

INDSR Newsletter



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The Institute for National Defense and Security Research (財團法人國防安全研究院) is dedicated to fueling knowledge-based policy analyses and strategic assessments on Taiwan's security.

INDSR was formally inaugurated on May 1, 2018, and is headquartered in Taipei, Taiwan. We are an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization.

INDSR aims to shape innovative ideas and lead constructive debates on issues pertaining to international security and national defense, Chinese politics and military affairs, non-traditional security, hybrid and cognitive warfare, and cybersecurity, among other security areas.

To bring together great minds in policymaking, industry and research, we convene international forums, network civil societies, engage in Track Two dialogue and conduct wargame simulations. INDSR's dynamic research agenda and activities are used to develop pragmatic policy recommendations for the Taiwan government.

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Institute for National Defense and Security Research

No. 172, Bo'ai Rd.,

Zhongzheng Dist., Taipei City-100057

Taiwan (R.O.C.)

<https://indsr.org.tw/en>

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Division of National Security Research



The Political Manipulation of China's Military Exercises around Taiwan

Jyun-Yi Lee

Associate Research Fellow

Division of National Security Research

Topics: International Trend

1. News Highlights

The August 2022 issue of *Foreign Affairs* featured an article by Oriana Skylar Mastro of Stanford University and Derek Scissors of the American Enterprise Institute on whether the rise of China is “the past” or still “in progress.” In contrast to the view that China’s power has reached its peak and will gradually weaken due to depleted resources, deteriorating demographics, stagnating economics, and international countermeasures, the article argues that even if China’s economy and demographics worsen, the decline is likely to be gradual rather than abrupt. Due to its military modernization and geographic

advantage, China is more capable of projecting its military power into Asia than the US; its military strength is, therefore, still on the rise. But the article also acknowledges that an anxious China at the height of its power and an assertive China still on the rise may behave similarly externally and especially become more aggressive on territorial issues. However, the different assessments will inspire very different policy directions for the US.¹

Based on an analysis of “cognitive warfare” in the *PLA Daily*, this article examines China’s international political maneuvering following the August 2 visit of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan. The maneuvering shows that

1. Oriana Skylar Mastro and Derek Scissors, “China Hasn’t Reached the Peak of Its Power: Why Beijing Can Afford to Bide Its Time,” *Foreign Affairs*, August 22, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/325vkumy>. The view of the article that “China’s rise is a thing of the past” is represented by Hal Brands, a researcher at the American Enterprise Institute, and Michael Beckley, a professor at Tufts University. See Michael Beckley and Hal Brands, “The End of China’s Rise: Beijing Is Running Out of Time to Remake the World,” *Foreign Affairs*, October 1, 2021, <https://tinyurl.com/yckjzvn>.

China is still confident, but a confident China may not be willing to compete with the US in the long term as the report suggested, but it may rather suffer risks due to misjudgment.

2. Security Implications

2-1. China tried to grasp the right to speak about Pelosi's Taiwan visit and PLA's military exercises

In PLA's ideas, cognitive warfare "blurs the boundaries between wartime and peacetime, the frontline and rear. It crosses battlefields and national borders, going beyond just the military domain to permeate all social areas such as politics, economics, and diplomacy." The key is the struggle for the "right to define" the nature of the incident, the "right to lead" the process of the incident, and the "right to judge" the outcome of the incident. Since the nature of war is political, therefore morality and legitimacy are the focus of the struggle between the parties. From this viewpoint, China tries to achieve the

effect of "I say more, you say less," "I am right, you are wrong," and "I am the one to speak, not you" through the following manipulation of public opinion.²

First, in terms of the "right to define," China described Pelosi's visit to Taiwan as a "sneaky visit." For instance, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi accused the US of violating the "One-China Principle" and the Three Joint Communiqués; the US not only interferes in China's internal affairs and violates international law and the basic standards of international relations but is also the "biggest spoiler" of peace in the Taiwan Strait and regional stability. On August 10, China released a white paper titled "The Taiwan Issue and China's Unification Efforts in the New Era," which, in addition to repeating its long-standing advocacy for Taiwan, also included allegations against the US. Secondly, in terms of the "right to lead," the PLA's military exercises since August 4 are, in fact, part of its annual drills. Since the joint exercises involved cross-theater, multi-branch scenarios and different assumptions, they could not

2. Yang Cun-she, "Taking the Pulse of Cognitive Domain Warfare: An Analysis of the Characteristics and Development Trends of Cognitive Domain Warfare," *PLA Daily*, August 16, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/475yw6wu>. In China, "cognitive warfare" is referred to as "cognitive domain warfare."

have been planned during Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. However, the Chinese propaganda system has the exercises labeled as a demonstration of the PLA's determination and ability to "safeguard the unification of China and defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity," giving the military operations specific political connotations against the US and Taiwan while drawing international attention to stress its claims. Lastly, in terms of the "right to judge," China has not only mobilized several domestic agencies to issue statements but has also spoken out through people mainly from third-world countries, aiming to create an image of international public opinion as being on China's side. At a press conference, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying listed the support for China from international organizations and countries to build an image that "The one-China principle is a general consensus in the international community. The rightful one gets help while the wrongful one doesn't."³

