

The Container Security Initiative and Maritime Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific*

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1. Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Challenges And Emerging Cooperation

It is well known that the Asia-Pacific region faces significant security challenges, many partially linked to the region's continued economic growth. There is an urgent need to fight rising terrorism and other security threats. Recent trends in non-state threats include terrorism, piracy, smuggling, and the targeting of critical infrastructure. Maintaining regional security is important for the wellbeing of the region's people, sixty percent of whom live in or rely economically on maritime zones.¹

It is also important because of the region's critical role in international trade and energy supply. Roughly one third of world trade passes through the Strait of Malacca annually. This includes more than 50 000 vessels,²

* The views expressed in this study are solely those of the author as a private individual. This study is based only on publicly available sources and does not represent the official position or analysis of the U. S. Navy or any other organization of the U. S. government. The author thanks Prof. William Murray for his helpful guidance and Mr. Gabriel Collins for his invaluable research assistance.

twice the number that passes through the Suez Canal by some estimates and many times that which pass through the Panama Canal.³ It includes 11.7 million barrels per day (bbl/d) of oil.⁴ Eighty percent of Chinese crude oil imports, for instance, including virtually all of China's imports from the Middle East and Africa, flow through Malacca.⁵ According to the U. S. Energy Information Agency, if an oil spill, piracy, or terrorism closed the 1.5 mile wide Strait, "nearly half of the world's fleet would be required to sail further, generating a substantial increase in the requirement for vessel capacity. All excess capacity of the world fleet might be absorbed, with the effect strongest for crude oil shipments and dry bulk such as coal. Closure of the Strait of Malacca would immediately raise freight rates worldwide."⁶ The South China Sea is likewise a vital transport corridor for liquefied natural gas (LNG), carrying 2/3 of the world's current LNG trade.⁷ At present, Japan and South Korea are the region's primary LNG users. Japan, for instance, imported 58.6 million tons of LNG in 2005, and South Korea 23.1 million tons in 2004, as compared to a smaller amount in Mainland China and China's Taiwan's 5.5 million tons in that same year.⁸ LNG transport security is also of great interest to China, however, which by 2020 may be importing more than 30 million tons per year.⁹

Of central significance to the economic interests of the U. S., its East Asian partners, and indeed the world, is the security of mega-hubs. Five of these deep-water ports (Singapore, Hong Kong, Ningbo/Shanghai, Kaosiung, Guangzhou, and Yokohama), which can accommodate the 60-foot drafts of the largest container ships, are located in East Asia. The world's 20 mega-hub container ports¹⁰ send nearly 68 percent of the 5.7 million containers entering the U. S. by sea annually.¹¹ This is part of a larger pattern in which seaborne trade, which accounts for 80 percent of all international trade,¹² has increased an estimated 4.1 percent (in 2004), and 3.6 percent (in 2005 and 2006).¹³

For all these reasons, such non-traditional security threats as piracy "... can no longer be viewed as someone else's problem. [Piracy] is a global threat to security because of its deepening ties to international criminal networks, smuggling of hazardous cargoes, and disruption of vital commerce," former U. S. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Mullen has emphasized. "Imagine a major seaport or international strait that handles the flow of hundreds of ships and thousands of containers each day—imagine that critical 'node' of the world's economy crippled or disrupted for days or weeks or months."¹⁴

2. China's Growing Maritime Interests

As it becomes an increasingly capable and influential maritime power in all dimensions, China is acquiring a large, comprehensive stake in the security of the oceans. Maritime commerce, in particular, is vital to China's national program of "peaceful development." With its over 4 million square km of claimed sea area, 1 400 harbors, and a tremendous number of cargo ships, the world's largest developing nation generated 10% of its GDP (\$270 billion) from maritime industries in 2006, up 14% from 2005.¹⁵ Estimates have projected that it will reach 1 trillion by 2020.¹⁶ With 1 700 ships, China's merchant marine is second only to Panama in size.¹⁷ A recent article by People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy Senior Captain Xu Qi in the prestigious journal *China Military Science* (《中国军事科学》) further documents China's growing global maritime interests, stating that today "[China's] open ocean transport routes pass through every continent and every ocean [and] through each important international strait [to] over six hundred ports in over 150 nations and [administrative] regions."¹⁸ A popular government-inspired study entitled *The Rise of Great Powers* (《大国崛起》) suggests that

economic development, fueled by foreign trade and safeguarded by a sustainable and non-provocative degree of naval power, drives national development.¹⁹ In this regard, it is worth noting that China imports staggering amounts of raw inputs to fuel its dynamic industrially-intensive economy. As the world's largest iron ore importer, for instance, China is projected to receive 370-380 million tons in 2007.²⁰

