

Post-INF Arms Control in the Asia-Pacific: Political Viability and Implementation Challenges

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Summary

Collaborative efforts to build a new arms-control architecture are urgently needed following the demise of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) – especially in the Asia-Pacific, where arms-racing pressures are unbridled. High-level discussions within the Trump administration on deploying previously prohibited ground-based INF-range (500–5,500 kilometres) missiles in the Asia-Pacific could hamper progress; rather than convincing Beijing to engage in (as-yet-unspecified) trilateral arms-control negotiations, they could increase strategic risks, strain relations between the United States and its allies in the region (Australia, Japan and South Korea) and encourage closer Sino-Russian military cooperation. Efforts to create arms-control momentum are welcome, but to be politically viable, new initiatives need to be fair, equitable and underpinned by strategic empathy, reciprocity and mutual restraint. A more constructive approach would see the US and its Asia-Pacific allies using their combined diplomatic capital to push for a formal regional arms-control dialogue, which could initially focus on confidence building and strategic-risk reduction, and over the longer term help lay the foundations for a new arms-control regime.

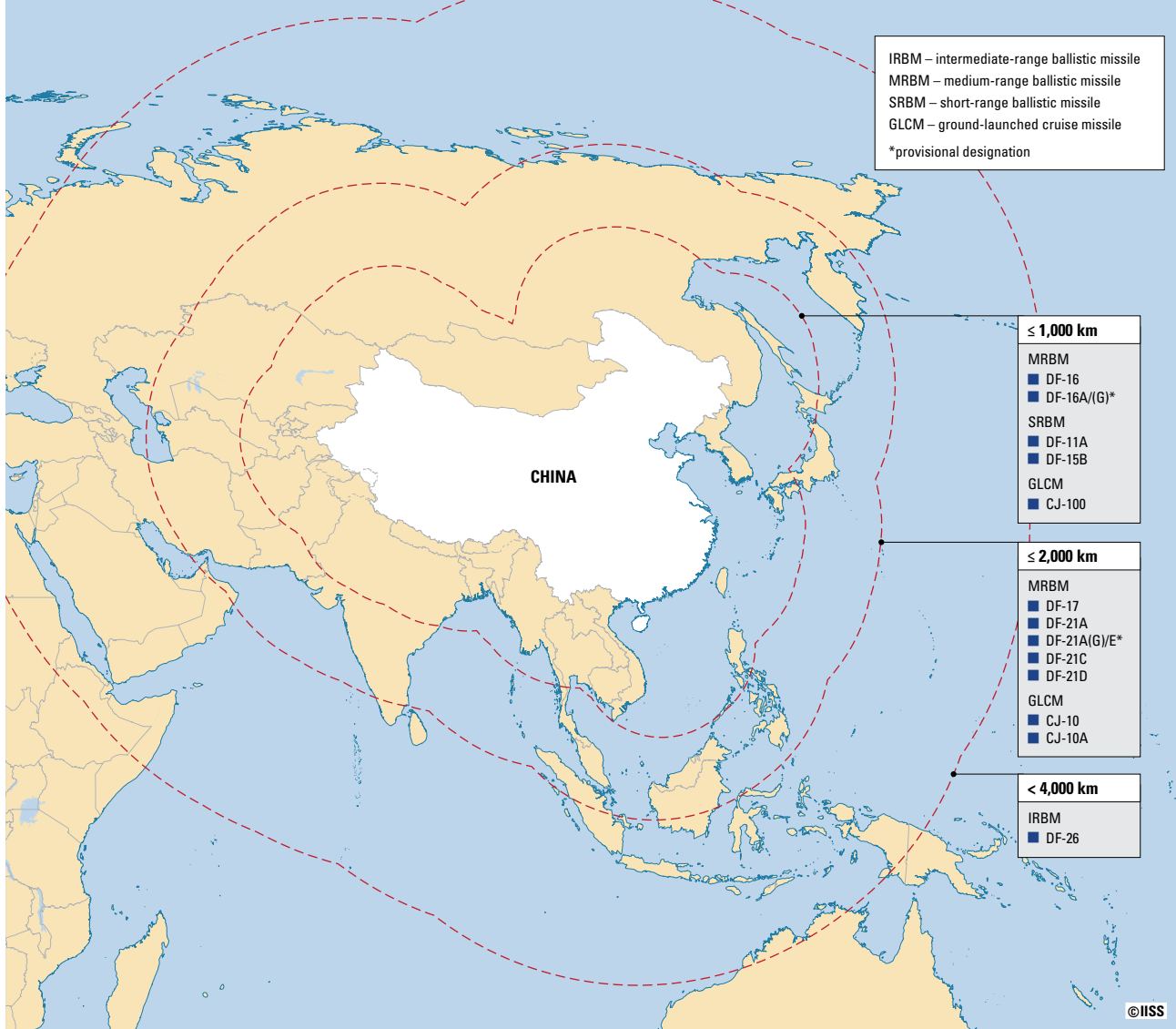
The impact of deploying US INF-range missiles in Asia

