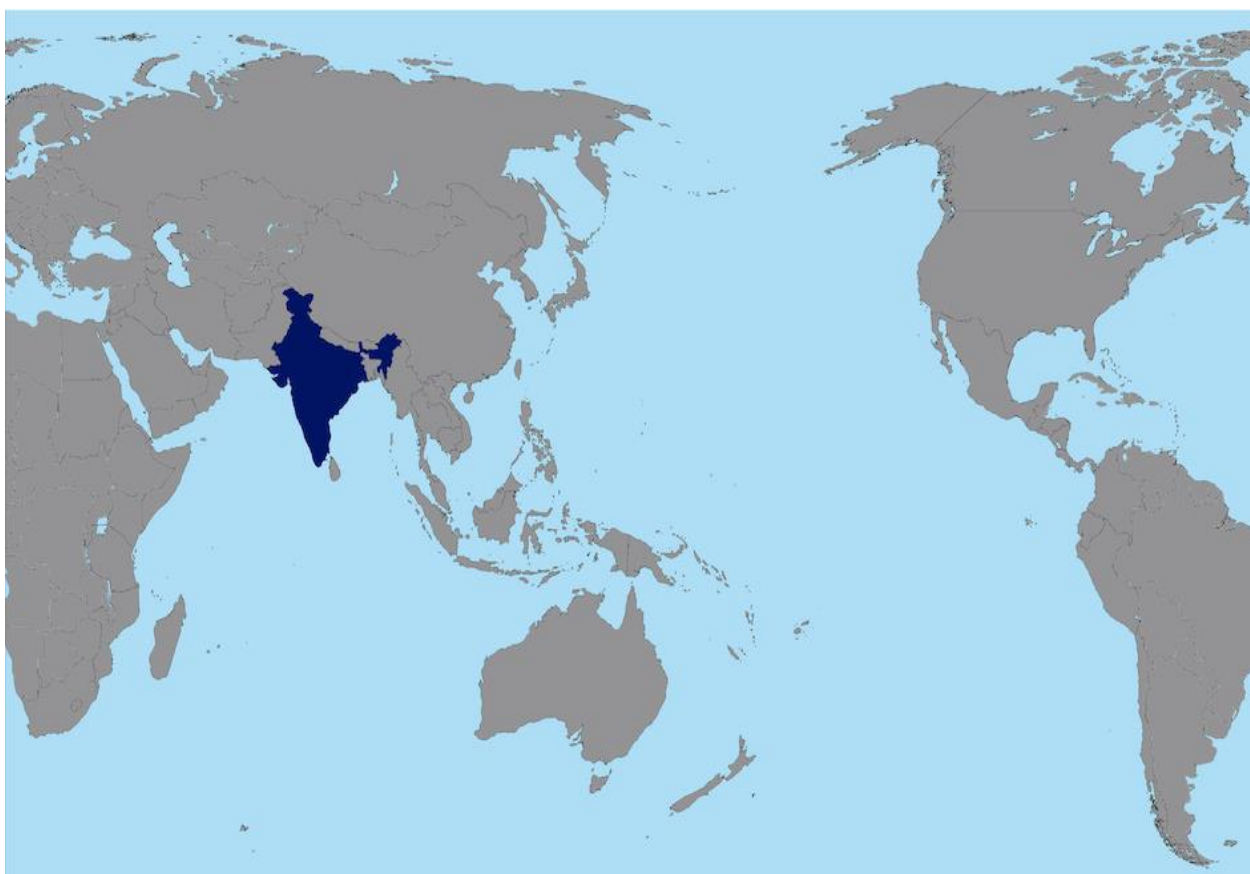




Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

DPG INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR AUGUST 2022



Volume III, Issue 8 | August 2022

Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

www.delhipolicygroup.org



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This publication is a monthly analytical survey of developments and policy trends that impact India's interests and define its challenges across the extended Indo-Pacific maritime space, which has become the primary theatre of global geopolitical contestation. It is authored by Cmde. Lalit Kapur (Retd.), DPG Senior Fellow for Maritime Strategy and assisted by Jayantika Rao Tiruvaloor Viavoori, Research Associate, based on open source reports and publications. Your comments and feedback may be addressed to Jayantika at jayantika@dpg.org.in. To subscribe, please [click here](#).

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DPG INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR

August 2022

Abstract

The 18-hour visit by the Speaker of the US House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, and her delegation to Taiwan ROC on August 03 raised tensions in East Asia, with the PLA's Eastern Theatre Command conducting exercises that effectively imposed a week long blockade of Taiwan, apart from other provocative actions. The USS Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group remained in the vicinity, but avoided provocation. Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen said her country would not escalate tensions nor instigate disputes, but would resolutely defend the nation's sovereignty.

President Putin approved the publication of Russia's new maritime doctrine. The document clearly articulates Russia's vision of itself as a great power with global interests, acknowledges the essentiality of maritime capability to retain great power status, identifies 14 strategic objectives, sets out concrete red lines where it will prioritise the use of force to defend its interests, and seeks the development of strategic partnerships and naval cooperation with India, as well as with Iran, Saudi Arabia and other states in the Indian Ocean.

In the aftermath of the Pelosi visit, China published its third Taiwan White Paper on August 10. The paper rests on five questionable premises: Taiwan is indisputably a part of China, the CPC has gone out of its way to promote peaceful reunification, reunification is stalled by outside powers, the benefits of reunification in the new era, and the bright prospects for reunification. The White Paper rests on unwarranted assumptions and a selective interpretation of history and as such is unlikely to convince opinion outside China.

Australia announced an independently-led Defence Strategic Review on August 3. The review, to be completed by March 2023, will update Australia's 2016 Defence White Paper, which in turn will guide the country's force structure and force posture over the next decade. Given the substantial change in regional threat perceptions which resulted in the conclusion of AUKUS last year, such a review will provide an indication of the new Labour government's defence outlook.



India's celebrations of its 75th Independence Anniversary included the deployment of eight warships to seven different ports around the globe, including the first visits by an Indian warship to San Diego (on the US Pacific coast) and Rio de Janeiro (in Brazil). In parallel, India's Navy, Army and Air Force conducted multiple exercises with Indo-Pacific countries during the month. Though India's SAGAR vision and Maritime Strategy of 2015 underline an Indian Ocean focus, the expanding range of military interactions signal growing Indo-Pacific interests.

A cabinet reshuffle in Japan resulted in Yasukuza Hamada returning as Defence Minister at a time when Japan faces three adversarial neighbours (Russia, North Korea and China) on its continental flanks. Hamada's primary task will be to lead revision of Japan's National Security Strategy, National Defence Programme Guidelines and Medium Term Defence Force Buildup Programme, which will shape the country's security posture over the next decade. Expert opinion in Japan remains divided on whether this will necessitate acquisition of offensive weapons, including a "counter-strike" capability to offset missile asymmetry, or whether a defensive approach (including focus only on missile defence) will be retained.

The UK released its National Strategy for Maritime Security on August 01, setting out the current and future issues facing the government in the maritime sector. The strategy, which defines maritime security in terms of upholding laws, regulations and norms to deliver a free, fair and open maritime domain, identifies five focal objectives towards which the government will work over the next five years. It is marked by a pronounced focus on the Indo-Pacific.

Speaking on "India's Vision of the Indo-Pacific" in Thailand, India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar highlighted the convergence between the Indo-Pacific visions of India and ASEAN, as well as its choice of the East Asia Summit's institutional mechanisms to propagate its Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative. He also pointedly observed, "Only those whose mindsets are built around sphere of influence and who are uncomfortable with the democratisation of world affairs will dispute the Indo-Pacific today".

The visit of China's spy ship Yuan Wang-5 to Hambantota from August 16 – 22 sparked a sharp exchange between the Chinese Embassy and the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka.

In his Liberation Day speech, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol described Japan as a partner and called for the swift improvement of Japan-South Korea relations. He also extended an offer of substantial financial support to

modernise North Korea if it abjured its nuclear weapons programme, which was promptly spurned by the North Korean side. South Korea and the US recommenced military exercises after a gap of four years.

According to a US think tank study, the PLA (Navy) possesses the resources necessary to field up to five aircraft carriers and ten ballistic missile submarines by 2030. The study indicates that China's power will continue to increase for at least the next decade, as against the belief that it is peaking now.

USS Preble became the first US warship to be equipped with an integrated optical dazzler and surveillance (HELIOS) system. The 60 KW directed energy laser is described as a transformational new weapon system.