China's strategic thinkers believe maritime energy security to be increasingly vital. Despite extensive exploration of offshore reserves²¹ to replace dwindling onshore reservoirs, China receives 85% of its imported oil by sea. A variety of existing and envisioned pipelines, of varying degrees of logistical and economic viability, are unlikely to substantially reduce this dependence on sea lane security. Indeed, according to PLAN Senior Captain Xu Qi, "By 2020... It may be [come] necessary to import three-quarters of [China's] oil from overseas."²² While the central government's level of support remains uncertain, it seems that a significant increase in Chinese-constructed and -flagged oil tankers is under way, with a view to fostering economic growth in peacetime and energy security in crisis.²³ For example, Luo Ping, an analyst at the Institute of Comprehensive Transportation (ICT)²⁴ for example, calls for at least 60 percent of oil imports to be carried by Chinese shipping companies.²⁵ Ministry of Communications' Water Transport Department senior official Peng Cuihong states that China will expand its tanker fleet to reduce reliance on foreign oil carriers.²⁶ In addition, despite considerable internal debate and ongoing challenges, China has commenced construction of some form of strategic petroleum reserve (SPR), and related refinery and pipeline infrastructure.²⁷

Shipbuilding, with commercial and military applications, is emerging as a major Chinese industrial sector. Having designated shipbuilding a "strategic industry" in need of "special oversight and support,"²⁸ China

launched over 13 million tons of new ships in 2006. If present trends continue, China will produce 20 million tons annually by 2010.²⁹ Beijing reportedly aims to become the world's largest shipbuilder by 2015, with 24 million tons of production capacity (35% of global capacity). Already, 275 000 personnel work in China's shipbuilding industry overall (with approximately 125 000 employed directly in large ship construction). Nearly 1 500 marine engineers and naval architects graduate from Chinese merchant academies and universities annually (approximately 7 times that from U. S. institutions).³⁰ While the size of China's current shipbuilding workforce stems in part from employment imperatives and relatively low average productivity per worker, capabilities are rapidly improving. For example, Chinese shipyards have focused primarily on constructing less sophisticated bulk carriers, but are now building significant numbers of oil, chemical, and liquid propane gas (LPG) tankers, and—encouraged by such bureaucratic entities as the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC)—are even starting to build small numbers of sophisticated LNG carriers.³¹ However uneven in its pace and nature of development, China's large shipbuilding sector will support broad-based maritime and naval development. As Alfred Thayer Mahan once postulated, when determining a nation's sea power, "it is not only the grand total [of a country's population], but the number following the sea, or at least readily available for employment on ship-board and for the creation of naval material that must be counted."³² Whether it stays primarily commercial or increases in military orientation, Beijing's growing shipbuilding sector will give it an even greater stake in the security of the global maritime commons.³³

3. Maritime Security Initiatives in the Asia-Pacific

Taken together, the conditions mentioned above cause many “stakeholders” to have a strong interest in the continued security of East Asia and its sea lanes. An appropriate philosophy for building on this consensus might be termed, “mutual interests, mutual respect, mutual consultation, and mutual responsibility.” The importance of maritime security in the Asia-Pacific, therefore, is clear. The question then becomes how to achieve this pressing, multifaceted objective. Encouragingly, a variety of agreements have already been formed to safeguard various aspects of maritime security in the region. This demonstrates widespread recognition of the need for action, even if problems remain to be fully addressed. As Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has stated from the U. S. perspective, “we fear the intrusion of terrorist weapons from a nation not our own [but] it is only in building strong alliances with foreign countries that we can prevent such an attack from occurring.”³⁴

The Malacca Straits Patrol Network

Two initiatives among the littoral states of the Malacca Strait, MALSINDO and EiS, are collectively known as the Malacca Straits Patrol Network.³⁵ In July 2004, the MALSINDO [Malaysia/ Singapore/Indonesia] Trilateral Coordinated Patrols were initiated in the Strait of Malacca based on cooperation between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.³⁶ The goal is to better utilize the littoral states respective resources in order to combat piracy,³⁷ terrorism, and other unlawful activities. Indonesian Navy Chief of Staff Admiral Bernard Kent Sondakh has emphasized that MALSINDO does not involve “joint” patrols;

A joint patrol means there is only one command and one logistic and has been part of a Defence Pact. However, coordinated patrol means that each country conducts the patrol in its jurisdiction or sovereignty area by always contacting or coordinating with other patrol partners in other area about activities in the field, and the command is still in their respective countries.³⁸

Thus, Zhang Xuegang explains, "MALSINDO... excludes other countries such as the United States..."³⁹ Moreover, even among the littoral states, "Due to the sensitivity of the littorals over the issue of 'sovereignty', MALSINDO does not provide for 'hot pursuit.'"⁴⁰