On 3 August 2019, the day after the US withdrew from the INF Treaty, US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper revealed that the US aims to deploy INF-range missiles, conventionally armed and ground-based, to the Asia-Pacific – a step he and other US officials and analysts believe is necessary to counter China's military

expansion and modernisation, including its deployment of cutting-edge anti-ship ballistic missiles and hypersonic glide weapons.¹

In addition to 'closing the missile gap' relatively cheaply and easily² in Asia, strategic analysts (and possibly US officials) believe this move will help incentivise Beijing to engage in formal arms-control negotiations, echoing the 1979 NATO missile-deployment plan (known as the dual-track decision),³ which eventually led Moscow to sign the INF Treaty.⁴ However, rather than drawing China and Russia into (as-yet-undefined) trilateral arms-control negotiations, early indications are that US deliberations on missile deployments are exacerbating arms-racing dynamics and consolidating ever-closer military cooperation between Beijing and Moscow.

China's condemnation of the US plan has been loud and clear, with one Chinese analyst describing it as a 'dagger at [Beijing's] throat'.⁵ Official criticisms have been less colourful but equally strong. After the US formally withdrew from the INF Treaty, China's Director General of the Department of Arms Control, Fu Cong, stated that 'China will not stand idly by and will be forced to take countermeasures if the United States deploys intermediate-range ground-based missiles in this part of the world'. According to reports, Beijing is responding by trying to accelerate its progress towards the survivability of its nuclear forces: moving over to new types of mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), adapting its missiles to carry multiple warheads, successfully experimenting with hypersonic boost-glide vehicles, and building a sophisticated radar network.⁶ Analysts inside and outside China are speculating that Beijing might also change its strategic

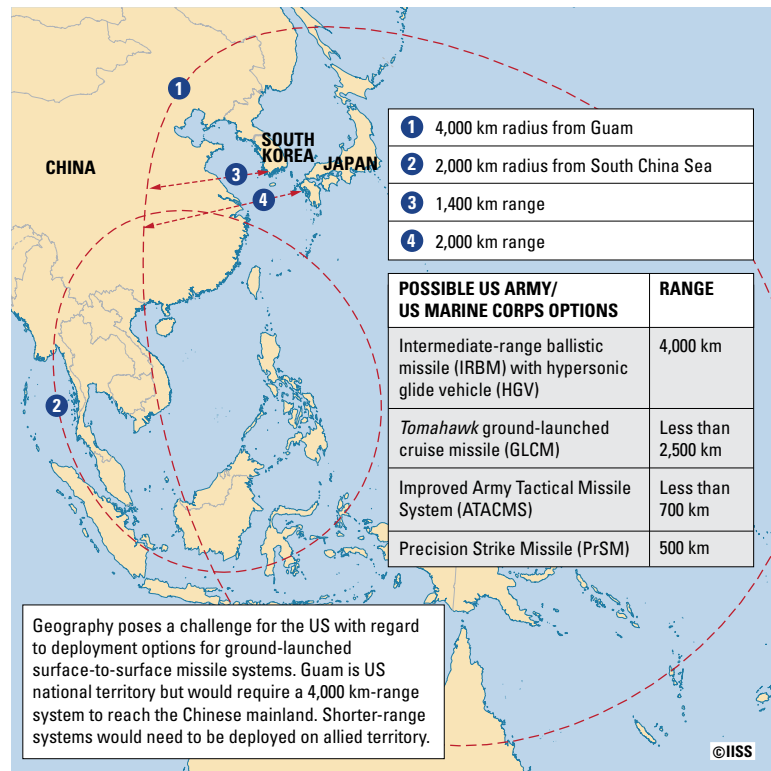


Selected Chinese missile ranges (Source: IISS)

posture and nuclear doctrine, abandoning its no-first-use commitment and increasing the operational readiness of its nuclear forces.⁷

As for Russia, despite the central role it played in the INF Treaty’s demise, it has been quick to criticise US plans to deploy INF-range missiles to Asia. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has stated that ‘the geographical reality is that if [ground-based INF-range] missiles are deployed ... a large part of Russia will be exposed ... Naturally, we will be forced to react.’⁸ These remarks followed revelations, announced by President Putin, that Russia is seeking to balance US deployment plans in Asia by placing new missile systems in its eastern regions, and augmenting its missile defences there, while also helping China to boost its own defensive systems.⁹

Some of the dynamics driving closer Sino-Russian ties can be traced back to US abrogation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty) in 2002 and



Notional US land-based range requirements (Source: IISS)

subsequent deployment of missile-defence systems, but the recent acceleration is hard to ignore. Putin describes the current state of Sino-Russian relations as ‘an allied relationship’, while China calls it a ‘comprehensive strategic partnership’ and insists relations with Moscow are the best they have ever been.¹⁰ Although some analysts stress that the bilateral relationship may be reaching its limits due to a mutual lack of strategic trust, this is not a given, and a more formal alliance could emerge as China and Russia attempt to counter US power projection in Asia.¹¹

