



Appendices

Appendix I: Press coverage of the 2008 Shangri-La Dialogue

Associated Press

31 May 2008

US military says it will not abandon Asia

SINGAPORE: The United States said yesterday it will not disengage from Asia despite political and strategic commitments elsewhere, as China told the region it is not a military threat to anyone. The declarations were made at a high-profile conference, known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, of defense ministers and military officials from 26 Asia-Pacific countries. Organizers say the annual meeting provides an opportunity for friends, foes and uneasy neighbors to meet and thrash out issues in private. But there is some blunt talk as well, usually by the United States.

In his opening speech, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates slammed Myanmar's junta, saying "tens of thousands of lives" were lost because the ruling generals prevented the international community from helping survivors of the May 2-3 Cyclone Nargis with relief aid. "We have reached out. They have kept their hands in their pockets," said Gates. "It's not been us that has been deaf and dumb in response to the pleas of the international community, but the government of Myanmar." But much of his speech was devoted to making it clear that the change in the U.S. administration next year will not lessen America's commitment to Asia, which dates back to World War II.

U.S. interests in Asia "will endure no matter which political party occupies the White House next year," Gates said. Many governments in the region fear that U.S. military and political commitments in the Middle East and Afghanistan will pull it away from eastern Asia and the Pacific. "For those who worry that Iraq and Afghanistan have distracted the United States from Asia and developments here, I would counter that we have never been more engaged with more (Asian) countries," Gates said.

One participant expressed concern that with growing economic uncertainty at home, the U.S. may not be able to afford its huge presence in Asia -- including military bases in Japan, the Philippines and South Korea and a massive naval deployment in the Pacific Ocean. "There are enormous budgetary pressures building up in the United States," said Kishore Mahbubani, a Singapore diplomat.

"At some point the US electorate will ask, 'Why do we need to have such a sizable military presence in Asia?'" Although U.S. military bases arouse anger among some in Asia, most governments feel a U.S. presence is crucial -- not only as protection from non-Asian threats, but also to counterbalance the growing military strength of China and the nuclear threat posed by North Korea.

China's defense budget for 2008 is reported to be \$59 billion (euro 38 billion), up 17.6 percent from a year ago. Other countries say China vastly underreports how much it spends on its military. The Pentagon estimates that China's military expenditure in 2007 was between \$97 billion (euro 63 billion) and \$139 billion (euro 90 billion). Lt. Gen. Ma Xiaotian, China's deputy chief of the general staff for foreign affairs, told the conference that only a third of this year's budget will go to buy armaments, with the rest for general maintenance expenses such as salaries and training.

China will always adopt a defensive defense policy. We do not engage in arms race. We are a military threat to no other country. You shall never see hegemony or expansionism," Ma added. The Chinese army is prepared to step up military exchanges with Asia-Pacific nations, as well as cooperate in areas such as counterterrorism and disaster relief, he said. Still, one of China's closest neighbors, Japan, is uneasy. Japanese Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba said even though China may not be regarded as a security threat, it has a duty to its neighbors to be transparent about its military capabilities

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Business Times

31 May 2008

No one centre of power will dominate world: PM

Asia shifting power balance, but growth of continent is not a zero-sum game

By Lee U-wen

(SINGAPORE) Powerful as China and India may be today and in the years to come, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong

believes that the future of the world belongs to neither of them alone.

Instead, he drove home the point that the world is a big place, and Asia could not be regarded as ‘all of it’, although it is an important part nonetheless.

The best outcome for countries in Asia is to not take sides with either China or India, but rather to also work with the US and Europe as well so that everyone, including smaller countries like Singapore, could prosper in the long run, he said.

Mr Lee was speaking at a question-and-answer session at the annual Shangri-La Dialogue last night, which is the largest defence and security dialogue among Asian nations.

‘The US will play an important role. It is a powerful economy and will continue to be so for decades to come. Europe ought to play an important role, the potential is there, but it depends on how the European enterprise fares in becoming more coherent and in developing a strategic view of its position in the international system,’ he told his audience of nearly 300 delegates from 27 countries.

Earlier in his speech, Mr Lee said that even as the emergence of Asia is shifting the balance of power in the world, the continent’s growth is not a zero-sum game.

Even as the mood among developing countries towards Asia is a defensive one, Asia’s growth over the next 25 years will contribute to ‘a doubling of the world economy’, and open up many opportunities around the world.

‘It’s in the vital interest of the developed world to accommodate a rising Asia, and engage the region constructively. For their part, as Asian countries become more interlinked with the world, they will have bigger stakes in the international system and greater responsibilities in global affairs,’ said Mr Lee.

While calling for the emerging powers in Asia to have ‘greater stakes’ in the existing international order, he said that international cooperation would be key to tackling non-traditional, ‘trans-border’ security threats such as food shortages or natural disasters. Globalisation, however, has its downsides too, especially in developed nations where income inequality is worsening, said the Prime Minister.

‘Even those not personally affected feel uneasy that closer inter-dependence may mean becoming vulnerable to foreign powers that may not be benign, hence the angst and debate about sovereign wealth funds. All this is fuelling deep discontentment with globalisation, and pro-

voking nationalistic and protectionist sentiments around the world,’ he said.

Mr Lee also spoke of how the US would continue to play a crucial role in engaging a rising Asia and integrating it into the global system. This is why the election of the next US President – to be elected this November – has taken on greater prominence, he said. ‘We in Asia are following the campaign closely because the critical issues of war and peace, and of prosperity and scarcity, all hinge on its outcome,’ he said.

While Singapore does not have any votes, Mr Lee shared his ‘wish list’ for the US president, including the hope that he or she would pursue constructive relations with China and other major powers, continue to fight terrorism and take a long-term approach towards Iraq and Afghanistan.

During the question-and-answer segment, a delegate asked Mr Lee about the issues around the world that kept him awake at night.

‘Something could go bump elsewhere in the world, such as in the Middle East. That can certainly affect us . . . Something could go bump within the Asian region, such as in North Korea.’

He also did not rule out problems related to terrorism or globalisation. On the latter, Mr Lee said: ‘If attitudes towards globalisation change, if America becomes inward-looking and protectionist, if Europeans decide they don’t have a stake in rising Asia. Therefore, instead of rising economies integrating peacefully into the Asian system, they force their way in. That’s big trouble.’

The Prime Minister also devoted a significant portion of his address to another global issue – rising food prices and shortages.

‘Over the next year, food prices may moderate with better harvests. In the longer term, the trends towards tighter supplies and higher prices will likely reassert themselves. This has serious security implications,’ he said, warning of how the impact of a chronic food shortage would be most keenly felt by poor countries.

‘The stresses from hunger and famine could result in social upheaval and civil strife, exacerbating conditions that lead to failed states. Between countries, competition for food supplies and displacement of people across borders could deepen tensions, and provoke conflict and wars,’ said Mr Lee.

He called for a multi-lateral cooperative effort where individual countries do their part to boost productivity and infrastructure in their farm sectors.

The three-day dialogue continues until Sunday, with US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates scheduled to make a speech this morning on challenges to stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

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Straits Times

31 May 2008

Rising prices could spark war over food

Multilateral efforts needed to avert global crisis: PM Lee

By Zakir Hussain

COUNTRIES need to work together to tackle the problem of rising food prices, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said yesterday.

The issue has 'serious security implications', and could spark wars and failed states.

If a serious problem is to be averted, countries must improve productivity in farming.

Agencies like the World Bank and Food and Agriculture Organisation should promote research to increase yields, and agricultural trade must be kept 'free and fair', he said.

'Only then will farmers everywhere have the right market signals and incentives to produce more food to meet increased demand.'

Mr Lee's remarks, made in a keynote speech at the annual Shangri-La Dialogue on security issues, come at a time when humanitarian officials and other experts warn that rising food prices could destabilise governments.

The issue is set to be discussed at sessions today and tomorrow.

Global food prices have risen by half over the past year.

Mr Lee specifically cautioned food-producing countries against pursuing greater self-sufficiency and trying to keep food production within their own borders.

Such actions 'will cause greater international tensions', he said, as they will make prices more unstable.

'Food importers will scramble to secure their own needs and poor countries will suffer, not just greater privation but famine and starvation.'

Human ingenuity had deferred mathematician Thomas Malthus' forecast 200 years ago that population growth would outpace food production, but such a scenario could happen in the future, he said.

The world's population is steadily growing and hundreds of millions of Asians are becoming more affluent and consuming more and better food, 'crowding out billions who are still poor', Mr Lee noted.

And where food supply is concerned, 'misconceived green policies to subsidise biofuels are encouraging farmers to grow fuel instead of food'.

Climate change – a security threat Mr Lee highlighted at last year's dialogue – will also see more extreme weather, reducing the supply of fresh water and fertile land, he added.

And while better harvests may moderate prices next year, he felt tighter supplies and higher prices will be a long-term reality.

Poor countries will be hardest hit by food shortages, and hunger and famine could lead to social upheaval and strife.

