplomacy scores new success’, Xinhua News Agency, 29 Dec. 2003, FBIS-CHI-2003-1229, 30 Dec. 2003.

⁶⁰ On China’s international peacekeeping activities see Gill, B. and Reilly, J., ‘Sovereignty, intervention and peacekeeping: the view from Beijing’, *Survival*, vol. 42, no. 3 (autumn 2000), URL <<http://www.brook.edu/dybdocroot/views/articles/gill/2000survival.htm>>.

(UNTAC) in 1992–93, and this remains a high point in terms of total soldiers sent to a particular mission. For the remainder of the 1990s, however, China sent an average of 60–90 peacekeepers per year to UN peacekeeping missions, mostly as observers.

Since the late 1990s, China has diversified and expanded its peacekeeping contributions. In 2000 it sent police to a UN mission for the first time—to East Timor, as part of the UN Transitional Authority in East Timor (UNTAET). China provided police forces for the UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) in early 2001. In 2001, China again began sending troops to UN missions, beginning with small numbers of soldiers sent to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). As of 31 December 2003, China was active in more than half of the ongoing UN peacekeeping missions (7 of 13) and had 48 observers, 289 troops and 21 police in the field—a total of 358 personnel, the highest Chinese peacekeeping contribution since the UNTAC mission.⁶¹ The boost in troop numbers is particularly noteworthy, since China's contribution consisted of only two people in December 2002. It has raised China from 44th to 27th in the ranking of contributors to UN peacekeeping missions (see table 6.1).⁶²

V. Obstacles to China's security multilateralism

Although there have been many successes for China's evolving security multilateralism, this approach faces limits. In spite of a generally positive post-cold war security environment in the region and China's apparent ability to seize this opportunity more proactively and astutely in recent years, there remain a number of lingering conditions which constrain China from becoming a more fully dominant political and security presence in the Asia–Pacific region. Interestingly, while China is successfully developing its security multilateralism, it will be most constrained from playing a greater role by the serious residual difficulties in several of its bilateral relationships in North-East Asia—especially with Japan and Taiwan—and in its relationship with the USA. These problems are not likely to be mitigated or resolved through multilateral processes.

China–Japan relations have generally improved over the past decade, to the point where the two countries have joined to help establish and cooperate

⁶¹ UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 'UN missions summary of military and civilian police', 31 Dec. 2003, pp. 35–36, in 'Monthly summary of military and civilian police contribution to United Nations Operations', Dec. 2003, URL <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/December2003Summary.pdf>>. See also chapter 4, table 4.3, 'Multilateral peace missions, 2003' in this volume.

⁶² UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 'Ranking of military and civilian police contributions to UN operations', 31 Jan. 2004, p. 5, in 'Monthly summary of military and civilian police contribution to United Nations Operations', Jan. 2004, URL <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/January2004/Summary.pdf>>; and UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 'Ranking of military and civilian police contributions to UN operations', 31 Dec. 2002, p. 5, in 'Monthly summary of military and civilian police contribution to United Nations Operations', Dec. 2002, URL <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/December2002Summary.pdf>>. See also chapter 4, table 4.3, 'Multilateral peace missions, 2003' in this volume.

within some regional multilateral security mechanisms, such as ASEAN+3 and the Six-Party Talks. Bilaterally, China and Japan have taken steps to improve and regularize dialogue and have begun to engage more actively both on issues ranging from regional security to energy development and on the steady clean-up of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on Chinese soil more than 60 years ago.⁶³