At the Shangri La Dialogue in June 2005, Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister, Najib Tun Razak, proposed a new initiative for the original MALSINDO states, this time in partnership with Thailand.⁴¹ On 13 September 2005 the four parties began "Eye in the Sky" [EiS] maritime air patrols out of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which have met with considerable media attention.⁴² According to one Australian assessment, however,

... despite initial success, these coordinated air and sea patrols have so far failed to significantly reduce criminal activity in the straits. Indeed, particularly the EiS program has been widely criticised for the low number of actual flights taking place and the limited resources available to respond to incidents spotted from the surveillance planes. The level and the nature of cooperation between the countries concerned is one important factor determining the outcome of the sea and air patrols. Concerns over national sovereignty, and the question of allowing law enforcement agencies from neighbouring countries access to national waters, has so far prevented closer cooperation in the region.⁴³

In an effort to address ongoing security concerns while emphasizing national sovereignty, the Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Navy has stated that "Other countries that would like to help in making Malacca Strait safe, would be highly appreciated if they are willing to share by

providing intelligence information, weapon equipment, navigational buoys/sea traffic sign, training, etc.”⁴⁴

Japan's role in providing such assistance has been particularly noteworthy. Tokyo has played an important role in supporting the efforts of states surrounding the Malacca Strait to increase security there.⁴⁵ The Japan Coast Guard has engaged in joint training exercises with six nations Southeast Asia. All coastal states have received Japanese training and equipment.⁴⁶ For instance, Tokyo has funded an anti-piracy center in Singapore.⁴⁷

The U. S. , for its part, has worked to increase regional security while respecting the views of states in the region. Washington has offered substantial military aid to Indonesia and expertise to Malaysia. The tragic 2005 tsunami gave the U. S. an historic opportunity to restore good relations with Indonesia.⁴⁸ In November 2005, despite ongoing controversy, Washington lifted a five-year ban on arms sales to Jakarta.⁴⁹ Following a meeting with his Malaysian counterpart in July 2006, then-Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Mullen stated, “As we are developing future capabilities, certainly we are willing to share those with the Malaysian navy. . . .”⁵⁰

Regional Cooperation Against Piracy and Armed Robbery

In November 2004, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plus Japan (which originally introduced the initiative), China, South Korea, Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka concluded a Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).⁵¹ This “indigenous pan-Asian initiative” resulted in the establishment of an Information Sharing Center (ISC) in Singapore to “maintain databases, conduct analysis, and act as an information clearinghouse.”⁵² ReCAAP's thirteen members do not include Malaysia or Indonesia, however, which have

yet to sign and ratify it. Moreover, the “agreement does not ‘oblige members to take any specific action other than sharing information that they deem pertinent to imminent pirate attacks.’”⁵³

The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)

Another constructive measure, which has recently been applied to East Asia, is the multilateral Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). PSI is motivated solely by concerns about proliferation and does not represent an effort to compromise the national interests of peaceful states. Rather, supported by over 60 countries, PSI is “a set of partnerships that establishes the basis for cooperation on specific activities, when the need arises. . . . PSI interdiction training exercises and other operational efforts help states work together in a more cooperative, coordinated, and effective manner to stop, search, and seize [proliferation-related] shipments.”⁵⁴ PSI supports the January 1992 United Nations (UN) Security Council Presidential Statement that proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threatens international peace and security, and underlines the need for member states of the UN to prevent proliferation. “Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan applauded the work of all countries active in PSI and has pointed to this initiative as an example of the type of cooperation necessary to counter today’s threats [with] nations acting in their own interest, but also for the common good,” points out former U. S. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Mullen. “I couldn’t agree more.”⁵⁵ PSI is also consistent with recent G-8 and EU statements calling for more coherent and concerted efforts to prevent the proliferation of WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials.

The first PSI exercise ever to be held in East Asia took place in 2005. Hosted by Singapore from 15-19 August of that year, *Deep Sabre* was

conducted in the South China Sea. *Deep Sabre* advanced PSI participating nations' operational capabilities by integrating an at-sea boarding (conducted by a combination of military and law enforcement forces) with a port search operation (conducted primarily by law enforcement). Over the course of five days, 2 000 personnel from military, coast guard, customs and other agencies of 13 PSI countries (including Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, the U. K. , and the U. S.) participated.⁵⁶ Other regional nations were invited to observe. On 12 August, the U. S. State Department stated that *Deep Sabre* "will promote greater awareness of and involvement in the PSI throughout the region."⁵⁷ On 18 August, Singapore's Ministry of Defense concluded that *Deep Sabre* "served to validate the multinational and inter-agency systems and procedures that have been put in place to detect and interdict illegal shipments of WMD-related materials."⁵⁸ As *Deep Sabre* demonstrated, specifically targeted exercises can provide an excellent opportunity for positive and productive cooperation for the promotion of mutual interests.