2-2. China is building an Image of declining US power

Compared to the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crisis when it sent two carrier battle groups into the Taiwan Strait, the US response to China's military exercises and even missile overflights over Taiwan this time was significantly lower key. While there are certainly different perspectives on the responses, China may interpret this as a decline in US power. Several examples seem to support this interpretation. First, the *PLA Daily* quoted Chinese military researchers' comments on the exercise, saying that the PLA's missiles flew across the densely deployed area of Taiwan's Patriot air defense missiles and "hit the target precisely under the nose of the US Navy's Aegis ships" to demonstrate its ability to break through the defenses with conventional missiles. "China doesn't care about interception since you can't stop our missiles anyway." Secondly, the Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a press release on August 10,

3. Breaking Defense, August 17, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/4xxeeavk>. For China's propaganda on the meaning of military exercises, see "PLA Successfully Held Joint Combat Exercises in the Sea and Airspace around Taiwan," *PLA Daily*, August 5, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/9d4pnsut>. For Hua Chunying's press conference, see "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying Hosts a Regular Press Conference on August 4, 2022," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China*, August 4, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/2yyt3hmv>.

saying that when Wang Yi would meet with the Foreign Ministers of Mongolia, South Korea, and Nepal from the 8 to the 10. He claimed that the situation in the Taiwan Strait was still in development and brought up “three cautions,” the first of which was “to be aware of the US bringing more crises... due to its embarrassment from being defeated.” Lastly, the PLA's Eastern Theater issued a statement on the 26, saying that the exercises in the sea and airspace around Taiwan are “normalized military operations” in response to the changing situation in the Taiwan Strait. Unlike the Chinese diplomatic system, which has not previously responded positively to whether military exercises in the Taiwan Strait are the “new norm,” the Eastern Theater's statement is apparently more explicit and assertive.⁴

The question of whether the balance

of power between China and the US has changed is still left to debate. But the Chinese actions are undoubtedly an attempt to signal a reversal of power superiority between the two countries and to influence US and international perceptions. The messages epitomize China's attempt to “use an ‘invisible hand’ to manipulate the opponent's will so it would feel ‘I can't,’ ‘I don't dare,’ and ultimately ‘I don't want to.’”⁵

3. Trend Observation

3-1. Democracies face the dilemma of showing determination and cooling down the situation

The aforementioned example can be regarded as China's internal and external propaganda, but they still have

4. On China's attempt to send a political message through military exercises, see Dean Cheng, “PLA Exercises after Pelosi Taiwan Visit Were Largely Pre-planned.” For the praise of China's military capabilities, see “The PLA has the determination, means, and ability to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country: Military experts interpret our joint combat exercises around Taiwan,” *PLA Daily*, August 7, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/sdjzny3x>. For Wang Yi's warning, see “Wang Yi Raises ‘Three Cautions’ Against New Developments in the Taiwan Strait,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China*, August 10, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/3c8ht5ts>. For a statement from the Eastern Theater, see “Eastern Theater Organizes Multi-service Joint Combat Patrols and Realistic Exercises in the Air and Sea Regions around Taiwan,” *Eastern Theater Official WeChat*, August 26, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/2s45hs29>.

5. Yang, Cun-she, “Taking the Pulse of Cognitive Domain Warfare: An Analysis of the Characteristics and Development Trends of Cognitive Domain Warfare,” *PLA Daily*, August 16, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/475yw6wu>.

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political effects that cannot be ignored. China's claims, statements, and actions are designed to demonstrate to its people and the international community that it has both the legitimacy of its sovereign claims against Taiwan and the military strength to deter the US and its allies. With the domestic propaganda machine at work, nationalism and patriotism in Chinese society may be further provoked, thus reinforcing the legitimacy of the CCP leadership and making its decisions increasingly hardline and aggressive. The PLA's analysis suggests that "when one side is strong in both hard and soft power with substantial military force, a large number of allies, and a major share of international voice, it often declares war in a high profile. On the other hand, when military actions are likely to trigger a chain reaction, they often use the term 'war' vaguely."⁶ Although China has not yet declared any war, its increasingly high-profile words and actions reflect its confidence in its own soft and hard power.

The article by Oriana Skylar Mastro

and Derek Scissors argues that a China at the peak of its power would be desperate to change the international order through aggressive actions, while a China on the rise would be more willing to back down from an unintended military conflict and less likely to start a war. But this insight may overlook the fact that a confident China that believes in its own power is also prone to misjudge the situation. Therefore, Taiwan, the US, and other democracies are caught in a dilemma of showing determination and cooling down the situation. Though public morale could be boosted if the countries respond with countermeasures or hardline statements, there is also a risk of provoking China and getting undesirable results. Conversely, self-restraining by these countries may cause frustration or anxiety among the people, which China could take as a sign of incompetence or unwillingness and use in the expanded propaganda. It is a policy challenge for democracies to weigh the two and ensure that China correctly understands the messages being delivered.

