

"SELFISH SUPERPOWER" NO LONGER?

CHINA'S ANTI-PIRACY ACTIVITIES AND 21ST-CENTURY GLOBAL MARITIME GOVERNANCE



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ABSTRACT

China has actively maintained an anti-piracy military presence for nearly four years in and around the Gulf of Aden, the strategic maritime region situated between the Horn of Africa and Yemen. This is the first major instance in which China has dispatched security forces independently in areas outside of its sovereign territory to protect Chinese citizens and national interests. These unprecedented developments demonstrate the sensitivity with which Beijing reacts to domestic and external pressure to protect its interests in the global commons, and they provide insight into how China is cooperating with other states to address transnational security threats such as piracy. More broadly, these missions also elucidate how China will participate in the broader establishment of 21st-century global maritime governance norms and how international maritime governance issues

relate to China's overarching vision of its role in the international system. This emerging set of potential indicators is particularly important, as China has demonstrated great power aspirations but has not yet contributed public goods to the international community commensurate with such a status. Anti-piracy operations represent one such contribution that Beijing can use to bridge this gap, and thereby take its place among the leading nations of the world.

INTRODUCTION

The persistence and complexity of modern piracy has created new challenges for the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), which is particularly unproven in out-of-area maritime regions that Chinese strategists term the "Far Seas," such as the Indian Ocean. These challenges are formidable and perhaps daunting for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP),

The image above, kindly provided by Chad McNeeley of the US Navy, shows Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, touring Chinese military facilities during his three-day trip to China in July 2011. The success of high-level US-China security dialogues will increasingly rely on the extent to which China engages in meaningful security cooperation in the global commons during the 21st century.

a regime that has staked its popular legitimacy on developing China as an economically dynamic world power with increasing global interests while simultaneously managing considerable potential sources of domestic instability. While piracy represents a new challenge for Beijing, countering it also offers excellent opportunities for China to benefit by protecting its economic interests abroad, allowing the PLAN to accumulate unprecedented experience and operational gains in the Far Seas, and enhancing the CCP's political image by respecting existing international maritime laws and cooperating with other states.

Moreover, as China's only sustained direct military presence in the global commons to date, PLAN anti-piracy activities constitute a bellwether or barometer for the degree to which China may contribute to the global maritime governance architecture of the 21st century, an era in which many security challenges will likely be unconventional and transnational in character. What is the nature and scope of the piracy problem and of China's resulting anti-piracy operations, and to what extent has China cooperated with other states and organizations during its anti-piracy activities to date? How do both Chinese and international observers perceive these efforts, and what obstacles are preventing even higher levels of meaningful cooperation that would benefit all nations concerned?

These are critical questions for the future of the global system. As Charles Kupchan has documented, in the aftermath of its ill-fated invasion of Iraq, the United States was denounced in German media as a "selfish superpower."¹ But Washington has subsequently returned to multilateral approaches. More broadly, since World War II the US has acted forcefully to support the major modern international organizations and the order that they undergird, first by playing a central role in establishing the postwar system of which they are a part and subsequently by making critical contributions to their financial and political capital. The US has been an unparalleled contributor to the security

of the global commons. It has retained its unrivaled status as the responder of first and last resort to a wide range of international challenges and crises. All nations act in their own interest, of course, but by making broad contributions to underwrite the functioning of the global system on which all nations' security and prosperity depend, the US has ensured that its interests largely overlap with those of the vast majority of other nations, and that it is viewed as an indispensable (if not always universally-loved) leader.² Other influential nations, such as the UK and France, have made contributions in proportion to their own status, and are thereby recognized widely as important, though not super-, powers.

Here, however, China is unusual in its insistence on first-tier status while prioritizing specific, limited national interests over broader security contributions and dismissing requests for further contributions by insisting that it is still a "developing" country that pursues "independent" policies. To be sure, other large developing nations with low per-capita resources—notably India and Brazil—also desire increased status and influence, yet remain reluctant to commit major resources to global public goods provision. Ashley Tellis terms this the "apparently anomalous phenomenon of large and impressively growing states behaving as if they were still disadvantaged entities."³ Yet these other powers do not claim top-tier status to the same degree that China does.

In addition to anti-piracy operations, for instance, China's non-combat operational deployments include contributions to UN Peacekeeping missions in Africa, where Chinese troop deployments outnumber those of any other nation. China has been investing heavily throughout Africa for decades, and the continent represents a vital component of Beijing's UN voting efforts and long-term energy security. Yet Beijing has not made the same level of contributions in areas

¹ Charles A. Kupchan, "The End of the West," *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 2002, accessed July 21, 2012, <http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/issues/2002/11/kupchan.htm>.

² G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

³ Ashley J. Tellis, "Strategic Asia: Continuing Success with Continuing Risks," in *Asia's Rising Power and America's Continued Purpose*, eds. Ashley J. Tellis, Andrew Marble, and Travis Tanner (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2010), 6.

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that do not directly serve its parochial political or resource needs. For all its emphasis on UN-centric approaches, its monetary contributions thereto remain a fraction of those of the US, shown in **Exhibit 1** (see *appendix*). To achieve the status that it desires, China must provide more global public goods; anti-piracy missions may be a positive first step in this regard.⁴

As **Exhibit 1** demonstrates, China's financial contribution to the general UN budget remains extremely small relative to the size of China's economy, which is already the world's second largest. Moreover, despite highly touted African peacekeeping missions and various marine security operations, China's baseline fiscal support of the international system through the UN has increased by far less than is often perceived.⁵

To be sure, even the US contributes a relatively low amount of its economic output to the UN. As a recent Congressional Research Service report explains, "If there were no maximum and minimum assessment levels for the UN regular budget and assessments were based exclusively on a ratio of a country's gross national product, the United States would be assessed about 30% and some very small and poor countries might be assessed less than 0.001%."⁶ Yet if this were actually the case, China's assessed contribution would likely stand at roughly 15% of the total UN budget. This would require Beijing to increase its current annual commitment to the regular UN budget by nearly 500%.