'We are already experiencing a small foretaste of this today,' Mr Lee said, citing riots and unrest in several developing countries.

'In vulnerable areas like Darfur and Bangladesh, large numbers of people are moving across borders, often illegally, in search of food and water. Even without a food crisis, we have seen vicious xenophobic attacks in South Africa against immigrants fleeing unstable regimes and desperate poverty,' he said.

'In the event of a global food crisis, all this will play out on a much bigger scale across the globe.'

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Channel News Asia

1 June 2008

Ministers say military a crucial element that can help in humanitarian crises

SINGAPORE: The military is a crucial element that can rally help effectively in humanitarian crises such as the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, according to both the Singapore and Malaysian defence ministers who were speaking at the final day of the Shangri-La Dialogue on Sunday.

Myanmar's Deputy Defence Minister Major General Aye Myint told the gathering of top defence officials that his country had broadcast to the people a warning about the cyclone more than a week before it struck.

He also said the military government is ready to accept aid as long as there are no strings attached.

He said: "We are trying our best for relief, resettlement and rehabilitation because they are our people. But you have to understand that every process will not be totally perfect.

"And as I've explained earlier, we are welcoming assistance and aid from any country or organisation from around the world without any politicisation and without any pre-conditions."

His statements evoked a sharp response from some clearly frustrated members of donor nations.

A French parliamentarian even said that he would press his government to propose a UN resolution that could hold the Myanmar government liable to be brought before the International Criminal Court.

French Parliamentarian Pierre Lellouche said: "We need a system of sanctions to stop this scandal of having hundreds of thousands of people dying with help waiting outside and having a lecture about non-interference in domestic affairs.

"I'm sorry, maybe, to change the tone of this very polite international gathering, but I think it is my duty to do so."

Ministers from ASEAN focused on possible solutions. Malaysia's Defence Minister Najib Razak called for a greater role for ASEAN and the military, although he recognised that there are diverging views on military involvement.

He said: "The only viable organisation that can really act effectively is the military. I think I speak on behalf of my other colleagues that we certainly would like to see ASEAN being allowed to play a much bigger role because the situation is very, very serious in Myanmar."

Mr Najib even likened it to the scale of the 2004 Aceh tsunami, according to some ground reports coming out of there.

Defence Minister, Teo Chee Hean, said: "Armed forces too have a crucial role to play in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Armed forces can transport aid to where it is needed most in the affected locality and help in its distribution.

"It is not the value or quantity of the relief supplies. The question is whether they can be delivered in a prompt

and effective manner to the last mile, down to the actual victims who need it, when they need it."

At a separate news conference, US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates said that his country was within days of making a decision on whether or not to move out the aid ships that had been anchored off the coast of Myanmar for some time.

He said the only alternative was to force aid on Myanmar and that was something all the defence ministers had unanimously agreed was not an option.

Besides the clear respect for sovereignty, discussion also centred on the issue of responsibility after three aid principles were outlined on Saturday.

Mr Teo said: "John asked whether what the ministers discussed yesterday results in a new responsibility, that is, the "responsibility to invite". I would say that it is really a 'responsibility to provide' – a responsibility of all national governments to provide for the welfare of the people.

"If they are not able to provide for it, then it is their responsibility to see what other resources they can garner to help provide for their people."

The three-day Asia Security Summit, also known as The Shangri-La Dialogue, ended on Sunday.

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Channel News Asia

1 June 2008

Former Japanese minister urges international accord on food, energy security

By Augustine Anthuvan

SINGAPORE: Former Japanese defence minister Yuriko Koike has called for an international accord on food and energy security ahead of the G8 summit in Japan as consumers around the world are battling to cope with record rice and fuel prices.

Ms Koike made these remarks on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue Asia Security Summit in Singapore on Saturday.

She highlighted that the controversy over bio-fuels, such as ethanol made from corn, needs to be regulated.

The Asia Security Summit, the seventh in the series, brings together defence, national security officials and regional analysts.

It is organised by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), an independent think-tank.

Ms Koike said: "You know the crude oil, in New York, price hit almost US\$140 a barrel. Well, it's now reducing a little bit, but still the tension is very high. So the price has skyrocketed in a year or so, mostly because of speculation.

"We should keep our life more low-carbon or maybe have a no-carbon society. We have to be prepared and this is one of the biggest agenda in the G8 summit meeting, which will be held in Hokkaido, Japan, this year.

"We have to have international regulations or international accord to prepare for this sustainable world. I hope that at the G8 summit meeting we will get some sort of conclusion or outcome to share the same view to prepare for the sustainable world."

Ms Koike, a member of the Japanese Parliament's Lower House and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, is in Singapore under the Singapore International Foundation Temasek programme. – CNA/de

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Xinhua News

1 June 2008

Asian security summit focuses on int'l co-op in disaster relief

By Zheng Xiaoyi

SINGAPORE, June 1 (Xinhua) -- The annual Asian Security Summit, also known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, concluded here Sunday with defense ministers and senior officials from 27 countries heavily focusing on international cooperation in disaster relief.

Meeting for the first time since Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar and the earthquake hit China last month, defense ministers including U.S. defense secretary, China's deputy chief of the general staff of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Myanmar's deputy defense minister, have agreed on three principles to guide the efforts of the international community in helping disaster-struck countries.

The first principle stressed the responsibility of disaster-hit countries to respond to disasters occurring within their territory in a prompt and effective manner.

The second is, where needed, they should facilitate the entry of humanitarian aid from other countries and international organizations.

Any external help shall have the consent of the affected countries, and it should come under their overall control and supervision, said the third.

Singapore's Defense Minister Teo Chee Hean, who spoke Sunday at the three-day forum, stressed the importance of international cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, as "no country, no matter how big, is able to muster all the resources and specialized capabilities necessary to attend to all the needs of the victims."

He also pointed out that the key in such operations is bringing relief speedily and effectively to the victims, which is "a responsibility to provide" of all national governments.

Teo's call for international cooperation in disaster relief echoed Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong who said that international cooperation is key to tackling non-traditional security threats such as food shortages and natural disasters when he made a keynote speech at the opening of the conference on Friday.

Chinese government's quick response to the May 12 earthquake received the approbation of the forum participants.

"The Sichuan earthquake showed how much China has changed and offered a glimpse of its future: a more open and self-confident nation," the prime minister Lee said.

China's military leader Ma Xiaotian detailed the PLA's relief efforts after the devastating earthquake and thanked for more than 30 countries and international organizations who have provided relief efforts to the affected areas.

Referring to Myanmar, the defense minister Teo said, "I think most of us would agree that we would have preferred to see a different outcome, where the aid flow available from the international community might have been put to more prompt and effective use."

Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak urged Myanmar to let the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) play a bigger role in providing relief to cyclone-hit areas.

"We would like to see ASEAN being allowed to play a much bigger role because the situation is very, very serious in Myanmar," he spoke at the forum.

The 10-member bloc, which includes Myanmar, has played a leading role in coordinating foreign aids to Myanmar.

Myanmar's Deputy Defense Minister Aye Myint told the forum that the focus of cyclone relief is now on reconstruction, and Myanmar welcomes "no strings attached" foreign aid.

"We would warmly welcome any assistance and aid which are provided with genuine goodwill from any country or organization provided that there are no strings attached, or politicization involved," he said.

South Korean Defence Minister Lee Sang-Hee called for the creation of a global crisis management system to cope with increasingly destructive natural disasters.

"A crisis management system of global reach is urgently required to effectively manage the vestiges of natural disasters," Lee said, adding that "Working together on such a system will strengthen our regional and global cooperation in dealing with today's uncertainty."

The Shangri-La Dialogue, now in its seventh year, has played a useful role in shaping common perceptions and norms of behavior in the region.

Over the years, the forum, named after the hotel it takes place, has facilitated discussions on specific issues such as maritime security in the Malacca Strait, leading to combined maritime air patrols by the littoral states.

This year, besides natural disasters, other security challenges facing the region were also discussed by the participants, such as energy and food security, non-proliferation, as well as terrorism.

The center of gravity of the world will move towards Asia within 25 years, said French Defense Minister Herve Morin, adding that the region is a major strategic stake for Europe.

U.S. Defense Secretary Gates also ensured participants that America has an enduring role in Asia which will continue regardless of who occupies the White House next year, while China is willing to boost military cooperation with other countries in the region.

Ma Xiaotian said, "We will work together with nations in this region to maintain regional peace and stability and are committed to unremitting efforts for a harmonious Asia-Pacific region of lasting peace and shared prosperity."

He said China argues for universal security of the international community and repels acts of ensuring security of some countries at the cost of others, including the expansion of military alliance.

He stressed, "To develop and deploy the missile defense system and to engage in missile defense cooperation in some areas in the world is not helpful in strategic balance, confidence building and regional stability."