6. Yang, Cun-she, "Taking the Pulse of Cognitive Domain Warfare: An Analysis of the Characteristics and Development Trends of Cognitive Domain Warfare," *PLA Daily*, 16 August, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/475yw6wu>.

3-2. Democracies need to compete with China in the “cognitive field”

Following the logic of the PLA's “cognitive warfare,” the way Taiwan and other democracies avoid China's misjudgment by overconfidence is to engage in competition in the “cognitive arena. Given that China's “cognitive warfare” constructs itself as a convergence of military power, morality, and legitimacy, democracies must compete with China on these fronts. In terms of the military, Taiwan should keep improving its defense capability and turn it into a clear signal to China. Possible approaches in this regard include revealing China's threats to Taiwan to the international community, highlighting the results of Taiwan's military training and exercises, seeking opportunities for joint exercises or military cooperation with other countries, and selectively revealing the results of military simulations. In addition to the demonstration of strength, highlighting Taiwan's will to defend may also influence or change China's strategic perceptions. Blocking or confiscating intruding Chinese drones to deter China from escalating to more aggressive tactics is also one of the possible approaches.

As China increasingly asserts itself

as a defender of international law and the basic norms of international relations, Taiwan and other democracies should compete with it for the right to speak in terms of morality and legitimacy. For example, China has recently used the “UN-based international order” to counter the “rules-based international order” advocated by the US. Still, the UN Charter does not give states the legitimacy to threaten others to use force on the grounds of defending sovereign independence and territorial integrity. In the face of China's attempt to create a general impression that the majority of the international community is supporting its assertion by allying with third-world countries to endorse its claims, it's in line with the interests of both Taiwan and other democracies to compete with China on international opinion platforms. Taiwan should encourage its friends and allies to express their values and propositions in the international arena proactively; this prevents China from dominating international public opinion and challenges China's claimed legal and legitimate ground to increase the cost and effort required to change the status quo of the international order by its force.



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(The contents and views in the assessments are the personal opinions of the author, and do not represent the position of the Institute for National Defense and Security Research.)

The Political Manipulation of China's Military Exercises around Taiwan



The Security Implications of Korea-China Relations after Li Zhan Shu's Visit to Korea

Chih-Hao Lin
Assistant Research Fellow

Division of National Security Research
Topic: Indo-Pacific Region, International Trend

1. News Highlights

Li Zhan Shu, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, visited Korea from September 15 to 17 for bilateral talks with Kim Jin-pyo, Speaker of the National Assembly of Korea, and Yoon Suk-yeol, President of Korea. The main reason for Li's visit to South Korea is that the then Speaker of the Korean Parliament, Park Byeong-seug, invited Li to visit the country during the Beijing Winter Olympics in February 2022. In other words, this is a "return visit."¹ In the visit to South Korea, which coincides with the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea

and China, Li not only discussed with the South Korean officials the prospects for future economic cooperation and development, but also had in-depth talks with President Yoon Suk-yeol on a number of issues such as the future invitation to Xi Jinping to visit Korea, the "bold ideas" Yoon had raised, and the "stumbling blocks" in the relationship between the two countries.²

2. Security Implications

2-1. Korea tries to maintain a balanced position between the US and China

Due to the geographical location of

1. <「中 서열 3위」 리잔수 15~17일 방한... 김의장, 16일 양자회담>, 《연합뉴스》, 2022年9月4日, <https://reurl.cc/XVxDpR>.

2. <윤석열대통령, 리잔수 中 전인대 상무위원장 접견>, 《대한민국정책브리》, 2022年9月16日, <https://reurl.cc/xQ4xX1>.

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the Korean peninsula, Korea's security strategy relies heavily on the military alliance with the US and dealing with the North Korean issue through diplomatic dialogue between major powers. In terms of the economic field, Korea and China have continued to cooperate in economic and trade matters for a strategic partnership since the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 1992. For a long time, Korea's principle of cooperation has been "the US for security, China for economy." Under the Moon Jae-in administration, South Korea has succeeded in alleviating the military confrontation between North and South Korea through the South Korea-US-China dialogue mechanism, and the number and scale of joint South Korea-US military exercises have been significantly reduced. However, since the talks with North Korea in Singapore and Hanoi were unsuccessful and the South transferred to a new regime, the military confrontation between the two is heating up again. According to previous experience, North Korea may launch the seventh nuclear weapon test or large-scale military exercises around its major political commemorative days before the end of the year. To deal with possible future

military provocations independently, Korea is actively strengthening its surveillance, reconnaissance, intelligence, and independent commanding capabilities against North Korea. In the Ulchi Freedom Shield Korea-US joint military exercise that took place on August 22, 2022, the commanding authority was assigned to the Korean deputy commander of ROK/US Combined Forces Command (CFC) for the first time, rather than to the US CFC commander who is also the head of the US forces in Korea in previous joint exercises.