This significant imbalance, compounded by a consistent drop in UN commitments by traditional powers increasingly hindered by domestic economic and political challenges,⁷

begs the question of when China will no longer be able to cite its status as an overpopulated developing country as rationale for not "pulling its weight" in the international arena. Continuing to "free-ride" in the global commons is simply not befitting of a nation with China's burgeoning overall capabilities and lofty great power aspirations. As Andrew Small of the German Marshall Fund maintains, "a free-rider on China's scale is just too great for the global security, economic, political, and environmental order to bear."⁸

This article uses evidence from contemporary PLAN anti-piracy operations to address how China is, if at all, evolving into a more mature contributor to international security, specifically in the maritime domain. The extent to which Beijing supports or challenges existing international maritime governance mechanisms on various security issues, such as anti-piracy and sea lane security, will partially define both what type of naval power China perceives itself as, and how it is received by the international community. Moreover, while China's engagement with other navies vis-à-vis anti-piracy has produced encouraging signals, it remains to be seen whether confidence built in this arena can help overcome deep-seated mistrust between China and counterpart nations over larger maritime issues such as longstanding territorial disputes and long-term military balances in the Asia-Pacific. Regardless, as China's national interests spill into new areas, pressure on Beijing to expand both its international maritime presence and cooperation will increase. It is thus crucial that China's civil and military leadership increasingly use anti-piracy and similar security operations as channels for reassuring the world that China will be a major contributor, rather than a free rider or even a detractor, to the security of the global commons during the 21st century.

THE PIRACY PROBLEM AND CHINESE MOTIVATIONS FOR GETTING INVOLVED

Modern piracy has flourished for over twenty years, reaching a zenith in 2010 when nearly 450 pirate attacks were reported worldwide. In 2011, over half of all pirate attacks occurred off the coast of Somalia, the failed state on the Horn of Africa notorious for lacking a central government and consequently its inability to monitor its coastline. Accordingly, piracy operations originating off the Horn of Africa have had a much higher success rate than in other regions: In 2010, for instance, successful Somali pirate attacks accounted for over 90% of total ship seizures worldwide. Somalia's centrality to piracy demonstrates how insufficient domestic governance in one state can produce major security threats for all states in the international system.

Piracy imposes economic costs on all nations with a stake in maritime commerce by disrupting flows of critical trade resources and destabilizing vital waterways. It also

⁴ For an insider account of what contributions the Obama Administration has encouraged China to make, see Jeffrey Bader, *Obama and China's Rise: An Insider's Account of America's Asia Strategy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2012), accessed July 21, 2012, <http://www.brookings.edu/research/books/2012/obamaandchinasrise>.

⁵ Of course, the UN Regular Budget is just one aspect of a member state's "assessed contribution," which also allocates funds for specialized UN agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Moreover, assessed contributions are one of several components of member states' contributions to the UN system: in addition to these binding assessed contributions, members also have the option to voluntarily contribute additional resources to finance special programs and offices created by the UN, as well as toward various peacekeeping missions. For example, the US currently contributes slightly under \$5 billion to the UN system annually. About 20% of this is through assessed contributions to the regular budget of UN and specialized agencies, while another 20% is in the form of assessed contributions for peacekeeping. Over 50% of the US's contribution is comprised of voluntary contributions to UN special programs and funds. For a detailed analysis, see Marjorie Ann Brown, *United Nations System Funding: Congressional Issues* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2011), 1-3, accessed July 21, 2012, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33611.pdf>.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ As Figure 1 illustrates, percentage shares of contributions to the total regular UN budget by Japan, Germany, France, the UK, and Italy all declined between 2008 and 2012.

⁸ Andrew Small, "Dealing with a More Assertive China," Atlantic-Community.org, February 21, 2010, accessed July 21, 2012, http://www.atlantic-community.org/index/articles/view/Dealing_with_a_More_Assertive_China.

threatens to create undesired international and domestic political consequences for states whose legitimacy and influence rely on perceptions of how they handle various types of security threats to economic, environmental, and human security. At the same time, the dispersed nature of pirates and their ability to disguise themselves as innocent civilians make them an expensive and complex problem for modern naval forces to address. Countering them is thus a common interest and a particularly productive area for cooperation among different nations' maritime forces. Following the gradual rise in pirate attacks off the coast of Somalia over the past twenty years, many countries, including China, have responded to this non-traditional but substantive security threat by deploying naval forces to the Gulf of Aden, the pirate-infested maritime region where the majority of Somali pirate attacks have occurred.

China's anti-piracy operations throughout the world are driven by economic, military, and political forces, both foreign and domestic. Economically, China relies increasingly on the stability of sea lines of communication (SLOC) for steady supplies of such resources as energy and commodities. In order to reduce China's reliance on coal, Beijing is attempting to address environmental concerns and diversify energy supply by finding new sources of oil and by boosting natural gas consumption to 10% of total energy use. To do this, in the near future China must significantly increase its imports of both oil and gas, making secure SLOCs even more critical for safeguarding energy supplies to fuel China's economy.

Evidence suggests that China is indeed looking to the seas to address domestic energy security. Oil is a vital resource that accounts for nearly 20% of China's total energy consumption and virtually all of its transportation fuel—for which there are currently no immediately interchangeable substitutes. Since becoming a net oil importer in 1993, China's oil import dependency has risen steadily, with China importing roughly half of its oil at present, 80% of which is delivered by sea. This means that China currently relies on maritime transport for 40% of its oil. Additionally, China became a net natural gas importer in 2007, and imports of shipborne liquefied natural gas have begun to challenge traditional fuel sources in coastal China. Besides energy security, the increase in Chinese port traffic further demonstrates China's comprehensive economic dependence on the sea. A 2000 PLAN study estimated that aggregate port throughput would grow from 1.8 billion tons to 3 billion tons by 2010. By 2009, total throughput had already reached 7 billion tons. While the recent global recession may have some impact on these figures, they are nevertheless likely to remain high as China relies increasingly on imports of manufacturing intermediate goods, key commodities, minerals, and various food stocks. China not only relies on stable SLOCs but also depends heavily on some of the world's busiest sea lanes that are most vulnerable to pirate attacks, such as the Gulf of Aden, Bab el-Mandab, Strait of Hormuz, Strait of Malacca, and Strait of Singapore. Many Chinese

analysts appear gravely concerned with China's strong reliance on goods passing through vulnerable international waters and chokepoints, as well as China's heavy dependence on foreign seaborne transportation. These trends are directly connected to Beijing's growing stake in the reduction of global piracy.