The Pelosi Visit to Taiwan

The short but significant visit by the Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan on August 03 was preceded by serious stage-management efforts from both sides. When it became clear that she could not be dissuaded, the Biden administration activated communication channels with Beijing to minimise the fallout¹. The People's Republic of China (PRC), on the other hand, simulated a furious response. Clubbed with an Asian tour that included Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea and Japan, her tour schedule announced on July 31 did not include Taiwan². Even on August 01, China's spokesperson was voicing serious concern about "Speaker Pelosi's potential visit to Taiwan", indicating uncertainty about the plan. He also said, "We want to make it clear to the US side that the Chinese side is fully prepared for any eventuality and that the People's Liberation Army of China will never sit idly by, and we will make resolute response and take strong countermeasures to uphold China's sovereignty and territorial integrity"³. Despite the dissuasive actions from both sides, Pelosi and her delegation landed in Taipei on the night of August 02.

¹ Pelosi's Taiwan Trip Left a Fuming White House Scrambling for a Plan, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-08-03/pelosi-s-taiwan-trip-left-white-house-scrambling-for-a-plan#xj4y7vzkg>

² Pelosi to Lead Congressional Delegation to Indo-Pacific Region, <https://pelosi.house.gov/news/press-releases/pelosi-to-lead-congressional-delegation-to-indo-pacific-region>

³ Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian's Regular Press Conference on August 1, 2022, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/202208/t20220801_10731629.html

The stated purpose, set out in an editorial by the Speaker⁴, was to reaffirm the US commitment under the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, at a time when Beijing had dramatically intensified tensions with Taiwan. She added, "Our congressional delegation's visit should be seen as an unequivocal statement that America stands with Taiwan, our democratic partner, as it defends itself and its freedom"⁵. Pelosi reiterated this in Taiwan, when she said, "Today, our delegation ... came to Taiwan to make unequivocally clear: we will not abandon our commitment to Taiwan, and we are proud of our enduring friendship"⁶.



US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Members of her Delegation with Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen at the Presidential Office, August 03, 2022. Source: Taiwan President's Office

The visit lasted for just over 18 hours and included an overnight halt, interaction with the American Institute in Taiwan (the de facto US embassy), an address to Taiwan's legislature, an interaction with President Tsai Ing-wen, a closed media session, and a visit to the Jing-Mei White Terror Memorial Park.

In a pre-planned response, the PLA Eastern Theatre Command announced it would conduct a series of joint military exercises around Taiwan, both to deter

⁴ Nancy Pelosi: Why I'm leading a congressional delegation to Taiwan, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/08/02/nancy-pelosi-taiwan-visit-op-ed/>

⁵ Ibid

⁶ President Tsai meets US delegation led by House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, <https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6292>

further US action and to warn separatist forces minutes after Pelosi landed⁷. The PLA then announced it would conduct military exercises and training activities including live firing in six areas surrounding Taiwan. In an action simulating a blockade, the PLA prohibited other ships and aircraft from entering these areas⁸. The exercises resulted in PLA aircraft repeatedly transgressing Taiwan's ADIZ and the Taiwan Strait median line and firing of missiles that overflowed Taiwan. This continued till August 10, 2022⁹. The sheer scale indicates the exercises were pre-planned and not reactive, and that China would have found some other reason to carry them out even if the Pelosi visit had not taken place.

Meanwhile, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke of the one-China principle being "the overwhelming consensus of the international community, the political foundation for China's relations with other countries, the core of China's core interests and a red line that cannot be crossed"¹⁰. China's spokesperson said the Pelosi visit was not about upholding democracy, but about China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which China would do everything to uphold¹¹. She harped on China having always stood firm on the one-China principle since the Shanghai Communiqué of 1972, which in turn led to the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1978. China also cancelled the China-US Theatre Commanders' Talks, the China – US Defence Policy Coordination Talks and the China – US Military Maritime Consultative Agreement meetings; and suspended bilateral cooperation on repatriation of illegal immigrants, legal assistance in criminal matters, transnational crime, counternarcotics cooperation and talks on climate change¹². It imposed sanctions on Pelosi and her immediate family members¹³.

⁷ PLA Eastern Theatre Command conducts joint military operations around Taiwan Island, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2022-08/02/content_4917253.htm

⁸ Notice authorized to be released by Xinhua News Agency, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2022-08/03/content_4917250.htm

⁹ PLA Eastern Theatre Command wraps up joint military operations around Taiwan island, all tasks fulfilled successfully, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2022-08/10/content_4917851.htm

¹⁰ Wang Yi: The US Side's Act in Bad Faith on the Taiwan Question Will Only Further Bankrupt its National Credibility, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/wjbz_663308/activities_663312/202208/t20220803_10732397.html

¹¹ Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hai Chunying's Regular Press Conference on August 03, 2022, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/202208/t20220804_10733756.html

¹² The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Announces Countermeasures in Response to Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2535_665405/202208/t20220805_10735706.html

¹³ Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Announces China's Sanctions on US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi,

If China's objective was to scare the Taiwanese nation or deter the US, it failed. The post-visit reaction fits the image of a sulking bully rather than a responsible great power. Taiwan has changed from the military dictatorship it was till the 1980s to a thriving democracy now. As per the IMF, Taiwan's mostly Han Chinese citizens have a nominal per capita GDP of over \$ 36,000 in 2022, as compared to the below \$ 14,100 for their mainland counterparts¹⁴. This success remains an affront to the CCP and an obvious reason for the nearly 24 million Taiwanese people to resist CCP governance. The example of Hong Kong has effectively killed any hope of belief in the CCP's 'one country, two systems' promises. Consequently, it is difficult to find Taiwanese who seek reunification today. Pelosi thus received a very warm welcome, with her arrival being streamed live and legislators from even the opposition welcoming the visit¹⁵.

Responding to China's military actions, President Tsai drew attention to the continued, deliberately heightened military threat including the dangerous launch of missiles into some of the busiest transportation corridors in the world as irresponsible and enhancing Indo-Pacific tension. She reiterated that Taiwan would neither escalate conflict nor instigate disputes, but would resolutely defend the nation's sovereignty and security as a bulwark of democracy and freedom. She called on the international community to support Taiwan¹⁶. ASEAN Foreign Ministers, meanwhile, came together in a statement expressing concern with "international and regional volatility which could lead to miscalculation, serious confrontation, open conflicts and unpredictable consequences among major powers"¹⁷. In comments seen as directed towards China, they called for maximum restraint, refraining from provocative actions, and upholding the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, while reiterating the support of member states for their respective One-China Policy¹⁸.

The merits of the positions of the two countries are discussed in a separate commentary. The reality is that the constructive ambiguity negotiated over Taiwan's status between the US and China after their rapprochement lies in

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2535_665405/202208/t20220805_10735509.html

¹⁴ IMF World Economic Outlook Database, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2022/April/select-country-group>

¹⁵ Pelosi in Taiwan: Legislators from all major parties welcome Pelosi, <https://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2022/08/03/2003782895>

¹⁶ President Tsai delivers remarks on the live-fire military exercises China conducted in areas around Taiwan, <https://english.president.gov.tw/News/6295>

¹⁷ ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Statement on the Cross Strait Development, 3 August 2022, <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/final-ASEAN-FMs-Statement-on-Cross-strait-tention.pdf>

¹⁸ Ibid

tatters. Xi Jinping's China will be increasingly inflexible as its power rises, while the US freedom of action will be increasingly constrained by the need to demonstrate the credibility of commitments to regional allies and the bipolar domestic anti-China consensus. China will indubitably use the opportunity to set new boundaries for what Taiwan considers encroachments into its airspace and territorial waters. The US will be increasingly pushed to maintain the status quo.

At the end of the day, however, neither of the two sides is prepared for conflict. All assessments indicate that China's power is not yet sufficient to ensure a successful military assault. Nor will Xi Jinping be prepared to take a risk just months before the 20th Party Congress that would hand him an unprecedented third term. The US, on the other hand, is focused on Ukraine. Actions in East Asia appear a choreographed drama, with leaders on both sides talking tough but taking care not to allow the conflict to escalate. How the Taiwan situation shapes up going ahead will continue to engage the Indo-Pacific for the foreseeable future.

Russia's New Maritime Doctrine

A little over seven years after he had promulgated the 2015 edition of Russia's Maritime Doctrine on June 17, 2015, President Putin promulgated a revised, enlarged and more ambitious edition on July 31, 2022¹⁹. Coming shortly after Russia approved a revised National Security Strategy in 2021²⁰, is deeply engaged in Ukraine, has entered into a 'no limits' partnership with China²¹, has been identified as "the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area"²² and had signed an agreement with Sudan to build a naval base in that country²³ (though reports indicate that this agreement has run aground²⁴), this document is of considerable interest.

