THE U.S. ARMY AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC

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FOREWORD

As the Bush administration reassesses U.S. foreign and defense policies, few regions of the world loom as large as the Asia-Pacific. This is an area where the United States has key economic and security interests. In recent decades, the Asia-Pacific has experienced rapid economic growth, a wave of democratization, and the emergence of a web of regional and subregional multilateral institutions. All these developments have contributed to enhancing the peace and prosperity of the region. Nevertheless, difficult challenges and perilous threats to regional stability remain; these necessitate the continued forward presence of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific.

This monograph highlights the significant and ongoing contribution of the U.S. Army in deterring war, executing smaller-scale contingencies, and shaping the security environment. The author advocates a robust, pro-active Army presence for the foreseeable future. Such a presence will ensure the promotion and protection of U.S. national interests in the region.

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THE U.S. ARMY AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC

This monograph assesses U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific region and the principal threats to those interests for the next 25 years. It analyzes the role of the U.S. military, the Army in particular, in promoting those interests. Lastly, it makes recommendations for future U.S. strategy with a particular focus on the use of military power to achieve desired outcomes. In this monograph, the Asia-Pacific Region refers to the area of the globe that stretches from Hawaii to Pakistan and from the Aleutian Islands to Australia.

U.S. INTERESTS

The United States has a number of vital interests in the Asia-Pacific Region. These include preventing the domination of the region by an unfriendly power and assuring U.S. political and economic access and influence. But perhaps the most pressing and tangible vital interest is to ensure the continued peace and prosperity of the region. This is often abbreviated to a single word—"stability." Peace cannot simply be said to be the absence of war; rather than a residual category, peace should be defined in robust and positive terms, not merely as a fleeting or temporary state. "Enduring peace" can be defined as the presence of thriving regional and subregional cooperation mechanisms in the arenas of politics, economics, security, and environment. The key contributors to enduring peace are political, economic, and cooperative security arrangements. Prosperity can be defined in terms of adaptive and accountable domestic political institutions, vibrant economies and commercial relations, professional and civilian controlled militaries, and pollution-free high quality of life in urban and rural living and working environments. The key dimensions of prosperity are responsive governments and dynamic economies. In short,

without durable and effective cooperative mechanisms, democratic regimes, and thriving market economies, peace and prosperity (or "stability") will be beyond reach in the Asia-Pacific Region.[1]

Where the Army Fits In.

A fundamental contention of this study is that a U.S. military forward presence, in some form or another, is essential for peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific. While the precise positioning, size, and mix of forces will depend on specific threats and conditions, it is vital that such a forward presence include a significant land power component. In a region as vast and ocean-covered as the Asia-Pacific, naval and air forces are extremely important. Nevertheless, the Army is the ultimate symbol of a rock-solid U.S. commitment to the enduring peace and prosperity of the region. The Army is the core service in the labor-intensive business of peacetime engagement.[2] Moreover, when hostilities break out and the commitment of U.S. forces is required, the Army forms the nucleus of any mission force. Finally, only the Army, the sole service that can occupy land, can guarantee a decisive strategic (i.e. political) outcome and an effective transition to a desired end state (e.g. East Timor).

Key Threats and Challenges to the Stability of the Asia-Pacific.

Over the next 25 years, the stability of the Asia-Pacific is likely to be challenged by complex threats from four key geographic hot spots; the United States will be faced with four fundamental challenges. The four threats emanate from Korea, the Taiwan Strait, South and Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. If current trends continue, the threat posed on the Korean peninsula will decline considerably over time. Meanwhile, the threat in the Taiwan Strait is likely to endure and fluctuate in its level of severity over the next two decades. South and Central Asia and Southeast Asia,

meanwhile, are emerging as subregions of chronic instability and are increasingly likely to cause complex and multidimensional threats to the stability of the entire Asia-Pacific region. The four fundamental challenges likely to confront the United States during the first quarter of the 21st century are: maintaining a forward presence; deterring a conflict in the Taiwan Strait; shaping what I call "powder keg" states; and, managing relations with allies and friends in the region. These threats and challenges are addressed below.

KEY FLASHPOINTS

Korea.

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula no longer appear to be the principal threat to peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific, and these tensions are likely to dissipate even further.[3] The recent rapprochement between Seoul and Pyongyang and the ongoing thaw in U.S.-North Korea relations come as a jolt to a national security apparatus that has spent half a century with the peninsula as a critical flashpoint. The speed of these dramatic developments makes it difficult for the defense community to comprehend and assess their impact. Commander in Chief of U.S. Pacific Command Admiral Dennis C. Blair appropriately called them "breathtaking."[4] The past year alone has seen the June summit between President Kim Dae Jung of South Korea and Chairman Kim Jong Il of North Korea, the visit to Washington of Vice Chairman Jo Myong Rok and the reciprocal visit of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to Pyongyang (both in October 2000). Few analysts would have predicted these events even a few years ago, and certainly none of them would have anticipated these might all take place within a single 5-month time span! The implications of these fast-paced changes are far-reaching for the U.S. military and the Army in particular. Although momentum (and enthusiasm) appears to have slowed as of March 2001,

it is difficult to tell whether this is merely a temporary lull or a sustained slowdown.[5]

Certainly, unification on the peninsula is not a foregone conclusion.[6] Unification would mean some form of political union between North and South Korea. Reconciliation—a necessary prerequisite for unification—is far more likely than unification, at least in the short-to-medium term. Reconciliation would entail a peace agreement, a framework for regular trade, travel, and communication between North and South, and an ongoing dialogue aimed at some sort of eventual confederation or unification.[7] Reconciliation is also a long, drawn-out, and graduated process.

Pyongyang's record of brutal and violent deeds and the nature of the Kim dynasty dictatorship itself provide powerful reasons to be skeptical about the regime's commitment to reform.[8] Moreover, the experience of the peace settlements in other strife torn areas of the world cautions that the process can be difficult, protracted, and littered with obstacles. Hence the United States must remain vigilant and continue to work hand-in-glove with our allies, the Republic of Korea and Japan, to ensure we are prepared for any eventuality. At the same time the experience of other divided nations such as Vietnam and Germany demonstrate that unification can come rapidly and suddenly via either peaceful or violent means.

While it is still too early to say when and how Korean unification might occur, it is prudent to proceed on the assumption that reconciliation is possible within a decade and unification is possible at some point within the next 25 years. In short, as the Perry Commission concluded in October 1999, the "status quo" does not appear to be "sustainable."[9] The leaders of both North and South Korea desire reconciliation. However, leaders in Seoul and Pyongyang, while in general accord on the concept of unification, seem to believe that the process should move forward gradually. Both sides, each for its own reasons,

want to see the continued existence of the two separate Korean regimes and steady progress toward some kind of confederation. Seoul is concerned about shouldering the staggering cost it would likely have to bear in order to realize unification, while Pyongyang is concerned that the process of unification may threaten regime survival.[10]

Although President Kim of South Korea has expressed a desire to maintain a U.S. military presence on the Korean Peninsula, even after unification, and Chairman Kim of North Korea reportedly has indicated the same desire, this does not represent any firm commitment by either government.[11] On the other hand, it reflects their distrust of other foreign powers and can be a point of great U.S. leverage.[12] There are three factors that caution against an assumption that U.S. forces will remain on the peninsula for the next quarter century.