From a purely military standpoint, widespread piracy in the Far Seas provides enormous incentives for PLAN intervention. Chinese naval officials, crewmen, and equipment all gain unprecedented operational experience by participating in anti-piracy missions abroad. Chinese escort task forces typically include two warships and one supply ship, which require roughly two weeks to travel the 10,000 km from China's coast to waters near Somalia. The destroyers, frigates, and landing ships chosen are some of China's newest and most advanced ships. An escort task force usually consists of roughly 800 sailors. These sailors are some of the PLAN's finest, as reflected by the intense competition for limited spots in Chinese escort task forces and the imperative for them to perform with distinction in the eyes of the world. PLAN strategists can also reap substantial benefits by studying the logistics associated with PLAN anti-piracy missions. The logistical demands of these missions, which typically last for over 100 days at a time (and sometimes substantially longer), are unprecedented in Chinese military history.

From the PLAN's perspective, anti-piracy missions also help secure significant budgetary funds and ensure that the service will receive some of China's most advanced weapons and information technology. The PLAN also garners noteworthy prestige by being China's only military service with major diplomatic responsibilities. Perhaps most significantly, persistent piracy attacks afford Beijing an otherwise nonexistent opportunity to expand its military presence in the Far Seas and project sustained military force at a greater distance. By engaging in its first extended overseas operation, the PLAN will have an opportunity to refine its doctrine and practices for future "blue-water" missions. This, in turn, will enhance the Chinese Navy's ability to perform other power projection tasks in the future more reliably.

Politically, as Beijing has learned quickly, while incidents involving Chinese citizens, companies, or military forces abroad offer excellent opportunities to portray China as a responsible stakeholder, they also present sensitive political and public relations challenges that make them complex and risky for China's externally wary leadership to address. The PLAN's anti-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden has exposed the inherent tensions between China's traditional noninterventionist foreign policy and mounting domestic pressure on the Chinese government to protect its citizens and interests overseas amidst poorly defined international maritime laws and norms concerning piracy. With failure comes great risk, but even success breeds the inflation of expectations. Thus, Beijing's recent forays into anti-piracy have been cautious.

In addition to the economic and military incentives discussed above, combined domestic and international pressure on Beijing to act has propelled Chinese anti-piracy

operations since 2008. By 2008, the Chinese public was applying heavy pressure on its leaders to intervene after multiple Chinese commercial vessels were hijacked. Chinese social networking websites such as *Weibo* captured some of the discontent felt by Chinese citizens as a result of Beijing's initially hesitant response to Somali piracy at the time. Many netizens pointed to Beijing's inability to protect its citizens living abroad, and China's leaders were surely receptive to these comments and blog posts. Paradoxically, a long-entrenched authoritarian regime like China's must in some respects be unusually responsive to short-term public opinion trends, as it lacks both reservoirs of enduring ideological affinity and the political release valves of periodic elections and alternation of parties in power that democratic states typically enjoy. Domestic pressure thus likely played a major role in accelerating Beijing's prioritization of the piracy issue.

NATURE AND SCOPE OF CHINA'S ANTI-PIRACY OPERATIONS

On July 3, 2012, the PLAN's 12th anti-piracy escort fleet left port in Zhejiang Province for the Gulf of Aden, the most recent Chinese task force deployed to waters off the Horn of Africa to escort commercial vessels and deter pirate attacks. Since the inaugural task force deployment in December 2008, over 7,000 Chinese sailors have served in the Gulf of Aden and escort services have been provided to over fifty countries.

Usually PLAN task forces consist of two warships, either frigates or destroyers, and one supply and replenishment ship. The objectives of PLAN anti-piracy missions are confined to defending all commercial ships participating in PLAN escort flotillas. At the onset of the mission, task forces escorted only vessels from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, but China has since allowed international commercial vessels to sign up for its escort services in advance. Though their training has expanded notably in the past three years, PLAN ships and troops involved in anti-piracy escorts do not pursue suspected pirates. Rather, they simply deter them from attacking PLAN vessels or merchant ships being escorted in the flotilla. They also respond to rescue request calls within areas sufficiently close to the Gulf of Aden.

As of July 2012 the PLAN had escorted nearly 5,000 commercial vessels, almost half foreign-flagged, safely through the Gulf of Aden. Since 2008, the PLAN has learned valuable lessons: Occasional encounters with pirates and dozens of exchanges with other navies have allowed the service to exhibit its competency in deterring piracy, and hundreds of escort operations have helped identify areas for logistical and operational improvement for future missions and potential instances of real combat. **Exhibit 2** provides details on each of the twelve PLAN Gulf of Aden task forces to date.

Indeed, as China's "going out" policy continues and more Chinese people, assets, and strategic interests move outside of China, domestic and international pressure for China to address security threats beyond its borders will grow.

This greatly increases the significance of China's cooperation (or lack thereof) with other states to address these issues and set norms for future security contingencies in the 21st century.