Korea maintains a stable relationship with its neighboring powers and seeks opportunities for common multi-party dialogue and coordination on North Korean issues. The practice is one of the principles of Korea's "Four-Power (US, China, Japan, and Russia) Diplomacy." Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and China on August 24, 1992, the two countries have cooperated on several of occasions on the North Korean issue, including arrangement of North Korean-US dialogue and the Six-Party Talks. Korea is also coordinating the US-China conversation on the North Korean nuclear issue and the dialogue framework between

the two Koreas to maintain its balanced relationship between the US and China.

2-2. The levels of recent high-level visits between Korea and China are gradually elevating

It has been the common practice of Korean Presidents and Speakers of the National Assembly to visit China once or twice during their terms of office. China is also Korea's major trading partner, ranking first in terms of dependence on import and export trade over the years. To maintain the stability of the Korean peninsula, South Korea and China have been strengthening their economic, trade, and cultural cooperation and exchange while working together on the North Korean problems. In the three-sided relationship between South Korea, North Korea, and China, the "South Korea-China" and "North Korea-China" connections constitute a competitive situation as China plays a pivoting role that maintains good interactions with the two Koreas and a key dialogue channel between them.

In the aftermath of the most significant "stumbling block" in Korea-China relations, namely the "THAAD missile incident," the high-level visits between South Korea and China have decreased significantly. The last such visit was in June 2015, when the then-chairman of the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress, Zhang Dejiang, visited South Korea. In 2022, the 30th anniversary of the establishment of Korea-China diplomatic relations, the high-level interactions between the two countries have become intensive since the Winter Olympics in Beijing at the beginning of the year. On August 24, 2022, both countries held a grand commemorative event in Seoul and Beijing at the same time. Moon Jae-in had planned to facilitate Xi's visit to Korea,³ which might have been possible if it was not affected by the COVID-19 epidemic. Li Zhan-Shu's visit to South Korea is likely to be a precursor to Xi Jinping's future visit. Xi's last official visit to South Korea was in July 2014, when he described the relationship between the

3. <한중정상통화... 「시 주석 연내 방한 추진」 >, 《KTV 국민방송》, 2022年5月16日, <https://reurl.cc/kE9E5x>.

two countries as a “hearty brotherhood” during a speech at Seoul University.⁴

3. Trend Observation

3-1. Korea’s “the US for security, the world for economy” course will be put to the test

In his video speech at the inauguration ceremony of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) on May 23, 2022, Yoon Suk-yeol first introduced the “the US for security, the world for economy” concept, which means “relying on the US for security and the world for the economy” in hope to reduce the dependence of the industrial chain and import/export trade on China. The concept is obviously deviating from the “the US for security, China for the economy” course in the past. But it is still unclear

whether the concept can actually reduce Korea’s dependence on China for imports and exports. According to the information released by the Korean Customs Service, Korea’s trade with China (excluding Hong Kong) has long been in surplus between August 1994 and April 2022. However, starting in May 2022, Korea’s trade deficit with China started to appear, and it may not be easy to recover in the short term.⁵

Korea’s major exports to China, such as semiconductors, LCDs, auto parts, cosmetics, and petroleum products, are all showing a sharp decline, while Korea’s import demand to China is increasing rapidly, mainly for lithium hydroxide, a raw material for electric vehicle batteries, with a dependence rate of 83% and a growth rate of 404% from Q1 to Q2 2022, which is one of the main reasons for the trade deficit.⁶

The recent “China trend”⁷ and the

4. <[시진핑 주석] 아시아 꿈을 위한 동행 (同行)>, 《서울대 소식》, 2014年7月5日, https://www.snu.ac.kr/snunow/snu_story?md=v=120501.

5. <[단독] 믿었던 중국마저 ...28년 이어온 對中 무역흑자>, 《매일경제》, 2022年7月1日, <https://pse.is/4gec62>.

6. 홍지상, <최근 對중국 무역수지 적자 진단>, 《한국무역협회 국제무역통상연구원》, 2022年8月19日, <https://reurl.cc/XVxDqE>.

7. The “China Trend” is a policy actively promoted in China in recent years. The goal is to elevate from “Made in China” to “Created in China,” from “Chinese Speed” to “Chinese Quality,” and from “Chinese Products” to “Chinese Brands” by 2035 for higher national self-confidence. For more related content, please refer to “The China Trend fever is growing fast! Chinese officials: promoting from ‘Chinese Products’ to ‘Chinese Brands,’” *UDN Online*, August 26, 2022, <https://reurl.cc/7pq31b>.

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localized production of semiconductors in China have seriously affected Korea's dominant position in the technology sector in China. In addition, China's "barring Korean products"⁸ order has yet to be lifted, causing many Korean companies to withdraw from the country.⁹ To address this, Korea should keep its technological advantage through further development, seek alternatives to the raw material imports in its industrial supply chain, and formulate new policies and measures to improve the trade structure between the two countries.