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ABS-CBN News

2 June 2008

When disaster and foreign policy mix

By Marites Danguilan Vitug

Two countries that are polar opposites—US and Myanmar—figured in a big way at the recent meeting of defense ministers in Singapore, an annual gathering that has become known as the Shangri-la Dialogue. The US, for its much awaited presidential election in November and what this will mean for policy towards Asia, and Myanmar, for its refusal to let international aid into its shores after the disaster caused by Cyclone Nargis.

The usually polite tone at the Dialogue, held at the Shangri-la hotel, changed somewhat when the subject turned to Myanmar. It was the first time that Myanmar sent a delegation to the Dialogue, which started seven years ago, and was described as US Defense Secretary Robert Gates as "without peer in Asia."

The Shangri-la Dialogue scored other firsts as well, reflecting changes in the security landscape in the region. It was the first time that Vietnam sent a high-level delegation; it was the first time that NATO was invited; and it was the first time that a non-defense official spoke, the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

In his talk, Maj. Gen. Aye Myint, Myanmar's deputy defense minister, said that they will only accept foreign aid "without preconditions" and reported what they have done for the victims of the devastating cyclone. Myint was part of a panel that spoke on the theme of "restoring peace in complex emergencies" and he was the only one who was not applauded.

Others in the panel were: Malaysia's deputy prime minister and minister of defense, Timor-Leste's secretary of state for defense, and the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

A French official asked pointed questions on why Myanmar said no to French aid—1,000 tons of relief goods

aboard a military ship. In an angry tone, Pierre Lellouche, member of the National Assembly, said that “the principle of non-interference in internal affairs (of another country) should not be at the expense of people dying.”

Lellouche said he will push for a resolution in the French national assembly to take Myanmar’s generals to the International Court of Justice for not looking after the welfare of its people.

Gates vs Burmese generals

The US, in a way, set the tone for the Dialogue. In his opening speech on Saturday, Gates sharply criticized the ruling generals of Myanmar for refusing aid brought by US ships and aircraft. He said that the US worked rapidly to deliver relief but Burma disapproved “at a cost of tens of thousands of lives.”

In similar instances, Indonesia agreed to let US aid in after a tsunami struck in 2004, and Bangladesh, too, after a fierce cyclone last November.

When the Dialogue opened Friday night, Singapore’s Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, in his keynote, took a swipe at Myanmar but in a diplomatic way. He said that “every day lost means more unconscionable human suffering.” But he pointed out that the military rulers “fear the political consequence of opening up the disaster zone to international aid teams. This might show up their incapability, and undermine their credibility and legitimacy.”

Lee Hsien Loong explained: “They are highly suspicious of humanitarian aid serving as a camouflage for a ‘regime change’ agenda.”

The discussions brought to fore the international principle of “responsibility to protect,” referring to governments’ duty to protect its citizens as well as other countries’ obligation to help countries do so in cases of disaster and conflict.

Myanmar’s Myint could only respond this way: “We are trying our best...Every process is not perfect...”

Anxiety over US

The other wave of sentiment that swept through the Dialogue, at least for those who spoke up, was a mix of anxiety and anticipation over the shape of US foreign policy toward Asia after its presidential elections in November.

“Any future US administration’s Asia security policy is going to be grounded in the fact that the United States remains a nation with strong and enduring interests in the region—no matter which political party occupies the White House next year,” Gates said in his speech.

A delegate wanted to know what exactly the US strategy was in Asia, while another wanted to be certain whether US foreign policy was based on pragmatism or ideology. Gates answered that the US is basically a “partner and collaborator” and this takes multiple forms, among them “providing protection, if required.”

The other factor that seemed to worry some was the troubled US economy and how it would impact on foreign policy as well. Will you lose interest in Asia because of the slowdown in your domestic economy, one participant asked Gates.

With a dry sense of humor, Gates replied, quoting Gerald Ford, former US president: “We should be able to walk and chew gum at the same time.” Explaining himself, Gates said, “We’ve had more severe economic slowdowns before but we never lost interest in Asia.”

He said that, whatever happens to its economy, the US has the capacity to be engaged in Asia because of its interests in this part of the world. Gates called the US a “resident power” in the Asia-Pacific region.

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Agence France-Presse

2 June 2008

Malaysia wants bigger ASEAN role in Myanmar

Singapore—Myanmar should allow military helicopters and rubber boats from its Southeast Asian neighbours to help distribute aid to cyclone victims in remote areas, Malaysia’s deputy prime minister said Sunday. Najib Razak, who is also defence minister, assured Myanmar’s military rulers that military personnel from its Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) neighbours will not be used to destabilise the government.

“The only organisation that can be effective in terms of disaster relief operations is the military,” Najib told reporters at the end of a high-level security forum, the Shangri-La Dialogue, in Singapore.

“We have proven time and time again that our involvement is strictly humanitarian in nature and there is no other agenda we have in mind when we (have) sent our military into the various disaster-stricken areas in other countries in the past.” Najib said ASEAN has always respected the sovereignty of Myanmar but he said it was important for the group to play a bigger role because the

scale of the unfolding tragedy, “potentially might even be bigger than the tragedy of the tsunami back in 2004.”

The tsunami disaster killed 220,000 people in countries around the Indian Ocean, mostly in Indonesia. “There is a huge human tragedy of the highest proportion that might befall the people of Myanmar if the government does not allow greater participation by the ASEAN countries and by the world,” Najib said.

Singapore has already offered to deploy its Chinook helicopters, widely used to help victims of the 2004 tsunami, to assist in relief efforts in cyclone-hit Myanmar, where 133,000 people are dead or missing and more than two million others were affected. Malaysia also sent helicopters to help in tsunami-hit Indonesia.

ASEAN has often been criticised for failing to act firmly against its member Myanmar. The country has been reluctant to admit foreign aid workers but it did ask Southeast Asian nations to coordinate the international relief effort.

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Reuters

2 June 2008

Beijing Olympics to face greater security challenge

By Melanie Lee

SINGAPORE (Reuters) – The Beijing Olympic Games will face bigger security challenges compared with previous games because of the threat of a terrorist attack, a top Chinese military official said on Sunday.

Ma Xiaotian, deputy chief of general staff of the People’s Liberation Army, told Reuters at the sidelines of a security conference in Singapore, that the development of “terrorism forces” has led to a greater security challenge for the Beijing games in August.

“Given the situation of the expansion of international terrorism forces who are bent on destroying all things good, I think this year’s Beijing Olympic Games will face bigger challenges compared to previous years.”

He did not elaborate further.

Beijing is also worried that foreign activists, who disrupted the international leg of the Olympic torch relay, will stage protests inside China over Tibet, Darfur, human rights and other issues during the Games.

The U.S. government issued a travel alert for China in April, citing a higher risk of attacks within the country in the near future, including possibly at the Olympic Games.

“Any large-scale public event such as the upcoming Olympic Games may present an attractive target for terrorists,” the State Department said in the alert.

While China has not been targeted by militant groups such as al Qaeda, some worry that China’s military has yet to fully appreciate the scale of the security operation, which at Athens in 2004, included the use of NATO early warning aircraft.

By using its own security forces, Beijing believes it can deliver a secure Games for a fraction of the \$1.8 billion that Athens paid in 2004.

Some 100,000 policemen and 600,000 volunteers will patrol venues, hotels and streets, while neighborhoods will be patrolled by citizens wearing red armbands during the Games.

A network of about 300,000 surveillance cameras covers the entire capital.

Previous Olympic Games have been marred by violence. A bomb at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics killed one person and wounded more than 100, while at the 1972 Munich Games, 11 Israelis died in an attack by Palestinian gunmen and a botched rescue attempt.

(Editing by Jan Dahinten and Valerie Lee)

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Straits Times

2 June 2008

Govts’ role in disasters: Provide – or invite – aid?

SINGAPORE’S defence minister yesterday elaborated on the three new principles that should guide countries on how they should offer help to disaster-hit states.

Mr Teo Chee Hean said the guidelines mean that governments have a responsibility to provide for their people in the wake of natural disasters.

“If they are not able to provide for it, then it is their responsibility to see what other resources they can garner to help provide for the people,” Mr Teo said on the closing day of the Shangri-La Dialogue.

On Saturday, top officials from participating countries agreed on three non-binding principles for disaster relief

efforts. They placed a responsibility on governments to quickly provide aid to their people and 'facilitate' outside help where it is needed. But external help shall come with the governments' consent.

The guidelines come amid criticism of Myanmar's ruling junta for its handling of the relief efforts following last month's devastating cyclone.

In his speech, Mr Teo said there was a difference between a government's responsibility to 'provide' and its duty to 'protect'.

In 2005, states agreed they had a responsibility to protect their citizens from instances like genocide and war crimes. If they fail to do so, the international community can intervene.

In pointing out that the 'responsibility to protect' was 'very specifically defined' to cover such instances, Mr Teo said: 'I think, here, we are talking generally about the responsibility of governments to provide. In the end, it is the people in the country and in the international community who will be the ultimate judge of whether or not governments...have lived up to their responsibilities.'

Myanmar was among the countries that agreed to the three principles.

Meanwhile, the role of the military in providing disaster relief was discussed yesterday.