¹⁹ Russian Federation Naval Doctrine Approved,
<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/69084>

²⁰ Russia's National Security Strategy approved,
<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/51129>

²¹ Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development,
<http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5770>

²² NATO 2022 Strategic Concept,
https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf had

²³ Sudan welcomes military base agreement with Russia in the Red Sea,
<https://www.africanews.com/2022/03/03/sudan-welcomes-military-base-agreement-with-russia-in-the-red-sea/>

²⁴ Russia's Dreams of a Red Sea Naval Base Are Scuttled – for Now,
<https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/07/15/russia-sudan-putin-east-africa-port-red-sea-naval-base-scuttled/>

The doctrine has ten sections: general provisions and definitions; Russian national interests and challenges to security in the world ocean; strategic objectives and principles of Russia's maritime policy; priorities for development of maritime activities; regional directions of national maritime policy; priority marine activities; measures for training and ensuring readiness; the objectives and tasks for state management of maritime policy; the process for using instruments of national maritime policy to protect Russian national interests; and the conclusion.



The Royal Navy monitoring the Russian Navy vessels in the waters close to the UK in a concerted operation, December 5, 2020. Source: Twitter (@Royal Navy).

The doctrine observes that both scientific and economic activity in the world ocean will steadily increase and development of maritime activities and potential will be one of the decisive conditions for sustainable socio-economic development in the 21st century. As a great maritime power, Russia's interests are global. 14 specific national interests are identified. Additions to the 2015 edition include preservation of the status of a great maritime power, maintaining strategic stability in the oceans and development of Russia's maritime potential and defence capability; the right to lay underwater cables and pipelines and to study and develop the mineral resources of the international seabed area; safe operation of offshore pipeline systems for the transportation of hydrocarbons; ensuring guaranteed access to global shipping routes (i.e. ensuring Russia cannot be blockaded); naval operations on the high



seas to protect Russian interests and ensure strategic and regional stability; and development of Russia's Arctic zone as a strategic resource base.

The doctrine defines vital areas as internal and territorial seas, the maritime zones conferred on Russia by UNCLOS including the extended continental shelf, the Arctic Basin, the Sea of Okhotsk and the Russian sector of the Caspian. Russia reserves the right to use military force in accordance with its laws and generally recognised principles of international law in these areas. Important areas include the Azov and Black Seas, the eastern part of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, Baltic and Kurile Straits, and the world SLOCs, including those running along the Asian and African coasts. In these areas, the doctrine specifies that Russia will use mainly political, diplomatic, economic and other non-forceful tools to realise and protect its national interests and will resort to force only when possibilities of using such tools are exhausted. In other areas, it will confine itself to non-forceful methods. Challenges to its interests are identified as the desire of the US and its allies to dominate the world ocean and contain Russia; territorial claims by nations on Russia's offshore islands and territories; the expansion of NATO infrastructure and exercises to Russia's borders, the US desire to achieve overwhelming naval combat superiority; armed conflict in important geopolitical areas; attempts by some states to change the existing legal regimes of maritime spaces used for international navigation to further their own geopolitical interests and an increase in international terrorism, piracy; and illegal smuggling of weapons, narcotics and WMD. Risk areas encompass insufficient Russian maritime infrastructure, dependence on international trade activity, sanctions that prevent Russian companies from accessing modern technology and long-term finance, incompleteness of the legal delimitation of the Arctic, Russia's lack of bases abroad to support its fleet, climate change and the pandemic.

The doctrine identifies 14 strategic objectives – Russia's development as a great maritime power, building up capability to protect oceanic national interests, ensuring Russia's guaranteed access to the world ocean, the maintenance of strategic stability and deterring Russia's adversaries in the oceans, protecting sovereign rights on the continental shelf, creating a favourable diplomatic environment in the world oceans, increasing competitiveness of Russian maritime transport and Northern sea route, increasing naval operational capabilities, protection of state borders at sea, improving climate forecasting, increasing scientific research capability, economic development, and demarcation of the Arctic Continental Shelf beyond the 200 mile EEZ. The principles governing achievement of these objectives include compliance with Russian and international law, proportionate and timely response to challenges and threats to security, effective use of naval potential, better coordination, an



integrated approach to the development of various systems, and strengthening of the material and technological base, among others. Five functional priorities have been identified – development of maritime transport, development and conservation of ocean resources, development of offshore pipeline systems, marine scientific research and navy activity.

Priority sea areas for Russian maritime activity are, in order, the Arctic, Pacific, Atlantic (including the Baltic, Azov-Black Sea and Mediterranean basins), the Caspian, the Indo-Pacific and the Antarctic regions. The usage of the term Indo-Pacific is significant. Among the Pacific Ocean priorities are “creating conditions for a naval presence in the Asia-Pacific region” and “the formation of logistics support points in the states of the Asia-Pacific region”, indicating a conscious enhancement Arctic and Pacific priorities over the Atlantic. The Atlantic focus remains defensive. In the Indian Ocean, the doctrine seeks the “development of strategic partnership and naval cooperation with the Republic of India, as well as the expansion of cooperation” with Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and other states. It speaks of “carrying out a purposeful course to turn the region into a zone of peace and stability, developing relations with the states of the region aimed at developing trade, economic, military-technical and cultural ties”, developing tourism, expanding Russian shipping in the region, maintaining a naval presence in the Gulf region through bases in the Red Sea, participating in ensuring the safety of maritime transport including anti-piracy operations, and the conduct of marine scientific research.

The priority areas of Russian activity include shipbuilding; training of manpower; security, protection and preservation of the marine environment information support, international legal support and international cooperation. In shipbuilding, the doctrine targets “creating a new competitive image” of Russia’s shipbuilding industry, including the development and construction of warships and a variety of other vessels mainly at Russian shipyards and “ensuring the capabilities of the shipbuilding complex of the Russian Federation for the construction of large-tonnage vessels, including modern aircraft carriers for the Navy”.

In conclusion, the new doctrine sees the world as a significantly more dangerous place, acknowledges the essentiality of maritime capability to retain great power status and enhances to role of military force in attaining Russia’s maritime interests. The clear identification of vital areas indicates concrete red lines, where Russia will utilise force to defend its interests. The enhancement of India’s status from “friendly ties” to “strategic partner” is noteworthy, as is the inclusion of Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia as prospective Indian Ocean partners. Doubts have been expressed about Russia’s ability to execute the ambitious

policy prescriptions, including the construction of large aircraft carriers, following the loss of Nikolaev Shipyard in Ukraine. These seem to overlook the Zvezda Shipyard near Vladivostok. In the final run, the credibility of the new doctrine will be seen from the investment Russia makes in executing identified policies in the years ahead.

China's New White Paper on Taiwan

The aftermath of the Pelosi visit included China publishing its third white paper on Taiwan on August 10. Titled "The Taiwan Question and China's Reunification in the New Era"²⁵, the paper follows "The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China" published in August 1993²⁶ and "The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue" published in February 2000²⁷. It is intended to demonstrate the resolve of the Communist Party of China (CPC), reiterate that Taiwan is a part of China and re-emphasise the CPC's position and policies.



Chinese and Russian aircraft exercise together in the Sea of Japan, May 24, 2022.

Source: Chinamil.com

The CPC's perceptions on Taiwan rest on five pillars: Taiwan is indisputably a part of China; the CPC's continuous thrust for reunification, why reunification

²⁵The Taiwan Question and China's Reunification in the New Era, August 10, 2022, <https://english.news.cn/20220810/df9d3b8702154b34bbf1d451b99bf64a/c.html>

²⁶The Taiwan Question and the Reunification of China, August 31, 1993, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/taiwan/7953.htm>

²⁷White Paper – The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue, February 21, 2000, <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/celt/eng/zt/zgtw/t125229.htm>

cannot be halted despite external attempts; the impact of reunification in the new era; and bright prospects following reunification. Since the different perceptions of CPC and the US on these pillars constitute an Indo-Pacific flashpoint, this commentary seeks to explore the salient issues involved.

Taiwan is indisputably a Part of China

The relevant part of the paper begins with China's abrogation of all treaties with Japan on declaration of war in 1941. It cites the 1943 Cairo Declaration as explicitly stating the intent of China, the US and the UK to restore all territories stolen by Japan. The subsequent Potsdam Proclamation of 1945 reiterated that the terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out. On October 25, 1945, it claims China resumed exercise of sovereignty over Taiwan. On October 1, 1949, the PRC became the successor to the ROC and the only legitimate government of all China, thus assuming the right of sovereignty and territorial integrity over all China. In 1971, the UNGA adopted Resolution 2758, restoring all its rights to the PRC and recognising its representatives as the sole legitimate Government of China. The white paper then proceeds to discredit the Treaty of San Francisco and the West's support for Taiwan's meaningful participation in the UN system as an attempt to alter Taiwan's status as a part of China and to create two Chinas, or one China, one Taiwan, thereby using Taiwan to contain China.