Popular Opinion. Public opinion has emerged as a key determinant of policy in South Korea, is likely to emerge as such in the United States, and perhaps will eventually emerge in North Korea. This is most evident in South Korea as popular opposition to U.S. military presence has been vocal, strident, and sometimes violent. In part, this is an expression of outrage over threats to quality of life, and, in part, it represents an expression of forthright Korean nationalism, xenophobia, and indeed virulent anti-Americanism. Concerns over quality-of-life issues are specific to each locale—noise, air or water pollution attributed to particular U.S. bases and misbehavior by U.S. service personnel. These issues are reinforced by assertive Korean nationalism and anger at what is perceived as an overbearing U.S. presence.[13] The recent controversy over the wartime killings of Korean civilians at No Gun Ri has underscored this feeling. Increasingly, South Koreans are questioning the need to have tens of thousands of U.S. troops stationed there when the threat from the North appears to have decreased dramatically.[14]

While expressions of anti-Americanism and popular support for a reduction or even an end to the U.S. military presence will probably fluctuate, if the North-South rapprochement continues unabated this groundswell is only likely to increase in intensity over time. To date, North Korean public opinion has not been a factor. However, it will probably emerge as a factor at some point if the iron grip of the Pyongyang regime loosens and society becomes more assertive. Public opinion in the north may very well mirror feelings in the south.

And one should not overlook public opinion in the United States. If tensions on the peninsula continue to decline and/or anti-American sentiment in Korea rises, there is likely to be growing sentiment to "bring the boys home."[15] These feelings may be influenced by calls from prominent members of Congress that changing circumstances on the peninsula merit the withdrawal of U.S. forces in Korea.

New Circumstances, New Leaders. While President Kim of South Korea and Chairman Kim of North Korea seem to be in favor of continued U.S. troop presence, these positions may change as conditions and public opinion change.[16] Furthermore, North Korea has floated an offer to end its missile program if another country would agree to launch Pyongyang's satellites. The precise offer remains unclear, as does the seriousness of the proposal itself, even after Secretary Albright's October 2000 visit.[17]

Moreover, there is no guarantee that political successors in Seoul or Pyongyang will be of like minds.[18] President Kim's term expires in early 2003 and Article 70 of the Republic of Korea Constitution bars him from seeking a second term. The tenure of his counterpart in Pyongyang is likely to be longer, but unification may not take place before 59-year-old Kim Jong Il has passed from the political scene. While some kind of political ouster—or even regime implosion—is possible, a leadership transition to the post-Kim Jong Il era is unlikely to come until his death or

incapacitation. The views of a new generation of Korean political leaders are difficult to predict.

Furthemore, one cannot ignore the potential for policy changes by successive U.S. administrations and/or developments in the region. A future U.S. president could very possibly decide that the time had come to withdraw American forces from Korea, especially if he is under domestic pressure to do so.

Challenges To Negotiating a Future Defense Pact. Even assuming that the governments of North and South Korea and the United States agree on the desirability of a continued U.S. military presence on the peninsula, they may find it difficult, and perhaps even impossible, to reach common agreement on the shape, size, location, and details of such a presence. This is possible, judging by the climate of the protracted Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) negotiations in late 2000.[19] However, the fact that a SOFA agreement was reached in late December 2000 and signed by Washington and Seoul in mid-January holds the promise that future defense agreements can be attained. In the new SOFA accord, the United States agreed to give Korea jurisdiction over U.S. military personnel charged with crimes in Korea and accept new regulations concerning environmental pollution originating from U.S. military bases.[20]

Taiwan Strait.

In the opening decade of the 21st century, tensions in the Taiwan Strait appear to be the principal threat to peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific for the foreseeable future. Some analysts now view it as the "most dangerous" flashpoint in Northeast Asia.[21] The threat in the Taiwan Strait is likely to remain a feature of the strategic landscape of the Asia-Pacific in the coming decades and is likely to absorb more and more attention from the Department of Defense. Reconciliation between Beijing and Taipei is certain to be very difficult to attain and unification is

probably unachievable within the foreseeable future. Three factors point to the likelihood of continued tensions in the Taiwan Strait and the persistent specter of armed conflict looming.

A Frustrated Beijing. China, especially its armed forces, has become more frustrated over the lack of tangible progress toward unification with Taiwan.[22] Unification with Taiwan has been a core national security objective of the People's Republic of China (PRC) for half a century. More than two decades of the moderate and pragmatic "one country, two systems" policy formulated by the late Deng Xiaoping have yet to bear fruit in the case of Taiwan. This is made all the more frustrating by the successful returns of the former British colony of Hong Kong in mid-1997 and former Portuguese enclave of Macao in late 1999. Expectations were also heightened by the dramatic rapprochement of the late 1980s and early 1990s when cross-strait trade and investment developed and travel for family reunions, business, and tourism expanded virtually overnight.[23] Most noteworthy was the significant diplomatic groundwork: the establishment of quasi-official organizations in Beijing and Taipei to manage bilateral relations. The high point was the summit held in 1993 in Singapore between the chiefs of these two organizations.

The goodwill and progress evaporated in mid-1995 when Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui was granted a visa to visit the United States. Lee's rhetoric during the visit, combined with other initiatives launched by Taipei, led Chinese leaders to conclude that Taiwan was embarked down a path toward independence. China's missile tests off the Taiwan coast and exercises in the vicinity of the Taiwan Strait during late 1995 and early 1996 were calibrated to make Taiwan rethink the advisability of such a course.[24]

For several years China's saber rattling appeared to have had its intended effect: Taiwan cooled is rhetoric and actions. But in mid-1999 Taiwan's President Lee suggested

that relations between China and Taiwan should be considered "state-to-state."

This triggered a further round of vitriolic rhetoric and threats from China, culminating in the Taiwan White Paper of February 2000.[25] This official document added a third justification for the use of force against Taiwan: lack of progress on negotiations directed at unification. Further warnings in the lead up to Taiwan's presidential elections of March 2000 admonished the island's electorate not to vote for long time pro-independence candidate Chen Shui-bian. The attempt at intimidation seemed to backfire when Chen won the election. Tensions cooled following Chen's victory and his inauguration, and China adopted a "wait and see" policy.[26]

However, tensions could flare up again at any time. As of October 2000, the PRC officially characterized the situation in the Taiwan Strait as "complicated and grim."[27] It is important to note that the PRC government has never renounced the use of force to achieve unification with Taiwan (or to prevent the island from attaining independence). Moreover the Taiwan Strait is the PLA's central warfighting scenario, and the Chinese military believes it has been entrusted with the sacred mission of unifying Taiwan with the Chinese mainland.[28]

While political elites on both sides of the Taiwan Strait have a great interest in avoiding a military conflict, this does not ensure hostilities will be averted. Conflict could occur through miscalculation or result from a deliberate decision by China's leaders or Taiwan's leaders. Significant potential exists for miscalculation or misperception in the kind of coercive diplomacy that China is in the habit of pursuing.[29] In some future round of saber rattling, a missile launched simply to intimidate Taiwan could veer off its anticipated course and cause unintended death and destruction. Or a massive military exercise in the Taiwan Strait could be misinterpreted by Taipei as preparations for an imminent attack. A deliberate decision by Beijing to

launch a military operation against Taiwan also cannot be ruled out. The issue of unification with Taiwan is sensitive, emotional, and, most importantly, a core element of the Chinese Communist Party's political legitimacy. As such, many of China's elites appear to believe that the party-state might not be able to survive the righteous indignation of the masses should the regime not fight to keep Taiwan. Under certain circumstances the PLA might be ordered to launch an operation against Taiwan even if it was thought to have little or no chance of success.[30] The bottom line is that political expediency—not military feasibility—is the paramount determinant of whether or not China uses armed force.[31]