CHINA'S ANTI-PIRACY COOPERATION TO DATE

Given the transnational economic and political damage wrought by piracy, it is most beneficial for navies throughout the world to, when possible, act in concert to protect vulnerable maritime regions. A number of regional and international anti-piracy mechanisms have been established in key strategic areas based on this principle. These systems have achieved important gains in reducing pirate attacks in areas such as the Gulf of Aden. However, there remains substantial room for improvement as several key players, including the PLAN, continue to operate primarily on a unilateral basis, albeit in parallel to larger international efforts. Several mechanisms are currently operational:

Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)

The first sustained military presence in the Gulf of Aden, CMF is commanded by the US Navy and consists of Combined Task Forces (CTF) 150, 151, and 152. It is tasked with maritime security in the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, and Indian Ocean. To date, twenty-five countries have contributed to the fight against piracy under CMF. Its presence as an anti-piracy force off the Horn of Africa can be traced to 2008. In January 2009, CTF-150 was replaced by CTF-151, which is tasked exclusively with combating piracy in the region. By channeling merchant ships through the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridors (IRTC), delineated zones designed to minimize maritime "traffic jams" between international vessels and Somali and Yemeni fishermen, CTF-151 has helped to lower pirate attacks considerably. Other than the US, major contributors to CMF include the UK, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Spain, South Korea, Turkey, and Yemen.⁹ CTF-151 has been commanded by naval officials from Pakistan, the US, Korea, Singapore, Turkey, New Zealand, and Thailand, which was commanding the task force as of June 2012.¹⁰ As of mid-June 2012, South Korea is commanding CTF-151.¹¹

⁹ Lauren Ploch et al., "Piracy off the Horn of Africa," Congressional Research Service, September 28, 2009, accessed July 21, 2012, http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/piracy_hornofafrica.htm.

¹⁰ "Combined Task Force (CTF) 151," Combined Maritime Forces, <http://www.cusnc.navy.mil/cmef/151/index.html>.

¹¹ "Republic of Korea Navy Assumes Command of Combined Task Force 151," Combined Maritime Forces Public Affairs, June 19, 2012, accessed July 21, 2012, http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=67909.

NATO

NATO's anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden stem from Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon's call to provide escorts to UN World Food Programme (WFP) vessels in late 2008. These escorts, combined with deterrence patrols in the waters off of Somalia, preceded Operation Allied Protector, which was previously tasked with anti-piracy operations around the Horn of Africa. Allied Protector was in operation from March to August 2009. NATO's Operation Ocean Shield (OOS) missions started in August 2009 and replaced Operation Allied Protector. In March 2011, a warship operating under OOS provided helicopter gunfire assistance to a US warship working under CTF-151 to arrest a group of pirates attempting a hijack. In mid-June 2011, Rear Admiral Gualtiero Mattesi of Italy replaced Royal Netherlands Navy Commodore Michiel B. Hijmans as Commander of OOS, and as of July 2012, Commodore Ben Bekkering of the Netherlands was commanding OOS. In February 2012, NATO announced it would extend OOS through December 2012. All allies contribute in some way to the mission, which works closely with CTF-151 and European Union (EU) forces in the region.

EU

The EU's Operation Atalanta (EUNAVFOR) was established in December 2008 as the first operation of the European Union Naval Force, tasked with promoting maritime security off the coast of Somalia by protecting humanitarian vessels and suppressing piracy. To date, France, Spain, and Germany have contributed the most ships and equipment. In early 2012, the EU reaffirmed its long-term commitment to suppressing piracy off the Horn of Africa by extending the EUNAVFOR Atalanta mandate for two more years through December 2014. Moreover, the EU has recently made progress with regard to developing systems for inter-navy cooperation in anti-piracy operations. At a two-day symposium in early 2012, it unveiled its Mercury Network IT, which allows for by the minute assessments of piracy situations and will likely facilitate closer inter-navy coordination. On May 14, 2012, EUNAVFOR used helicopter fire to shell a Somali beach at Haradheere, 220 miles north of Mogadishu. According to an EU military official, this night raid was carried out to "make life as difficult for pirates on land as we're making it at sea." It was the first time any naval anti-piracy mission had attempted to directly suppress Somali pirates onshore.

SHADE

Shared Awareness and De-Confliction (SHADE) meets quarterly in Bahrain and considers any naval ship or convoy fighting piracy as extended members. Its core mission is to "ensure effective coordination and de-confliction of military

resources and operations in combating piracy."¹² SHADE's chairmanship rotates every six months, and China, which falls alphabetically before India, Japan, and Russia, held the leadership role in early 2012. An April 2012 testimony before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission lauded SHADE as a success story for bringing CTF-151, NATO EU NAVFOR, and China closer to meaningful cooperation, and even suggested that a SHADE-type model of multilateral coordination could be applied to various land-based counterterrorism operations. The PLAN has emphasized the communal benefits of synchronizing escort schedules, and in late 2009 it requested to co-chair SHADE along with EU NAVFOR and CTF-151.

Generally speaking, the PLAN has been open in principle but circumspect in practice toward cooperation with the aforementioned groups through official exchanges, limited intelligence and schedule sharing, and joint patrols. However, several trends within the past two years indicate that China may be moving closer toward greater cooperation in order to minimize the costs of deterring piracy. Naval officers of these states, along with representatives of navies currently under the command of CTF-151, NATO, and EU anti-piracy missions, have been increasing inter-navy anti-piracy dialogues through SHADE. The PLAN assigned one of its vessels to monitor the IRTC alongside CTF-151 ships. Moreover, the PLAN's highly-domestically-publicized escorts of WFP supplies through the Gulf of Aden further signal China's willingness to increase its international responsibilities for the stability of the world economy. While engaging in numerous highly publicized confidence-building activities with counterpart navies and ships from multilateral anti-piracy forces, the PLAN has largely preferred to operate within the scope of its own task forces, treating its exchanges with other navies as bilateral diplomatic sweeteners supplementing its core anti-piracy responsibilities.