Recent events back up this analysis. In July 2019, the first joint patrol by Chinese and Russian long-range bomber aircraft took place over the Pacific Ocean: an explicit demonstration of the possibilities of Sino-Russian joint military action in the event of a conflict.¹² In October 2019, Putin confirmed Russia is helping China develop a missile-launch-detection system – one of the most sensitive components in a strategic control system.¹³ According to Vassily Kashin of the Russian Academy of Sciences, this level of military integration (which builds on Sino-Russian cooperation in missile defence, hypersonic technology and the construction of nuclear submarines) would lead China and Russia down a parallel path to that of the US and its Asia-Pacific allies.¹⁴

China’s attitude to arms control

It will be difficult to convince China to engage in post-INF arms-control negotiations – though neither because China is uninterested in arms control per se, nor because Beijing always insists on free-riding on the efforts of others (which is Beijing’s reputation in the arms-control sphere). Like all nuclear-armed states, China is willing to engage in arms-control discussion when it believes the political, military and economic benefits outweigh the costs and risks. It tends to put more value than the other permanent members of the UN Security Council (the P5) on broad declarations of intent, behavioural rules, and self-control, and less on numerical limits on capabilities, compliance mechanisms, and operational transparency.¹⁵ However, at times, China has adapted its approach, as it did when it signed the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty and when it pushed for a treaty preventing an arms race in outer space.¹⁶

China rejects the current US push for trilateral negotiations, due to suspicions over US motivations and uncertainty over its expectations. Fu Cong has stated that it is ‘not reasonable or even fair to expect China to participate in an arms-reduction negotiation at this stage’ – a position based on Beijing’s much smaller nuclear arsenal and long-standing defensive nuclear posture.¹⁷ Unlike Washington and Moscow, Beijing maintains a minimum deterrent, pledges never to use nuclear weapons first or to make nuclear threats to deter non-nuclear attacks, assures adversaries that it will not try to gain a military advantage by retaliating rapidly and reciprocally to any nuclear attack, and promises never to engage in a nuclear-arms race.¹⁸ A key operational feature of this posture is that China’s nuclear warheads and missiles are not mated, and would count as zero under existing New START counting rules.¹⁹ US overtures on trilateralising New START thus appear disingenuous.²⁰

Scepticism over US motivations partly explains Beijing’s current approach to nuclear-arms control. Chinese officials deny that they are dragging their feet, and tout their leadership within the P5 process, including the development of a Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms,²¹ discussions on nuclear doctrine, and submission of national reports in the 2020 review cycle of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as evidence of progress. But these are very slim pickings at a time when proactive arms-control leadership is urgently needed, and complaints that China is not shouldering enough responsibility for reducing nuclear risks, particularly in East Asia, are valid.

There have been periods in the past when China has played a much more constructive role. In the 1990s, for example, China was quite active in military-to-military confidence building and risk reduction, showing leadership on non-targeting, safeguarding against accidental missile launches, using early-warning systems to prevent inadvertent military incursions, and prescribing technologies that could undermine command-and-control capabilities.²² These efforts were motivated by a desire to improve China’s image as a rising power and to foster economic growth, and reflected a sense of optimism that a new type of relationship, underpinned by the principles of cooperative security, was possible.²³ However, Beijing’s optimism has gradually eroded,

beginning with US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, deployment of missile defences, pursuit of space dominance, and shift from engagement with to containment of China.

Largely as a result of these developments, for the past 20 years it has been increasingly difficult to persuade Beijing that the benefits of engaging in arms control outweigh the costs and risks. The Trump administration's heavy-handed push for trilateral arms control (in which Washington has not defined what agreement it would want China to embrace and shows no sign that the agreement would include reciprocity or mutual restraint) thus exacerbates an already serious problem.²⁴

Engaging China on missile control

Although its efforts to engage China have been unsuccessful, the Trump administration's determination to tackle the arms-control void in the Asia-Pacific deserves some credit. Finding a way to limit China's expanding missile arsenal, and to halt the race to amass faster, more lethal weapons, is an urgent task, and one that is becoming more difficult as President Xi Jinping pushes forward with his goal of building a world-class military.²⁵ The problem is not only that China suspects the US of using arms control as a tool to scupper its global ambitions, but that there is no global norm governing missile activities, and thus no equivalent of the NPT, Chemical Weapons

Convention or Biological Weapons Convention through which to agree and implement controls.