An Increasingly Assertive Taiwan. China has detected that Taiwanese politicians have become increasingly assertive and outspoken on a host of issues, particularly the nature of Taiwan's relations with China and the island's international status. This was true of Lee Teng-hui who was president of Taiwan from January 1988 until May 2000, and it is also true of the man who succeeded him, President Chen Shui-bian. Many Chinese leaders consider Taiwan's current president as a devious and double-dealing individual who remains committed to pursuing independence for Taiwan.[32] The fact is that the island's inhabitants aspire to be citizens of a political entity that is recognized and accepted as a member of the community of democratic states. At the same time the vast majority of Taiwanese recognize that their options are limited by China's opposition to the island gaining greater international recognition and understand that they must be constantly alert to Beijing's sensitivities. Taipei must be careful not to do anything that would constitute a "declaration of independence" in Beijing's eyes. The real challenge for Taiwan may be avoiding actions that could be construed as stalling on negotiations aimed at achieving unification. This may be especially difficult in the current political environment with a divided government in Taipei embroiled in controversy. President Chen's political party

does not control the legislature, and relations between the major parties were strained to the breaking point by Chen's sudden decision in late 2000 to halt construction of a nuclear power plant.[33]

At this writing, cross-strait relations are enjoying a period of temporary calm, but there are signs that bode ill for the future.[34] At the very least Taiwanese political leaders will periodically say and do things that will raise the ire of Beijing, such as happened in 1995 and 1999. Inevitably these episodes will trigger blasts of condemnatory rhetoric and saber rattling from the PRC. The United States cannot be certain when a crisis might erupt into an actual military conflict.

An Entangled United States. The United States is deeply involved in the Taiwan Strait standoff whether it wants to be or not. Since 1950, when President Harry S. Truman ordered the Seventh Fleet to interpose itself in the Taiwan Strait, Beijing has identified Washington as Taipei's protector. This was reinforced during the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait Crisis when the U.S.S. *Independence* and U.S.S. *Nimitz* were dispatched to the vicinity of Taiwan. Moreover, the United States continues to sell weaponry to the island. China has been particularly angered by U.S. readiness to provide Theater Missile Defense (TMD) to Taiwan and by Congressional efforts to pass the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act (TSEA). The issue of TMD is especially incendiary with some Chinese researchers insisting that provision of TMD by the United States would constitute justification for China to attack Taiwan.[35]

Most Chinese leaders assume that in any conflict with Taiwan, there will be some military response by the United States. Bravado aside, most Chinese military strategists take the matter very seriously.[36] PLA war planning appears to be focused on either (1) a sudden whirlwind military operation to subdue Taiwan so rapidly as to present the United States with a fait accompli, or (2) a more gradual and carefully calibrated operation against selected key military,

political, or infrastructural targets that would cause maximum psychological damage but minimal casualties. In the first scenario, PLA planners believe that the United States would have no time to marshal forces to defend Taiwan and almost certainly be forced to accept the situation. In the second scenario, Beijing would do its best not to cross the threshold that would trigger U.S. military intervention.[37] In either case, in the context of deterring U.S. military support for Taiwan, Chinese military modernization focuses on operations against Taiwan and the United States. An outright invasion scenario with amphibious landings is highly unlikely but cannot be ruled out.[38]

Whether or not China and Taiwan come to blows, the Taiwan Strait flashpoint is unlikely to disappear any time soon.[39] In fact, it is very possible that this hot spot will heat up during the next 25 years. Senior Chinese leaders may have set themselves a deadline for achieving unification with Taiwan. Officially Beijing has deliberately avoided setting any deadline. Nevertheless, the high level of frustration over the lack of progress on unification with Taiwan, the concurrent belief that time is not on China's side, and the formal warning (in the Taiwan White Paper of February 2000) that Beijing will not tolerate indefinite procrastination by Taiwan in cross-strait negotiations suggest that some internal timetable for the attainment of unification has been formulated. It appears that a timetable has been set for the first or second decade of the 21st century.[40] However, a deadline—if one has been set—is not necessarily cause for alarm. Because it has not been formally announced, Beijing will not feel pressured to abide by the deadline and can readily push back or adjust it. Nevertheless, the existence of such a timetable still can exert psychological pressure on Chinese leaders and/or become a point of controversy in elite politics.

South and Central Asia.

Much attention has focused on the Asian subcontinent since the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in the spring of 1998. There has also been considerable attention given to the upheaval in the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir, the protracted civil war in neighboring Afghanistan, and the international terrorist threat highlighted by the alleged activities of Osama Bin Laden who is based in Afghanistan.

However, the threats posed are not limited to South Asia, and there are valid reasons to view South Asia and Central Asia as forming a near organic and seamless whole. In a real sense an arc of instability stretches from the Jaffna Peninsula in Sri Lanka to the steppes of Central Asia. Ethnic conflict and ethno-secessionist movements exist in and threaten the stability of virtually all the countries in the region. The pivotal state in South and Central Asia is Pakistan and the "geopolitical fault line" lies on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.[41] Pakistan is in dire straits economically, and most of its inhabitants live in abject poverty, including as many as two million Afghan refugees.[42] The misery and political turmoil are breeding grounds for extremist groups, particularly Islamic radicals, and provide substantial pools of willing and highly motivated young recruits to wage holy war or Jihad against their perceived enemies. First, this messianic movement was focused on Afghanistan itself; increasingly it is concentrating on nearby countries, especially Indian-controlled Kashmir and the Central Asian states. The Taliban and other radical Islamic armed groups have tended to have close ties with Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI). In the past, ISI has provided funding, weapons, and other assistance to these groups.[43]

The prime threats to the stability of Central and South Asia are major theater war, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, and persistent ethnic conflict.

Threat of Major Theater War. At present the most likely scenario is a war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. The historical record is sobering: to date, the two countries have fought serial conflicts. There have been three major wars, in 1947, 1965, and 1971, and most recently a smaller war in the remote Kargil region in 1999 and the threat of war in multiple other crises.[44] Three of these conflicts have been fought over the status of Kashmir. Given the level of distrust and animosity between Islamabad and New Delhi and roller coaster experience of bilateral relations in the past several years, the situation must be considered highly volatile.

Moreover, if Pakistan appeared to be disintegrating and/or exploded into civil war, India would be tempted to intervene.[45] Such a chain of events could dramatically escalate the conflict. There is also the potential for a conflict between India and China, although this is far less likely than another Indo-Pakistani war.[46]

Weapons of Mass Destruction. The threat of WMD must also be taken very seriously, particularly a nuclear war between India and Pakistan.[47] This is what former President Bill Clinton had in mind when he called the subcontinent "the most dangerous place on earth." In both India and Pakistan, the command and control mechanisms are unclear at best. This increases the potential for mistakes.[48] But the greatest cause for alarm is the political instability in Pakistan. This point is underscored by the fact that Pakistan is the only nuclear power to have experienced a successful military coup (in October 1999) resulting in a military takeover.[49] While arguably the current military regime provides more stability for Pakistan than did its civilian predecessor, the domestic political scene is far from settled.[50] Without a doubt, the military is the most important national institution in the country. If the military were to fragment, so, too, would the country. If nuclear devices or materials were to fall into the hands of extremists, the outcome could be catastrophic.

