

Preface

The inauguration of U.S. President Joe Biden in 2021 has been considered the beginning of a shift in the international strategic environment. It was anticipated that the strategic confrontation between the U.S. and China that began with former U.S. President Donald Trump would de-escalate as Biden advocated a strategic competitive relationship with the Chinese Communist Party. However, over the past year, initial predictions of de-escalation of U.S.-China relations have been undermined by the Chinese Communist Party's continued military aggression, ethnic and religious oppression in Xinjiang, as well as its national security legislation constricting human rights in Hong Kong, which have alarmed countries in the Indo-Pacific region. As a result, Biden was forced to continue Trump's Indo-Pacific strategy to curb the Chinese Communist Party's attempts. In particular, the immediate fall of Afghanistan to Taliban control after the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the country has raised international concerns regarding whether the U.S. will uphold its strategic assurances and commitments to its allies.

Over the past year, the U.S. conducted intensive joint military exercises and training in the Indo-Pacific region with regional and allied countries. In addition to the existing Quad security structure, the U.S. established a trilateral alliance (AUKUS) with the United Kingdom and Australia to upgrade the strength of its Indo-Pacific maritime alliance. In addition, Japan, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, France, and other countries have been regularly invited to hold joint naval exercises in the Indo-Pacific region, demonstrating the determination of the U.S. and its allied countries to deter the Chinese Communist Party with superior military power. As a consequence of this dynamic, other regions such as Northeast

Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and Europe have been affected in terms of security.

Published this year, the 2021 Report on the Security Landscape of the Indo-Pacific Region distinguishes between the strategic context and the actions of major powers that affect the Indo-Pacific region, the responses and actions of major Indo-Pacific nations, and the security implications for the Indo-Pacific region. The 15-chapter assessment report is herewith presented to provide a reference for relevant policymaking stakeholders.

As the Chinese Communist Party entered its 100th year of establishment, the political and military dynamics of the CCP in 2021 reflected a Xi Jinping in haste to establish his position in history and perpetuate his power. The “2021 Report on the Development of the Chinese Communist Party’s Politics and Military” analyzes and assesses the internal and external challenges confronting the CCP from the primary perspectives of political, military, economic and social. In terms of the internal environment, the CCP released its 14th Five-Year Plan and 2035 Visionary Goals and promoted its dual-cycle policy, which not only emphasizes strategic technologies and enterprises with R&D potential but also aims to foster semiconductor industries to achieve technological autonomy. Furthermore, under the goal of maintaining stability and sustainable governance, the CCP, mindful of the coming 20th Party Congress, will intensify, not relax, its control over social, public opinion, media, and military forces.

In terms of external relations, the CCP is alienated from the international community because of its series of actions suppressing human rights and democracy and its use of a wolf warrior diplomacy to deflect international criticism. As the U.S.-China dynamic intensifies, the U.S.-Taiwan military cooperation relationship has dramatically escalated, bringing an increasing number of countries to support Taiwan and its participation in international bodies. There are divergent views on whether the CCP is overconfident and expanding externally as a result of its rising national power, or whether it is in a state of international isolation and unrest, seeking internal stability and preventing external forces from taking advantage of the situation and adopting strong control measures. This year’s

2021 Report on the Development of the Chinese Communist Party's Politics and Military provides a critical perspective on the CCP, with the hope of gaining a deeper understanding of the nature of the CCP regime.

In the wake of media reports of the launch of hypersonic missiles into space orbit in the South China Sea, the U.S.-China nuclear arms race has evolved into a competition for missiles capable of traveling faster than five times the speed of sound. While the Chinese Communist Party is actively strengthening its military intelligence, the development of new-generation military technology capabilities is not only of concern to advanced Western countries, it is also expected to impact the military balance in the Indo-Pacific region. The “2021 Report on the Defense Technology Trend Assessment—Assessment of the New Generation of Chinese Communist Party's Military Technology,” pulls together forward-looking insights regarding the Communist Party's conventional military forces, strategic forces, strategic support equipment, general-purpose technology, and policy support, and analyzes the Communist Party's current and potential future defense technology capabilities and policies.

The Institute for National Defense and Security Research's research efforts range from the study of national security, the Chinese Communist Party's political and military forces, and operational concepts at the national level to the study of national defense strategies and resources, cyber security, and decision-making at the strategic level, bolstered by cross-evidence of strategic theory and practice. In addition, many scholars and experts from different fields have been invited to give lectures, teach classes, and integrate research across fields to strengthen the depth and breadth of the Institute's research results and to build research capacity.

The 2021 assessment reports are a manifestation of the annual research results of INDSR's four research institutes. In view of many topics and volumes, there are inevitably errors and omissions, and we hope that all parties will be kind enough to offer their comments.

Chairman
Shoou-Yeh Huoh
December 6, 2021