That said, the PLAN is not alone in deploying independent forces to the Indian Ocean and off the Horn of Africa to mitigate the effects of piracy on shipping and maritime commerce. Japan, India, Russia, Iran, and Malaysia have also deployed substantial naval capacity in the region in this fashion. Japan typically operates two warships tasked with anti-piracy support at a time, while Russia and India often have one warship at any given time. Similarly to China, these states have not operated under the command of CTF-150 or CTF-151, nor have they adapted policies identical to those of any of the multilateral task forces operating in the Gulf of Aden. See **Exhibit 3** for a survey of these unilateral approaches and a representation of the potential gains to the international community if these countries—especially China—were to integrate fully into international mechanisms for fighting piracy.

Despite its unilateral stance, China's cooperation efforts to date merit recognition. While forces patrol the

¹² Nitin Gokhale, "India, China and the Pirates," *The Diplomat*, March 6, 2012, <http://the-diplomat.com/2012/03/06/india-china-and-the-pirates/>.

Gulf of Aden, shipboard exchanges help establish simple but important relationships between the PLAN and foreign military units operating simultaneously and in close proximity. These on-ship interactions are highly publicized by the media in China as symbols of the PLAN's growing competence in operating on the international stage as well as China's peaceful outward military development. Chinese task forces have held exchanges with multilateral naval forces operating under CTF-151, NATO, and EUNAVFOR. Such interactions have increased considerably since the PLAN's initial deployment. In 2011, Han Xiaohu, Commander of China's eighth escort task force, visited NATO's flagship frigate in March; welcomed Singapore Navy Rear Admiral Harris Chan, then-Commander of CTF-151, aboard a PLAN warship in May; and hosted the EU NAVFOR Force Commander onboard the frigate *Wenzhou* in June.

PLAN task forces off the Horn of Africa have also been active in bilateral exchanges with counterpart navies. The Chinese and Russian navies conducted joint anti-piracy escorts for the first time in October 2009. One month later, PLAN military officials performed on-ship inspections and exchanges with Dutch counterparts. PLAN forces collaborated with South Korean naval units in 2010 to execute joint anti-piracy exercises in the Gulf of Aden. In April 2011, Illinois Senator Mark Kirk visited the 8th PLAN escort task force in the Gulf of Aden and held talks with task force commander Han Xiaohu. During the same month, China's 8th escort task force sent *Wenzhou* and *Qiandaohu* to conduct joint anti-piracy exercises with Pakistani guided missile destroyer *Khyber*. Additionally, the PLAN held extensive joint exercises with the Russian Navy's "Blue Shield" units in May 2011. **Exhibit 4** lists notable PLAN multilateral and bilateral exchanges with other anti-piracy forces.

The Gulf of Aden mission has also facilitated general PLAN maritime interaction. Along with *Zhoushan*, the frigate *Xuzhou* visited South Africa on April 4, 2011 to conduct exchanges with South African navy in Durban. Subsequently, in mid-May 2011 China invited twenty representatives from eight African nations, including Algeria, Gabon, and Cameroon, to participate in a twenty-day maritime law enforcement program in Zhejiang Province, the first time China has provided Francophone African nations with such training. These experiences have established inter-military dialogues between China and strategically-significant counterparts.

Particularly since 2011, China has actively sought to enhance its coordination of anti-piracy missions with other countries, but not necessarily with traditional naval forces in the region such as US-led CTF-151 multinational task forces. China, India, and Japan began using the SHADE mechanism in 2011 to coordinate their anti-piracy operations. The Sino-Japanese-Indian escort coordination agreement reportedly includes a plan for one country to act as the "reference" country responsible for formulating the monthly escort schedule. As Indian Navy Assistant Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Monty Khanna explained in February 2012, "Earlier

what was happening was that the convoys of all these three countries would be spaced by few hours and there would be long hours in a day when no convoy was available for escorting the vessels."¹³ Now this disparity is being rectified. China served as the first reference country, and other nations participating in coordinated escorts are to design schedules based on that of the PLAN. As of July 2012, India had completed service as the reference country for the second wave of coordination efforts, and Japan was set to lead joint efforts over the summer.

Cooperation initiatives are also unfolding within China. The aforementioned symposium hosted by the PLAN in late February 2012 brought together naval officials of twenty countries with anti-piracy activities in the Gulf of Aden. At this symposium, it was revealed that the PLAN provided each participant nation with its detailed escort schedules and also planned to serve as the reference and coordinator for navies in the region performing escorts. Additionally, the PLAN stated it will begin to cooperate with Indian and Japan naval vessels in the region to the extent that all three navies are able to adjust each other's schedules.

Coordination with other independently operating states allows China to enhance its image as a cooperative stakeholder without having to operate under CTF-151, and it does not require China to make fundamental policy adjustments that could be sensitive and undesirable. With respect to Sino-Indian military relations, recent coordination under SHADE represents the first instance of a "working relationship on the high seas" between the PLAN and the Indian Navy.¹⁴ While these efforts, particularly between China and India, are a welcome sign to all observers, they certainly do not signal a major shift in Sino-Indian military or bilateral relations. And nor does coordination between China and Japan represent a drastic change in the historically unstable regional rivalry. Recent actions by all countries involved suggest that the East China Sea and South China Sea will remain contentious hotspots for potential flare-ups between China and the counterpart navies. Anti-piracy coordination between the PLAN, Indian Navy, and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force in the Gulf of Aden region rather represents a convenient "win-win" relationship in an area far from Chinese-contested waters much in line with all sides' views on the importance of coordination to minimize piracy's negative economic impact.

PROSPECTS FOR GREATER COOPERATION

China's cooperation to date is welcome. Yet its current engagement with other independent naval forces is little more than convenient coordination and sharing of low-sensitivity

¹³ Ajay Banerjee, "India, China Join Hands on the High Seas to Tackle Pirates," *The Tribune India*, February 1, 2012, accessed July 21, 2012, <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2012/20120202/main1.htm>.

¹⁴ Ajay Banerjee, "India, China Join Hands on the High Seas to Tackle Pirates."

information, and in the case of the Gulf of Aden, the subtle undermining of the multilateral mechanisms implemented by traditional naval powers such as the US and Europe. There thus remains substantial room for improvement.