Terrorism. The threat of terrorism from extremists based and/or trained in, and/or sponsored by, Central and South Asia is all too evident.[51] The 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the 1998 bombings of U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the regular attacks on, and kidnappings of, Westerners and other foreigners around the world highlight the magnitude of the threat. Afghanistan-based Osama Bin Laden has been conclusively linked to the embassy bombings.[52] Recently there has been a spate of kidnappings in the southern Philippines and Malaysia committed by Abu Sayyef, a group with strong ties to Afghani extremists.[53] A group with links to Bin Laden appears to have perpetrated the bomb attack on the U.S.S. *Cole* in October 2000.[54]

The Spread of Ethnic Conflict. Ethnic conflict in Central and South Asia appears to be intensifying and spreading. Today, foreign forces reportedly make up a significant portion of the Taliban forces fighting in Afghanistan.[55] These forces are readily being infiltrated into neighboring countries to support radicals seeking secession or the overthrow of the current regimes.[56]

While it is possible that radical Islamic regimes can bring stability to a country (arguably this is the case in Iran), it is very likely that the victorious movement will prove incapable of effective governance and/or wartime coalitions will disintegrate. Whatever the fate of such movements, continued ethnic feuding is likely since these movements tend to be comprised of certain ethnic groups while others are excluded. The excluded will inevitably be discriminated against or oppressed perpetuating conflict. Even a country like Pakistan with a well-trained and relatively cohesive military finds the amalgam of diverse tribal and ethnic groups difficult to manage.[57]

The ongoing conflict in Sri Lanka receives much less publicity than the ethnic cauldrons further north, but merits attention, too. No end appears in sight for this brutal war between the majority Sinhalese population and Tamil

minority.[58] The conflict has a significant terrorist dimension.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam—the main rebel organization—is classified as a terrorist group by the U.S. Government. The Liberation Tigers have international tentacles that have so far focused on fundraising rather than engaging in terrorism.[59] Although U.S. citizens and property have yet to be singled out as targets, Americans have been the unintended victims of at least one attack, an October 2000 terrorist bombing in Columbo aimed at Sri Lankan political leaders.[60]

The outcome of the threats of MTW, WMD, terrorism, and ethnic conflict is chronic turmoil in an arc of instability running across South and Central Asia.

Southeast Asia.

Southeast Asia is a subregion that is very likely to require more attention from the United States in the next 25 years. Despite experiencing dynamic economic growth, unprecedented prosperity, and significant democratization, Southeast Asia remains "at risk."[61] While there are significant territorial disputes among Southeast Asian neighbors, the underlying causes of the instability are not inter-state tensions but intra-state and transnational threats. Certainly the simmering disputes over islands, reefs, and territorial waters in the South China Sea—including claims by China to virtually the entire area—are significant, but they are unlikely to erupt into a major conflict. For the foreseeable future, none of the disputants, including China, has the capability to seize outright direct control of the area through military force.[62]

Moreover, there is generally a basic level of trust and understanding fostered through entities such as the ten-member Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the related ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) that includes an even larger membership, including the

United States and most recently North Korea, which joined in July 2000. While ASEAN and the ARF have proved to be a disappointment to many observers, they have endured and provide useful mechanisms to ensure a basic level of dialogue.[63]

Of greater concern are the threats emanating from within states, such as ethnic and religious conflicts and terrorism, as well as the contagions of disease, narcotics, and environmental pollution that have spread throughout the subregion without regard to national borders. These nontraditional security threats pose the greatest danger to the subregion. The severity of these trends varies from country to country.

In Thailand, for example, the major security threat comes from narcotics and AIDS.[64] Meanwhile, in the Philippines and Indonesia it is political turmoil, ethnic conflict, and terrorism. While the Philippines will probably weather the current storm surrounding the impeachment of President Joseph Estrada and his handover of power to the Vice President, it continues to be tormented by ethno-secessionist movements in the south. Militant Islamic groups are behind these threats.[65] Recent activities have centered on the kidnapping of foreigners, including an American citizen, by the Abu Sayyef group on the island of Jolo. The objective seems to be ransoms to raise money for the groups.

In Indonesia, secessionism seems endemic with regions throughout the archipelago seeking independence. The ethno-secessionist groups are undoubtedly encouraged by the example of East Timor. Also significant is terrorism, much of it religiously or ethnically motivated. While much attention has been focused on the violence perpetrated by the pro-Indonesia militias in East Timor and the reign of terror in refugee camps in West Timor, there has been much violence inflicted on ethnic Chinese and Christian minorities in recent years.[66] Most recently some terrorism has been aimed at Americans—threats against the U.S.

Embassy and other American targets.[67] In addition to the potential for chronic instability, there is the possibility of terrorism expanding to neighboring countries and beyond. Indeed, terrorism has already crossed borders with kidnappings taking place in Malaysia, and the victims being transported to the Philippines.

Furthermore, cyber terrorism put Southeast Asia on the map in 2000. The so-called "Love Bug" virus, which caused an estimated U.S.$10 billion worth of damage to computer systems around the world and included attacks on the Pentagon, originated in the Philippines. The suspected perpetrator has not been brought to justice by the Manila authorities because the individual was not found to have violated any Philippine law.[68]

Another serious problem in the region is sea piracy. While many of the pirates seem to be small local groups who simply board passing cargo ships to steal the personal valuables from the crew and then leave, some appear to be well-organized, well-connected, and ambitious—they hijack the vessel, pilfer the cargo, and then sell the ship.[69]

Lastly, mass migration poses a serious potential threat to Southeast Asia if economic and political conditions deteriorate sufficiently. Refugee outflows from the Philippines and Indonesia have the potential to dwarf similar seaborne exoduses from Vietnam, Cuba, and Haiti.

KEY CHALLENGES

Maintaining Our Forward Presence.

The broader challenge for the U.S. military in the Asia-Pacific over the next quarter of a century is likely to be simply maintaining a forward presence.[70] Political trends on the Korean Peninsula and in Japan strongly suggest that the United States might be faced with increasing pressures to reduce or curtail its military presence. Moreover, a greatly reduced presence or complete withdrawal from Northeast Asia will bring into question the extent of the

U.S. commitment to the security of the region and its overall balance of power. Without bases in such places as Korea and Okinawa, any operations to assist in the defense of Taiwan would prove difficult.

Deterring Conflict in the Taiwan Strait.

The dominant challenge for the United States is to deter a conflict in the Taiwan Strait. This effort is especially daunting because it entails what has been called "dual deterrence."[71] What this term means is that Washington must, on the one hand, deter Beijing from opting for a military solution for unification with Taiwan, while on the other hand deter Taipei from doing anything that would provoke a military reaction by China. The United States finds itself in a classic dilemma. If Washington is seen as speaking too softly and is too limited in its actions in working for Taiwan's defense, then this may embolden Beijing and/or alarm Taipei. And if the United States is seen as too adamant verbally and too generous in its military assistance to Taiwan, then this may goad China to take military action and/or make Taipei over confident. Both paths are fraught with danger and a middle way will be difficult to navigate.

Engaging "Power Keg" States.