Under the relatively calm surface of China–Japan relations lies a constant tension, however, which assures continued mutual suspicion between the two ‘Asian giants’.⁶⁴ As Japan pursues its interests in the Asia–Pacific region both unilaterally and in concert with its ally, the USA, China’s ability to become a more dominant player in the region is de facto limited. In Japan, China’s dramatic growth as an economic force and regional political leader is viewed with some concern, particularly when juxtaposed with Japan’s economic malaise and its continuing self-imposed limits on asserting itself more forcefully as a regional leader for political or security-related matters. Japan tends to view Chinese political and military muscle-flexing in the region as a reason to take a go-slow approach in its relations with China. In particular, Japan no longer provides certain forms of Japanese overseas development aid to China, ostensibly because of China’s economic successes. Since China’s final nuclear tests on 8 June and 29 July 1996⁶⁵ as negotiations for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) came to a close, the Japanese Foreign Ministry has been under pressure to limit aid to China because it is steadily and significantly boosting its conventional, missile and nuclear forces and targeting the Western Pacific region, including Japan and Taiwan.⁶⁶ The increased presence of Chinese military vessels in waters around Japan and the continuing territorial dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in the East China Sea—occasionally involving confrontations between Japanese naval forces and Chinese fishing boats and protesters—further exacerbate Japanese concerns about an economically and militarily rising China. Moreover, China’s consistent reminders to Japan to remain duly remorseful over its aggression against China and other parts of Asia in the 1930s and 1940s are increasingly resented by younger Japanese.

China’s deep-seated concerns about Japan’s perceived inability to confront and properly deal with its imperial past are underscored by its perceptions of resurgent Japanese nationalism and more robust military pursuits. China has

⁶³ For more on the clean-up of abandoned Japanese chemical weapons in China see chapter 16 in this volume.

⁶⁴ For an excellent regular summary of China–Japan relations see the China–Japan section by James Pryzstup in the quarterly electronic journal *Comparative Connections* at URL <<http://www.csis.org/pacfor/ccejournal.html>>.

⁶⁵ For more on China’s nuclear tests see Ferm, R., ‘Nuclear explosions, 1945–96’, *SIPRI Yearbook 1997: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1997), pp. 433–36.

⁶⁶ The CTBT was opened for signature on 24 Sep. 1996 and will enter into force 180 days after it has been ratified by the 44 members of the Conference on Disarmament with nuclear power or research reactors on their territories, as listed in annex 2 of the treaty. For the states which have signed and ratified the CTBT see annex A in this volume. The text of the CTBT is reproduced in *SIPRI Yearbook 1997: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1997), pp. 414–31.

watched Japan expand its regional military reach to an unprecedented degree under the guise of assisting the international community, notably by providing naval vessels for logistics support to combat terrorism in Afghanistan and by sending some 550–600 Japanese troops to southern Iraq in early 2004 as part of the US-led multinational force there.⁶⁷ The latter deployment was the first time since World War II that Japan put troops on the ground in a country significantly affected by internal violence. In addition, China observes Japan continuing to strengthen its alliance relationship with the USA. China is particularly concerned about Japan's decision in December 2003⁶⁸ to invest an initial \$1 billion in the development of a sea- and ground-based ballistic missile defence system which will cost several billion dollars more before it is fully deployed (probably not earlier than 2011).⁶⁹ This system, while ostensibly intended to foil a North Korean missile attack against Japan, could be utilized to defend the country against Chinese missile threats, and its sea-based component could also be deployed to help Taiwan. More broadly, China warily notes Japan's deepening political relationship with Taiwan, a Japanese colony in the period 1895–1945, and an economically and strategically important neighbour of Japan today.

Taiwan and the challenges of cross-Taiwan Strait relations present another set of bilateral challenges for China's regional security multilateralism. Formally, all of China's regional neighbouring states agree with or acknowledge China's position that Taiwan is a part of China, but the region also has a clear strategic interest in the maintenance of stability across the Taiwan Strait and in seeing the differences between China and Taiwan settled peacefully. At the same time, Taiwan's democratization and increasing embrace of a 'Taiwan identity' are a concern for China, particularly since Taiwan's two most recent presidents, Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian, have insisted that Taiwan is independent of China and have advocated measures to solidify that stance.⁷⁰ China has not renounced the possibility of using force to settle its problems with Taiwan and has steadily built up its military capabilities—most notably its force of some 500 short-range ballistic missiles—in the provinces and waters directly opposite Taiwan.

Continued tensions across the Taiwan Strait undermine China's regional security multilateralism in three important ways. First, China insists that Taiwan be excluded from any multilateral organization in which membership is based on statehood. In addition, since China believes that the issue of Taiwan

⁶⁷ Recknagel, C., 'Iraq: first Japanese troops arrive on reconstruction mission', Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 19 Jan. 2004, URL <<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2004/01/73bff3c0-de7a-449b-902f-210d00ea082d.html>>.