There are currently mixed signals over whether Beijing wants to lead international anti-piracy missions. One issue is the evolution of anti-piracy operations in Somalia. While China has been at the forefront of escort-based innovation and collaboration, navies in the region are slowly adopting more-assertive approaches such as land-based preventative measures. The PLAN is less forceful in its anti-piracy tactics at sea than most naval counterparts, and, without breakthroughs in international law, it is unlikely to invest heavily in shore-based tactics. Additionally, given that the majority of states involved in collaborative anti-piracy operations share similar views on international maritime laws governing states' rights to intervene against sub-state threats, increased leadership by China would likely have to be matched by a subtle but definite alignment toward the international consensus vis-à-vis piracy law. China is a signatory to over thirty-five international laws and treaties related to SLOC security. The complex nature of international maritime laws, as well as a lack of consensus regarding issues such as the fate of captured pirate suspects, often precludes decisive action by states in the international community. These characteristics of existing maritime law, coupled with the extreme sensitivity that Beijing places on sovereignty issues, make differences in opinion and interpretation with regard to international law a potentially-costly bottleneck for enhancing China's anti-piracy cooperation with other states and mechanisms. Moreover, current PLAN lack of advanced command and control systems and procedures likely limit the extent to which China is able to lead an international contingency of tens of navies.

Official Chinese statements on anti-piracy missions to date reflect the caution with which Beijing is proceeding. China supported all four UNSC resolutions aimed at Somali piracy that were passed in 2008, including declarations that states may intervene within the 12 nautical miles of Somalia's territorial waters (Resolution 1846) and even fight pirates on Somali shores (Resolution 1851) if necessary. Since these resolutions, China has gone to great lengths to emphasize Somali sovereignty, both by continuously stating that all international assistance and operations against piracy should only take place with Somalia's permission, and also by repeatedly reaffirming Somalia's appreciation for Chinese assistance through domestic media outlets. While Somalia's TFG has overtly encouraged an onshore Chinese presence, Beijing is wary of the domestic and political backlash that such a policy shift would produce, especially after witnessing the extensive media coverage of Seychelles' invitation to China to build an anti-piracy military base.

Evidence through July 2012 suggests the PLAN will be open to the possibility of greater cooperation in the Gulf of Aden. But there are no signs that China will decide to operate under a multinational aegis off the Horn of Africa

in the near future. Beijing perceives the potential of costs of joining a collaborative effort to exceed the benefits. Operating independently avoids any situation in which China subordinates itself—even only symbolically—to another state or organization, and affords the PLAN considerable freedom to alter its missions without having to notify its partners and undergo lengthy multilateral consultations and deliberations. For now, it appears that while Beijing is eager to increase cooperation off the Horn of Africa, the nature of this cooperation is likely to remain—with incremental enhancement—basic coordination, low-level information sharing, navy-to-navy exchanges, and joint operations.

Of course, China's growing prioritization of stable SLOCs must be considered. Official Chinese views on anti-piracy law as well as rules associated with naval engagement in international waters emphasize the need for greater legal institutions regarding SLOCs vital to international commerce. Official Chinese media sources have frequently called on the international community to be more proactive therein. Chinese sources generally assert that the UN should form a new entity tasked specifically with strategic SLOC security worldwide. The essential claim is that the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), while providing mandates for general maritime security, lacks specific provisions concerning how to address SLOC-related security issues. Regional agencies should be established to implement UN-mandated regulations on the security of SLOCs, Chinese experts contend, and also to serve as communication centers for states invested in the region. As China's overseas interests burgeon during the 21st century, Beijing's willingness to play a more active role in anti-piracy and other security initiatives may also increase.

ANTI-PIRACY: A SPRINGBOARD FOR BROADER MARITIME GOVERNANCE COOPERATION?

Beijing is likely satisfied with the PLAN's current quasi-leadership position among the navies committed to fighting piracy for the reasons mentioned above, and China has technically assumed a leadership position within a multilateral anti-piracy mechanism without having to subordinate itself to the US Navy and other traditional forces in the Gulf of Aden. A major source of Chinese pride, this is viewed as supporting the global trading system significantly. Co-chairing SHADE on a rotational basis allows Beijing to portray itself domestically as a leader of an international coalition, even though in practice the PLAN remains one of *many* significant contributors.

From the perspective of the US, China's willingness to interact with other naval forces in the region and constructively discuss the issue of subnational piracy is certainly a welcome sign. This is particularly the case for those who have criticized China for constantly "free-riding" over the years on US-provided public goods such as stable maritime transportation lanes. Washington would like to see the PLAN play a substantial leadership role in anti-piracy

operations provided that it respects international law and does not abuse the mission to fulfill ulterior motives.

To what extent, if at all, can the US and China use piracy to spearhead international efforts to establish 21st-century maritime governance norms? During Admiral Mike Mullen's visit to Beijing in 2011, Mullen and Chinese counterpart Chen Bingde agreed on such military exchange accords as senior official visits, joint exercises on formations, and communications for anti-piracy operations. Mullen's visit laid a foundation for expanding joint anti-piracy operations, as the two sides reportedly signed multiple collaboration agreements despite remaining fundamental differences with regard to the South China Sea issue. While such agreements are a welcome sign, Beijing's experience with anti-piracy has not produced a fundamental shift in China's views on US intentions vis-à-vis the proposed Global Maritime Partnerships. Indeed, China still views a growing US presence in East Asia, highlighted by the announcement of a US "rebalancing" toward East Asia in late 2011, as a pernicious grand strategy designed to "contain" China.

High-level dialogues are welcome signs for what will likely be the most important bilateral military relationship in the early 21st century, but events from the past year provide a somber reminder that cooperation on non-traditional and transnational security issues is contingent on other areas of the US-China relationship. For example, Beijing cancelled combined exercises with the US Navy in the Gulf of Aden scheduled for late 2011 after the Washington announced new arms sales to Taiwan in September 2011. While many nations are eager to utilize anti-piracy cooperation with China to build strategic trust, Beijing's behavior reflects the fact that such operations are ultimately subordinate to Beijing's larger national security interests, as will be China's potential contributions to the stability of the global commons through helping to build upon widely-accepted international procedures.