4. The Container Security Initiatives (CSI)

Another important security measure with particular significance for Asia, which has 13 of the world's top 20 container shipping ports,⁵⁹ is the Container Security Initiative (CSI). CSI was introduced by the U. S. in January 2002 following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.⁶⁰ The salience of containerized cargo security to the health of the global economy is clear: nearly 90 percent of global trade is transported in a total of 108 million cargo containers annually. Nearly half of incoming trade (by value), 40% overall, reaches the U. S. 's

360 commercial ports by onboard ships carrying as many as 8 000 containers. This percentage is even higher in Japan, Singapore, and the U. K. In fiscal year 2004, U. S. ports received 26 000 containers per day, for a total of 9.6 million.⁶¹ That year, 1/4 of U. S. imports (\$423 billion) and 1/6 of U. S. exports (\$139 billion) traveled via seaborne container.⁶² In the subsequent year, 16 million shipping containers arrived in U. S. ports.⁶³ That fiscal year, U. S. Customs and Border Protection processed 20 million sea, truck and rail containers entering the U. S. and 29 million of its trade entries.⁶⁴

China's economy is critically dependant on container traffic, as well. In 2006, China had \$974 billion in exports. 21% (\$250 billion) went to the U. S. Japan received 9.5% of Chinese exports. Imports into China totaled \$777.9 billion for that year (14.6% from Japan, 11.3% from South Korea, and 7.5% from the U. S.).⁶⁵ In all cases, by logistical and commercial necessity, the vast majority of goods by volume, and a substantial majority by value, traveled by sea. Empty containers constantly enter China's ports, and full ones are shipped out, many through just-in-time supply chains, so China, like the U. S., has to have complete faith in the safety of containers coming from other nations.

Given this tremendous reliance, disruption of trade by terrorist activities involving shipping containers could be disastrous, if difficult to estimate or quantify before such a debacle occurred. According to a 2002 report by Booz, Allen and Hamilton, which was cited by the U. S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) in its 2003 Container Security Report, if searching for an un-detonated weapon of mass destruction were to require the closure of a single U. S. seaport for 12 days, economic costs could reach \$58 billion, or \$4.8 billion per day. Other estimates have produced rates of \$1-2 billion per day.⁶⁶ Not to be underestimated is the indirect economic damage that could also result

from containerized terrorism. In 2002, a Brookings Institution study suggested that a detonation in a similar single-port scenario could cause \$1 trillion in economic damage by triggering trade restrictions.⁶⁷ Clearly, any disruption in U. S. imports would have a significant negative impact on China's economy, which is heavily reliant on seaborne exports, particularly to the U. S., the destination of \$250 billion of Chinese exports in 2006, or 21% of China's total for that year.⁶⁸

In order to ensure the security of container shipping, CSI participants use a four-part process:

1. Identify and target containers that risk facilitating terrorist activities by using intelligence, standardized information, and automated targeting tools;
2. Pre-screen at-risk containers at the earliest stage possible, ideally at the port of departure, before they arrive at ports in participating member nations;
3. Employ sophisticated non-intrusive inspection detection technology (e. g., radiation detection devices as well as X-ray and gamma ray machines) to pre-screen at-risk containers bound for ports in participating member nations with minimal disruption to trade movement, and;
4. Introduce containers that are more secure and which more clearly reveal any tampering that they might have encountered.⁶⁹

The Secure Freight Initiative

Three East Asian ports—Singapore's Brani Terminal, South Korea's Gamman terminal (in Busan), and China's Hong Kong are participating in the Secure Freight Initiative. Hong Kong's recent participation is an extremely welcome development. In 2004, the U. S. received \$43.4 billion containerized imports (10% of overall containerized imports, and

3% of total imports) from China's Hong Kong.⁷⁰ Hong Kong sent 13% (1.3 million) of its containers to the U. S. in fiscal year 2006. Hong Kong currently ranks first in terms of the volume of both shipments and containers exported to the U. S.⁷¹ Ninety percent of Hong Kong's shipments are themselves transshipments, making their safety all the more important to verify.⁷²

Started officially on 7 December 2006, the Secure Freight Initiative builds on CSI to screen a greater portion of containers, even those not predetermined to be of high risk, with a specific focus on identifying radiological hazards. It therefore integrates sophisticated scanning technology (e. g. , nuclear detection devices) into selected operations at selected ports and sub-port terminals.⁷³ In fiscal year 2006, the six ports under evaluation handled over 10% (nearly 1.2 million) of U. S. - bound shipments.⁷⁴