"Powder keg states" are "volatile countries upon which the stability . . . of the region or subregion hinge."[72] These are Asia-Pacific states with the greatest potential to explode in conflict or implode into turmoil. Moreover, because of their geographic locations, large populations, and significant defense capabilities, in such a scenario these states would seriously threaten the stability of the subregion and/or region. There are at least four powder keg states in the Asia-Pacific: China, North Korea, Indonesia, and Pakistan. China is the key "powder keg" state for the entire region and will require sustained attention. Often overlooked are the significant results of the U.S. policy of

engagement with China including engaging China in a strategic dialogue, expanding China's involvement in multilateral fora, and increasing transparency. The release in October 2000 of China's latest White Paper on National Defense, its most detailed and forthcoming to date, was a significant milestone.[73]

North Korea, with nuclear and missile programs and the world's fifth largest armed forces, is the powder keg state in Northeast Asia and will require the most immediate attention. Indonesia, with the world's fourth largest population inhabiting an area about three times the size of Texas, is the powder keg state in Southeast Asia and one that will require more American efforts in coming decades.[74] Meanwhile, Pakistan, a nuclear state with the world's sixth largest population living in an area approximately twice the size of California, and the world's seventh largest armed forces, is the powder keg state for South and Central Asia. These efforts will be politically sensitive since all of the states have poor human rights records and large militaries, three of them (China, North Korea, and Pakistan) pose serious threats to U.S. proliferation policy, and two (North Korea and Pakistan) have strong ties to terrorist groups or a record of state-sponsored terrorism.

Effective Alliance Management.

The operational challenges just mentioned raise broader strategic questions of alliance management. Cultivating relations with our allies has not received the priority it deserves.[75] Priority should be given to enhancing our security ties with "linchpin states"—those critical states that form the bedrock of U.S. strategic posture in the Asia-Pacific. The dramatic developments on the Korean Peninsula in the 1990s have resulted in closer cooperation and coordination between South Korea, Japan, and the United States through the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group. Alliance management requires constant attention. Better interagency cooperation with the United

States would help, particularly in preparing for SOFA negotiations. There must be greater recognition of the importance of public relations efforts and matters of protocol and culture. Such symbolism is particularly important in Asian countries but following up with substance is essential. Moreover, our relations with our allies and friends in Southeast Asia and Australasia require more attention from both sides.[76]

U.S. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

Baseline U.S. strategic objectives in the Asia-Pacific should be to:

- Maintain a forward presence in the region.

- Apply "dual deterrence" in the Taiwan Strait and work to facilitate a modus vivendi between China and Taiwan.

- Engage China, North Korea, Pakistan, Indonesia and other countries in the region with particular attention to military-to-military relations. Strive to realize reconciliation between North and South Korea; and promote confidence-building measures between India and Pakistan.

- Sustain and nurture relations with our allies and friends. American priorities should be in working with South Korea and Japan to improve not only cooperation and coordination with the armed forces of these countries but also with their governments and people.[77] The majority of this effort should be oriented toward substance, but part of the effort should be directed toward improving public relations.[78] The United States should give due attention to our alliances with Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Taiwan Strait currently represents the most dangerous flashpoint in the Asia-Pacific. Of course, the

North Korean threat remains serious although an MTW on the Korean Peninsula is gradually becoming less probable than smaller-scale contingencies. Still, we cannot declare that peace has broken out on the peninsula. Nevertheless, tensions on the peninsula are likely to decline over the next few decades; meanwhile, tensions over Taiwan are likely to remain serious, and may even escalate. A Strait conflict involving the United States would be very different from one on the peninsula. The risk of escalation to a nuclear conflict would be significantly higher over Taiwan than over Korea. For its part China might be tempted to go nuclear in the face of conventional defeat but two factors suggest that Beijing would be reluctant to escalate a conventional conflict with the United States and probably would do so only if it thought a nuclear strike by the United States was imminent. First, China realizes the overwhelming numerical superiority of the U.S. nuclear arsenal.[79] Second, since 1949 China has a clear record of seeking to contain a conflict to a particular locality for a specific time period, and at a certain level of intensity.[80]

Air and naval forces assume greater importance in a Taiwan Strait conflict than in one on the Korean Peninsula. But land power would remain a key component to the successful outcome of any Taiwan Strait conflict, particularly if the conflict were prolonged and/or escalated.[81] Certainly it is unlikely that the Army would be directly involved in a Taiwan scenario—in the sense of sending troops into combat. However, to achieve a decisive strategic end state it is possible that U.S. ground forces would be deployed on Taiwan and/or would be garrisoned on the soil of our allies and friends in the region (see below). Such steps would be taken to ensure that both friends and foes get the unambiguous message of strategic deterrence: America's commitment to the peace and prosperity of the region remains rock solid in the face of wanton aggression.

No matter what the duration or scope of a U.S.-China war, the Army would be involved in at least three ways. First, in the event of the outbreak of war in the Taiwan

Strait, the most immediate impact on the Army would likely be pressure to reinforce its forward presence in the region (i.e., Japan and South Korea). Indeed the United States could expect its friends and allies in the region to request immediate assistance in the form of U.S. force buildups to provide added psychological reassurance. The second impact on the Army would be a heightened state of alert and readiness to deter an attack by another state or nonstate actor seeking to take advantage of the diversion provided by a U.S.-China conflict. Despite the recent positive developments on the Korean Peninsula, tensions remain. It is conceivable that North Korea might launch an attack on the South if Pyongyang believed that, with a distraction in the Taiwan Strait, a surprise attack would have a fair chance of succeeding. A third impact on the Army could be the order to deploy a force on Taiwan either after the outbreak of war or following the cessation of hostilities. While military leaders would probably not favor such a move, under certain circumstances the National Command Authorities might direct it. This may simply be a small military assistance advisory group to provide training for new weapon systems provided to the Taiwanese military; or it may be a token combat force deployed on the island after hostilities have subsided to serve a tripwire function—one similar to that played by U.S. forces along the demilitarized zone (DMZ) in Korea.

Pre-Crisis Response. The Taiwan Strait may be approaching crisis and the United States must respond to ensure one is avoided. The goal of achieving a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan Strait is currently subsumed under the so-called policy of "strategic ambiguity." The result is that China assumes the United States will intervene militarily in any Strait conflict. This means that China is probably preparing to do battle with the United States. The peaceful resolution of Taiwan Strait tensions then becomes in the U.S. vital national interest. It is therefore incumbent upon the National Command Authorities to be very clear as to what U.S. policy on Taiwan is, how the military

instrument of national power fits in, and to communicate all of this to the defense community.

Moreover, a military conflict in the Taiwan Strait, even without U.S. involvement, poses a direct threat to the stability of the entire region. The United States should do everything it can to deter such an eventuality. Unfortunately our influence, while significant, has its limits. Both Taipei and Beijing now respond to fluid domestic dynamics in their own political systems and to the rhetoric and actions of each other. Washington should put pressure behind the scenes on both sides to begin talks immediately without preconditions. Washington can also help to maintain a rough balance of military power in the Strait by providing Taiwan with weapon systems that fill gaps in the island's defenses. The most immediate threat to address is that posed by Chinese ballistic missiles.[82] While the question of TMD for Taiwan is extremely inflammatory to China and must be carefully managed so as not to provoke a military response, the United States can and should provide the components for a lower tier missile defense system.[83] Of course if China reversed its missile build up in the Taiwan Strait the need for a Taiwanese TMD could be reassessed.[84] Creative means can be adopted to supply Taiwan with weapon systems appropriate for the island's defense without antagonizing China.[85]

Force Protection Plus. Washington should proceed deliberately and prudently to develop and deploy limited lower tier missile defense systems to protect U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific, the most vulnerable U.S. civilian areas, and our allies as appropriate. It is important to recognize the sensitivity of missile defense (both theater and national) to many countries in the region, including our allies. There is, for example, strong opposition to U.S. missile defense initiatives from China. Meanwhile support from Japan and Australia is conditional and could be affected by changes in the regional security environment, national economic performance, or a change of government.[86] Limited deployment would provide sufficient defense in the medium

term and help assuage the concerns of countries in the region. Limited deployment would include the systems to protect U.S. forces in Korea and Japan, and U.S. military installations and population centers in Alaska, Hawaii, and on the western coast of the continental United States.