To date, efforts to control missile proliferation have been non-binding and have either produced initiatives that are perceived to be West/US-dominated, and are thus spurned by key states (such as the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOB), and the Proliferation Security Initiative), or have resulted in lowest-common-denominator initiatives that have fizzled out.²⁶ Before Germany launched the Missile Dialogue Initiative in 2019, no serious international effort to address this gap had taken place since the UN Panel of Governmental Experts produced a series of recommendations in 2008. In the intervening period, a combination of deteriorating great-power relations, uncertainties about the impact of emerging technologies, and the fact missiles are inherently attractive to states, with low political and psychological barriers to acquisition and use, led to decline in missile-control momentum. As a result, the Asia-Pacific is now on the brink of a dangerously destabilising arms race, with increasing escalation risks exacerbated by China's overconfidence and lack of experience in handling crisis situations.²⁷

Thus, the critical question is: what would encourage China to participate in missile-control negotiations in the current strategic climate? Fortunately, likely delays



China's DF-17 medium-range hypersonic boost-glide system, photographed at a military parade in Beijing on 1 October 2019, is nearing service entry, while an intercontinental-range boost-glide vehicle is also reported to be in development (Greg Baker/AFP via Getty)

in the US deployment of INF-range missiles in Asia leave open a diplomatic window which, if utilised effectively, could result in arms-control progress that leads the US to reassess, limit or even reverse its deployment plans.²⁸ But how can this opportunity be maximised?

To be politically viable, arms-control proposals need to be fair, equitable and concrete, with a demonstrable emphasis on strategic empathy, reciprocity and mutual restraint. China would have strong incentives to discuss proposals that are underpinned by these principles if Chinese officials considered they would help them avoid a costly arms race, reduce strategic risks and demonstrate arms-control leadership.²⁹ With these criteria in mind, three existing proposals merit discussion:

- A trilateral negotiation to limit the number of missile launchers – a proposal put forward by Tong Zhao of the Carnegie–Tsinghua Center for Global Policy. His suggestion is to cap the number of land-based missile launchers, ICBM launchers, submarine-launched ballistic-missile launchers, and heavy bombers.³⁰ The advantage of focusing on launchers is that China, Russia and the US each currently operate approximately 600 launchers of the relevant types, making it easier to tackle them on an equitable basis. Tong argues that a comprehensive agreement would address Russian and US concerns about China’s INF-range land-based missiles and Chinese concerns about Russian and US strategic-weapons advantages.³¹
- Negotiation of a regional missile-limitation regime in East Asia – a proposal originally developed by Kurosaki Akira of Fukushima University in 2004.³² Kurosaki’s idea was to develop a comprehensive regional regime that would include agreements on missile control, peaceful uses of outer space, confidence-building measures and verification systems (each component negotiated separately or together). His proposal remains relevant because it focuses on the regional dynamics of missile proliferation, which affect the feasibility and implementation of bilateral and trilateral arms-control agreements. At the very least, his idea of creating a regional organisation for missile-technology control (including an agreement between regional

states to provide prior notice of missile and satellite launches and to exchange data on missile armaments) is worth considering, as it would enhance transparency and predictability.³³

- A multilateral initiative to upgrade the HCOC to improve its implementation and make it more appealing to Beijing and other holdouts – an approach advocated by Nikolai Sokov of the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. He suggests developing a global notification network for the pre-launch of missiles, with rules similar to those governing Russian and US launches of nuclear missiles; bringing long-range cruise missiles and uninhabited aerial vehicles into the regime; and increasing transparency in launches of military satellites, for example by sharing data on payloads.³⁴ This would help alleviate Chinese and Russian concerns about space-based strike weapons and US fears about progress in anti-satellite weapons (ASATs), which are sensitive issues due to a mutual and growing dependence on space assets amid multi-domain threats. However, if the HCOC is deemed to be overburdened by political baggage, it should be possible to pursue some of these ideas bilaterally, trilaterally or among the P5, as former US assistant secretary of state for arms control Frank A. Rose has recommended.³⁵

Alternative approaches

Alternative means of addressing missile-control challenges tend to fall into two categories: ideas that are conceptually appealing but so complex that it is difficult to imagine how they would be implemented in practice; or proposals that lack feasibility because they would reinforce or remove a major competitive advantage in a way that is transparently one-sided. The former, in which dynamic limits (bilateral, trilateral or multilateral) are applied across multiple domains, weapons systems and emerging technologies, are interesting and worth discussing in Track 2 dialogues, with the goal of developing workable proposals.³⁶ The latter are also worth reviewing if they raise awareness of competing perspectives and gridlocks, as well as potential arms-control incentives.

The work of Wu Riqiang (Associate Professor in the School of International Studies at Renmin University of China) is helpful in this context.³⁷ His proposal to kick-start trilateral arms control would have been dismissed outright by former US president Barack Obama, let alone President Trump, but it contains useful insights. Chief among these is his discussion of how US space and missile-defence activities signal to Beijing and Moscow that Washington is pursuing invulnerability, which he argues undermines all arms-control efforts. He makes several suggestions for how this roadblock could be removed, such as an acknowledgement of mutual vulnerability by China, Russia and the US, including a joint statement that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought; an agreement to simultaneously consider limits on offensive and defensive weapons; a trilateral no-first-use statement, which would build confidence and reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national-security policy; and bilateral Russia-US reductions in strategic and non-strategic weapons. In return, China would commit to future engagement in New START (after new counting rules were agreed) and would significantly improve its nuclear transparency.