Mr Teo said armed forces have the 'resources and manpower' to respond quickly in the crucial first stages of disaster relief efforts.

'It is not the value or quantity of the relief supplies. The question is whether they can be delivered in a prompt and effective manner,' he said.

Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said there were 'diverging views' on military involvement in general relief cases.

But the 'wider consensus among Asean countries is that the armed forces have a key role' to play, he said.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said the 'wealth of human resources and logistical capabilities' of military forces are a welcome addition to humanitarian efforts.

But its president, Dr Jakob Kellenberger, said the armed forces should intervene only if humanitarian agencies are overwhelmed.

'It is, in any case, up to them to prove that they are in a better position to (help) than humanitarian actors,' he said.

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Wall Street Journal

2 June 2008

Washington Trades Jobs With Beijing Over Missile Plans

By Yochi J. Dreazen and Gordon Fairclough

SINGAPORE -- Defense Secretary Robert Gates dismissed the Chinese government's concerns about American missile-defense plans and its insistence that its long-range ballistic missiles don't represent a threat to other countries.

Mr. Gates's comments to reporters at a regional security conference in Singapore underscored the security issues that continue to divide Washington and Beijing, despite the Bush administration's relatively nonconfrontational approach to China.

U.S. officials are also angry that China continues to strongly support Myanmar despite its junta's refusal to approve extensive foreign relief efforts in the aftermath of a devastating cyclone there.

Mr. Gates's latest comments on China appear to represent a shift. In the run-up to the conference, his aides debated how strongly in his prepared remarks Saturday to criticize China. The U.S. defense chief ultimately decided to make only oblique reference to China in the speech, continuing a recent administration effort to play down disputes with Beijing.

On Sunday, Mr. Gates was significantly more critical, in large measure because of unusually pointed remarks from a senior Chinese official that were seen by conference participants as directed squarely at the U.S. and its main regional ally, Japan.

Speaking Saturday, Lt. Gen. Ma Xiaotian, the deputy chief of the general staff of China's People's Liberation Army, said that the U.S. "expansion of military alliances" and the "development and expansion of missile-defense systems" was "undercutting the equilibrium of regional powers."

The U.S. has been working with Japan to expand missile-defense systems in Asia, and Washington has been pushing Tokyo to strengthen its own military capabilities as the U.S. readjusts its forces in the region and prepares to move 8,000 Marines to Guam from Okinawa.

The Chinese general also brushed aside questions about China's continuing military expansion, arguing that the sharp increases in its military expenditures were in line with the growth of the country's rapidly expanding economy.

China has been investing heavily in missile technology, including the development of longer-range intercontinental ballistic missiles. The missiles are a cause of deep concern to Japan and other U.S. allies across Asia, but Gen. Ma insisted in his remarks that the missiles weren't offensive in nature and shouldn't be seen as threatening.

The U.S. defense chief argued that the American missile-defense systems envisioned by the Bush administration are so limited in scope that they would be easily "overwhelmed" by a sustained volley of Chinese intercontinental missiles.

"The facts betray that I think it's more of a political statement than it is one about military strategy," he remarked on the Chinese concerns about U.S. missile defense.

Mr. Gates rejected Gen. Ma's contention that the Chinese missiles didn't represent a threat to the U.S. or any neighboring Asian countries.

"I don't know what you use them for if it's not for offensive capability," he said. "It's hard to see an intercontinental ballistic missile as a defensive weapon."

The Pentagon chief also said the U.S. was concerned about the "numbers and the nature" of China's military build-up, concerns echoed by many of the other senior defense officials at the conference.

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Xinhua News

2 June 2008

France says Asia a major strategic stake for Europe

SINGAPORE: France's defense minister Sunday told an Asian security conference that the center of gravity of the world will move towards Asia within 25 years, and the region is a major strategic stake for Europe.

"A global stake requires a global answer. In terms of security, France and Europe are not intending to remain secondary partners in Asia, but indeed full players," French Defense Minister Herve Morin said.

Addressing defense ministers, military officials and experts from 27 countries who were attending the annual Asian Security Summit here, Morin noted, "during the 25 years to come, the center of gravity of the world will move more and more towards Asia."

Through their economic, financial, demographic and intellectual dynamism, "Asia, and Southeast Asia in par-

ticular, is a major strategic stake for Europe," he added. He said France's commitment in Asia now finds an illustration in Afghanistan, where France is "making a long and difficult counter terrorism and state reconstruction effort."

France will host an international donors conference to support Afghanistan on June 12 in the presence of President Hamid Karzai.

He pointed out that France's interest for Afghanistan is related with its being determined to counter terrorism and fundamentalism.

"Today, struggling against al-Qaeda and its ramifications is still a priority for each nation present in this room. Let me tell you solemnly today: in this struggle, France will stand by you," he said.

Countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is also France's priority, he added.

"Therefore, France is paying attention to the negotiation process initiated with North Korea and will continue supporting the six-party talks," said the defense minister.

He also said Southeast Asia in particular would hold a "very special stake" for Europe in future.

He also called for more concrete cooperation between the two region against maritime piracy and offered France's help with averting any problems as Southeast Asia's submarine forces patrol in shallow waters and narrow routes.

"We are no longer in an environment that was long ago described as 'benign neglect' by Europe about Asia, by a Singapore prime minister. Symmetrically, Asia should not consider Europe as a second ranking partner," he said.

U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates also expressed America's remaining interests in Asia on Saturday at the same forum, saying "the United States remains a nation with strong and enduring interests in this region — interests that will endure no matter which political party occupies the White House next year."

The three-day conference, also known as the Shangri-La Dialogue and organized by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, concluded Sunday.

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Defense News

3 June 2008

Shangri-La Dialogue Ends Extraordinary Meeting

By Wendell Minnick

SINGAPORE – A regional agreement for dealing with natural disasters underscored the ascension of the Shangri-La Dialogue, the 7th annual edition of which was held here May 30-June 1, to a leading position in discussions of Asia-Pacific security.

Sponsored by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), this year's Dialogue featured defense ministers and secretaries from Australia, Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Run by the nongovernmental IISS, the Dialogue is an unusual place to find top-tier decision-makers.

"The conference in effect functions as a security institution and has helped shape the regional strategic debate," said Nigel Inkster, director of Transnational Threats and Political Risk, IISS. "An example of the kind of outcomes it can produce is the decision yesterday by regional defense ministers to agree to some principles for dealing with natural disasters."

Largely a reaction to the Myanmar government's slack response to the recent flooding, the agreement include three principles: that the state government should react quickly and responsibly to a natural disaster within its borders; that the state should allow the foreign humanitarian aid to enter where and when needed; and that the state affected should have control over and supervision of incoming aid.

"At this Shangri-La we have brought together the largest group ever, with more ministers from more countries than before," said John Chipman, IISS director-general and chief executive. "At past Shangri-La Dialogues, for example, new intergovernmental arrangements for maritime security in the Malacca Straits have been agreed, and the conditions for the establishment of a hotline between the U.S. Pentagon and the Chinese government," he said.

Speeches were made by U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates; U.S. Sen. Joseph Lieberman; Lt. Gen. Ma Xiaotian, the Chinese deputy chief of the General Staff, People's

Liberation Army; South Korean Defense Minister Lee Sang-Hee; U.S. Adm. Timothy Keating, commander, Pacific Command; Indonesian Defense Minister Juwono Sudarsono; Col. Gen. Pran Trung Kien, Vietnam deputy minister of defense; Japan Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba; and Maj. Gen. Aye Myint, Myanmar deputy minister of defense.

Richard Armitage, former U.S. deputy secretary of state, presented a paper on strategies for resolving proliferation challenges; Yu Hong, counselor and director, Department of Asian Affairs, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, talked about maritime disputes in the Asia-Pacific; and M.M. Pallam Raju, Indian minister of state for defense, discussed defense policy formulation.

"This event has no peer in Asia," said Gates. "We all make time to come here because the Dialogue offers an unbeatable mix: cutting-edge topics, world-renowned experts, and senior security officials working together for three days."

On June 1, Singapore Defense Minister Teo Chee Hean discussed how the Dialogue has shaped perceptions and behavior.

"Over the years, the Shangri-La Dialogue has facilitated discussions on specific issues such as maritime security in the Malacca Strait over a number of meetings, leading to a consensus over a set of common principles and the successful 'Eyes in the Sky' initiative for combined maritime air patrols," said Teo.

Teo met with defense leaders and officials from 24 countries on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue, including Dato' Sri Najib Tun Razak, Malaysian deputy prime minister and minister of defense; French Defense Minister Hervé Morin; Sri Lankan Minister of Foreign Affairs Rohitha Bogollagama; Mongolian Defense Minister Jamiyandorj Batkhuyag; and Gates.

The future U.S. role was a matter of discussion at the Dialogue. Gates stated the next administration would no doubt face the same issues and pursue the same goals present and past White House administrations have pursued.