Mistrust between Washington and Beijing may well increase as the US further reorients its national security strategy toward the Asia-Pacific and as Chinese military development unfolds both regionally and internationally at an unprecedented pace. It is thus critical that naval officials from both sides maximize the opportunities for military and strategic confidence building that anti-piracy operations provide. Of course, neither side should view cooperation against non-state piracy as a panacea. Yet neither should dismiss the gains that can be made by increasing US-China joint efforts vis-à-vis transnational maritime security threats that increasingly endanger the economic and political welfare of states throughout the world. Accordingly, it is even more crucial that the US and other states continue to include China in discussions about global maritime governance, and that China participate constructively therein.

CONCLUSION

On balance, Beijing's experience in the Gulf of Aden has been positive thus far. China's strategic interests may continue to impel the PLAN to make more substantive contributions to non-traditional maritime stability. Such approaches conveniently couple China's narrow security interests—such as enhancing its economic, political, and military influence in regions critical to China's energy security—with the broader well-being and stability of the global commons.

Chinese leaders have learned valuable lessons that will likely dictate the extent to which Beijing forms policy on other issues involving sub-state actors in the maritime domain. While a combination of domestic and international pressure catalyzed China's involvement in anti-piracy operations, to date all of China's substantial international military non-combat operational deployments have occurred in areas deemed vital to China's national security. Internal opinions over how to address future transnational maritime security threats will likely intersect at the balance of China's domestic audience, the international community, and the strategic relevance of the issue and region in question. Thus, while China is less of a "free rider" than it was in the past, it may still be widely perceived abroad as a "selfish superpower" if it does not continue to broaden and deepen its global provision of public goods to an extent that more closely approaches its rapidly growing capabilities and desire for international status.

While there are no indications that Beijing is planning global naval expansion, the PLAN will encounter a mature US military presence in any area into which it ventures in the coming years. Indeed, Chinese and American interests overseas will intersect in the 21st century more so than ever before, making substantive cooperation between the two sides indispensable, not only for US-China relations but also for the stability of the global commons. And ultimately, both nations, as well as the global system, will benefit if neither is perceived as a "selfish superpower."

APPENDIX

Exhibit 1: Top Ten Economies and Their Contributions to UN Regular Budget

Country	GDP 2011 (US \$ trillions)	Rank	Adjusted PPP 2011 (US \$ trillions)	Rank	UN Assessments for 2008 in US \$	% of UN Regular Budget 2008	UN Funding Rank 2008	UN Assessments for 2012 in US \$	% of UN Regular Budget 2012	UN Funding Rank 2012
U.S.*	15.094	1	15.232	1	453,338,391	22.00	1	568,750,776	22.00	1
China*	7.298	2	11.325	2	54,956,977	2.67	9	82,443,010	3.19	8
Japan	5.867	3	4.539	3	342,558,973	16.62	2	323,929,419	12.53	2
Germany	3.571	4	3.283	5	176,740,154	8.58	3	207,283,806	8.02	3
France*	2.773	5	2.346	7	129,840,236	6.30	5	158,293,682	6.12	5
Brazil	2.477	6	2.261	9	18,051,111	0.88	19	41,648,068	1.61	14
UK*	2.432	7	2.316	8	136,866,982	6.64	4	170,728,642	6.60	4
Italy	2.195	8	1.966	10	104,659,349	5.08	6	129,235,688	4.99	6
Russia*	1.858	9	2.845	6	24,727,549	1.20	15	41,415,397	1.60	15
India	1.848	10	4.488	4	9,272,831	0.45	27	13,805,133	0.53	27

* United Nations Security Council permanent member

Sources

Table incorporates data provided and used by the World Bank and UN. World Bank data on nominal GDP and GNI PPP are available at <http://data.worldbank.org/>. Information on member states' budgetary contributions to the UN can be found at <http://www.un.org/en/ga/contributions/budget.shtml>. All above calculations based on these statistics.

Exhibit 2: PLAN Gulf of Aden Escort Statistics by Task Force

Task Force	1	2	3	4	5	6
Duration	12/26/08-4/28/09 (124 days)	4/2/09-8/21/09 (142)	8/1/09-12/20/09 (158)	10/30/09-4/23/09 (176)	3/4/10-9/11/10 (192)	6/30/10-1/7/11 (192)
Escorts	212	393	582	660	588	615
Batches	41	45	53	46	41	49

7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
11/2/10-5/9/2011 (189)	2/21/11-8/28/11 (189)	7/2/11-12/24/11 (175)	11/2/11-05/05/12 (185)	2/28/12-	7/3/12-	
578	507	280	240	184		>4700
38	46	41	40	58		~500

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Exhibit 3: Selected Anti-Piracy Forces Independent of CME, NATO, and EU NAVFOR

Country	Date of First Task Force Deployment	Estimated Total Ships Escorted
China	December 26, 2008	>4700 (June 28, 2012)
India	October 23, 2008	~2000 (June 12, 2012)
Russia	October 2008	>130 (June 26, 2012)
Japan	March 14, 2009	2341 (February 7, 2012)
Iran	December 20, 2008	~1400 (February 28, 2012)

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Exhibit 4: Selected PLAN Multilateral and Bilateral Exchanges

	Date	Counterpart	Activity
1	October 2009	Russia	Joint Escorts
2	November 2009	Netherlands	On-ship inspections and exchanges
3	March 2011	NATO	Visit aboard counterpart ship
4	April 2011	Pakistan	Joint Anti-Piracy Exercises
5	April 2011	South Africa	Offshore exchanges in Durban, South Africa
6	May 2011	8 African Countries	Offshore maritime law enforcement training in Zhejiang, China
7	May 2011	CTF-151	Host CTF-151 Commander aboard PLAN vessel
8	June 2011	EU NAVFOR	Host EU NAVFOR Commander aboard PLAN vessel
9	January 2012	NATO	On-ship exchanges
10	July 2012	CTF-151	On-ship exchanges
11	July 2012	EU NAVFOR	Visit EU NAVFOR personnel aboard EU NAVFOR vessel