Since Xi Jinping came to power, unlike the past practice of China's top leaders visiting North Korea before visiting the South, Xi exchanged phone calls with Yoon Suk-yeol after Yoon was confirmed to be elected, and China even extended an invitation to Yoon to visit after he took office. Observing the current situation, Korea and China are interacting well, and the August 2022 Foreign

Ministers' meeting was successfully concluded. However, South Korea and China have different views on the "Three-Not Principles" agreement reached on October 31, 2017, which means South Korea "will not deeply more THAAD anti-missile system," "will not join the US missile defense system," and "will not join the military alliance between South Korea, the US, and Japan." Moreover, China believes that in addition to the "Three-Not," there is a "One-Limit," which means "restricting the use of the existing THAAD system." Still, there is a clear difference in understanding between the two sides on this issue.¹⁰ Although Yoon Suk-yeol Li Zhan-Shu mentioned this topic during their meeting on September 16, they seem to have not reached a consensus.

In addition, Yoon planned to meet with US Vice President Kamala Devi Harris on September 25 to exchange views on "Korea-US economic and security

8. In retaliation for the South Korean government's decision to deploy the THAAD system and the Lotte Group that provided the space, China has been restricting the development of Korean idol groups, cultural industries, and tourism products in China through executive orders since 2016. The orders gradually expanded the scope and forced the Lotte Group to withdraw altogether from the Chinese market.

9. <미중갈등에 ... 회계법인·로펌, 사업철수 자문 활황>, 《매일경제》, 2022年8月24日, <https://pse.is/4gmmjh>.

10. <사드 3 불과 3 불 1 환>, 《중앙일보》, 2022年8月15日, <https://reurl.cc/O4Q7m7>.

relations” and North Korea issues.¹¹ The relations between the two countries have been upgraded from “military alliance” to “military alliance and economic and security relations,” which may also become one of the uncertainties affecting Korea-China relations in the future.

3-2. US-China competition will lessen the ambiguity of Korea's future

Since the establishment of Korea-China diplomatic relations, Korea has always taken a clear, cautious approach to the Taiwan issue. For example, in the joint statement released by then-President Moon Jae-in of South Korea and US President Joe Biden on May 21, 2021, peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait were mentioned — the first since the establishment of Korea-China diplomatic relations. However, the substantiality of the brief mention is still quite limited.

At present, the Korean government still adopts a rather clear response to the Taiwan issue. Judging from the recent

move of Yoon Suk-yeol avoided meeting Nancy Patricia Pelosi, it is likely that Korea will still try to sidestep Taiwan-related issues publicly in the future while maintaining the existing economic and cultural exchanges with Taiwan. Therefore, judging from the current situation, Korea-China relations should break the ice soon, and Korea will engage in dialogue with China on issues such as the “Three-Not Principles,” North Korea, and the economy.

But with the increasing competition between the US and China and the rather low 32.3% domestic approval of the Yoon Suk-yeol administration, which has been in office for less than a year, the situation has not yet improved.¹² At the same time, internal confrontation and conflicts are rampant in Korea, and negative public perceptions of China are at an all-time high. According to a Pew Research Center poll released in June, nearly 80% of the Korean public had a negative view of China.¹³

To resolve the domestic political

11. <尹대통령 ,29 일 「방한」 해리스美부통령 접견 ... 「한미동맹 강화」 > , 《연합뉴스》 , 2022 年 9 月 8 日 , <https://reurl.cc/xQexvz>.

12. <尹대통령 지지율 ,33.6% → 32.3%...4 주만에 하락세 [리얼미터] > , 《연합뉴스》 , 2022 年 9 月 5 日 , <https://reurl.cc/lenkpA>.

13. “Negative Views of China Tied to Critical Views of Its Policies on Human Rights,” Pew Research Center, June 29, 2022, <https://reurl.cc/RXoRM9>.

dilemma, the Yoon administration is struggling to change the “weak government, strong opposition” situation; he might also take measures to respond to the current public opinion as the US-Korea economic and security relations and the Indo-Pacific security strategy are gradually taking shape. Although the “Korea-US-Japan military alliance” is unlikely to emerge in the near future, the recent regularization of their joint military exercises and the reconvening of the “Korea-US Extended Deterrence Strategy and Consultation Group”¹⁴ have diminished Korea’s ambiguity between the US and China and may force it to choose sides. In this situation, Korea will have to find a new solution and position for itself.

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14. <제 3 차 한미 고위급 확장억제 전략 협의체 (EDSCG) 개최>, 《대한민국 정책브리핑》, 2022년 9월 8일, <https://reurl.cc/KQEKOy>.

The Security Implications of Korea-China Relations after Li Zhan Shu's Visit to Korea



The Effectiveness and Follow-up of the United Nations OHCHR Assessment of Human Rights Concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China

Chien-Yu Shih
Associate Research Fellow

Division of National Security Research

Keywords: Xinjiang, Human Rights, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet released the OHCHR Assessment of Human Rights Concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China on August 31st, 2022, the last day of her term in office.¹ The assessment, which is nearly 50 pages, can be said to be the clearest, the most concise, and the most direct review of China's repression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. Although the release of the assessment

was delayed for one year, the UN High Commissioner has again demonstrated their professionalism and maintained dignity and reputation as the human rights gatekeeper. The assessment rejects great power politics and gets straight to the point: is it appropriate and justifiable for China to conduct large-scale “de-extremification” campaigns in the name of countering terrorism?²

When the assessment was released, China refuted it with a 130-page-long

1. “OHCHR Assessment of Human Rights Concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China,” *OHCHR*, August 31, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/2022-08-31/22-08-31-final-assesment.pdf>.