Participating East Asian Economies

Under CSI, officials are deployed overseas to work in cooperation with their host Economy counterparts. U. S. Customs and Border Protection officers are stationed in many overseas locations, where they engage in reciprocal information exchange. It must be emphasized that these personnel are essentially law enforcement officials, and not military officials. This makes it much easier for them to share relevant information, which is related to law enforcement activities and not to potential military activities. Cooperation in law enforcement is usually much easier for economies to achieve than is military cooperation, especially against mutual threats. CSI partner economies may also send officers to U. S. ports to monitor containers destined for their own economy's ports, as Japan and Canada have already done. Currently operational ports in East and Southeast Asia, please see Figure 1 (below):

Figure 1: CSI Ports in (South) east Asia⁷⁵

Mainland China	Hong Kong, China *	Taiwan, China	Singapore *	Japan	South Korea	Malaysia	Thailand
Shenzhen		Kaohsiung		Yokohama	Busan *	Port Klang	Laem Chabang
Shanghai		Chi-Lung		Tokyo		Tanjung Pelepas	
				Nagoya Kobe			

* Also a participant in Secure Freight Initiative.

All the aforementioned nations or entities have played a critical role in furthering CSI’s coverage, and deserve great recognition for their many efforts in this regard. For the purposes of this essay, however, it will be necessary here to focus on the implementation of CSI in two East Asian member nations, Singapore and China.

Singapore

In March 2003, Singapore became the first Asian nation to participate in CSI. Singapore’s participation represented a tremendous advance for CSI, as the dynamic city state boasts the world’s busiest port in terms of container traffic (23 192 000 TEUs in 2005).⁷⁶ Singapore sent 330 000 shipping containers to the U. S. in 2004 alone. With 80% of its large volume of containers representing transshipments, Singapore is uniquely positioned to detect and interdict dangerous containers. U. S. Customs and Border Protection has deployed five officers in Singapore, where they observe cargo being screened by Singaporean authorities.⁷⁷ This is in complete accordance with utmost respect for Singapore’s national sovereignty, as it is with all host countries. Unarmed and lacking arrest powers, foreign officers stationed in host country ports conduct themselves strictly in accordance with CSI guidelines, with local law being the

deciding factor.

China

CSI simply could not succeed without Beijing's active participation. With 7 of the world's top 20 container ports,⁷⁸ China handles a tremendous volume of containerized exports. In 2004, Chinese ports handled roughly one-quarter of global container traffic that year and (when including that of the Hong Kong S. A. R.) nearly 40 percent of world container volume in 2004. With its rapid manufacturing-based economic growth, China has already had a major impact on global container trade.⁷⁹ China's rapid port development and economic growth will probably only increase its portion of global container trade.⁸⁰

For all these reasons, President Jiang Zemin's announcement that China would join CSI, at a 25 October 2002 meeting with President George W. Bush in Crawford, Texas, represented a major step forward for global container security. "I am very pleased that the Chinese government has agreed in principle to join with the United States in the Container Security Initiative," U. S. Customs Commissioner Robert C. Bonner responded. "We will be working with the appropriate Chinese government officials to implement the program as quickly possible. This is an important step, not only for the protection of trade between the U. S. and China, but for the protection of the most critical component of the world trading system as a whole—containerized cargo."⁸¹ On 29 July 2003, China formally joined CSI when Commissioner Bonner and Mu Xinsheng, China's Commissioner of the General Administration of Customs, signed a declaration of principles in Beijing. "We appreciate the continued support of CSI by President Hu Jintao," Commissioner Bonner stated. "The CSI security blanket is now expanding and strengthening as it encompasses the ports of Shanghai and Shenzhen."⁸²

Beijing's accession to CSI has been followed with the participation of

these two high-volume ports. On 28 April 2005, U. S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Bonner and Minister Mu announced that the port of Shanghai would become operational in CSI. "China and the U. S. have great prospects for anti-terrorism cooperation and both sides' efforts in strengthening cooperation in container security is a good example," Minister Mu declared in a written statement. "The China-U. S. cooperation on CSI that has been launched in Shanghai is a good start for cooperation between customs authorities in China and the U. S. "⁸³ Shanghai has particular significance for container security. Already third in volume after Singapore and China's Hong Kong (with 18 084 000⁸⁴ container unit throughput in 2005, a 24 percent increase from the previous year), the port is targeted by Chinese authorities to become the world's largest by 2010.⁸⁵

On 24 June 2005, Minister Mu and Commissioner Bonner announced that the Port of Shenzhen would officially become operational within CSI as well. In 2005, Shenzhen ranked fourth globally in container unit throughput, just behind Shanghai at 16 197 000.⁸⁶ Bonner applauded the efforts of his Chinese counterpart, declaring: "Due to the continued support of CSI by Minister Mu Xinsheng, U. S. borders are more secure and more efficient."⁸⁷ Given the tremendous scale of China's shipping industry and the nation's significant technical capacity, it is not surprising that CSI has attracted much attention and research.⁸⁸ Awareness of the importance of maritime anti-terrorism appears to be increasing in China.⁸⁹ Chinese attention to non-traditional security threats appears to have prompted a variety of unprecedented maritime safety exercises.⁹⁰ It is to be hoped that more Chinese ports will enter CSI in the near future.