Although as a complete package Wu's proposal lacks balance and is unlikely to attract the support of Moscow and Washington, elements of his proposal are worth probing, including his point about China's preoccupation with US invulnerability. Being seen to address this overwhelming concern would help Washington's defence decision-makers demonstrate the strategic empathy needed to kick-start serious arms-control talks.

The role of US allies in the Asia-Pacific

The actions of US allies in the Asia-Pacific have a major impact on China's threat perceptions and thus, for better or worse, influence Beijing's position on arms control. In order to implement its post-INF plan, the Trump administration is hoping its Asian allies will host US ground-based INF-range missiles on their territory³⁸ – a development some believe will help push China to the negotiating table on missile and strategic-arms control. But Washington would be unwise to devote its diplomatic capital to this strategy. In addition to

riling Beijing and Moscow, Washington's desired post-INF hosting agreements are unpopular among officials and publics in the Asia-Pacific;³⁹ pursuing them could weaken the US alliance in the region, push China and Russia into a closer strategic partnership, and increase arms-racing behaviours.⁴⁰

In Australia, Japan and South Korea, the US post-INF deployment plan is regarded negatively, from Seoul's condemnation of it as a reckless move tantamount to declaring China and Russia enemies, to Canberra's and Tokyo's assertions that hosting arrangements are not even being considered and a line should be drawn under any such discussion.⁴¹ All three countries are concerned the US plan would increase arms-racing pressures and propel Beijing to use its economic clout to punish behaviours it explicitly proscribes.⁴² Analysts have argued that one way around this is for US allies to quietly negotiate limited deployment agreements that would only place missiles on their territory during a time of crisis, but even this arrangement would increase escalation pressures in ways that would be difficult to manage.⁴³

It would be more constructive to enlist the help of US allies in the Asia-Pacific to try to bring China, North Korea and Russia into an inclusive regional arms-control dialogue, underpinned by the principles of cooperative security. The initial focus of these discussions could be on confidence building and risk reduction (some of Kurosaki's recommendations are relevant here), with a longer-term goal of limiting specific weapons systems, including dual-capable INF-range missiles, ASATs and hypersonic weapons.⁴⁴ Washington could incentivise Beijing to engage in this diplomatic process if it emphasises not just the economic savings but also the mutual interest in managing the sometimes unpredictable and destabilising actions of states in the region, and the shared need to find ways to effectively de-escalate regional crises.⁴⁵ Although this would be a dramatic departure from the Trump administration's current approach, it could become more feasible if there is a change of government following the US presidential election later this year. Moreover, the economic and societal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic could encourage greater openness to new arms-control initiatives that could help trim defence budgets.