As per the counter-argument, the PRC's recording of history is incomplete. The first document that should be considered is the Declaration of the United Nations of January 1, 1942, wherein China pledged²⁸ to accept the Atlantic Charter of 1941²⁹. This Charter explicitly specifies no aggrandizement, territorial or other; no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned, and respect for the sovereign rights of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; all provisions that China is now transgressing through its coercive thrust to assimilate Taiwan. The Cairo Declaration of November 26, 1943 was a statement of intent. It remained unsigned because of differences between the leaders on its actual wording³⁰. It thus has no bearing on the actual status of Taiwan. The focus of the Potsdam Declaration was stripping Japan of additional territories, not the determination of sovereignty over them. The surrender of Japanese forces on Taiwan on October 25, 1945 was personally to Chiang Kai-shek as the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in China, not to

²⁸History of the United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/history-united-nations>

²⁹Atlantic Charter, August 14, 1941, <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp>

³⁰The True Legal Status of Taiwan, <https://www.taiwanbasic.com/un/truelegal.htm>

the Republic of China, as a reading of the Act of Surrender³¹ makes clear. The Act has no bearing on the disposition of Japanese territories. Chiang Kai-shek was authorised to accept the Japanese surrender in China, Formosa and Indo-China but not in Manchuria, so by the PRC logic, Manchuria should NOT be part of China, while all of Indo-China should. It was only under Article 2 (b) of the San Francisco Peace Treaty (1951)³² that Japan renounced all rights, title and claim to Formosa, leaving the island under control of the occupying power (ROC). There are questions about the legal validity of UNGA Resolution 2758: according to Article 6 of the UN Charter, expulsion of a member state requires the recommendation of the Security Council (which was not obtained) and is permissible only when the member has persistently violated the principles contained in the UN Charter³³. A counter to this argument, however, is that only one Chinese state could be a member (both the PRC and ROC claimed to be the true China), and the UNGA majority chose the PRC. Even then, it was not a 'consensus' decision; 35 nations voted against the resolution and 17 abstained. Besides, the resolution only decided who would be China's representative at the UN; the UNGA was not the competent body to decide who had sovereignty over Taiwan.

The PRC's arguments under this head are, therefore, questionable. The merits or otherwise of the two arguments must be resolved peacefully, as enshrined in the UN Charter.

The CPC Thrust for Reunification

The CPC argument is essentially that under its leadership, people on both sides of the Strait have worked to de-escalate tensions and have made substantial progress. The CPC conceived the one country two systems approach, applied it in resolving Hong Kong and Macao and thus opened up people-to-people exchanges. After the 18th Party Congress in 2012, the CPC under Xi Jinping set out overarching guidelines and a programme of action. The resolve to never let anyone separate Taiwan from China was set at the 19th Party Congress in 2017. Efforts to achieve complete reunification are based on the one-China principle, the wellbeing of all Chinese people including those in Taiwan, defending the fundamental interests of the people and the core interests of the state, that any force that seeks to undermine China's sovereignty and territorial integrity must be resisted, and unity and solidarity must be upheld.

³¹Act of Surrender – China Theatre, <http://www.taiwandocuments.org/surrender02.htm>

³²Treaty of Peace with Japan, signed at San Francisco on 8 September 1951, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20136/volume-136-i-1832-english.pdf>

³³United Nations Charter (Full Text), <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>

It is noteworthy that the CPC was not amenable to a unified government in which it shared power with the ROC immediately after WW II. The objective then was the sole right to determine China's future, and that remains the guiding objective even today. While there is undoubtedly a thirst for an undivided China on both sides, this aspiration has necessarily been tempered by the increasingly authoritarian turn the PRC has taken under Xi Jinping. China has evidently dishonoured its treaty commitments to Hong Kong under the one country two systems approach. This, together with its dishonouring treaty commitments under UNCLOS and revisionist approach in the South and East China Seas has created considerable doubt about the credibility of its commitments to Taiwan. The programme of action set by the CPC under Xi Jinping is unilateral and does not take into account the aspirations of the Taiwanese people. They are, in fact, living proof that democracy can succeed in China, an affront to the CPC. China may propagate that it seeks the well-being of all Chinese, including those in Taiwan, but the reality is that the 23 million Taiwanese people don't believe China's reassurance. The sovereignty and territorial integrity argument is absurd – Taiwan has never been under China's sovereignty at least since the Treaty of Shimonoseki, nor has Taiwan's territory ever come under the PRC's jurisdiction.

Even the one-China principle argument is questionable. In the Shanghai Communiqué of February 28, 1972, the US acknowledged "that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China"³⁴. This merely recognised what had been decided by the UNGA. It did not, however, amount to recognition of the PRC's sovereignty over ROC and Taiwan. The communiqué explicitly reaffirmed the US interest "in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves"³⁵. Six years later, President Jimmy Carter decided to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC and withdraw recognition from the ROC. He also decided to abrogate the 1954 US-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty³⁶. Members of the United States Congress challenged this action as presidential overreach. The Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) was a consequence, in which the Carter Administration's draft act was rejected and replaced with language that has remained in effect since 1979. The TRA explicitly sets out the policy "that the US decision to establish diplomatic relations with the PRC rests on the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means"³⁷. Other policy

³⁴Joint Communiqué, February 28, 1972,

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v17/d203>

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of China, December 2, 1954, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/chin001.asp

³⁷Public Law 96-8, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-93/pdf/STATUTE-93-Pg14.pdf>

provisions include, "any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, pose a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the US", and that the US will not only provide Taiwan arms of a defensive character, but also maintain its own capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan"³⁸. The provisions of the Shanghai and subsequent communiqués, Reagan's six assurances to Taiwan and the Taiwan Relations Act have long been accepted by the CCP and PRC as part of carefully constructed strategic ambiguity that permitted relations to go ahead, bypassing the one-China policy. China's arguments about domestic legislation overriding international commitment are also without validity: the legislation has not overridden any formal commitment and the US acknowledgement that the PRC is the only legal government of China remains unchanged. This still does not have any bearing on Taiwan's reunification by other than peaceful means. China's protestations do not seem to understand that laws in democracies are set by the people and elected representatives are answerable to them - and not just to one party.

China's Reunification Cannot be Halted

The PRC argument is that reunification is critical, it is the only way to avoid Taiwan being invaded and occupied by another nation and thus contained; and to safeguard national sovereignty. The counter argument however, is that only the PRC is threatening to invade Taiwan, the people of Taiwan prefer to maintain their freedom and have control over their own destiny rather than abdicating this responsibility to the CPC. They are determined to halt reunification on unilateral terms. Apart from the people of Taiwan, others too are concerned about China's revisionism and the threat this poses to the region as a whole. Taiwan is a geopolitical gate. Allowing it to come under PRC control effectively allows China to project its maritime power outward, first to Japan, then to the second island chain and eventually further East (on the other hand, lack of control over Taiwan does not prevent the projection of China's power to the South, or West through the Malacca Straits, a reality India must be concerned about). The reality is that while the PRC may project that reunification cannot be halted, both Taiwan and other democratic countries have an interest in ensuring that it is halted.

³⁸Ibid.

Other Pillars of the White Paper

The PRC describes peaceful reunification as the first choice of the CPC and the Chinese government. It promises Taiwan a high degree of autonomy in accordance with the law after reunification, and cites the success of one country, two systems. It also holds out the threat of not allowing separatist activities in any form and reserves the option of use of force as a last resort. The credibility of the PRC's assurances is, however, suspect. The high degree of autonomy promised does not take away from the reality that the law to determine the degree of autonomy is to be framed by the PRC, and can be changed at whim.

The last section of the white paper is about bright prospects that will flow from reunification. Taiwan's people will have vast space for development, access to a vast mainland market, their rights and interests will be protected, and peaceful reunification is conducive to peace and development of the Asia-Pacific and the wider world. These statements can be considered propaganda and dealt with accordingly.

Conclusion

The critical issue is that China is not willing to have its beliefs adjudged before an independent tribunal, or indeed before world opinion. According to its beliefs, only the CPC narrative can be correct, all others must be wrong. It is this intransigence, this core belief that its beliefs cannot be questioned, that lies at the root of its alienation of many countries with whom it otherwise had good relations.

The Official US Historian records, "the Truman administration was prepared to abandon the Nationalists, allow the Communists to take over Taiwan, and perhaps even grant recognition to the PRC" in 1949³⁹. The entry of China into the Korean War in October 1950 and combat with US forces led to change in the administration's China Policy, with the Seventh Fleet coming into the Taiwan Straits to prevent any PRC attack on Taiwan. If the CCP had been patient and not relied upon force in Korea (at the same time as it chose to move forcibly to capture Tibet), its one-China aspirations may have been reality today.