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

The present edition of the Harvard Asia Quarterly is a double issue that covers a broad range of topics relevant to Asia today. In lieu of placing the articles presented here under a single specific theme, the “theme” that best captures the contents of this issue is perhaps the very diversity and broadness of the subject matter itself. This diversity, which ranges from Bangladesh to Japan, from feminist Chinese literature to the rise and fall of Puer tea, and from Somali piracy to threats in the cyber realm, is indicative of the intriguing range of developments that we see in Asia today – an Asia that is far too diverse to be encapsulated in a single word or phrase.

We are pleased to open this issue with an interview of Ezra Vogel, Henry Ford II Professor of the Social Sciences Emeritus at Harvard University. Speaking about his most recent book, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*, Professor Vogel offers interesting insights into Deng Xiaoping’s role in shaping, fundamentally, what China has become today.

In the following section, focused on cultural and social change, we begin with an article by Bettina Gransow of Freie Universität Berlin in which she dissects government migration and urbanization policies and their impact on marginalized populations of migrants-in-the-city. Professor Gransow has kindly granted us permission to reprint this article, affording us the opportunity to correct editing errors in a previous issue for which we would like to apologize. Mikiko Eto of Hosei University analyzes the debates and dynamics surrounding the Japanese government’s reluctance to use the term “gender-free,” as well as the efforts of women legislators in effecting change. Xiaoping Wang of Xiamen University builds on the feminine and feminist issues alluded to by Eto in his examination of the works of famed Chinese writer Ding Ling and the metamorphosis of her writings from the feminist to the revolutionary, and later to the socialist. Finally, through an anthropological lense, Jinghong Zhang of Yunnan University examines the social context surrounding the rise of Puer tea and the cultural implications of its rapid fall.

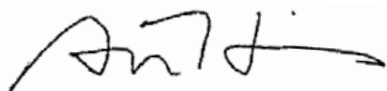
The following trio of essays offers perspectives on varied aspects of international relations and the geopolitics of the region. Rup Narayan Das, head of the China and East Asia Centre of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, provides his views on the triangular India-China-US relation and the political role that the US has played in both establishing and disrupting the balance. Mubashar Hasan, drawing upon his years of journalism experience, takes an historical approach to understanding the roots of the failed Bangladeshi military coup attempted earlier this year. Gunjan Singh, also from the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, closes the section with a discussion of possible future scenarios resulting from the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement’s impact on cross-strait relations.

A thoughtful dialogue centered on security and defense comes next, with four essays that offer insights on four unique aspects of security in the region. Rohan Gunaratna, head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, provides a survey of the terrorist situation in Southeast Asia, with details on the threats specific to each Indonesia, West Papua, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, and the Philippines. John Hemmings of the Pacific Forum, CSIS, brings to light Japanese and Korean contributions to the development of Afghanistan, as well as their growing non-traditional roles as security providers. Andrew Erickson and Austin Strange of the US Naval War College further the discussion of East Asian countries’ emerging roles as security providers with their analysis of the Chinese role in maritime security and anti-piracy efforts. Lastly, Mihoko Matsubara of Hitachi extends the focus on security in the traditional sense to include the growing need for cybersecurity and international cooperation in cyberspace.

We conclude the issue with a section on business and innovation. Marc Szepan, with years of experience as an aviation industry executive, contests the common view that Chinese companies are simply imitators instead of innovators. Taking the commercial aircraft industry in China as a case study, he argues that Chinese firms do in fact innovate, operating under novel business models that challenge what have traditionally been conventional practices in the aviation industry.

This idea that Asian countries are challenging traditional practices and models of thought is common to the articles of this issue as a whole. Whether it be on land, at sea, or in the cyber realm, or in the cultural, corporate, or political space, the developments taking place in Asia today reflect a dynamism inherent to the region – a dynamism that is difficult to describe with a single, focused theme, and, ultimately, a dynamism driven by the very regional diversity that this issue attempts to capture.

With kind regards,



Allan Hsiao
Editor-in-Chief

ABOUT THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY ASIA CENTER

Established on July 1, 1997, the Harvard University Asia Center was founded as a university-wide inter-faculty initiative with an underlying mission to engage people across disciplines and regions. It was also charged with expanding South and Southeast Asian studies, including Thai Studies, in the University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

The Center sponsors a number of seminars, conferences, lectures, and programs during the academic year, including the annual Tsai Lecture, the Modern Asia, Southeast Asia, and Islam in Asia seminar series, the Ezra F. Vogel Distinguished Visitors Program, and the Asia Vision 21 conference. In addition to its award-winning Publications Program, the Center issues a weekly bulletin featuring Asia-related events at Harvard and in the greater Boston area, as well as an on-line newsletter.

COVER PHOTO

The cover photo of this issue shows the work of Chinese calligrapher Haji Noor Deen. The full image, created with Chinese brush technique, reads *tawakkaltu 'alallah* (I have put my trust in Allah). Haji Noor Deen, from Shandong Province in China, brings together the Islamic calligraphy of his Muslim heritage with the Chinese calligraphy of his homeland. Both traditions prize the art and poetry in the written word, Islam in the celebration of the sacred, and China in the secular realm.

The Chinese Islamic style of Haji Noor Deen's work bridges the two.

The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program and the Asia Center are sponsoring an exhibit of the calligraphy of Master Haji Noor Deen from June 15 through August 20 in the Friends of Japan Concourse at the Center for Government and International Studies (CGIS). Haji Noor Deen gave a demonstration of his art to a captivated audience at the Asia Center in April.

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