Around the World

In addition to securing the world's major seaports, CSI increasingly serves as a model for security cooperation in general. In June 2002,

all 161 member entities of the World Customs Organization adopted a resolution facilitating development of programs for their ports modeled on CSI. An agreement signed by the European Union and the Department of Homeland Security on 22 April 2004 envisions the spread of CSI throughout the European Union.⁹¹ A European Commission statement immediately following the agreement, signed by U. S. Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge and Irish Minister of Finance Charlie McCreevy on behalf of the EU emphasized the following:

The Commission fully shares U. S. concerns about improving cargo security and considers that the most effective means to meet these concerns is by co-operation at EU level with the U. S. The new agreement is based on the principle that substantially greater security of legitimate trade can be achieved through a system where the customs authority of the importing country works collaboratively with customs authorities involved in earlier parts of the supply chain to use timely information and inspection technology to target and screen high-risk containers before they are shipped from their ports or places of loading or transshipment.⁹²

Clearly the CSI model has broad applicability to enhancing the security of global seaborne trade. But more work is needed, as many critical ports are not yet covered.⁹³

5. Building Maritime Partnerships

While CSI has certainly played a constructive role, what are the prospects for a more comprehensive approach to maritime security? In a landmark speech at the 17th International Seapower Symposium, held at the U. S. Naval War College in September 2005, then-U. S. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Mullen called for a series of global maritime partnerships. In CNO Mullen's vision, a "Thousand Ship

Navy” would bring the maritime forces of friendly nations together based on their abilities, needs, and interests to provide collective security against a variety of threats in the maritime commons. These include energy transport interruption, piracy, WMD proliferation, human trafficking, drug smuggling, and natural disasters.⁹⁴ Combating avian influenza is another area in which the two militaries might cooperate productively.⁹⁵ “Today, navies need tools that are not only instruments of war, but also implements of peace in order to improve maritime security,” Admiral Mullen emphasized.

Perhaps the most profound effect of today’s challenges is the increased value of cooperation between friends, allies, coalition partners, and like-minded nations. Despite differences in size or structure of our navies, cooperation today is more necessary than ever before. And cooperation is growing, but we need more—much more. Because today’s challenges are global in nature, we must be collective in our response. We are bound together in our dependence on the seas and in our need for security of this vast commons. This is a requisite for national security, global stability, and economic prosperity. . . . I’m after that proverbial 1 000 ship Navy—a fleet in being, if you will—composed of all freedom-loving nations, standing watch over the seas, standing watch over each other. . . . We have proven the awesome capability of the sea when used for war. But we have yet to realize the full potential of the sea when leveraged for peace, prosperity, increased understanding, transparency, and pervasive security. . . . The real potential of sea power. . . is the power of the sea to share and unite, to deter and defeat, to protect and endure.⁹⁶

Vice Admiral John Morgan, Jr. , and Rear Admiral Charles Martoglio have amplified Admiral Mullen’s remarks in a recent co-authored article:

The process of globalization has inextricably linked nations together in a de facto security arrangement [regarding] the global maritime commons. . . because freedom of the seas is critical to any nation’s long-term economic well

being. . . . Likewise, the exploitation of the maritime commons by nations, groups, or individuals who seek to disrupt, destroy, or otherwise degrade security in the maritime domain must be considered a global challenge. . . . Policing the maritime commons will require substantially more capability than the United States or any individual nation can deliver. . . . The 1 000 ship Navy is about the voluntary development of a network that vastly increases. . . [the means] available to monitor security in the maritime domain while increasing the number of responders capable of ensuring maritime security.⁹⁷

Sino-American Maritime Cooperation

Meanwhile, a larger vision is emerging concerning the utility of cooperation between China and the U. S.⁹⁸ Former Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick has stated that China should become a “responsible stakeholder” and “has a responsibility to strengthen the international system that has enabled its success.” Beijing and Washington, Zoellick suggests, possess a “shared interest in sustaining political, economic, and security systems that provide common benefits.”⁹⁹ While expressing significant concerns, China’s 2006 Defense White Paper acknowledges that “[N]ever before has China been so closely bound up with the rest of the world as it is today.” China, in this analysis, is “[C]omitted to peace, development, and cooperation” as it seeks to construct “together with other countries, a harmonious world of enduring peace and common prosperity.”¹⁰⁰