⁶⁸ 'Japan to introduce missile shield', BBC News Online, 19 Dec. 2003, URL <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3333117.stm>>.

⁶⁹ 'Raytheon may get Japan missile order, analyst says (Update 4)', Bloomberg.com, 18 Mar. 2004, URL <<http://quote.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000101&sid=a1TSgtZxhQ.M&refer=japan>>. See also appendix 15B in this volume.

⁷⁰ For more on these issues see Romberg, A., *Rein in at the Brink of the Precipice: American Policy Toward Taiwan and US-PRC Relations* (Henry L. Stimson Center: Washington, DC, 2003); and Swaine, M., 'Trouble in Taiwan', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 83, no. 2 (Mar./Apr. 2004), URL <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20040301faessay83205/michael-d-swaine/trouble-in-taiwan.html>>.

is a Chinese 'internal affair', the Chinese Government refuses to discuss Taiwan-related security issues in regional security organizations such as the ARF. While on a formal diplomatic level this may make some sense, it undermines China's credibility as a power truly concerned with settling matters of strategic import to the region through multilateral means. Second, in developing significant new military capabilities based on its increased concern with Taiwan, China bolsters regional anxiety about growing Chinese military power and its use in the Western Pacific, thus lending a more cautionary tone to China's relations with key neighbour states and multilateral partners such as Japan and the ASEAN member states. Third, an aggressive Chinese approach towards Taiwan could also lead to a breakdown in Chinese relations with the most important single player as regards the Asia-Pacific region—the USA. This would probably have negative consequences for China's regional posture overall. The problem for China in each of these instances is that it lacks sufficient control over, and even ability to predict, the directions in which Taiwan's political process may lead in the future. Therefore, the cross-Taiwan Strait situation will remain for China a troubling complication in and a constraint upon a more expansive, China-led regional multilateral security agenda.

The broader issues of China-USA bilateral relations will probably place another set of constraints on Beijing's security multilateralism in the Asia-Pacific region. Overall, the two countries, while currently experiencing a period of constructive relations, have yet to fully reconcile fundamental differences over such strategic issues as the impact of US missile defences on China's nuclear deterrent, the desirability of a US-led global security structure and 'hegemony' versus a more equitably distributed balance of power in a multipolar world, and the role of US alliances and the use of force, particularly as these apply around China's periphery.

China and the USA continue to harbour suspicions about one another at the highest levels of decision making. For example, as Qian Qichen noted a year after the September 2001 terrorist attacks in the USA, 'Generally speaking Sino-US relations are developing forward, but there are also many frictions and struggles. . . . There is no change in the basic contradictions between China and the United States'.⁷¹ In a near-echo of such concerns, the US Department of Defense's 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review Report stated that 'the possibility exists that a military competitor with a formidable resource base will emerge in the region' [East Asia], and that among the USA's 'enduring national interests' is 'precluding [the] hostile domination of critical areas', including North-East Asia and the East Asian littoral, defined as 'the region stretching from south of Japan through Australia and into the

⁷¹ Qian, Q., 'The international situation and Sino-US relations since the 11 September incident', *Waijiao Xueyuan Xuebao* [Foreign affairs college journal], no. 3 (25 Sep. 2002), pp. 1–6. More recently Qian, who is retired but remains influential on foreign policy, wrote with concern about US approaches to military intervention. Qian, Q., 'US adjusts security strategy after Sept. 11 attacks', *People's Daily*, 19 Jan. 2004, p. 3.

Bay of Bengal'.⁷² Such views are likely to persist in spite of continued improvements in bilateral relations.