2. Over the past few years, when discussing the Xinjiang governance issue, many international human rights groups, even researchers, may be too eager to protect human rights in Xinjiang, and often ignore China's counter-terrorism argument. However, the OHCHR assessment faces this argument head-on, which is very inspiring. As for the correlation between counter-terrorism and Xinjiang internment camps, there are many factors involved, and another article will be dedicated to addressing this topic.

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report via the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland. China's official argument doesn't fully address points mentioned in the assessment but only repeats the same arguments from years ago. Their stance is: Xinjiang is under serious threat of terrorism and China is protecting public security through "legal" governance, and "Vocational Education and Training Centers" is the best strategy for de-extremification. Vocational Education and Training Centers are not concentration camps. These accusations are lies told by the U.S. and anti-Chinese forces in the west. The trainees have found jobs after the training, and the centers fully comply with international human rights standards.³

The assessment points out that China's legal definition of terrorism and terrorists is too vague and broad, such as associating "disruption of social order and other serious social harm" with terrorism. The same goes for the

definition of extremism: the regulation describes Islamic religious materials, rituals, and dress code, without giving a clear definition of extremism. Besides, the methodologies used to identify suspects and persons "at risk" of "extremism" are highly questionable. Some Islamic commandments and practice, such as quitting alcohol, or not attending traditional cultural activities, are seen as indicators of religious extremism. The power of law enforcement agencies has been expanded, and electronic monitoring or collection of personal biometrics and data can be done without a reason, and the suspects can be detained indefinitely without inspection.

Despite some victims of Xinjiang internment camps and human rights groups believing this assessment has been truncated, according to this assessment, the allegations of the Chinese government conducting large-scale, discriminatory detention, torture, and forced labor in Xinjiang are credible and that China may have already committed crimes against

3. For China's official response to the OHCHR Assessment of Human Rights Concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, please see "Fight Against Terrorism and Extremism I Xinjiang: Truth and Facts," August 2022, published by Information Office of the People's Government of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/2022-08-31/ANNEX_A.pdf.

humanity.

In this human rights tug-of-war, there are five points worth noticing:

1. The UN says China's repression in Xinjiang may amount to "crimes against humanity"

The OHCHR assessment represents the official stance of the United Nations. It is the most authoritative narrative of the Xinjiang issue and has a profound influence on UN member states and the international community. The last allegation of crimes against humanity was Rwanda Genocide in the 1990s. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was set up by the UN to deliver verdicts against three suspected military officers, who were sentenced to life imprisonment, and the relevant trials are still going on today.⁴ As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China is one of the most powerful countries in the UN, but it is now accused of the same crime as Rwanda, crimes against humanity, by the UN High Commissioner. We should not underestimate the seriousness of this

issue.

2. If China doesn't make real changes, international sanctions won't stop

In March 2021, the deal between China and the EU broke due to their tit-for-tat sanctions over the Xinjiang issue, which made the EU halt the approval of the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI). With the ongoing U.S.-China trade war, the CAI agreement is considered a historic investment agreement between China and the EU but has been put on hold since then. With the release of the OHCHR Assessment of Human Rights Concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region by the UN High Commissioner, the western world is not able to relax or alleviate the sanctions against Xinjiang internment camps, its relevant personnel, and businesses.

The new UN High Commissioner for Human Rights will continue to track the situation of China's repression of Xinjiang and whether it has committed crimes against humanity. Whether the international judicial system can do anything about China's current violations

4. For more information about the Trial of the Rwanda Genocide, please see <https://unictr.irmct.org/>.

against human rights, we will need to wait to find out.

3. Did genocide happen in Xinjiang?

The US and several western countries believe genocide happened in Xinjiang, but the OHCHR assessment only accused China of crimes against humanity. The reason is simple: there isn't enough evidence.

According to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, genocide means the illegal acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group.⁵ In other words, there isn't enough evidence to prove China has such intent. The UN High Commissioner didn't take the evidence provided by the Uyghur Tribunal in London in 2021, which refers to the leaked Report of the General Office of the Chinese Communist Party, whose authenticity is yet to be verified. Therefore, we can say evidence collection for the OHCHR assessment is very discreet.

4. China may pass new regulations to govern Xinjiang and its internment camps

The relevant policies of Xinjiang internment camps have been implemented for more than five years, and they have certainly achieved the purpose of preliminary national assimilation. Now, they should have entered the next stage -- evaluation and revision. The OHCHR assessment points out how ridiculous it is to legitimize and justify Xinjiang internment camps using counter-terrorism regulations. After Xi Jinping is re-elected at the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, he can't withdraw the policy as this can make him look weak, but he can consider offering employment services or national education and adjust the policy implementation criticized by many people, to recalibrate and regulate the large-scale detention, forced labor policy, and violent acts.