Notes

- 1 China is believed to possess the largest arsenal of ground-launched INF-range missiles in the world, at around 2,000, comprising 95% of its total missile inventory. This expanding missile arsenal is part of Beijing's push to modernise the People's Liberation Army by 2035 and develop what Chinese President Xi Jinping calls a 'world-class military' by 2049 (the centennial of the founding of the People's Republic of China). Although President Xi has never specified what he believes would constitute a world-class military, strategic analysts in China and the US define it as one that can match or balance the armed forces of the US, and allow China to prevail in sovereignty disputes, especially over Taiwan. See United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Transcript of the Hearing on a 'World-Class' Military: Assessing China's Global Military Ambitions, 20 June 2019, <https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2019-10/June%202020,%202019%20Hearing%20Transcript.pdf>; Robert Kobza, 'Another Tool in the Toolbox: Using Intermediate-Range Missiles to Counter A2/AD in the Pacific', *Georgetown Security Studies Review*, 2 December 2019; Richard Weitz, 'Asian Missiles on the March', *Open Forum*, 31 October 2019, <http://www.theasanforum.org/asian-missiles-on-the-march/>; Murano Masashi, 'The Japan-US Alliance in a Post-INF World: Building an Effective Deterrent in the Western Pacific', 18 December 2019, <https://www.nippon.com/en/in-depth/do0526/the-japan-us-alliance-in-a-post-inf-world-building-an-effective-deterrent-in-the-western-p.html>.
- 2 Relative to (conventional) hypersonic systems, which are expensive and technically challenging to develop. Kelley M. Saylor, 'Hypersonic Weapons: Background and Issues for Congress', CRS Report, updated 17 March 2020, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/R45811.pdf>.
- 3 The 1979 NATO dual-track decision led to the negotiation of the 1987 INF Treaty, but it also arguably brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. The decision was taken in response to the 1976 Soviet deployment of a new, mobile and accurate intermediate-range missile, the SS-20, which was targeted at Western Europe. To fill the perceived missile gap this created, the US deployed a new class of land-based intermediate-range missiles on the territory of some NATO allies, to hold Soviet strategic assets at risk. In addition to strengthening extended deterrence, it was hoped this would generate momentum to negotiate a ban on INF-range weapons (which were considered destabilising due to their speed and accuracy). The decision caused serious divisions within NATO, as some European members believed basing US INF-range missiles on their territory would dramatically increase nuclear risks, representing a shift to a nuclear war-fighting posture (fears the Soviet Union's propaganda machine successfully exploited). But European concerns proved prescient: deployment of the NATO INF-range missiles took place on the back of the *Able Archer* military exercise, which was misinterpreted by the Soviets as preparations for a nuclear attack. Tanya Ogilvie-White, *On Nuclear Deterrence: The Correspondence of Sir Michael Quinlan* (London: Routledge/IISS, 2011), pp. 169–220.
- 4 Despite its risks, some commentators support this approach. See, for example, Grzegorz Kuczyński, 'The Collapse of the INF Treaty and the US–China Rivalry', Warsaw Institute Special Report, 3 January 2020, <https://warsawinstitute.org/the-collapse-of-the-inf-treaty-and-the-us-china-rivalry/>; Rebecca L. Heinrichs, 'Put US Post-INF Missiles into Production', *Defense One*, 20 December 2019, <https://www.hudson.org/research/15610-put-us-post-inf-missiles-into-production>; and Robert Kobza, 'Another Tool in the Toolbox'.
- 5 Zhao Weibin, 'Potential Impact of US Deployment of Intermediate-Range Missiles in China', 23 August 2019, <https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/potential-impact-of-us-deployment-of-intermediate-range-missiles-in-asia>.
- 6 Tong Zhao, 'China in a World with No US-Russia Treaty-Based Arms Control', Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy, 1 April 2019, <https://carnegietsinghua.org/2019/04/01/china-in-world-with-no-u.s.-russia-treaty-based-arms-control/k25e>; Andrey Baklitskiy, 'What the End of the INF Treaty Means for China', Carnegie Moscow Center Commentary, 2 December 2019, <https://carnegie.ru/commentary/80462>.
- 7 Baklitskiy states that 'it's not impossible Beijing might increase the operational readiness of its nuclear forces, or even adopt the doctrine of a retaliatory strike'. Andrey Baklitskiy, 'What the End of the INF Treaty Means for China'.
- 8 'US Can Deploy Shorter- and Intermediate-range Missiles in Asia Pacific if it Wants – Lavrov', *TASS*, 10 February 2020, <https://tass.com/politics/1118165>.
- 9 See, for example, Stephen Blank, 'After the INF: Russia's Propaganda and Real Threats', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 6 September 2019, <https://jamestown.org/program/after-the-inf-russias-propaganda-and-real-threats/>; 'Russia is Helping China Build a Missile Defence System, Putin Says', *Guardian*, 4 October 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/04/russia-is-helping-china-build-a-missile-defence-system-putin-says>;