Given the criticality of interests involved, there is bipartisan consensus in the US to continue supporting Taiwan. A revised Taiwan Policy Act is presently

³⁹ Chronology of US-China Relations 1784-2000,
<https://history.state.gov/countries/issues/china-us-relations>

under consideration by the US Congress⁴⁰. This proposes bolstering Taiwan's defence capabilities, providing almost \$4.5 billion in security assistance over the next four years and designating Taiwan as a major non-NATO ally. It also proposes support for Taiwan's participations in international organisations and in multilateral trade agreements, including the IPEF. The Act, if passed, will further entrench US opposition to the assimilation by China of Taiwan in force. US-China confrontation in the Taiwan Straits is, therefore, likely to remain for the foreseeable future.

Australia's Defence Strategic Review

The joint announcement⁴¹ on August 3, 2022 by the Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and the Defence Minister Richard Marles of an independently-led review⁴² of Australia's Defence force posture and force structure marks the beginning of a process that will result in updating of Australia's 2016 Defence White Paper. This in turn will enable "prioritising investment in Defence capabilities" and assessment of "the Australian Defence Force's structure, posture and preparedness in order to optimise Defence capability and posture to meet the nation's security challenges" over the next decade and beyond⁴³.

Two independent leads have been nominated: Professor the Hon Stephen Smith, a former Minister for Foreign Affairs (December 2007 – September 2010) and Defence (September 2010 – September 2013); and Air Chief Marshal Sir Alan Grant (Angus) Houston, the former Chief of Australia's Defence Force (2005 – 2011) and the Air Force (2001 – 2005). The review, to be completed by March 2023 and cover the period till 2033, requires the completion of five tasks. First it must outline all future strategic challenges facing Australia that may require an operational response. Second, it must prioritise the estate, infrastructure, disposition, logistics and security investments required to provide Australia with the force posture it needs. Third is to consider all elements of the integrated investments programme and provide recommendations for the programme's reprioritisation, particularly in light of

⁴⁰The Taiwan Policy Act of 2022,
[https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/SBS%20Taiwan%20Policy%20Act%20FINAL%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/SBS%20Taiwan%20Policy%20Act%20FINAL%20(1).pdf)

⁴¹ Joint Statement – Defence Strategic Review, 3 August 2022,
<https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/minister/rmarles/statements/joint-statement-defence-strategic-review>

⁴² Defence Strategic Review, <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/reviews-inquiries/defence-strategic-review>

⁴³ Terms of Reference for the Independent Leads of the Review,
<https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-08/defencestrategicreview-termsreference.pdf>

recently announced large-scale projects (AUKUS) to provide Australia the force structure required. Fourth is to outline the investments required to support defence preparedness and mobilisation needs. Finally, it must outline funding required to ensure longer-term strategic investments are progressed⁴⁴.



HMS Artful, an Astute Class nuclear attack submarine, December 2015. The class is a contender for Australia's AUKUS Programme.

Source: Ministry of Defense, Royal Navy (British).

Australia's 2016 Defence White Paper visualised the country "in a period of significant economic transition leading to greater opportunities for prosperity

⁴⁴ Ibid.

and development”⁴⁵. It envisaged “no more than a remote prospect of a military attack by another country on Australian territory in the foreseeable future”. Australia’s strategic outlook was shaped by recognition of the regional and global nature of Australia’s interests and different sets of challenges to them created by the behaviours of countries and non-state actors. Commitment to making practical and effective military contributions to global security operations to maintain the rules-based order and address shared security challenges was the guiding motif, along with the necessity of dealing with the terrorist threat, providing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief where required, maintaining a technological edge over potential adversaries, and dealing with threats in space and cyber-space⁴⁶. It saw major conflict between the US and China as unlikely. China was Australia’s largest trading partner and Australia welcomed “China’s continued economic growth and the opportunities this is bringing for Australia and other countries in the Indo-Pacific”, while seeking “to deepen and broaden our important defence relationships with China”⁴⁷.

The outlook changed in the aftermath of the pandemic and Australia’s push for an independent inquiry into its origins, as well as the pushback against China’s interference in Australia’s domestic affairs. In August 2020, concerned about the Morrison Government’s initiatives regarding China’s investment in Darwin, the Global Times warned about the risk of Australia turning into “the poor white trash of Asia”⁴⁸. Two months later, Beijing’s Embassy in Canberra publicised a list of 14 demands and threatened, “If you make China the enemy, China will be the enemy”⁴⁹. In September 2021, Australia entered into the AUKUS alliance⁵⁰ with the US and the UK⁵¹. China’s initiatives in the Southern Pacific including the Solomon Islands Beijing Security Agreement⁵², its ‘no-

⁴⁵ 2016 Defence White Paper, <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/publications/2016-defence-white-paper>

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Australia risks backsliding into a poor country in Asia Pacific, Global Times, 311 August 2021, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1199471.shtml>

⁴⁹ ‘If you make China the enemy, China will be the enemy’: Beijing’s fresh threat to Australia, <https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/if-you-make-china-the-enemy-china-will-be-the-enemy-beijing-s-fresh-threat-to-australia-20201118-p56fqs.html>

⁵⁰ Remarks by President Biden, Prime Minister Morrison of Australia and Prime Minister Johnson of the United Kingdom Announcing the Creation of AUKUS, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/09/15/remarks-by-president-biden-prime-minister-morrison-of-australia-and-prime-minister-johnson-of-the-united-kingdom-announcing-the-creation-of-aukus/>

⁵¹ For an analysis, see Lalit Kapur, “The AUKUS Alliance: Return to the Past?”, September 25, 2021, <https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/publication/policy-briefs/the-aukus-alliance-return-to-the-past.html>

⁵² For an overview, see “China in the Solomon Islands”, Indo-Pacific Monitor April 2022, https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/uploads_dpg/publication_file/voliii-issue4-3831.pdf

limits partnership' with Russia and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine Conflict are other factors that signal strategic change.

Australia's Labor party had initially committed to a fresh 'Defence Force Posture Review'⁵³. What has now been ordered is a Defence Strategic Review, going far beyond just where Australia's Defence Forces are to be based. Australia has already begun experiencing the impact of China's direct security challenges in its proximity. There is need to quickly strengthen ability to deter and deal with them. Substantial additional military spending will be required, not just for the nuclear submarines to be acquired under AUKUS, but also for cyber capabilities, hypersonic missiles and how to defend against them, long range strike weapons etc. The infrastructure to support all this will have to be created. Sources of funding for this additional expenditure, which is expected to go well beyond 2% of the GDP, will have to be found. Timelines for when the threat is expected to go live will have to be factored in: there is limited use in planning for capabilities to come on stream a decade or two hence, given that the threats they are expected to deal with will become evident much earlier. Australia's current force structure is heavily weighted towards the south and east, leaving the north and west relatively exposed. Ways will have to be found to turn these regions into forward operating areas, rather than just buffer zones. Existing facilities will have to be hardened to guard against long-range strike weapons. And Australia will have to learn that while SSN's are great for offensive purposes, they are somewhat limited at supporting diplomacy, protecting commerce or supporting operations on land. Unless other sources to execute these tasks can be guaranteed, Australia will also have to invest in assuring full-time availability of tactical air power at sea. This is only possible through aircraft carriers.

The interim report of the Review Leads, to be submitted at the earliest will, if made public, provide an indication of the future direction of Australia's Defence Forces. Interestingly, Marles has also committed to a decision on which SSN Australia will acquire by March 2023. The decisions involved are big ones, not just for Australia but for the entire Indo-Pacific region. Analysts will keenly watch the outcomes of the Review, and how Australia chooses to shape and posture its defence force for the future.

India's Evolving Maritime Outlook

Among India's celebrations of its 75th independence anniversary was the presence of eight Indian Naval ships proudly raising the national flag at seven

⁵³ Defence Force Posture Review, <https://www.alp.org.au/policies/defence-force-posture-review>

different ports across the globe. INS Sumedha started by hoisting India's 'colours' (the Tricolour and White Ensign) at Fremantle, Australia at 0800 (Australian Western Standard Time) on August 15, 2022. As the globe spun eastward into the rising sun, INS Saryu in Singapore came next, followed by INS Kochi and INS Chennai in Muscat, INS Tabar in Mombasa, INS Tarangini in London and INS Tarkash in Rio de Janeiro. INS Satpura at 0800 (Pacific Daylight Time) at San Diego, 15 hours behind Fremantle, was last. The message was loud and clear: independent India has accepted its maritime character and has acquired the capability and reach to display its maritime power around the globe.



Indian Warships Celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav Across the World on August 15, 2022.

Collage created by DPG from official sources

This message has taken a long time to come. Despite its maritime heritage and the lessons of history, India's post-independence focus was continental, driven both by the need to consolidate its union and external threats, first from Pakistan and later from China. An autarkic outlook, a self-contained economy and a reactive polity, coupled with a post-colonial economy with its paucity of resources, resulted in the Indian Navy (IN) often being described as the 'Cinderella Service'. Limited capability and the fact that extra-regional states provided security in the Indian Ocean enabled India to close its eyes to regional responsibilities.