With the advance of monitoring technology, China's CCTV is everywhere, not just in Xinjiang, and China can also control citizens through its social credit

5. For the difference between War Crimes, Crimes against Humanity, and Genocide, please see the UN Mapping Report of the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Countries/CD/FS-2_Crimes_Final.pdf.

system. Large-scale detention may no longer be needed, and the government can use other methods to monitor citizens.

5. The aimless fifth column

Over the past few years, many China-friendly countries signed petitions to support China's governance policies in Xinjiang. China widely invited international media to Xinjiang to "see for themselves" (including Taiwanese media and politicians), and mobilized internet celebrities to advertize the achievement of China's governance in Xinjiang in their videos. The OHCHR assessment can silence these voices for a while. If the Chinese government doesn't adjust its governance framework and approach, China's fifth column around the world will lose ground, and can only beat around the bushes when it comes to the Xinjiang issue.

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Japan-India 2+2 Ministerial Meeting Highlight and Its Strategic Implications

Tsun-Yen Wang
Associate Research Fellow

Division of National Security Research

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On September 8, 2022, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada, along with Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and Defense Minister Rajnath Singh, held the second Japan-India Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting (commonly known as “2+2”) in Tokyo, which resulted in the issuance of the “Joint Statement Second Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting.” (Note: The first meeting was held in New Delhi on November 30, 2019.) This is the first “2+2” meeting between Japan and another country since Prime Minister Fumio Kishida reshuffled his cabinet after the

Liberal Democratic Party won the Senate election in July 2022.

It has been less than a month since the end of China’s military exercises around Taiwan. At the same time, Russia was holding its “Vostok-2022” military exercise with participation from India while Russian President Vladimir Putin inspected the exercise.¹ Therefore, the sudden visit of the Indian foreign minister and defense minister to Japan for the highly strategic “2+2” meeting has attracted considerable attention from the international community. Based on the information released by the Japanese government, this article discusses the key points of the talks and their strategic implications.

1. “China and India Participate in Russian Military Exercises, Putin Visited,” *Central News Agency*, September 6, 2022, <https://www.cna.com.tw/news/aopl/202209060368.aspx>.

Highlights of the second Japan-India “2+2” talks

Summarizing the Joint Statement of the talks and the relevant information released by Japan’s Defense Ministry, the topics of the talks can be divided into four major areas:

1. Executive summary: the two countries recognize their close cooperation in bilateral, multilateral, regional, and international situations.
2. Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region:
 - (1). The two countries share the strategic goal of achieving a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP), which opposes unilateral changes to the status quo by force, advocates peaceful resolution of disputes based on international law, and respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as a rules-based global order.
 - (2). Both countries support the aforementioned FOIP idea, India’s “Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative” (IPOI), and the “ASEAN Outlook

on the Indo-Pacific” (AOIP) advocated by the ASEAN members.

3. Bilateral security cooperation:

- (1). The two countries will continue to promote regular bilateral and multilateral exercises, including the Dharma Guardian annual Army exercise, the JIMEX Navy exercise (held every other year), and the Malabar annual Navy exercise; joint fighter training will be scheduled as soon as possible.
- (2). Both countries will continue to discuss cooperation in weapons and technology;
- (3). Both countries welcome the establishment of a consultation mechanism between their joint staff headquarters;
- (4). Both countries welcome cooperation between their maritime police services;
- (5). Both countries will strengthen cybersecurity cooperation and maintain discussions on economic security issues;

2. The IPOI was Launched by India’s Prime Minister Modi on November 4, 2019, at the 14th East Asia Summit. It Consists of Seven Categories: “Maritime Security,” “Maritime Ecology,” “Marine Resources,” “Capacity Building and Resource Sharing,” “Disaster Risk Reduction and Management,” “Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation,” and “Trade, Connectivity and Maritime Transport.”

- (6). Japan expressed its intention to review options, including “counter-attack capabilities,” and to increase its defense budget within five years for strengthened national defense as India showed its support to the decisions;
4. Regional situation: The two countries exchanged views on international and regional situations such as Ukraine, the East Sea, the South Sea, North Korea, and South Asia.

Self-explanatory anti-China connotation

Although the Joint Declaration does not specify individual countries, it emphasizes “a rules-based global order,” “respect for the integrity of territoriality and sovereignty,” and opposition to “attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force” that are obviously directed at Russia and China.

It is worth noting that the talks mentioned the “Japan-India Mutual Supply

of Goods and Services Agreement,” under which the Army of both countries can provide each other with logistical services such as the supply of food, fuel, and ammunition.³ The two countries can use each other’s bases and other military facilities, especially the Indian forces can use Japan’s defense facilities in the African country of Djibouti, while the Japanese Self-Defense Forces can use India’s facilities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. As China is developing the strategy of establishing a strategic foothold in the Indian Ocean littoral states through the “Pearl Chain” approach, such cooperation between India and Japan has the significance of developing a strategic confrontation with China.