Washington should seize the initiative and develop plans for reconfiguring U.S. forward presence in the Asia-Pacific. This is preferable to being forced to respond to pressures from a host country or rapid sudden changes in the strategic environment. One need only recall the circumstances that led to the sudden and rapid exit of U.S. forces from the Philippines a decade ago.[87]

The United States must recognize that, extrapolating from current trends, reduction and, perhaps, withdrawal of most, and possibly all U.S. forces on the Korean Peninsula may be in the cards. The United States and Republic of Korea should begin serious discussion about the circumstances and logic of a continued U.S. military presence in Korea after reconciliation and unification. The recently completed SOFA agreement is necessary but not sufficient to prepare adequately for the future.[88] Moreover, changes seem inevitable in the location, format, and size of the U.S. military presence in Japan.[89] While there is strong public support in Japan for the alliance, almost two thirds of the respondents in an opinion poll taken in mid-2000 desired a smaller, less intrusive U.S. military presence.[90] It is time for the Pentagon and each of the individual services to draw up alternative proposals for significant changes in the U.S. forward presence in the Asia-Pacific. These changes might include a smaller Army presence and/or possible relocation of some forces to Southeast Asia or Australia.

While not ignoring the missile and nuclear issues, the Pentagon, in consultation with the Department of State and our Republic of Korea allies, should discuss the feasibility of a phased-in comprehensive reduction of all forces (U.S., North Korean, and South Korean) on the peninsula.[91] At the

very least, a symbolic pull back of some U.S. or ROK units from forward positioning along the DMZ should be considered. This would demonstrate good will on the part of the United States and Republic of Korea and call for similar goodwill gestures from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). If no response in kind were forthcoming from the North, this would be a significant, albeit negative, indication of North Korea's intentions.

The U.S. Army should plan now for how it will dispose of the more than one million estimated anti-personnel landmines (APLs) placed by United Nations Command forces in the DMZ. The Army is likely to face the daunting challenge of landmine clearance on the Korean Peninsula within the next decade or so. This challenge could be turned into a worthwhile confidence-building exercise with the North Korean military. A major initiative could be launched to work with Seoul and Pyongyang to establish a timetable whereby both sides of the DMZ would undertake clearance of all APLs on the peninsula. Former President Clinton has directed the end of the use of all APLs on the Korean Peninsula by the year 2006, and the Republic of Korea has indicated that it wants to end use of APLs at an early date.[92] Certainly, any such effort should be undertaken cautiously, mindful of not adversely affecting the defense of the Republic of Korea or the protection of U.S. forces on the peninsula.[93] However, such an effort would not only achieve a key policy objective but also serve as an excellent confidence-building measure between the armed forces of North Korea, South Korea, and the United States. Moreover a mine clearance initiative is a logical extension of the limited mine clearing effort proposed to permit the reopening of the north-south railway link.

At the same time, however, U.S. and South Korean forces must remain at a high state of readiness and alert for a MTW or lesser acts of belligerence.

Focus shaping activities around the "powder keg states" identified above (China, North Korea,

Pakistan, and Indonesia). A critical dimension of U.S. shaping activities is military-to-military relations. This is particularly crucial because in each of these powder keg states, the armed forces exercise enormous political influence and play a prominent role in national security policymaking. If U.S. policy objectives are to be attained, then military-to-military relations must be pursued. While the military in a dictatorship tends to be viewed as part of the problem, it must also be seen as part of the solution. If the Beijing and Pyongyang regimes are to moderate and become less confrontational, then this will only be done with the concurrence of their respective military establishments. If Indonesia is to become a country with firm civilian control over the military and one in which members of the armed forces demonstrate a clear respect for human rights, then the military leadership must conclude this is in the best interests of the institution and the country. Pakistan is the clearest case in which the armed forces matter because the country is ruled by a military government. Obviously the military will not relinquish power to civilians until military leaders believe the time is right. Moreover, significant reforms of the Pakistani military are called for, particularly in the ISI, which, as noted above, has been extremely active in covert operations involving Islamic militants in South and Central Asia.

Concentrating on these powder keg states does not mean ignoring other states. For example, working to reduce tensions with North Korea necessarily entails cooperating closely with our allies South Korea and Japan, and working with China and Russia. And concentrating on Pakistan certainly means engaging with proximate countries, such as India, and addressing the upheaval in Afghanistan. Developing a more vigorous military-to-military relationship with India would be a particularly valuable exercise. Moreover, CINCPAC's attention to multilateralism, through the development of "security communities" or "enhanced regional security cooperation," is not inconsistent with a powder keg state's peacetime

engagement strategy.[94] These states can be encouraged to participate in multilateral regional structures. North Korea, for example, recently joined the ARF. Targeting these countries simply means focusing efforts on trying to help those countries that have the potential to destabilize their neighbors. Resuscitating the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and strengthening ASEAN/ARF will not only help regional cooperation but these steps will also help bring stability to Pakistan and Indonesia respectively.

THE ARMY'S CONTRIBUTION TO REGIONAL SECURITY

What is the Army's contribution to maintaining the peace and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific? In light of the threats and challenges outlined above, what should the Army do to enhance its contribution to regional stability? The answer to these questions entails attention to the Army's contribution in three areas: deterring large-scale conflict, executing smaller-scale contingencies, and engaging with regional armies.

The most important immediate strategic contribution of the U.S. Army in the Asia-Pacific is to deter the outbreak of a major war. It is often said that the primary mission of the Army is to fight and win America's wars. However, this does not fully encapsulate its core functions. Certainly the prime operational focus of the Army must be to fight and defeat a foe when called upon by the National Command Authorities. But from the strategic perspective, the Army's mission is foremost to deter a major war. Indeed, the textbook example in the region where the U.S. Army has been extremely successful in its deterrence function is on the Korean Peninsula. The U.S. Eighth Army, in conjunction with our ROK allies, has for almost 50 years dissuaded the Korean People's Army from launching a major attack against the Republic of Korea. Yet, deterrence is only credible if potential adversaries view the U.S. Army

as capable of defeating them in battle. Thus the best form of deterrence is the demonstrated ability to undertake large-scale sustained land combat. This can best be achieved through regular major exercises at the division and multidivision levels.

The greatest challenge to the Army's deterrence mission in the region is the broad scope and spectrum of threats that confront the United States and our friends and allies there. While the Army's deterrence mission in Korea is clear because the source and nature of the threat are self-evident, this is not the case with the rest of the Asia-Pacific. In Korea our deterrence can be focused, while beyond the peninsula deterrence must be a broader and more general type as a consequence of the dispersed and varied nature of the security threats. The best way to execute this general deterrence mission is with a dynamic forward military presence and vigorous engagement with armies of the region. This must be augmented with the demonstrated ability to project power to the region if necessary. To this end, at a minimum the Army should sustain its active program of a total of more than two dozen annual, biannual, and quadrennial exercises with allied and friendly armies in the region.[95] In addition the Army should consider the feasibility of larger multinational exercises at the division level or above which involve the deployment of CONUS-based divisions. Possible locales for such exercises would be Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand. In addition to demonstrating the ability of the U.S. Army to project power to the region, the operation would provide invaluable training for American forces.