The 'glass slipper' moment came following the December 2004 earthquake and tsunami. Within hours, the IN deployed its ships and aircraft in support of five rescue, relief and reconstruction missions centred on India's east coast (Operation Madad), the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Operation Seawaves),

the Maldives (Operation Castor), Sri Lanka (Operation Rainbow) and Indonesia (Operation Gambhir)⁵⁴. This deployment highlighted India's potential to resolve humanitarian and other needs for the region⁵⁵. India's aircraft carrier INS Viraat ventured into Southeast Asia for the first time in 2005, visiting Klang (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), Singapore and Jakarta (Indonesia)⁵⁶. The Shangri-La Dialogue of 2009 witnessed the US Defence Secretary telling Southeast Asia that Washington looked at India as a Net Security Provider in the region, even as India's Chief of the Naval Staff was telling the same audience, "We see the Indian Navy as a significant stabilising force in the Indian Ocean Region" and observing that India's influence in the Pacific could only expand⁵⁷.

The enunciation of India's first integrated oceanic policy by Prime Minister Modi in Mauritius on March 12, 2015 was the next step in the evolution of India's maritime outlook⁵⁸. This was followed by his enunciation of India's Indo-Pacific outlook at the Shangri-La Dialogue on June 01, 2018⁵⁹. It is not just to the East that India's international engagement has grown. The West remains critical for India's energy needs as well as the presence of large Indian Diasporas in the Arabian Peninsula. The recent I2U2 Summit signals yet another expansion of India's overseas interests⁶⁰.

This expansion of interests has already resulted in substantially increased international engagement by the IN. The number of ship days the IN now spends in the Pacific has increased manifold. INS Satpura represented the IN in Exercise RIMPAC-2022⁶¹, described as the largest maritime exercise in the world. But it is not just the IN that is increasingly venturing into the Indo-Pacific. In August alone, the IAF participated in Exercise Udarashakti in

⁵⁴ Vice Admiral Anup Singh, in "Blue Waters Ahoy: The Indian Navy 2002-2010", Harper Collins Publishers India 2018, P 84-101

⁵⁵ As observed by then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during press interaction on March 15, 2005, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43490.htm>

⁵⁶ C Raja Mohan, "Is India an East Asian Power? Explaining New Delhi's Security Politics in the Western Pacific", <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/104768/80.pdf>

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Text of the PM's Remarks on the Commissioning of Coast Ship Barracuda, 12 March 2015, <http://www.pib.gov.in/newsite/erecontent.aspx?relid=116881>

⁵⁹ Prime Minister's Keynote Address at Shangri La Dialogue (June 01, 2018), http://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/29943/Prime_Ministers_Keynote_Address_at_Shangri_La_Dialogue_June_01_2018

⁶⁰ For an overview of the I2U2 Summit, see "The I2U2 Summit – Another Opening of Doors" in the Indo-Pacific Monitor, July 2022, https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/uploads_dpg/publication_file/indo-pacific-monitor-4099.pdf

⁶¹ INS Satpura showcases here professional prowess in the Pacific Ocean during RIMPAC-22, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1848148>

Malaysia⁶² and is participating in Ex Pitch Black in Australia⁶³. In the same period, the Indian Army participated in Ex Vajra Prahar with the US⁶⁴, Al Najaf with Oman⁶⁵ and Vinbax with Vietnam⁶⁶. Other Indian Army exercises with Indo-Pacific countries include Maitree with Thailand, Yudh Abhyas with the US, Indra with Russia, Ekuverin with the Maldives, Lamitye with the Seychelles, Bold Kurukshetra with Singapore, Harimau Shakti with Malaysia, Garuda Shakti with Indonesia, Dharma Guardian with Japan and Nomadic Elephant with Mongolia. Australia has also invited India as an observer to its Exercise Talisman Sabre. As India's political interests, manifested by partnerships such as with the Quad, with ASEAN, the I2U2 and bilateral engagements grow, India will increasingly use its military capacity to shape "a more integrated and cooperative future in the region that enhances the prospects for sustainable development for all"⁶⁷.

A number of pointers indicate the future direction of India's maritime outlook in the Indo-Pacific. The outlook is still evolving – it has not been publicly articulated in the terms used by China in its 2015 Military Strategy White Paper⁶⁸, or by Russia in its recent doctrine⁶⁹. However, the visible thrust being imparted by India to the maritime dimension is evident. While priorities have been set by the government, its ability to set a clear direction is circumscribed by the need to carry sufficient sections along to ensure policy continuity irrespective of change of government. How effectively the current and successive governments can manage the change will determine whether India fulfils its promise of becoming one of the world's leading maritime powers, as it was in the past.

Other Indo-Pacific Developments

The UK National Strategy for maritime security, published on August 1, 2022, sets out the current and future issues facing the government and the maritime

⁶² Culmination of Exercise Udarashakti,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1852827>

⁶³ IAF Participation in Exercise Pitch Black 2022 at Darwin, Australia,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1853181>

⁶⁴ Joint Exercise with US Special Forces Commences at Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1849960>

⁶⁵ Indo-Oman Joint Military Exercise Al Najaf IV concludes

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1851645>

⁶⁶ Vietnam-India Bilateral Army Exercise Vinbax 2022 Concludes at Chandimandir,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1852904>

⁶⁷ Extracted from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's SAGAR speech on March 12, 2015.

<http://www.pib.gov.in/newsite/erecontent.aspx?relid=116881>

⁶⁸ China's Military Strategy White Paper, 26 May 2015,

http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2015/05/27/content_281475115610833.htm

⁶⁹ See separate commentary in this issue of the Indo-Pacific Monitor.

sector⁷⁰. It defines maritime security in terms of upholding laws, regulations and norms to deliver a free, fair and open maritime domain, and identifies five focal objectives towards which the government will work over the next five years: protecting the homeland; responding to threats; ensuring prosperity; championing British values; and supporting a secure, resilient ocean.



Participating ships sail in formation off Hawaii during Exercise RIMPAC 2022 on July 28, 2022.
Source: US Indo-Pacific Command

The White House articulated its strategy toward Sub-Saharan Africa on August 08, 2022⁷¹. Acknowledging that it is impossible to address today's defining challenges without African contributions and leadership, the strategy targets four US objectives in the region: fostering openness and open societies; delivering democratic and security dividends, advancing pandemic recovery and economic opportunity; and supporting conservation, climate adaptation and a just energy transition. The stated approach towards delivering on these objectives is revamping public diplomacy efforts; supporting sustainable development and resilience; refining and reinvesting in US defense tools, strengthening trade and commercial relations, driving digital transformation and rebalancing toward urban hubs. Whether this will result in enhancement

⁷⁰National Strategy for Maritime Security, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1100525/national-strategy-for-maritime-security-web-version.pdf

⁷¹Fact Sheet: US Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/08/08/fact-sheet-u-s-strategy-toward-sub-saharan-africa/>

of the US economic and military footprint in the region, however, remains to be seen.



Japan's Defense Minister Yasukuza Hamada Reviews a Guard of Honour on August 12, 2022.
Source: Japanese Ministry of Defense.

The truce in Yemen was renewed for another two months, till October 2, 2022. The UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg also announced that both the government and Houthi rebels would intensify negotiations to reach an expanded agreement as soon as possible⁷².

Speaking on India's vision of the Indo-Pacific at the Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, India's External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar said, "Only those whose mindsets are built around sphere of influence and who are uncomfortable with the democratization of world affairs will dispute the Indo-Pacific today"⁷³. He described ASEAN as the centre of the Indo-Pacific and observed that India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), announced at the 14th East Asia Summit (EAS) in Bangkok did not have a separate institutional

⁷²Yemen truce renewed for another two months,
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/08/1123832>

⁷³ Address by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar at the Chulalongkorn University on "India's Vision of the Indo-Pacific", https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/35641/Address_by_External_Affairs_Minister_Dr_S_Jaishankar_at_the_Chulalongkorn_University_on_Indias_Vision_of_the_IndoPacific

infrastructure but relied on the Leaders-led EAS process and was aimed at the establishment of a safe, secure and stable maritime domain. He described the Quad as “the most important plurilateral platform that addresses contemporary challenges and opportunities in the Indo-Pacific” to address a broad range of activities. In another indirect reference to China, he added, “If there are reservations in any quarter, these stem from a desire to exercise a veto on the choices of others. And possibly a unilateralist opposition to collective and cooperative endeavours”⁷⁴.