"While I cannot predict the specifics of a new president's Asia policy, certain elements can already be discerned above and beyond the time-tested principles of strategic access, freedom of commerce and navigation, and freedom from domination by any hegemonic force or coalition," said Gates.

"The next U.S. administration seems certain to continue the overlapping, long-standing, security partnerships I

outlined. It will also inherit an agenda of especially worrying issues," he said. "This means no change in our drive to temper North Korea's ambitions, a policy not possible without China's valued cooperation. Beyond this center stage issue, I suspect that the new administration will also find strategic inspiration in America's dual role – as a resident power and as the 'straddle power' across the Pacific."

The next U.S. administration was noted in the keynote address, given by Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, who sees some continuation of issues, but also sees new challenges and uncertainties.

"Singapore has no votes, but we have our wish list," he said.

The wish list includes continued U.S. commitment to globalization, free trade and international rules; pursuing constructive relations with China; actively cultivating its diverse interests in the Asia Pacific, especially in Southeast Asia; remaining steadfast in the fight against terrorism; and taking a long-term approach toward Iraq and Afghanistan.

"America's role is especially crucial in engaging a rising Asia and integrating it into the global system. The emerging powers in Asia should have greater stakes in the existing international order," said Lee.

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The Hindu

3 June 2008

Australia for practical military cooperation with India

By P.S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE: Australia, under the new Kevin Rudd government, intends to engage India in "closer practical military cooperation, particularly in the Indian Ocean region." And, "the starting point is the two countries already have a high degree of trust between one another."

Potential

Outlining the "potential" for a new take-off from this "platform" of mutual trust and compatible democracies, Australian Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon told *The Hindu* that "maritime security and counter-terrorism" were already

identified for enhanced cooperation "in the first instance." India, he said, "has great expertise in counter-terrorism, and we think we can learn from that."

In an exclusive interview, after the conclusion of the seventh Asia Security Summit organised here by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, Mr. Fitzgibbon said: "I don't exclude anything from the dialogue" with India in the defence domain.

He was responding to specific questions about the possibilities of India-Australia cooperation on matters relating to "network-centric warfare, missile defence, and outer space-oriented preparedness."

Mr. Fitzgibbon said: "You almost drove me into operational issues now. While I have had a number of conversations with the Indian junior Defence Minister [M.M. Pallam Raju, on the sidelines of the Asia Security Summit in Singapore], I wouldn't want to pre-empt more, formal, discussions on the practical ways in which we can develop our cooperation. We are both 'Western democracies,' sharing many of the same values; and that's a great starting point for any further discussions."

He was emphatic, however, that "the new government [in Canberra], at this point in time, has not turned its mind to any decision about a quadrilateral relationship [among Australia, India, Japan, and the United States]." The idea, first mooted by Japan about two years ago, has been opposed in some East Asian quarters. Yet, Australia would not see its own ties with China and India through the "prism" of any zero-sum games.

India a key player

As Australia "develops a new white paper on defence this year, we will be looking to India as very much a strategic player for global security and security in the [Asian] region." As for Beijing's strategic relevance to Canberra, he said: "The only country that has a stronger economic relationship with Australia [than China] is the United States of America."

Engaging the U.S.

Asked about the signs that the Kevin Rudd government would think totally out of the box in engaging the U.S., Mr. Fitzgibbon said: "It is true that we are putting a greater emphasis on our own region, but the U.S. is an important player in that equation as well. We are absolutely committed to [Australia's] U.S. alliance. It is one of the first pillars of our defence policy and will continue to be so into the future."

About the Australian Labour Party's signature tune on Iraq in this context, the Defence Minister said: "We have promised to have our troops out by mid-year, and they shall be."

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Le Monde

4 June 2008

Ménagée par la Chine et l'Inde, la junte birmane reste sourde aux critiques internationales

By Par Sylvie Kauffmann

ENCART: Lors d'une conférence sur la sécurité en Asie, à Singapour, pays occidentaux et asiatiques ont exprimé leur colère face au refus du régime birman d'accepter une aide internationale massive aux sinistrés du typhon Nargis

Un mois après le passage du typhon Nargis, qui a dévasté le delta de l'Irrawaddy, en Birmanie, les 2 et 3 mai, fait 133 600 morts ou disparus, selon les autorités, et laissé 2,4 millions de Birmans sans abri, l'ONU reconnaît qu'un travail " urgent " reste à faire et que 60 % des sinistrés n'ont reçu aucune aide. Les réfugiés sont, selon les ONG, chassés des camps par la police anti-émeute pour réintégrer des logis détruits.

Ce constat, dévastateur pour les dirigeants du pays, est aussi celui de l'impuissance de la communauté internationale face à une junte militaire irrémédiablement fermée. Impuissance de l'Occident qui, ayant choisi d'isoler le régime, n'a plus aucun moyen de pression sur ce pays. Impuissance de l'ONU, même si l'intervention sur place du secrétaire général, Ban Ki-moon, a permis d'entrouvrir la porte. Impuissance de l'Asie du Sud-Est, dont l'approche conciliatrice et " familiale " se solde aussi par un échec.

Ces frustrations ont éclaté, les 31 mai et 1er juin, au cours d'une conférence sur la sécurité en Asie organisée par l'Institut international d'études stratégiques (IISS) de Londres, à Singapour, en présence de responsables de la défense, dont le vice-ministre birman de la défense, Aye Myint. Le chef du Pentagone, l'Américain Robert Gates, a accusé la junte birmane de " négligence criminelle " ; son refus d'une aide internationale massive a coûté, a-t-il dit, " des dizaines de milliers de vies ". A un participant

asiatique qui critiquait l'approche " dure " des Etats-Unis, il a rétorqué, évoquant des généraux " sourds et stupides " : " Chaque fois que nous leur avons tendu la main, ils ont gardé les leurs dans leur poche. " Le député français Pierre Lellouche a proposé que les dirigeants qui refusent l'aide " par caprice " soient jugés par la Cour pénale internationale.

Des responsables asiatiques ont eux aussi exprimé leur exaspération à l'égard de la junte birmane. Le vice-premier ministre et ministre de la défense de Malaisie, Najib Razak, qui siégeait à la même tribune que le général Aye Myint, a averti que " si l'aide n'atteint pas les sinistrés, l'ampleur du désastre dépassera celle du tsunami de 2004 ". " Au risque d'offenser mon collègue, a-t-il poursuivi en se tournant vers le Birman, oui, nous voulons jouer un plus grand rôle dans la tragédie du Myanmar - Birmanie - . " " Nous ", c'est l'Association des nations du Sud-Est asiatique (Asean), qui s'est engagée, le 19 mai, à mettre en oeuvre un " mécanisme " permettant de distribuer l'aide internationale en Birmanie. Ce mécanisme ne s'est guère concrétisé.

L'obstruction de la Birmanie, Etat membre de l'Asean, est de plus en plus embarrassante pour les gouvernements voisins, dont la presse et la société civile sont plus offensives sur la tragédie birmane. Au déjeuner à huis clos qui a réuni les ministres présents au forum de l'IISS, les participants ont pris à partie, les uns après les autres, selon un participant, leur collègue birman. Celui-ci est resté imperturbable, accroché à un discours de déni, assurant que les autorités birmanes maîtrisaient la situation et en étaient déjà à la phase de reconstruction, pour laquelle l'aide internationale est la bienvenue, " pourvu qu'elle soit sans conditions ".

Deux participants ont cependant réussi à se tenir à l'écart de la mêlée : le plus haut représentant chinois, le général Ma Xiaotian, chef d'état-major adjoint de l'Armée populaire de libération (APL), et Pallam Raju, vice-ministre indien de la défense. La Chine et l'Inde passent pour les deux seuls pays capables de peser sur la junte. Au cours du forum, le concept de " responsabilité de fournir " de l'aide a émergé, pour tenter de sortir de l'impasse dans laquelle le rejet très majoritaire d'une intervention militaire en Birmanie a placé celui de " responsabilité de protéger ". Mais, devant le silence de la Chine et de l'Inde, ces débats restent vains.

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New Straits Times

4 June 2008

Uncle Sam's security role in Asia**By Umapagan Ampikaipakan**

AS the taxi pulled into the fortress that was now the Shangri-La Hotel on Singapore's Orange Grove Road, we were waved through by armed policemen to a security check-point, driving past the Gurkhas and their automatic weapons, to a hotel lobby that resembled an airport departure lounge, with its metal detectors and X-ray machines. The taxi driver, always a source of great wisdom, turns to me and says, "no one trusts anyone any more". A sentiment which, in essence, was what this summit was about.

Now there are summits, and then there are summits.

Last weekend I had the pleasure of being invited to the 7th IISS Asia Security Summit in Singapore. I say pleasure, because as a one-time conference whore turned political commentator, the Shangri-La Dialogue is, in many ways, my Sundance Film Festival (in which case Davos would undeniably be Cannes).

I am not easily star-struck, but when face to face with the likes of US Defence Secretary Robert Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen, when you're in the same room with China's Lt-Gen Ma Xiaotian of the People's Liberation Army, you can't help but be deferential, if only because of the sheer military might over which these gentlemen preside.