The U.S. Army is the service best equipped to execute extended Smaller Scale Contingencies (SSCs), and it is essential that this capability be enhanced in the Asia-Pacific. The Marine Corps is very good at dealing with short-term crisis situations such as Noncombatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) deployments. However, operations lasting longer than a few weeks or months require greater capabilities that only the Army can

provide. The Army's critical contribution in this area is indicated by the fact that the Army paid 53 percent of the Department of Defense's incremental costs for peace operations between 1994 and 1998.[96]

To improve the capabilities of American and regional militaries to conduct multinational operations, such as peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations, and enhance military cooperation with allies and friends in the region, the Army should explore the feasibility of establishing a combined training facility in the region. Such a training center would complement the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (or COE) located at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii. While COE focuses on peace operations, humanitarian intervention, and disaster relief, it does so from a more academic perspective with seminars, conferences, and simulations.[97] The COE also supports command post exercises and field exercises. The proposed combined training center would concentrate solely on the actual field training of military units from the United States and other Asia-Pacific countries. Perhaps the most logical location for such a facility would be Australia. Such an initiative would be particularly timely and appropriate because it would follow on the heels of the successful Australian-led multinational operation in East Timor in which the U.S. armed forces provided valuable and much appreciated support.[98] In addition, Australia has just completed a major review of its defense needs. According to Australia's Defense White Paper of December 2000, Australia's alliance with the United States is "one of our greatest national assets."[99] ANZUS celebrates it 50th year in 2001, and Canberra would likely be very receptive to a new joint venture on Australian soil that would enhance cooperation with the U.S. military and improve the capabilities of the Australian Defence Force (ADF). The White Paper anticipates that the ADF will be involved in "regional peacekeeping and humanitarian relief

operations," perhaps even several such operations simultaneously.[100]

In any SSC in the Asia-Pacific, the U.S. Army will likely be operating as part of a multinational force, coordinating and cooperating with one or more partners. Indeed this is the most desirable option since such operations require less of a commitment of manpower and resources. Indeed the United States need not always take the lead in an SSC. Here the example of East Timor is significant. While the United States provided considerable support in the form of logistics, including the airlift of food and supplies, construction of community buildings, and medical care, Australia took the lead in International Force East Timor (INTERFET). The result was a relatively small U.S. footprint. At the height of the operation some 2,000 U.S. military personnel were involved in the U.S. Support Group East Timor. As of February 2001, the U.S. presence in East Timor had shrunk to 12 personnel.[101] The training center described above would be invaluable in preparing the United States and regional partners for such operations.

In an SSC, U.S. forces seem best suited to initial entry: to intervene with decisive force and establish overall security and stability on the ground. As soon as it becomes feasible, basic level security ought to be handed over to coalition partners and/or a multinational police force. Once the situation on the ground has stabilized, a civilian-type police force provides the most appropriate security formation. This is evident from the example of the International Police Monitors in Haiti, ably led by former New York City Police Chief Raymond Kelly.[102] But if any type of military unit were useful at this stage, it would be Military Police. However, the U.S. Army can be most useful in providing an insurance policy in the form of a rapid reserve force based nearby for swift deployment in the event of an escalating crisis.[103]

The U.S. Army should take the lead in engaging the militaries of the Asia-Pacific. As the most admired and

respected armed forces in the world, the U.S. military provides a living and breathing example of a dynamic and action-oriented defense establishment that is under civilian control, governed by rule of law, and in the service of a democratic political system. And it is the U.S. Army—rather than the Air Force, Navy, or Marine Corps—that is best suited to take the lead in this effort, because in each country the indigenous army is by far the largest and most dominant service. Indeed, USARPAC is already actively engaged with its brother land services throughout the Asia-Pacific.

Army-to-army relations must be tailored to the specifics of the army and political entity concerned and the sensibilities of neighboring states. Two distinct categories of states are "linchpin" U.S. allies and "powder keg" states (and their neighbors). The former category involves established democracies that are by-and-large noncontroversial. The latter classification consists of outright dictatorships or fledgling democracies with militaries viewed by many Americans as instruments of domestic repression and/or as potential adversaries of the United States. Such military-to-military relations require considerable caution and sensitivity. There are political and diplomatic constraints on both the United States and these other countries that limit the feasibility of certain activities. North Korea's political leaders, for example, would be unlikely to permit Korean People's Army (KPA) officers to participate in a U.S. sponsored "role of the military in a democracy" workshop. And there would likely be outrage within the United States if Americans discovered that the U.S. military was demonstrating cutting-edge high-tech weaponry to KPA leaders. Moreover the sensitivities of subregional tensions must be considered. Thus, for example, the official high-level visit with full military pomp and ceremony by the Taiwanese Army Chief of Staff to Washington would be guaranteed to enrage Beijing. The current low profile military-to-military interaction between the island and the United States is satisfactory and

adequate for now. However, should tensions in the Taiwan Strait escalate due to the actions of China, the U.S.-Taiwan military-to-military relationship can be reassessed and enhanced as needed. Similarly, any program of military-to-military engagement with Pakistan without a corresponding effort at a relationship with India would inevitably raise concerns and suspicions in New Delhi and only serve to increase subregional tensions. Avoidance of controversial subjects will minimize the likelihood of disruptions to the relationship due to partisan political squabbles in either country.

Engaging Armies from Linchpin States.

For the foreseeable future the primary focus of army-to-army engagement with our allies—linchpin states—in the Asia-Pacific should be South Korea, Japan, and Australia. The degree of cooperation and coordination is generally good but can always benefit from attention. In Japan and South Korea integration can be further improved through constant contacts and a greater appreciation and understanding of cultural differences and sensibilities in Tokyo and Seoul. More efforts can be made to build relationships between officers, NCOs, and enlisted men of the U.S. Army and their host armies: the ROK Army and Japan Self-Defense Ground Force. A concerted effort to provide language study and cultural sensitivity training to American soldiers and their families prior to their permanent change of station and continued after the start of their tour in Northeast Asia would enhance relations between armies and countries. Military-to-military relations with Australia are very good but would be enhanced through the establishment of the training center proposed above.

Engaging Armies from Powder Keg States.

While fully cognizant that we cannot expect dramatic, short-term results from military-to-military engagement

with countries such as China, North Korea, Pakistan, and Indonesia, we can engage in a long-term effort on matters of substance to further U.S. national interests.[104] This effort should consist of four types of activities, which one could call the "pillars" of U.S.-Asia defense diplomacy: high-level visits; functional exchanges; routine military confidence-building measures; and, integrating defense establishments into multilateral fora. High-level bilateral exchanges hold not merely symbolic importance, but also help develop key personal relationships providing continuity as the larger relationship develops.

Functional exchanges provide the greatest potential for substantive interaction and learning but also tend to be the most controversial. Exchanges and conferences between research institutes and military education institutions could focus on nonsensitive matters. Possible themes to pursue are joint studies of classic military campaigns in history and professional military education in the two countries, and the military's role in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

Military exchanges, such as faculty/student visits from professional military education institutions, are valuable for establishing basic goodwill and building relationships. Thus, the high-level Chinese People's Liberation Army Academy of Military Sciences delegation visit to the United States in August 2000 ought to be reciprocated.

Such activities should ideally reach the point where they are seen as "routine" rather than unusual. This does not mean they should be treated casually or lightly but rather they should not attract undue attention or controversy and simply be considered "normal." And the impact of these interactions should not be underestimated—they promote important American values such as the principle of democratic civilian control of the military and increased transparency in defense matters. A greater appreciation for the differences in areas such as national cultures and service cultures—things that are easy to overlook but

extremely important—can minimize the chances of one side misinterpreting the acts of the other.