The visit of China’s spy ship Yuan Wang-5 to Hambantota, in Sri Lanka, from August 16-22 resulted in considerable media interest. A brief by this author on the visit has been published separately⁷⁵. There was a diplomatic aftermath, when China’s Embassy in Sri Lanka said, “Looking back at the great history of the island, Sri Lanka has overcome aggression from its other neighbour for 17 times, colonisation by the west for 450 years, and an anti-terrorism war for nearly 3 decades, and is now still standing in the world bravely and proudly. Approving a foreign vessel’s port call for replenishment is a decision made by the Sri Lanka government completely within its sovereignty, not to mention all the scientific research activities of the Yuan Wang 5 comply with the international law and common international practice. External obstruction based on so called “security concerns” but without any evidence from certain forces is de facto a thorough interference into Sri Lanka’s sovereignty and independence”⁷⁶. India’s High Commission responded with, “We have noted the remarks of the Chinese Ambassador. His violation of basic diplomatic etiquette may be a personal trait or reflecting a larger national attitude. His view of Sri Lanka’s northern neighbour may be coloured by how his own country behaves. India, we assure him, is very different. His imputing a geopolitical context to the visit of a purported scientific research vessel is a giveaway. Opaqueness and debt driven agendas are now a major challenge, especially for smaller nations. Recent developments are a caution. Sri Lanka needs support, not unwanted pressure or unnecessary controversies to serve another country’s agenda”⁷⁷. India’s strong response to China’s irresponsible breach of diplomatic etiquette speaks for itself.

⁷⁴Ibid

⁷⁵LalitKapur, DPG Policy Brief Vol VII Issue 38, “The Yuan Wang-5 Affair”,
https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/uploads_dpg/publication_file/the-yuan-wang5-affair-4107.pdf

⁷⁶Chinese Embassy in Sri Lanka,
<https://twitter.com/ChinaEmbSL/status/1563107466719920132>

⁷⁷India in Sri Lanka,
https://twitter.com/IndiainSL/status/1563559042077048839?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Etweet

Evidence of India's maritime footprint continued mounting. INS Tarkash began the month with a visit to Dakar, in Senegal⁷⁸, before crossing the Atlantic and hosting Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro on board in Rio de Janeiro⁷⁹. She then visited Natal, completing the first deployment of an Indian warship to South America in over two decades before beginning her journey back⁸⁰. INS Satpura, after participating in RIMPAC 2022 off Hawaii, went to San Diego, becoming the first Indian warship to show India's flag on the West Coast of North America⁸¹. INS Sumedha visited Port Tanjung Benoa⁸², Bali before going on to Fremantle, Australia⁸³. She called at Port Kang (Kuala Lumpur) on her way back to India⁸⁴. INS Tabar visited Mombasa⁸⁵, while IN Ships Chennai and Kochi went to Muscat⁸⁶. NS Tarangini visited Aalborg, Denmark⁸⁷; London⁸⁸ and Porto, Portugal⁸⁹. Meanwhile, the sail training ship INSV Tarini set off on an ocean sailing expedition to Mauritius with a crew of six, including three women officers⁹⁰. All ships also exercised with host nation navies before entering harbour, or on departure.

⁷⁸INS Tarkash visits Dakar, Senegal, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-tarkash-visits-dakar-senegal>

⁷⁹INS Tarkash had the Rare Honour and Privilege of Receiving on board the President of Brazil, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-tarkash-had-rare-honour-and-privilege-receiving-onboard-president-brazil>

⁸⁰INS Tarkash completes maiden deployment to Brazil, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-tarkash-completes-maiden-deployment-brazil>

⁸¹INS Satpura Arrived at San Diego Harbour, USA on 13 August 2022, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-satpura-arrived-san-diego-harbour-usa-13-august-2022>

⁸²INS Sumedha visits Bali, Indonesia, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-sumedha-visits-bali-indonesia>

⁸³Indian Navy Operational Deployment, INS Sumedha Deployed to South Eastern IOR, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/indian-navy-operational-deployment-ins-sumedha-deployed-south-eastern-ior>

⁸⁴INS Sumedha Visits Port Klang, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-sumedha-visits-port-klang>

⁸⁵INS Tabar Arrived at Mombasa, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-tabar-arrived-mombasa>

⁸⁶INS Chennai and Kochi Entered Muscat Harbour on 14 August 2022, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-chennai-and-kochi-entered-muscat-harbour-14-august-2022>

⁸⁷INS Tarangini to Denmark Ambassador Pooja Kapur Visited The ship in Aalborg, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-tarangini-denmark-ambassador-pooja-kapur-visited-ship-aalborg>

⁸⁸INS Tarangini Celebrated Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav as Part of Commemorating 75th Independence Day Celebrations During her Port call at London, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-tarangini-celebrated-azadi-ka-amrit-mahotsav-part-commemorating-75th-independence-day>

⁸⁹INS Tarangini, the First Sail Training Ship of Indian Navy Deployed as Part of Lokayan 22 Made A Port Call at Porto, Portugal, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-tarangini-first-sailtrainingship-indian-navy-deployed-part-lokayan-22-made-port-call>

⁹⁰Ocean Sailing Expedition on INSV Tarini to Mauritius, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ocean-sailing-expedition-insv-tarini-mauritius>



India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar meets Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha in Bangkok, Thailand on August 17, 2022. Source: Twitter (@DrSJaishankar).

The US Military Sealift Command's Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ships USS Charles Drew conducted maintenance at the Larsen and Toubro Ltd Shipyard in Kattupalli from August 7-17, 2022⁹¹. Maintenance conducted includes repairs to safety and crew habitability systems and equipment. It may be recalled that the Joint Statement of the US-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in April this year had recorded, "both sides agreed to explore possibilities of utilizing the Indian shipyards for repair and maintenance of ships of the US Maritime Sealift Command (MSC) to support mid-voyage repair of US Naval ships"⁹². The repair, done in an Indian shipyard for the first time ever, marks a new chapter for deeper engagement between India and the US⁹³.

⁹¹Indian Port Provides Key Maintenance Capability for US Navy's Military Sealift Command, 17 August 2022, <https://www.cpf.navy.mil/News/Article/3132590/indian-port-provides-key-maintenance-capability-for-us-navys-military-sealift-c/>

⁹²Joint Statement on the Fourth India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue, April 12, 2022, <https://www.state.gov/fourth-annual-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue/>

⁹³First ever repair of a US Navy Ship in India, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1849430>

USS Frank Cable, an Emory S Land-class submarine tender visited Visakhapatnam from August 01-04, 2022⁹⁴. Ships of this type are designed to resupply and repair submarines on long deployments at sea. India no longer has a submarine tender: the last such ship, INS Amba, was decommissioned in July 2006. Interaction during the visit with senior IN officers, including the Chief of Staff of Eastern Naval Command and the Flag Officer Submarines⁹⁵, indicates that India may be exploring the acquisition of a similar vessel in the near future.

Admiral Tan Sri Mohd Reza Bin Mohd Sany, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy, visited India from August 16-19, 2022⁹⁶. His itinerary encompassed meetings in Delhi, including with counterparts, NSCS officials and MEA officials, as well as a visit to his Alma Mater, INS Dronacharya, the Indian Navy's Gunnery Training Establishment, from where he graduated in 1990⁹⁷. The visit is another indicator of warming of relations between India and Malaysia.

India announced that the first indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant would be commissioned into the Indian Navy on September 02, 2022, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the Chief Guest on this momentous occasion⁹⁸. Designed in-house by the Indian Navy and built by Cochin Shipyard Limited, the ship is fitted with a large amount of indigenous equipment sourced from major industrial houses as well as over 100 MSMEs. Questions about the survivability of aircraft carriers in the current AA/AD environment and their utility continue to be asked. A brief addressing these questions has been published by this author separately⁹⁹.

A cabinet reshuffle in Japan resulted in Yasukuza Hamada taking over as Japan's Defence Minister from Nobuo Kishi on August 10, 2022¹⁰⁰. Hamada has

⁹⁴USS Frank Cable Visits Visakhapatnam, India, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/3118881/uss-frank-cable-visits-visakhapatnam-india/>

⁹⁵USS Frank Cable on a four-day visit to Visakhapatnam, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/uss-frank-cable-four-day-visit-visakhapatnam>

⁹⁶Visit of Chief of Royal Malaysian Navy, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/visit-chief-royal-malaysian-navy>

⁹⁷Chief of Royal Malaysian Navy RMN, was on a Two-Day Official Visit to SNC, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/chief-royal-malaysian-navy-rmn-was-two-day-official-visit-snc>

⁹⁸Curtain Raiser Commissioning of Indigenous Aircraft Carrier, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/curtain-raiser-commissioning-indigenous-aircraft-carrier>

⁹⁹LalitKapur, DPG Policy Brief Vol VII Issue 37, "The Return of INS Vikrant", https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/uploads_dpg/publication_file/the-return-of-ins-vikrant-4106.pdf

¹⁰⁰PM Kishida to bring back veteran Hamada as Japan defence chief, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/PM-Kishida-to-bring-back-veteran-Hamada-as-Japan-defense-chief>

served as Defence Minister earlier in 2008-09, under Prime Minister Taro Aso. He has also served as the parliamentary vice minister of the Defence Agency in 2003-04, and as the parliamentary vice defence minister in 1998-99¹⁰¹. Hamada will have to lead revision to Japan's National Security Strategy and other key security documents before the year ends, providing the foundation for the country's defence policies in the years ahead.