- 'Russia Plans to Beef Up Missile Defense on Northern Kurils, Close to Islands Claimed by Japan', *Japan Times*, 3 September 2019, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/09/03/national/russia-plans-beef-missile-defense-northern-kurils-close-islands-claimed-japan/>; 'Massive Nuclear War Games Start in Russian Arctic', *Moscow Times*, 15 October 2019, <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/10/15/massive-nuclear-war-games-start-in-russian-arctic-a67737>; Elizabeth Howell, 'Rocket Glitch Fixed, Russia Launches Satellite to Enhance Military Communications', 21 February 2020, <https://www.space.com/russian-soyuz-rocket-launches-military-satellite-meridian-m.html>.
- 10 Vassily Kashin, 'Tacit Alliance: Russia and China Take Military Partnership to New Level', 22 October 2019, <https://carnegie.ru/commentary/80136>.
- 11 Stephen Blank, 'The Sino-Russian Alliance and What it Means for Australia', *The Interpreter*, 5 November 2019, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/sino-russian-alliance-and-what-it-means-australia>; Tong Zhao, 'China in a World with No US-Russia Treaty-Based Arms Control'.
- 12 Franz-Stefan Gady, 'The Significance of the First Ever China-Russia Strategic Bomber Patrol', *The Diplomat*, 25 July 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/07/the-significance-of-the-first-ever-china-russia-strategic-bomber-patrol>.
- 13 If Chinese and Russian detection systems are integrated, it will increase the warning time both countries have of a US missile strike. China will be alerted by warning stations in Russia's north; Russia will be alerted by warning stations in China's south and southeast.
- 14 Vassily Kashin, 'Tacit Alliance'. In fact, the path of Sino-Russian strategic cooperation need not mirror that of US military cooperation with its allies in East Asia to have major strategic consequences for the region. Rapid developments in dual-use technologies and the growing significance of the space and cyber domains in the evolution of warfare mean high-tech collaboration could become a major feature of 21st-century strategic-alliance formation (particularly if China and Russia overcome their trust issues). For an introduction to Sino-Russian high-tech cooperation, see Samuel Bendett and Elsa Kania, 'A New Sino-Russian High-tech Partnership', ASPI Policy Brief no. 22, 29 October 2019, <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/new-sino-russian-high-tech-partnership>.
- 15 Rod Lyon, 'Is China Ready to Play Ball on Arms Control?', *The National Interest*, 8 February 2020, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/china-ready-play-ball-arms-control-120666>.
- 16 Nancy Gallagher, 'China on Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Strategic Stability', *CISSM Working Paper*, August 2019, p. 2.
- 17 Quoted in Christopher Bodeen, 'China Vows to Counter US Deployment of Midrange Missiles in Asia', *The Diplomat*, 7 August 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/08/china-vows-to-counter-us-deployment-of-midrange-missiles-in-asia>.
- 18 State Council Information Office of the PRC, 'China's National Defence in the New Era', 24 July 2019, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-07/24/c_138253389.htm; Xu Weidi, 'China's Security Environment and the Role of Nuclear Weapons', in Li Bin and Tong Zhao (eds.), *Understanding Chinese Nuclear Thinking* (CEIP, 2016), pp. 19–43.
- 19 Leanne Quinn, 'China's Stance on Nuclear Arms Control and New START', *Arms Control Now*, 23 August 2019, <https://www.armscontrol.org/blog/2019-08-23/chinas-stance-nuclear-arms-control-new-start>.
- 20 These concerns are shared by key US domestic critics. For example, a former acting under-secretary for arms control, Tom Countryman, has called the US push to include China in trilateral negotiations 'a poison pill, a pretext for withdrawing from or allowing New START to expire' – Testimony of the Honorable Thomas Countryman, US House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment, 25 July 2019, <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA14/20190725/109869/HHRG-116-FA14-Wstate-CountrymanT-20190725.pdf>.
- 21 This is a Chinese-led initiative to develop a common language of arms control to make meaningful negotiation easier.
- 22 Ming-Yen Tsai, *From Adversaries to Partners? Chinese and Russian Military Cooperation After the Cold War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); Janne E. Nolan (ed.), *Global Engagement: Cooperation and Security in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1994).
- 23 Nancy Gallagher, 'China on Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Strategic Stability'.
- 24 Testimony of the Honorable Thomas Countryman, p. 10; George Perkovich, 'What's in it for China? A Beijing Insider's Surprising Insight on Nuclear Arms Control', CEIP Commentary, 30 July 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/07/30/what-s-in-it-for-china-beijing-insider-s-surprising-insight-on-nuclear-arms-control-pub-79596>; Tong Zhao, 'Opportunities for Nuclear Arms Control Engagement with China', *Arms Control Today*, January/February 2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2020-01/features/opportunities-nuclear-arms-control-engagement-china>.