This divergence results in real differences over how regional security can best be achieved in the Asia–Pacific region. The Chinese 'new security concept' calls for a change in the way regional security is established and can be seen as consciously offering an alternative framework to US leadership, military alliances and a forward-based Western presence. For example, the emphasis on 'equality and mutual respect' can be interpreted in part as a call for the USA to act in a less high-handed, unilateral way. China emphasizes 'non-aggression', 'non-interference' and the need for disputes to be settled peacefully through dialogue, reflecting its concern with US-led intervention. By noting that the 'cold war mentality' needs to be abandoned, Chinese leaders express their concern about the US alliances, especially those in East Asia. They question these alliances on philosophical grounds, perceiving them as adverse to trends of regional cooperation. They also believe that US alliances may aim to 'contain' China and prevent reunification with Taiwan on China's terms. It is unlikely that the United States will readily acquiesce in a situation in which China's influence grows and encroaches upon spheres where the USA has traditionally dominated for decades. Even as the USA is strategically distracted in South-West Asia, its forward bases and array of alliances and defence relationships in the Asia–Pacific region remain a formidable military and diplomatic presence across the area, complicating China's efforts to establish a more complete and manifest regional leadership role through multilateral security mechanisms.

VI. Conclusions: implications for Asia–Pacific security

China's most authoritative public statements of its defence and security goals call for a 'new security concept and a new international political, economic, and security order responsive to the needs of our times'.⁷³ They state that the 'old international political and economic order, which is unfair and irrational, has yet to be changed fundamentally'⁷⁴ and that 'China's fundamental interests lie in . . . the establishment and maintenance of a new regional security order'.⁷⁵ This has obvious and difficult implications for countries such as the USA, which have a stake in keeping many aspects of regional order just as they are, and begs the question of whether the coexistence of China's regional security strategy and the currently positive nature of Chinese–US relations can continue indefinitely. This potentially difficult dynamic will need to be carefully managed by China and the USA, and demands deeper and more regularized interaction and consultation on regional security affairs, both multilaterally and bilaterally.

⁷² US Department of Defense (DOD), *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (DOD: Washington, DC, 30 Sep. 2001), pp. 2–4, URL <<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/qdr2001.pdf>>.

⁷³ *China's National Defense in 2000* (note 18), 'I. The security situation'.

⁷⁴ *China's National Defense in 2002* (note 18), 'I. The security situation'.

⁷⁵ *China's National Defense in 2000* (note 73).

Multilateral approaches have supported China's overarching security strategy and goals. While this convergence continues China can be expected to expand and deepen its embrace of security multilateralism, especially around its periphery. China's increased participation in and commitment to regional multilateral security mechanisms help embed it in a more sustained framework intended for cooperation rather than confrontation.

Through multilateral activities China has found that it can engage its major neighbours to manage potentially explosive regional security problems around its periphery. By working with Japan, North Korea, Russia, South Korea and the USA to resolve problems in the Korean peninsula peacefully, China hopes to avoid conflict in its region. Similarly, China's intensified dialogue with the smaller countries of South-East Asia is clearly intended to reassure its neighbours of its benign intentions and commitment to diplomatic solutions to problems and to defuse the possibility of neighbouring states 'ganging up' on China, even as it becomes a stronger political, economic and military power. In Central Asia, the establishment of the SCO has helped China reassure its neighbours to the west and north, has brought greater predictability to those relationships and has provided a framework within which these countries can address common threats and goals.

While China will be reluctant to become too entangled in multilateralism for fear that it may limit its security options, given these successes China's security multilateralism is likely to expand and deepen in the near to medium term. As China becomes more powerful, multilateral engagement will become an instrument for further extending its influence in the Asia-Pacific region. China has taken a leadership role in forming a number of multilateral security frameworks and mechanisms—such as the SCO and a growing number of agreements with countries in South-East Asia—in which the USA (the principal influence on the region) does not participate. Moreover, China has increasingly positioned itself as a regional leader through its participation in multilateral security mechanisms at a time when the USA is strategically distracted in Central and South-West Asia. The presentation and to a great extent the practice of Chinese policy make an intended contrast to the Bush Administration's predilection for direct action in security affairs and the current weakening of some of the USA's Asia-Pacific alliance relationships—such as that with South Korea.

Looking ahead, the trends noted above—if prudently managed by China, the USA and China's regional neighbours—will contribute to greater regional security as China comes to accept a larger stake in establishing and sustaining regional stability. In the last analysis, security in the Asia-Pacific region will be shaped in large measure by a combination of two factors: how China and the USA manage their relations, and how China itself manages to reconcile the tensions between multilateralism and its own steadfast opposition to third-party interference in what it considers 'internal affairs', meaning first and foremost the status of Taiwan.