The “2+2” talks also emphasized the promotion of cooperation in defense equipment and technology. Although not specified in the publicized information, it is assumed that the equipment Japan has so far wanted to export will be included in the discussion as the cooperation between the

3. “The Agreement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of India Concerning Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services Between the Self-Defense Forces of Japan and the Indian Armed Forces,” *Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, September 10, 2020, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100091751.pdf>; 〈日・インド物品役務相互提供協定（日印 ACSA）の署名〉, 《日本防衛省》, 2020 年 9 月 10 日, https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/press4_008742.html.

two countries in equipment development is on the agenda. For example, Japan is marketing to India the US-2 seaplane used by the Maritime Self-Defense Force, which can take off from sea or land with more than 15 tons of payloads and have a range of 4,700 km to perform maritime rescue, search and rescue, and transportation missions. More importantly, India can use the aircraft to strengthen its grasp of the maritime situation to combat piracy as well as to detect and monitor the movement of the PLA Navy in the Indian Ocean.⁴

In addition, the meeting also covered the issue of Japan-India military exercises, of which the promotion of Japanese and Indian warplane training is also imperative. In fact, the two countries had a joint exercise planned for late 2019, and it was rumored that India was scheduled to participate in the exercise with Su-30 jets. The plan was postponed due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and has

not yet been realized.⁵ In recent years, Japan's relationship with China has been in dispute, and that with Russia is also at odds due to the Russo-Ukrainian conflict. Since both China and Russia use Su-30, Japan can learn more about its performance in air combat through joint exercises with the Indian Air Force. The meeting also discussed the establishment of a consultation mechanism between the two countries' joint staff headquarters. The objective of the mechanism should be strengthening the coordination and planning functions of future joint exercises between their armed forces.

Strategic implications for Japan and India's relations with Russia

It is well known that India is highly dependent on China for its economy, while most of its weapon systems are acquired from Russia. Since the US-China relation breakthrough in 1972,

4. It's reported that the case of exporting US-2 to India has not yet been realized due to the budget, technology transfer, and production conditions proposed by India. Judging from the policy direction of the current Japanese government that emphasizes the fostering of defense industries, there is still a chance for this case to be further pursued.

5. 関賢太郎, 〈インド空軍のロシア製戦闘機が日本へ〉, 《乗りものニュース》, 2020年1月24日, <https://trafficnews.jp/post/93148>; Lu Bohua, "India Sends Su-30 Fighter to Joint Exercises with Japan. Chinese Expert: Malicious Betrayal of China and Russia," *China Times*, August 30, 2021, <https://www.chinatimes.com/realtimenews/20210830004854-260409?chdtv>.

India has been strategically using Russia to keep China in check for years, which naturally constitutes the important background for India's abstention from the UN resolution condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its participation in Russia's "Vostok-2022" exercise. In particular, Vostok-2022 covered the "northern territories" over which Japan claims sovereignty, which upset the Kishida government; Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno Hirokazu also expressed regret on September 5 that he was concerned about Russia's movements.⁶ Under such circumstances, the Indian foreign and defense ministers rushed to Japan to participate in the "2+2" talks that are considered highly strategic, and most of the topics were focused on defense cooperation (the Joint Declaration contents show that the talks were more on defense than diplomacy), which actually had the effect of appeasing Japan.

For India, Russia's power has declined due to its invasion of Ukraine, and recently it is gradually showing a tendency to move toward China. In the future, India's "using

Russia to contain China" strategy may thus become more and more difficult to realize. As a result, the incentive to cooperate with countries that take an "anti-China/prevent-China" stance should be stronger than in the past. With its intractable confrontation with China, Japan is clearly a worthy ally for New Delhi to pursue.

Since the Joint Statement does not mention the QUAD security talks (mentioned in the first 2+2 talks), nor does it name China and Russia, Japan could have been considering India's position. However, if China and Russia continue to draw closer together in the future, it is expected that the motivation to strengthen strategic cooperation between India and major countries such as Japan will continue to develop. In India's eyes, the question that requires more attention than the "Russia-China draws closer" is whether Russia, weakened by its invasion of Ukraine, will be willing to play the "junior partner" role to China in the future. If so, it will not be good news for the New Delhi authorities, and the day of substantial adjustment of its "non-alignment" foreign policy will be on

6. "Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Expresses Regret over Russian Military Exercises in the Four Northern Islands," *Kyodo News*, September 5, 2022, <https://tchina.kyodonews.net/news/2022/09/97bfb0e6c83d.html>.

the horizon soon.

Although the Joint Statement did not indicate that the Taiwan Strait issue was mentioned, Japanese Defense Minister Hamada revealed, at a press conference the next day, that Indian Defense Minister Singh had expressed concern about the current situation in Taiwan.⁷ Sharing the same universal values of democracy and freedom as India, Taiwan has always regarded China as a major threat and has long maintained a sovereign stance without compromise. It should be an important partner for India in its China strategy. Taiwan and India may refer to the “Taiwan-Japan Diplomatic and Defense (2+2) Exchange of Ruling Parties” held in 2021 and start a similar strategic dialogue to seek opportunities to strengthen exchanges in diplomatic and security issues.

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7. “Minister of Defense Press Conference,” *Ministry of Defense of Japan*, September 9, 2022, <https://www.mod.go.jp/j/press/kisha/2022/0909a.html>.



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