They are the Spielbergs and Clooneys of military power (a comparison I guarantee you've never heard, and are unlikely to ever hear, again).

With close to 300 delegates in contingents from 27 countries, the Shangri-La Dialogue, in just seven years, has become widely accepted as the security summit for Asia and the Pacific. It is the ultimate boys club, where men in power suits talk about missile defence and nuclear non-proliferation; about securing energy resources and restoring peace in complex emergencies.

It is where those who command the instruments that could destroy us all get together and engage in diplomatic discourse. It is the conduct of statecraft by those usually called upon to manage its failure; where, for two whole days, policy makers discuss policy without the usual logorrhea that takes place during events like this one.

These are, for the most part, serious people, doing serious work. But even more than that, they are the people

trying to build and restore trust in a world gone to hell in a hand-basket.

While the summit itself was all-encompassing on issues concerning defence and security in the Asia Pacific, for me the most important questions involved two things. The first being America's message to Asia, and the second being Myanmar.

From the very first pre-summit press conference with Senator Joseph Lieberman to Secretary Robert Gates' address the next morning, their message was simple and direct.

In his comments, Senator Lieberman stated that America remains a responsible stakeholder in this region and the international system. Quoting from an op-ed article he co-wrote with Senator John McCain, Lieberman added that: "American power does not mean we can do whatever we want, whenever we want. On the contrary, our position in Asia has been strongest when we have listened to our friends, and when we have worked not only to persuade them we are right, but been willing to be persuaded that they are right."

While many perceived the United States as being distracted from Asia by its entanglements in Afghanistan and the Middle East, Lieberman insisted that this was not the case. Speaking in his capacity as a senior member of the Senate Arms Services Committee, the senator said to "expect more, not less, attention, investment, and co-operation from the United States government", regardless of which party is in power come January.

A sentiment that was further reflected by Gates' speech where he dismissed any speculation about the United States losing interest in Asia as "either preposterous or disingenuous or both". He emphasised that "the United States is a Pacific nation with an enduring role in Asia".

That they welcomed Asia's rise, and that their "continued presence in this part of the world has been an essential element enabling this rise – opening doors, protecting and preserving common spaces on the high seas, in space, and more and more in the cyber world".

One senior defence official travelling with Gates later told me that "all countries in Asia, large or small, gain from a focused American involvement", and that it had "a stabilising effect".

It would be easy to liken America's message to that of an attention-seeking child, jumping up and down and screaming, "I'm here! I'm here! Look at me!" I, however, felt the message carried a more reassuring tone. Like that

of a parent or a guardian. Of someone that has always been there, of someone we thought we had outgrown.

Recently, we in Asia have been somewhat caught up by the rise of India and China, so much so we had forgotten that such things are by no means zero-sum equations. Political and economic hegemonies are not a realistic consequence of this rise. And as we become more and more reliant on one another, the only likely endgame is one of interdependence. It avoids unnecessary competition, it prevents wars, and the sooner we wise up to this fact, the more stable and secure our respective environments will be.

Which brings me to the unavoidable elephant in the room. The overarching issue that seemed to dominate every discussion, from the casual coffee-break conversations to the private luncheon with defence officials.

I had asked Gates about Myanmar during a small press roundtable on Sunday morning. What now? With the limited success that the US, the UN and Asean have had in engaging Myanmar's military junta, where do we go from here? He said that "unless the regime changes its approach, changes its policy, more people will die".

Gates stopped short of calling the government's actions as being tantamount to genocide, adding instead that it was more akin to "criminal neglect".

The only other alternative would be the forced distribution of aid to Myanmar, something that minister after minister had drawn a line at using.

When asked about why there was such universal agreement that aid should not be imposed, Gates responded by saying that "there is great sensitivity to violating a country's sovereignty, without some kind of UN umbrella that would authorise it".

There has been a lot of attention focused on the United States for not being able to engage with Myanmar's military junta. They are an easy target. I for one agree that the United States had already exercised its moral obligation "above and beyond the call".

America has been unswerving in its ideology concerning aid. Its response has always been immediate and effective, be it after the Asian tsunami or the cyclone in Bangladesh. Because "when your neighbour's house is on fire, one does not haggle over the price to put it out". But as the Essex and other aid vessels continue to "steam around in circles", it is becoming increasingly clear that their efforts are frustrated.

But through all of this, we seem to have overlooked the bigger question: What does this mean for Asean? What are

the implications for Asean and its relationship with one of its member states, if no one engaging with the regime is able to change their minds?

What is the virtue of non-interference when faced with the deaths of hundreds of thousands? How can we stand idly by and let our neighbours, our friends, our brothers, engage in such self-destructive behaviour?

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Defense News

5 June 2008

Gates Reaffirms U.S. Presence in Asia at Summit

By Wendell Minnick

SINGAPORE – The U.S. will continue to honor its commitments and responsibilities in the Asia-Pacific region "no matter which political party occupies the White House next year," U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates told delegation members at the 7th International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Summit: The Shangri-La Dialogue, held here from May 30 to June 1.

"For those who worry that Iraq and Afghanistan have distracted the United States from Asia and developments here, I would counter that we have never been more engaged with more Asian countries," said Gates, who has visited Asia four times in his 18-month tenure as secretary of defense.

"Secretary Gates provided the kind of strategic reassurance badly needed by the region," said Kurt Campbell, CEO of the Center for a New American Security.

Retired U.S. Rear Adm. Michael McDevitt of the CNA Corp. observed the reassurance of continued U.S. engagement in Asia was needed, and the Shangri-La Dialogue served as an "excellent" venue for his message.

"Clearly, he was intent on reassuring listeners that the U.S. intended to stay engaged in the region because it was in our interests to do so, and that we had the military capability to do so, since air and naval power are the most relevant forces for the region," he said.

Campbell said there is a need for balance, however, in U.S. declarations concerning the War on Terror.

"While [Paul] Wolfowitz and [Donald] Rumsfeld drummed on this issue to the exclusion of all others, barely mentioning Asia in their early Shangri-La speeches,

Gates did not even utter the word," said Campbell, who served previously as both the deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asia and the Pacific and director on the National Security Council staff.

He argues the U.S. is trying to strike a balance between a dangerous Middle East while recognizing and meeting Asian challenges.

"Finding that balance has been virtually impossible for anyone in the Bush Administration – with the notable exception of Gates – and it will be left to the new president to see if his or her administration can do better," he said.

Gates emphasized three critical points during his speech. First, the U.S. is a "Pacific nation" with territory in the Asia-Pacific extending from the Aleutian Islands down to Guam. Second, in reference to freedom of the seas and respect for the Law of the Sea, the U.S. supports "openness, against exclusivity, and in favor of common use of spaces." Third, future Asia security policy will be based on "strong and enduring interests in the region."

"I thought formulation that the U.S. was a 'resident power' was a clever new way of reinforcing the notion that we have vital interests in the region that we are not going to abandon. His arguments about common spaces, inclusivity (open door) rather than exclusivity – are traditional, but repackaged nicely," said McDevitt, who served as the director of the East Asia Policy Office for the secretary of defense during the first Bush administration.

Bush also noted the "stirrings of a new regionalism, a pan-Asia search for new frameworks to encompass and thereby moderate inter-state competition.

"The search for this regional architecture will continue – after all, one can hardly suggest that it is appropriate for Europe, the Middle East and Africa to develop regional security institutions, but not for Asia to do so," he said.

Ralph Cossa, president of the Pacific Forum CSIS, believes the U.S. presence in Asia remains strong, as does its commitment. However, he argues that U.S. capabilities are limited as far as crisis response may be concerned.

"Obviously, North Korean leader Kim Jong-il does not lose much sleep worrying about an American invasion – but it can still project air and sea power into the region (including against North Korea) at will and remains a powerful stabilizing and deterrent force," he said.

Gates reiterated the U.S. position that North Korea will continue to be the focus of denuclearization drives. The next administration will inherit "an agenda of especially worrying issues."

"This means no change in our drive to temper North Korea's ambitions, a policy not possible without China's valued cooperation. Beyond this center stage issue, I suspect that the new administration will also find strategic inspiration in America's dual role – as a resident power and as the 'straddle power' across the Asia Pacific," Gates said.

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Economist

6 June 2008

Asia's Navies: Into the wide blue yonder

Asia's main powers are building up their navies. Is this the start of an arms race?

IN THE 15th century China possessed a mighty navy of "treasure fleets". They sailed as far as Africa and the Persian Gulf, spreading China's economic and political influence across several continents. Had this naval expansion continued, some scholars say, China could have dominated the world. But successive emperors turned the nation inwards on itself, seafaring was banned and the country's great shipyards were closed. In Asia as elsewhere, it is America that rules the waves—its naval might is still needed, for example, to help defend the Malacca Strait, route for much of the region's oil and other trade.