The potential for Sino-American maritime cooperation has been highlighted by recent events. The U. S. Coast Guard has established excellent relations with its Chinese counterparts. These include the Ministry of Public Security (with its Border Control Department and Maritime Police Division), Ministry of Communications (with its Maritime Safety Administration and Rescue and Salvage Agency), Ministry of Agriculture (with its Bureau of Fisheries), and State

Oceanic Administration. In May 2006, buoy tender USCGC *Sequoia* (WLB-215) became the first U. S. cutter to visit China. In June 2006, USCGC *Rush* (WHEC-723) called in Qingdao. In August 2007, USCGC *Boutwell* continued these exchanges with a visit to Shanghai during the North Pacific Coast Guard Forum, East Asia's only maritime security organization, in which China and the U. S. play substantive roles.¹⁰¹ U. S. Coast Guard officers have provided training and lectures in China, and Chinese officers have studied at the U. S. Coast Guard Academy (New London, CT) and the fisheries enforcement school (Kodiak, AK). Chinese fisheries enforcement officers have served temporarily on U. S. cutters (i. e., to halt illegal Chinese fishing), and their patrol boats join U. S., Japanese, and Russian counterparts annually to prevent illegal driftnet fishing in the North Pacific. It is to be hoped that the reportedly-impending creation of a unified Chinese coast guard organization will further opportunities to build on this substantive and useful progress.¹⁰² Already, the posting of a U. S. Coast Guard liaison officer, with the rank of captain, at the U. S. Embassy in Beijing appears to indicate prioritization of developing the relationship on the U. S. side.¹⁰³

Despite its greater sensitivity, cooperation between the U. S. and Chinese navies is expanding as well, as part of larger bilateral military cooperation and exchanges. In July 2006, PRC Central Military Commission vice chairman Guo Boxiong became the highest-ranking Chinese military officer to visit the U. S. since 2001. Qian Lihua, deputy director of the Foreign Affairs Office of China's Defense Ministry, described Guo's visit as "the most important Chinese military exchange with another country this year" and bilateral military relations as being "at their best since 2001."¹⁰⁴ Former Commander of U. S. forces in the Pacific Admiral William Fallon visited China in May and August 2006. He extended to the PLA an unprecedented invitation to

observe the U. S. Guam-based military exercise *Valiant Shield* in June, which was readily accepted. A Chinese defense ministry official stated that, "The invitation to observe the U. S. military exercises is a very important component of exchanges between the militaries of China and the United States." That same month, the U. S. Navy's Pacific Fleet flagship *Blue Ridge* called on Shanghai for the forth time, which China's official media described as "highlighting warming exchanges between the two navies." Assistant Defense Secretary Peter Rodman led a U. S. delegation to Beijing for the eight round of annual defense consultations between the two countries. "The defense departments of the two countries restored a series of consultation mechanisms on maritime security, humanitarian disaster relief and military environmental protection," stated *People's Daily*. "A mechanism for officer exchanges between the two armed forces was also set up and military institutions have regular exchange programs." Visits to China were also made in September and December 2006 by Ryan Henry, Deputy Under Secretary of the U. S. Department of Defense, and Gary Roughead, then Commander in Chief of the U. S. Pacific Fleet.

Building on the foundation of this growing series of exchanges, the U. S. and China held a series of unprecedented bilateral exercises. A search and rescue exercise (SAREX) was held by off San Diego on 20 September 2006. Though a series of port visits had previously occurred, and are scheduled to continue,¹⁰⁵ this was the first bilateral military exercise ever conducted between the two nations.¹⁰⁶ The two navies stationed observers on each other's ships as they practiced transmitting and receiving international communications signals. Led by North Sea Fleet deputy commander Rear Admiral Wang Fushan, China's guided missile destroyer *Qingdao* and refueling vessel *Hongze Hu* joined the new U. S. Arleigh Burke-class Aegis guided missile destroyer USS *Chung-Hoon* (DDG 93). Specifically selected to

convey a positive connection, USS *Chung-Hoon* is the first U. S. Navy ship named for a Chinese-American. Rear Admiral Gordon Pai'ea Chung-Hoon (1910-1979) served as commanding officer of USS *Sigsbee* (DD 502) from May 1944 to October 1945 and received the Navy Cross and Silver Star for "conspicuous gallantry and extraordinary heroism."¹⁰⁷ The 2006 SAREX is envisioned to be "the first in a series of bilateral exercises."¹⁰⁸