As tensions in East Asia grow, reports indicated Japan is considering stockpiling more than 1000 long-range cruise missiles to narrow the 'cavernous' missile gap with China¹⁰². Acquisition plans could be unveiled in the Japanese MoD's budget proposal, which is expected shortly. Expert opinion in Japan, meanwhile, remained divided on whether to acquire counter-strike capabilities or to focus on missile defence¹⁰³. China is reported to possess about 300 long-range cruise missiles and over 1900 ballistic missiles that could strike Japan. Japan does not currently possess long-range missiles. Neither does the US, which was till recently bound by the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty that banned all land-based missiles with ranges of 500 – 5500 Km.

In his Liberation Day Speech on August 15, President Yoon Suk-yeol said, "Today, Japan is our partner as we face common threats that challenge the freedom of global citizens --- We must swiftly and properly improve Korea-Japan relations by upholding the spirit of the Kim Dae-jung – Obuchi Declaration which proposed a blueprint of a comprehensive future for Korea-Japan relations"¹⁰⁴. He also called for denuclearisation of North Korea to ensure sustainable peace on the Korean Peninsula, offering a large-scale food programme, assistance for power generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure, projects to modernise ports and airports for international trade, enhancement of North Korea's agricultural productivity and assistance to modernise hospitals if North Korea abandoned its nuclear programme and

¹⁰¹ Japan's new defense chief set to have his work cut out for him – again,
<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2022/08/10/national/politics-diplomacy/yasukazu-hamada-defense-minister-profile/>

¹⁰² Japan weighs deploying over 1,000 longer-range missiles amid China tension, report says,
<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2022/08/21/national/japan-1000-long-range-missiles-china/>

¹⁰³ In meetings with Japanese officials, experts divided over counterstrike capabilities,
<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2022/08/28/national/japan-defense-experts-counterstrike/>

¹⁰⁴ Full text of Yoon's Liberation Day speech,
<https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20220815001600315>

embarked on a genuine and substantive process for denuclearisation. Kim Yo-jong, the North Korean leader's sister, flatly rejected the Yoon proposal¹⁰⁵.

On August 22, the US and South Korea revived military exercises after a gap of four years. These had largely been reduced to computer simulations after 2018, when then President Trump, seeking enhanced South Korean contribution towards the cost of maintaining US troops there, had directed that the training be scaled down. The political situation has changed, with the Biden Administration now focused on strengthening alliances and South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol supporting a tougher posture against North Korea¹⁰⁶.

Exercise RIMPAC 2022, billed as the world's largest international maritime exercise, concluded off Hawaii on August 4, 2022¹⁰⁷. The exercise, which began on June 29, 2022, involved 38 surface ships, three submarines, nine national land forces, more than 30 unmanned systems, about 170 aircraft and over 25,000 personnel. Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, the United Kingdom and the United States took part. India was represented by INS Satpura, an indigenously built frigate, which proceeded to San Diego thereafter¹⁰⁸, becoming the first Indian warship to visit the west coast of the US.

The Ninth China – Japan High-level Political Dialogue took place in Tianjin, China on August 17, 2022, with China's Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Director of the Office of the Central Committee for Foreign Affairs Yang Jiechi meeting Japan's National Security Adviser Takeo Akiba¹⁰⁹. The Chinese statement was marked by the absence of handshakes in the traditional photograph of such events. The two sides agreed that the seven hour dialogue was "candid, in-depth and constructive, with

¹⁰⁵North Korea rejects South's aid offer calls President Yoon 'really simple', <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/08/19/asia/north-korea-south-korea-aid-denuclearization-intl-hnk/index.html>

¹⁰⁶US, South Korea Revive Live Military Drills After Four-Year Hiatus, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-south-korea-revive-live-military-drills-after-four-year-hiatus-11661074202>

¹⁰⁷Rim of the Pacific 2022 Concludes, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/3120559/rim-of-the-pacific-2022-concludes/>

¹⁰⁸INS Satpura Arrived at San Diego Harbour, USA on 13 August 2022, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-satpura-arrived-san-diego-harbour-usa-13-august-2022>

¹⁰⁹The 9th China-Japan High-Level Political Dialogue is Held in Tianjin, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/wshd_665389/202208/t20220821_107472_06.html

some useful consensus reached"¹¹⁰. As both countries approach the 50th anniversary of normalisation of their relations next month, the focus will be on whether they can find a way to bridge the widening gap in their political outlooks.

The AUKUS Submarine Joint Steering Group and the AUKUS Advanced Capabilities Joint Steering Group met at Washington DC in end-July 2022 to take stock of the progress made in their tasks¹¹¹. The Joint Steering Group for Nuclear Submarines noted the introductory remarks of the IAEA Director General to the Board of Governors in which he expressed satisfaction with the engagement and transparency shown by the three countries so far and noted that he plans to present a report on AUKUS during the Board Meeting in September 2022¹¹². The Joint Steering Group for Advanced Capabilities decided to accelerate near-term capabilities in hypersonics and counter-hypersonics, as well as cyber. They also recommitted to deepening cooperation on information-sharing and other previously agreed working groups. They said, "As work progresses on these and other critical defense capabilities, we will seek opportunities to engage allies and close partners"¹¹³.

China's PLA (Navy) possesses the resources necessary to field up to five aircraft carriers and ten ballistic missile submarines by 2030, according to a study by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments¹¹⁴. The report assumes that China's military will grow at a rate of 3% above inflation during this period. For nations concerned about the growth of China's maritime might and aspirations, this cannot be good news.

USS Antietam and USS Chancellorsville, both Ticonderoga-class cruisers of the USN, transited the Taiwan Straits on August 28, once again demonstrating the US commitment to sailing wherever international law allows¹¹⁵. The response from China's Eastern Theatre Command claimed that the PLA conducted

¹¹⁰Ibid

¹¹¹Readout of AUKUS Joint Steering Group Meetings, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/07/31/readout-of-aukus-joint-steering-group-meetings-2/>

¹¹²IAEA Director General's Introductory Statement to the Board of Governors, <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/statements/iaea-director-generals-introductory-statement-to-the-board-of-governors-6-june-2022>

¹¹³Readout of AUKUS Joint Steering Group Meetings, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/07/31/readout-of-aukus-joint-steering-group-meetings-2/>

¹¹⁴China's Choices: A New tool for Assessing the PLA's Modernization, [https://csbaonline.org/uploads/documents/CSBA8310_\(Chinas_Choices_report\)_FINAL_web.pdf](https://csbaonline.org/uploads/documents/CSBA8310_(Chinas_Choices_report)_FINAL_web.pdf)

¹¹⁵7th Fleet Cruisers Transit Taiwan Straits, <https://www.c7f.navy.mil/Media/News/Display/Article/3142171/7th-fleet-cruisers-transit-taiwan-strait/>

security tracking and monitoring their passage throughout and had all movements of the US warships under control¹¹⁶.

Reports indicate that USS Preble has become the first USN ship to be fitted with a High Energy Laser with an integrated optical dazzler and surveillance (HELIOS) system. The 60 KW directed energy laser weapon has been installed in place of a Vulcan-Phalanx Close-In-Weapon-System. It can reportedly be upgraded to 120 KW. HELIOS is described as “a transformational new weapon system, providing deep magazine, low cost per kill, speed of light delivery and precision response”¹¹⁷. China’s spokesperson, meanwhile, described the transit as “provocation aimed at freedom of trespassing” and constituting “deliberate sabotage of regional peace and stability”. He urged the US side to “stop fudging, hollowing out and distorting the one-China principle, observe basic norms in international relations including respecting other countries’ sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in their internal affairs, earnestly abide by the one-China principle and stipulations of the three China-US joint communiqués, and stop being a trouble maker for peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait”¹¹⁸.

¹¹⁶PLA Eastern Theatre Command spokesperson’s remarks on US warships’ transit through Taiwan Straits, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2022-08/28/content_4919671.htm

¹¹⁷First operational anti-missile Laser installed on San Diego based Destroyer, <https://timesofsandiego.com/military/2022/08/19/first-operational-anti-missile-laser-installed-on-san-diego-based-destroyer/>

¹¹⁸Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s Regular Press Conference on August 29, 2022, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/202208/t20220829_10757209.html



Delhi Policy Group
Core 5A, 1st Floor,
India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road
New Delhi - 110003
India

www.delhipolicygroup.org