Today a resurgent, confident and globalising China is rebuilding its naval strength. Like India, its rising Asian rival, it already has an impressive army. But both countries are finding that rapid economic growth is providing the money to realise long-cherished dreams of building ocean-going "blue-water" navies that can project power far from their home shores.

In the past two years China's navy has acquired new destroyers, frigates and submarines, some home-built, some (including its most advanced kit) Russian. A recent study by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) concluded that China was also close to beginning the production of aircraft-carriers, which would give it the ability to project airpower over great distances. China has long wanted to create a force capable of thwarting the intervention of America's Pacific fleet in any war over Taiwan. But it is also increasingly keen to protect its supplies of fuel and raw materials from threats such as piracy and terrorism.

America has particular worries about a naval base China is building on Hainan island, from where its vessels will have easy access to South-East Asia's shipping lanes—most importantly the Malacca Strait. The Indians are afraid that China's reason for building ports in Myanmar, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and conducting naval exercises with Pakistan, is to extend its dominance into the Indian Ocean. Thousands of Chinese-flagged merchant ships now cross the ocean each year, giving China plenty of justification for increasing its naval presence. India, in turn, is pushing into the South China Sea, and seeking port facilities in Vietnam.

India shares China's concern that, as trade volumes and energy consumption soar, its security is vulnerable to any disruption of sea traffic. The flagships of its new blue-water navy will be three aircraft-carriers—the same number as Britain. The first of two Indian-built carriers is now under construction, with a launch date of 2010. A third, bought second-hand from Russia, is suffering delays and disputes over its refitting.

Tim Huxley of the IISS says that with so much attention focused on China and India, the naval expansion of other Asian countries is often overlooked. Yet several, especially South Korea, are also building long-range naval capabilities. Besides new submarines and destroyers, the South Koreans, like the Japanese, are commissioning helicopter-carriers.

Is this an arms race? As Asia's defence ministers and military chiefs gathered in Singapore last weekend for their main annual summit, the Shangri-La Dialogue (organised by the IISS), the conclusion of most analysts seemed to be: not yet. A classic arms race, says Mr Huxley, consists of two main countries that have one dominating dispute. Asia is different. Instead, it has the makings of a pair of opposing alliances. A "quad" group (India, America, Australia and Japan) plus Singapore now conduct naval manoeuvres together. So do China and Pakistan. But China and India seem keen to avoid provoking each other. Indeed, they are seeking to build good relations between their navies.

Military chiefs at the summit insisted they were not seeking an arms race and gave various justifications for all their new warships. Rather implausibly, China and others insisted they were mainly to ward off pirates and terrorists. South Korea's defence minister, Lee Sang-hee, said North Korea's navy threatened its maritime supply lines. As if to prove him right, on May 30th the North test-fired three ship-to-ship missiles in the Yellow Sea.

Disaster relief is also commonly cited as a reason to have a bigger navy. Within days of Myanmar's cyclone, three existing blue-water navies—those of America, France and Britain—had ships off the country's coast, laden with supplies. South Korea's and Japan's new helicopter carriers could also one day be useful for moving troops in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

So there are plenty of ways for Asian powers to use their navies co-operatively. Equally, plenty of disputes might more easily escalate into war if the countries concerned had the naval strength to wage it. The potentially oil-rich Spratly and Paracel Islands, for example, are claimed in whole or part by six countries. In 1988 more than 70 Vietnamese sailors died in a naval battle with China in the Spratlys. Dozens of Koreans died in battles over a disputed sea border in 1999 and 2002.

Even without any ill intent, accidents will happen at sea. France's defence minister, Hervé Morin, worries about all the new submarines that will soon be lurking in the region's shallow and crowded shipping lanes. If one went missing, or suffered a collision, there is a danger of this being misconstrued as hostile action. He argues that to prevent minor incidents escalating in this way, Asian countries need to invest a lot more time in discussions of regional security and do more to replace mutual suspicion with co-operation and confidence-building. If not, Asia's cautious naval build-up could indeed mutate into a classic, old-fashioned arms race.

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Experts See Gains Against Asian Terror Networks

SINGAPORE — The deadliest terrorist networks in Southeast Asia have suffered significant setbacks in the past three years, weakened by aggressive policing, improved intelligence, enhanced military operations and an erosion of public support, government officials and counterterrorism specialists say.

Three years after the region's last major strike — the attacks on three restaurants in Bali that killed three suicide bombers and 19 other people — American and Asian intelligence analysts say financial and logistical support from Al Qaeda to other groups in the region

has long dried up, and the most lethal are scrambling for survival.

In Indonesia, since 2005 authorities have arrested more than 200 members of Jemaah Islamiyah, an Islamic group with ties to Al Qaeda. In the Philippines, an American-backed military campaign has the Abu Sayyaf Group, an Islamic extremist organization with links to Jemaah Islamiyah, clinging to footholds in the jungles of a handful of southern islands, officials said.

Indonesia and the Philippines, which have faced the most serious terrorist threat in the region, have taken sharply different approaches to combat it. Each has achieved some success, offering lessons to American and allied counterterrorism efforts worldwide. But there are worrisome signs that the threat could rebound quickly.

A bombing at a Philippine air base in the southern island of Mindanao late last month killed two people and wounded 22 others. Peace talks between the Philippine government and the country's main Muslim separatist group are threatening to fall apart, which could ignite wider violence, building on deep anger about the country's military-first approach against Muslims. In February, the head of Jemaah Islamiyah in Singapore slipped out a prison bathroom window, hopped a fence and disappeared.

But senior American officials, government authorities in the region and counterterrorism specialists say that the most serious threats are on the wane — in contrast to American intelligence assessments that Al Qaeda in the Pakistani tribal areas is resurgent and that regional affiliates like Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb are gaining strength.

"The governments out here take it very seriously and, in my opinion, seem to be doing a very good job individually and working together to deal with that terrorist threat," Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, a former director of central intelligence, told reporters on June 1 at a regional security conference here.

Senior American intelligence officials began noting progress earlier this year. "Southeast Asia continues to be a concern, although not nearly that which we might have envisioned two or three years ago," Michael E. Leiter, acting director of the National Counterterrorism Center, said in a speech in Washington in February.

The United States and Australia, in particular, have played major roles in helping Southeast Asian countries combat terrorist threats in the region.

More than 500 American personnel, including experts from the military Special Operations Forces, the Federal

Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Agency for International Development, are training and working with Philippine counterterrorism forces from a base in Zamboanga, a city in Mindanao.

The Pentagon recently awarded the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia a total of \$27 million in coastal surveillance stations equipped with special radar, heat-detecting cameras and computers to help disrupt terrorists plying the Sulawesi sea lanes, according to documents sent to Congress. The Philippines also received nearly \$6 million in night-vision goggles, body armor, helmets and radios.

In Indonesia, the Australian police provided sophisticated electronic surveillance capabilities that allowed local security forces to locate within days several militants who carried out an even deadlier bombing in Bali in 2002. The Australians are still helping the Indonesian police monitor telephone traffic, and, along with American officials, have helped train Indonesian lawyers, prosecutors and judges.

In contrast to the Philippines, where the United States is backing a more militarized approach, Indonesia has taken a different tack, in which terrorist suspects are treated well and encouraged to defect or to share information.

Indonesia explains that its friendly handling of detainees will make its government seem less of an enemy of Islam. The Indonesian police are skillful interrogators, their Western counterparts say, and there have been no credible reports of torture being used in Indonesia to break the rings or win the prosecutions.

At the same time, the Indonesian government has been sentencing some prominent captives to long prison terms. Zarkasih, who uses one name and is believed to have been the leader of Jemaah Islamiyah from 2005 until his arrest last year, was sentenced in April to 15 years in prison. Abu Dujana, a deputy who led the group's military arm and was also arrested last year, was also sentenced to 15 years.

Azhari Husin, one of the most feared bomb makers in Asia, was killed by Indonesia's elite antiterrorism unit in 2005, but his second in command, Noordin Top, is still at large, American intelligence officials said.

"Overall, the threat is far less in Indonesia than it was two or three years ago," said Sidney Jones, a senior adviser to the International Crisis Group in Jakarta and an expert on terrorism in Southeast Asia.

Lt. Gen. Michael D. Maples, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, voiced cautious optimism to

Congress in February about the situation in Indonesia. He noted, though, that the fact that Indonesian authorities were seizing caches of weapons showed that insurgents were still trying to mount attacks.

In the Philippines, the government and the Pentagon say that the threat of the Abu Sayyaf has substantially diminished over the past few years, noting that several of the group's top officers, including its leader, Khaddfy Janjanlani, have been killed and its ranks have dwindled to about 200 from more than 1,000 in 2001, according to terrorism experts.

But there are clear indications the group can still do damage. In the attack on the Philippine air base on May 29, a cellphone-detonated bomb was apparently concealed in a bag belonging to a civilian commuter waiting to hitch a ride on a C-130 cargo plane outside Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga, police officials said.

The Philippine government blamed Abu Sayyaf as well as elements of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a separatist group that has been fighting for an Islamic state in Mindanao for decades and that has been involved in peace talks with Manila.