A second phase of the exercise was held in the South China Sea in November 2006.¹⁰⁹ China provided guided missile destroyer *Zhanjiang*, fuel tanker *Dongting Lake*, and a *Yun-7* transport aircraft. The U. S. contributed missile destroyer USS *Fitzgerald*, landing platform dock (LPD) USS *Juneau*, and a P-3C patrol plane. These ships and aircraft worked together to "locate and salvage a ship in danger." In the assessment of PLAN South China Sea Fleet Commander Gu Wengen, "the two navies demonstrated very good military skills and strong cooperative spirits."¹¹⁰ "The exercise symbolizes more substantial cooperation between the armed forces of China and the United States, which is very important to the future development of military relations,"¹¹¹ Qian Lihua elaborated. "The current search-and-rescue exercise is an important and substantial exchange activity between the two armed forces. It has been of vital importance to expanding the Sino-U. S. military cooperation despite its limited scale in terms of troops and vessels."¹¹² Then U. S. Pacific Fleet Commander Admiral Gary Roughead concluded, "The visit of the USS *Juneau* is indicative of improved military relations and transparency between the People's Liberation Army navy and the U. S. navy."¹¹³

China has also been invited to cooperate more broadly with the U. S. Navy under the framework of global maritime partnerships. In November 2006, while visiting China, then-U. S. Pacific Fleet commander (and now Chief of Naval Operations) Admiral Gary

Roughead stated to Chinese officials that “[E]nhancing our navy-to-navy relationships is especially important so we can cooperate in our many areas of mutual interests... [T]hrough routine dialogue and exercises, our navies can improve the ability to coordinate naval operations in missions such as maritime security, search and rescue, and humanitarian relief.”¹¹⁴ In April 2007, during PLA Navy commander Vice Admiral Wu Shengli’s visit to the U. S. , Admiral Mullen asked Admiral Wu to consider “China’s potential participation in global maritime partnership initiatives.”¹¹⁵ According to Admiral Mullen’s spokesman Commander John Kirby, Admiral Wu “expressed interest” in the proposal and “asked for more information... so that he would better acquaint himself about it.”¹¹⁶

6. Conclusion

The Asia-Pacific region boasts increasing maritime commerce but faces growing unconventional security threats. Many experts believe that robust maritime security cooperation initiatives (e. g. , the CSI and global maritime partnerships) can help provide a framework for security. There are other positive indications that analysts in Pacific nations increasingly seek cooperative solutions to maritime security concerns. A major collaborative Chinese study on sea lane security, for instance, calls for emphasizing cooperation in international organizations and conventions, laws and regulations concerning oil transport.¹¹⁷ Establishing specific security measures, such as CSI, offers prospects for increasing trust, fostering good will, and enhancing maritime security in East Asia. As the world’s largest developed and developing nation respectively, as well as two major Pacific powers, the U. S. and China have a critical role to play in this process. Effective bilateral

communication will maximize prospects for positive results.

Beyond the specifics of bilateral cooperation, important questions that need to be addressed by all Asia-Pacific maritime stakeholders in the future include: How have non-state threats combined to form a new challenge to international maritime commerce and security? What is the nature and level of the threat? Will the maritime realm be a continued target for terrorism? How will the national interests of regional states be safeguarded? Are the international responses and reforms accomplishing what they set out to do? Finally, what are the specific implications for East Asia? Each nation will have its own interests and priorities, but it will be important to reach a common understanding on these broader issues.

One issue that all parties can agree on already is that the multiple, complex security challenges that confront the region call for cooperative security measures that are no less sophisticated than the threats that they are designed to address. As former U. S. Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michael Mullen has emphasized,

Today's reality is that the security arrangements and paradigms of the past are no longer enough for the future. And today's challenges are too diverse to tackle alone and require more capability and resources than any single nation can deliver. Our level of cooperation and coordination must intensify in order to adapt to our shared challenges and constraints. We have no choice in this matter because I am convinced that... no nation today... can go it alone, especially in the maritime domain. There is no inherent conflict between a country's national interests in maritime security and the greater security of the global commons. They are mutually reinforcing and inextricably linked—they are two sides of the same coin in today's globalized world.¹¹⁸

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

亚洲地缘经济与政治:汉、英/沈丁立,任晓主编.
上海:上海人民出版社,2008

(上海论坛丛书/王生洪,秦绍德,金在烈主编)

ISBN 978-7-208-07797-3

I. 亚… II. ①沈…②任… III. ①政治-亚洲-文集-
汉、英②经济-亚洲-文集-汉、英 IV. D73-53 F13-53

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2008)第 038341 号

责任编辑 张笑天

封面装帧 人马艺术设计工作室·储平

·上海论坛丛书·

亚洲地缘经济与政治

沈丁立 任晓 主编

世纪出版集团

上海人民出版社出版

(200001 上海福建中路 193 号 www.ewen.cc)

世纪出版集团发行中心发行

常熟新骅印刷厂印刷

开本 635×965 1/16 印张 16.5 插页 3 字数 220,000

2008 年 5 月第 1 版 2008 年 5 月第 1 次印刷

ISBN 978-7-208-07797-3/F·1738

定价 28.00 元

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