- 25 Please refer to footnote no. 1. Transcript of the Hearing on a 'World-Class' Military: Assessing China's Global Military Ambitions, 20 June 2019, <https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2019-10/June%2020,%202019%20Hearing%20Transcript.pdf>.
- 26 Examples of the latter include the UN Panel of Governmental Experts, which tried and failed on three separate occasions to generate momentum for a global norm on missile control. Divisions between the panel members highlighted many of the challenges involved in developing a universal missile-control regime, including overcoming a trust deficit, and perceptions of double standards and 'West-centrism' in existing missile-control arrangements.
- 27 Jenny L. Naylor, 'The Third Nuclear Age', *Comparative Strategy* 2019, vol. 38, no. 4, p. 282.
- 28 The 2020 US National Defense Authorization Act barred funding for the production and deployment of ground-based INF-range missiles until the US Department of Defense provides details of where they will be based.
- 29 George Perkovich, 'What's in it for China?'
- 30 Tong Zhao, 'Opportunities for Nuclear Arms Control Engagement with China'.
- 31 An intriguing feature of Tong's proposal is that it dovetails with the 'freedom to mix' approach suggested by former NATO deputy secretary general Rose Gottemoeller, whereby an absolute limit could set on the overall number of missiles for each state, but states could then decide which configuration of missiles to retain within that limit. Amy J. Nelson, 'The Death of the INF Treaty has Lessons for Arms Control', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 4 November 2019, <https://thebulletin.org/2019/11/the-death-of-the-inf-treaty-has-lessons-for-arms-control>.
- 32 Kurosaki Akira, 'Moving Beyond Deterrence and Missile Defense', INESAP Briefing Paper no. 13, November 2004, http://www.inesap.org/sites/default/files/Briefing13_04_o.pdf.
- 33 To assist this exercise, work on de-escalation and information sharing in the Russia–NATO context could be usefully mined for ideas that could also be relevant in East Asia. See Corentin Brustlein, 'The Erosion of Strategic Stability and the Future of Arms Control in Europe', IFRI Proliferation Papers no. 60, November 2018, https://www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/brustlein_erosion_strategic_stability_2018_3.pdf.
- 34 Nikolai Sokov, 'The Hague Code of Conduct: Multivector Expansion', Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, 10 October 2019, <https://www.nonproliferation.org/the-hague-code-of-conduct-multivector-expansion>.
- 35 Frank A. Rose, 'Order from Chaos: Bringing China into the Fold on Arms Control and Strategic Stability Issues', Brookings, 25 September 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/09/25/bringing-china-into-the-fold-on-arms-control-and-strategic-stability-issues>.
- 36 The most complex arms-control treaty ever negotiated was the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I). Its provisions were notoriously demanding to implement, involving 12 different types of verification. The START experience offers lessons on the implementation challenges that are likely to accompany any new arms-control agreements (assuming major negotiation obstacles can be overcome), particularly when multiple weapons systems are covered by a single treaty, the weapons technologies being limited are changing rapidly (across multiple domains), and agreements are trilateral/multilateral. See Emmanuelle Maitre, 'What Prospects for Arms and Missile Control After the End of the INF Treaty?', FRS Recherches & Documents no. 3, February 2020, <https://www.frstrategie.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/recherches-et-documents/2020/202003.pdf>; David Santoro, 'A U.S. Perspective on Trilateral Arms Control: A Long Shot - Within Reach', in Ulrich Kühn (ed.), *Trilateral Arms Control? Perspectives from Washington, Moscow and Beijing*, IFSH Research Report no. 2, March 2020, https://ifsh.de/file/publication/Research_Report/002/20200224_IFSH_Research_Report_002_final.pdf; and Heather Williams, 'Asymmetric Arms Control and Strategic Stability: Scenarios for Limiting Hypersonic Glide Vehicles', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 2019, vol. 46, no. 6, pp. 789–813.
- 37 Wu Riqiang, 'Trilateral Arms Control Initiative: A Chinese Perspective', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 4 September 2019, <https://thebulletin.org/2019/09/trilateral-arms-control-initiative-a-chinese-perspective>.
- 38 US analysts argue that US territories in the region, such as Guam, could be used to deploy some longer-range missiles, but they caution that Guam's limited size makes it vulnerable to a massed missile attack from China and believe that placing missiles in a single small location would make it easier for Chinese forces to anticipate potential missile flight paths, easing interception. For these reasons they urge the US to utilise the geographic characteristics of allies in the Asia-Pacific to deploy ground-launched missiles in a variety of locations. See Robert Kobza, 'Another Tool in the Toolbox'.
- 39 Despite this reluctance, some strategic analysts in Australia, Japan and South Korea argue in favour of a significant deepening of extended deterrence. See, for example, recent

- work by Stephan Frühling, Andrew O’Neil and David Santoro, who advocate ‘Australian-US cooperation in the development of long-range targeting capabilities to enable US strike operations, including by new US intermediate-range cruise and ballistic missiles’. They also suggest demonstrating and publicising the targeting of US cruise missiles based on Australian sensors. Stephan Frühling, Andrew O’Neil and David Santoro, ‘Escalating Cooperation: Nuclear Deterrence and the US-Australia Alliance’, 7 November 2019, <https://www.usssc.edu.au/analysis/escalating-cooperation-nuclear-deterrence-and-the-us-australia-alliance>.
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- 41 Franz-Stefan Gady, ‘Australia, South Korea Say No to Deployment of US INF-Range Missiles on Their Soil’, *The Diplomat*, 6 August 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/08/australia-south-korea-say-no-to-deployment-of-us-inf-range-missiles-on-their-soil>.
- 42 South Korea experienced this type of pressure in 2017–19 after the Korean retail conglomerate Lotte Group provided land for the US deployment of missile interceptors. In response, Beijing shut down Lotte Group stores in China, indefinitely suspended construction on Lotte projects in Shenyang and Chengdu, and forbade Chinese tourists from travelling to South Korea.
- Seoul sustained deep economic wounds as a result. Tokyo and Canberra are now equally wary in the wake of Beijing’s threats to impose even more severe penalties in response to any new missile deployments.
- 43 For a discussion of the growing risks of extended deterrence breakdown in Asia, see James M. Acton, ‘Escalation Through Entanglement’, *International Security* 2018, vol. 43, no. 1, https://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/full/10.1162/isec_a_00320; Tanya Ogilvie-White, ‘The Urgent Need for Nuclear Risk Reduction in Asia’, APLN-CNND Policy Brief no. 14, August 2014, <https://cnnd.crawford.anu.edu.au/publication/cnnd/4631/policy-brief-no-14-urgent-need-nuclear-risk-reduction-asia>.
- 44 The military doctrines of China, Russia and the US all emphasise space as a future war-fighting domain. See *China’s National Defense in a New Era*, July 2019, <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/download/whitepaperonnationaldefenseinnewera.doc>; *The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation*, 25 December 2014, <https://rusemb.org.uk/press/2029>; and *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, December 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905-2.pdf>.
- 45 Dong Wang and Friso M.S. Stevens, ‘Why is there No Northeast Asian Security Architecture? Assessing the Strategic Impediments to a Stable East Asia’, *The Pacific Review*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2019.1702087>.



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