Integrating foreign armies into multilateral defense fora is also highly desirable. It permits the other armies to realize the common challenges and aspirations they share with their colleagues in other countries. This kind of interaction helps soldiers from such insular states as China and North Korea gain a better sense of the characteristics of a modern military beyond crack troops and the possession of high-tech weaponry. Furthermore, soldiers increasingly will value the formal and informal dialogues with their counterparts in other countries and find the interaction useful and professionally rewarding. The U.S. Army is well-equipped to build this pillar with well-developed multilateral mechanisms already in place in the Asia-Pacific. The Pacific Armies Management Seminar (PAMS), annually co-hosted by USARPAC and the land service of another Pacific Rim country, recently celebrated its 24th year. PAMS is now attended by delegates from more than 30 countries. The recently established biannual Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference (PACC) promises to enhance further this spirit of multilateralism. Meanwhile, PACOM's answer to the Marshall Center, the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (established in 1995), is now ensconced in new facilities in Honolulu.

The Asia-Pacific offers significant opportunities for Army Transformation concepts to be tested. The Army, in the course of fulfilling its function of deterring major war, exercising its ability to execute SSCs, and take the lead in engaging the militaries of the region, can display the newest capabilities. The Asia-Pacific provides a prime training ground to put the Army's new lighter armored brigades through their paces and demonstrate U.S. power projection capabilities.

CONCLUSION

The stability of the Asia-Pacific is a vital U.S. national interest. To ensure stability in the region, all the instruments of national power must be brought into play. The Taiwan Strait has replaced the Korean Peninsula as the most dangerous flashpoint in the Asia-Pacific. The United States must focus special attention on the ongoing tensions in the Strait both in terms of deterring a conflict and promoting reconciliation between China and Taiwan.

Military power, primarily in the form of a continued forward presence, is an invaluable dimension. This presence is only possible and effective with a vigorous network of allies and friends in the region. With the ongoing transformations in Northeast Asia, every effort should be made to ensure that the United States is able to maintain forward bases in the region. This probably will entail reconfiguring our current forces in South Korea and Japan and, very possibly, involve relocating personnel to other locations in Southeast Asia, Australasia and/or U.S. possessions in the Pacific.

Summary of Recommendations.

- The United States should focus greater attention on deterring any Chinese military operation in the Taiwan Strait. While not relaxing its vigilance on the Korean Peninsula, the U.S. military should give more consideration to deterring a Chinese attack against Taiwan.

- The Department of Defense should develop options for reconfiguring the U.S. forward presence in the Asia-Pacific in anticipation of possible political pressures in Northeast Asia to reduce force levels or perhaps even close installations.

- The United States should proceed deliberately and prudently to develop and deploy limited lower tier missile defense to protect U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region.

• The best form of deterrence the Army can provide is the demonstrated ability to undertake large-scale, sustained land combat. This can be achieved through regular major exercises at the division and multidivision level.

• The Army must enhance its ability to execute extended SSCs and multinational operations. To this end serious consideration should be given to establishing a combined training center to focus exclusively on military field exercises for humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and peacekeeping operations.

• The Army should take the lead in engaging the militaries of the Asia-Pacific, focusing in particular on the armies of the "powder keg" states of China, Indonesia, North Korea, and Pakistan. At the same time it is essential that the Army remain engaged with the armies of the "linchpin" states of South Korea, Japan, and Australia.

ENDNOTES

1. This is essentially the core of U.S. national security goals. See *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, December 1999.

2. The Marines would also have a key role to play. On the general point, see Brigadier General Huba Wass De Czege (USA Ret.) and Lieutenant Colonel Antulio J. Echevarria, "Precision Decisions," *Armed Forces Journal International,* October 2000, p. 58.

3. This is a dramatic change from the view stated in the National Security Strategy of 1999. See *A National Security Strategy for a New Century,* p. 35.

4. "Enhancing Regional Security Cooperation," speech by Admiral Dennis C. Blair, Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, to Asia Society, New York, October 19, 2000.

5. See, for example, Ilene R. Prusher, "S. Korea's Enthusiasm Fizzles For Cozying Up to North," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 7, 2000.

6. See Victor D. Cha, "The Continuity Behind the Change in Korea," *Orbis*, Vol. 44, No. 4, Fall 2000, pp. 585-598.

7. The distinction between reconciliation and unification is an important one and has been recognized by General Henry Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. See Richard Halloran, "Ground Forces in Japan, S. Korea Under Review," *Washington Times*, September 29, 2000.

8. Accord to the Perry Commission, "The North Korean regime would strongly resist . . . reform, viewing it as indistinguishable from a policy of undermining [the regime]." *Review of United States Policy Toward North Korea: Findings and Recommendations*, Unclassified report by Dr. William J. Perry, U.S. North Korea Policy Coordinator and Special Advisor to the President and Secretary of State, October 12, 1999 [hereafter *Perry Report*]. Accessed from *www.fas.org/new/dprk/1999/991012_northkorea_rpt.htm* on December 6, 1999. Nevertheless the 5-day visit to Beijing and Shanghai in January 2001 by a high-level Pyongyang delegation led by Kim Jong Il—Kim's second to China in 8 months—suggests there is serious contemplation about economic reform in North Korea. For excellent insights and analysis on the North Korean regime, see Adrian Buzo, *Guerrilla Dynasty: Politics and Leadership in North Korea*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999.

9. *Perry Report.*

10. On Seoul's concerns, see Cha, "The Continuity Behind the Change in Korea," pp. 592-593.

11. For analysis on the expressed desires of these two leaders, see Nayan Chanda, "G.I. Joe, Meet Kim Jong Il," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 5, 2000, p. 20.

12. Indeed, this concern about the intentions of other powers is clearly evident in the exchange between the two Korean leaders. Kim Dae Jung reportedly told Kim Jong Il: "The peninsula is surrounded by big countries, and if the American military presence were to withdraw, that would create a huge vacuum that would draw these big countries into a fight over hegemony." The North Korean leader is said to have responded: "Yes, we are surrounded by big powers—Russia, China, and Japan, and so therefore it is desirable that the American troops continue to stay." See Doug Struck, "South Korean Says North Wants U.S. Troops to Stay," *Washington Post*, August 30, 2000.

13. Scott Snyder, "Anti-Americanism and the Future of USFK," *Korea Times*, August 10, 2000.

14. A poll of South Koreans, taken in June 2000 found that 90 percent of those surveyed held a positive image of North Korea and its

leaders, and 53 percent dismissed the possibility of North Korean invasion of the south. Cha, "The Continuity Behind the Change in Korea," p. 586. Also see the discussion in Sung-Joo Han, "The Koreas' New Century," *Survival*, Vol. 42, No. 4, Winter 2000-01, pp. 88-91.

15. See also Han, "The Koreas' New Century," p. 90.

16. President Kim has gone on record favoring the continued presence of American troops. Reportedly, his North Korean counterpart has expressed similar sentiments although the precise context and meaning of his remarks remain unclear. Struck, "South Korean Says North Wants U.S. Troops to Stay."

17. Doug Struck, Steven Mufson, "North Korea Mulls Curb of Missile Program; Kim Accepts 'Idea' But Albright Leaves Without Agreement," *Washington Post*, October 25, 2000.

18. This point is also made by Joel S. Wit, "North Korea: The Leader of the Pack," *The Washington Quarterly,* Vol. 24, No. 1, Winter 2001, p. 83.

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