It was not the first time that the Front had been accused of colluding with Abu Sayyaf. In the past, accusations that it had helped the group, as well as Jemaah Islamiyah, had threatened the peace negotiations, with the Front remaining adamant that it had nothing to do with these terrorists. It had said it would withdraw from the negotiations if the government continued its accusations.

An American-supported "civil action" campaign in the Philippines, involving building infrastructure for social services in communities and financing medical missions, has gained some praise. But in general, the government's campaign against Abu Sayyaf has been dominated by a heavy military approach that is often seen as broadly categorizing all Muslims together as a threat, which terror experts and analysts fear could backfire.

"My real concern is that Philippine government has never had a comprehensive policy with Muslims in Mindanao," said Zachary Abuza, an expert on terrorism in Southeast Asia who teaches at Simmons College in Boston.

Lumping the Islamic Front with Abu Sayyaf will inflame those Filipino Muslims who are seeking self-determination through a peace effort, and make it harder for the Front to cooperate in fighting terrorism, said Abhoud Syed Lingga, the executive director of the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies, a research organization on Islamic issues in Cotabato City, in Mindanao.

"U.S. forces are strengthening the Philippine military and using civic action to drive a wedge between rebels and the Muslim populace," said a recent report by the International Crisis Group that referred to the Abu Sayyaf Group. "But if their goal is to defeat the A.S.G. and its foreign, mainly Indonesian, jihadi allies, they are casting the net too widely and creating unnecessary enemies."

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Appendix II: Selected IISS publications

The *Adelphi Papers* monograph series is the Institute's principal contribution to policy-relevant, original academic research. Papers published since 2005 include:

Audrey Kurth Cronin. *Ending Terrorism: Lessons for defeating al-Qaeda*. Adelphi Paper 394. Routledge for the IISS, 2008.

Karabekir Akkoyunlu. *Military Reform and Democratisation: Turkish and Indonesian experiences at the turn of the millennium*. Adelphi Paper 392. Routledge for the IISS, 2007.

Cyrus Hodes and Mark Sedra. *The Search for Security in Post-Taliban Afghanistan*. Adelphi Paper 391. Routledge for the IISS, 2007.

Martin N. Murphy. *Contemporary Piracy and Maritime Terrorism: The threat to international security*. Adelphi Paper 388. Routledge for the IISS, 2007.

Evelyn Goh. *Developing the Mekong: Regionalism and regional security in China–Southeast Asian relations*. Adelphi Paper 387. Routledge for the IISS, 2007.

Robert L. Carlin and Joel S. Wit. *North Korean Reform: Politics, economics and security*. Adelphi Paper 382. Routledge for the IISS, 2006.

Jürgen Haacke. *Myanmar's Foreign Policy: Domestic influences and international implications*. Adelphi Paper 381. Routledge for the IISS, 2006.

Mark J. Valencia. *The Proliferation Security Initiative: Making waves in Asia*. Adelphi Paper 376. Routledge for the IISS, 2005.

The *IISS Strategic Dossier* series harnesses the Institute's technical expertise to present detailed information on key strategic issues. Recent publications include:

Nuclear Programmes in the Middle East: In the shadow of Iran. IISS, 2008.

European Military Capabilities: Building Armed Forces for Modern Operations. IISS, 2008.

Nuclear Black Markets: Pakistan, A.Q. Khan and the rise of proliferation networks: A net assessment. IISS, 2007.

Iran's Strategic Weapons Programmes: A net assessment. Routledge for the IISS, 2005.

North Korea's Weapons Programmes: A net assessment. Palgrave for the IISS, 2004.

Strategic Comments is the Institute's online source of analysis of international security and politico-military issues. Articles focused on South, Southeast and Northeast Asia published between August 2006 and August 2008 include:

'The military in disaster relief – Using armed forces to save lives'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 14, no. 6, August 2008.

'Taiwan's elections – A change of guard'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 14, no. 3, April 2008.

'Sri Lanka's civil war – Escalating conflict'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 14, no. 3, April 2008.

'Malaysia's new politics'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 14, no. 3, April 2008.

'The Beijing Olympics – A focus for Chinese diplomacy'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 14, no. 2, March 2008.

'China's navy – Drive for modernisation'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 14, no. 1, January 2008.

'Climate change: from Kyoto to Bali'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 14, no. 1, January 2008.

'Chinese defence expenditure – Calculating its true extent'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 10, December 2007.

'India's energy insecurity – Competition with China poses challenges'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 9, November 2007.

'Myanmar's peaceful rebellion – Dashed hopes for democracy'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 8, October 2007.

'China's cyber attacks – Casting a wider intelligence net'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 7, September 2007.

'South Asia's water – Steps to ease tensions'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 5, June 2007.

'Thailand's political turmoil'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 5, June 2007.

'Japan–China relations'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 4, May 2007.

'Halting North Korea's nuclear programme'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 2, March 2007.

'Achieving security in the southern Philippines'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 1, February 2007.

'Chinese military messages'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 13, no. 1, February 2007.

- 'Thailand after the coup'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 12, no. 9, November 2006.
- 'North Korea's nuclear test'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 12, no. 8, October 2006.
- 'Japanese diplomacy'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 12, no. 8, October 2006.
- 'North Korea's missile tests'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 12, no. 6, July 2006.
- 'Unstable democracies in Southeast Asia'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 12, no. 4, May 2006.
- 'China's domestic politics'. *Strategic Comments*, vol. 12, no. 3, April 2006.

The Military Balance is the Institute's annual assessment of military capabilities and defence economics worldwide. Region-by-region analyses cover the major military and economic trends and developments affecting security policy and the trade in weapons and other military equipment. Comprehensive tables portray key data on weapons and defence economics. Defence expenditure trends over a 10-year period are also shown.

The Military Balance 2008. Routledge for the IISS, 2008.

Survival: Global Politics and Strategy, the Institute's bi-monthly journal, is a leading forum for analysis and debate of international and strategic affairs. Recent articles of interest include:

- Ayson, Robert and Taylor, Brendan, 'Carrying China's Torch'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 4, August–September 2008, pp. 5–10.
- Jaffe, Amy Myers, Klare, Michael T. and Elhefnawy, Nader, 'The Impending Oil Shock: An Exchange'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 4, August–September 2008, pp. 61–82.
- Dupont, Alan, 'The Strategic Implications of Climate Change'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 3, June–July 2008, pp. 29–54.
- Bremmer, Ian, 'The Return of State Capitalism'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 3, June–July 2008, pp. 55–64.
- Goldstein, Lyle, 'China's Falklands Lessons'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 3, June–July 2008, pp. 65–82.
- Menon, Rajan, 'Reorienting Japan'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 3, June–July 2008, pp. 177–90.

- Elhefnawy, Nader, 'The Impending Oil Shock'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 2, April–May 2008, pp. 37–66.
- Riedel, Bruce, 'South Asia's Nuclear Decade'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 2, April–May 2008, pp. 107–126.
- Schaffer, Teresita C., 'Pakistan: Transition to What?'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 1, February–March 2008, pp. 9–14.
- Litwak, Robert S., 'Living with Ambiguity: Nuclear Deals with Iran and North Korea'. *Survival*, vol. 50, no. 1, February–March 2008, pp. 91–118.
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- Paul, T.V. and Shankar, Mahesh, 'Why the US–India Nuclear Accord is a Good Deal'. *Survival*, vol. 49, no. 4, Winter 2007–08, pp. 111–23.
- Tellis, Ashley J. 'China's Military Space Strategy'. *Survival*, vol. 49, no. 3, Autumn 2007, pp. 41–72.
- Hughes, Christopher and Krauss, Ellis S. 'Japan's New Security Agenda'. *Survival*, vol. 49, no. 2, Summer 2007, pp. 157–76.
- Lanxin Xiang, 'Review Essay: Who Was Responsible?'. *Survival*, vol. 49, no. 2, Summer 2007, pp. 183–6.
- Saunders, Phillip C., 'The United States and East Asia after Iraq'. *Survival*, vol. 49, no. 1, Spring 2007, pp. 141–52.

Strategic Survey is the Institute's annual review of strategic developments throughout the world. Recent sections of interest include:

- 'Climate Change: Security Implications and Regional Impacts'. *Strategic Survey 2007*, pp. 46–68.
- 'China: Growth and Engagement'. *Strategic Survey 2007*, pp. 283–309.
- 'Korean Security: Roller-Coaster Ride'. *Strategic Survey 2007*, pp. 309–324.
- 'Japan: Active Diplomacy'. *Strategic Survey 2007*, pp. 324–40.
- 'Southeast Asia: Domestic Instability and Sensitive Bilateral Relations'. *Strategic Survey 2007*, pp. 375–95.
- 'The Oil Price Rise: Geopolitical and Structural Issues'. *Strategic Survey 2006*, pp. 53–66.
- 'South Asia: New Possibilities, Old Problems'. *Strategic Survey 2006*, pp. 304–27.