Abstract

The rapid emergence of a large country like China understandably will cause some international concern and suspicions. However, China has decided to take the road of peaceful development, and has committed itself to building a harmonious world. China persists in mutual benefits and collective development, while pursuing its own prosperity. China advocates the establishment of a democratic and fair world order when it merges itself into the world and abides by the established international norms. China cannot develop peacefully without a favorable periphery and international environment. Among the three elements, common security is the objective that all players in the region should seek. Cooperation security is the approach that all countries have to adapt in an era of globalization. Development security is the foundation. It promotes the prosperity of each individual country so as to eliminate the roots of insecurity.

The following five goals should be pursued by China and other countries to preserve win-win benefits for all: Increasing Strategic Mutual Trust Between the Countries; Joining Hands to Maintain Cross-Taiwan Strait Peace and Stability; Striving For a Peaceful Solution of the DPRK Nuclear Issue; Promoting Regional Security Cooperation; and Enhancing Regional Cooperation in Areas Other Than Security.
Recently, China has increasingly become the focus of debate in the media, in academic seminars and in public opinion polls. The newly aroused interest reflects diversified views on China’s orientation on its way of peaceful development. For example, some people in the United States define China as an international “stakeholder,” which is expected to assume more responsibilities in maintaining world peace and stability. Others in the United States and elsewhere expect a showdown between the “Oriental Dragon” and the “American Eagle.”

It is understandable that the rapid emergence of a large country will cause some international concerns and suspicions. According to an old way of thinking, the rise of a new power is inevitably accompanied by competition so fierce that it would result in wars and violence. But that old logic will not apply to contemporary China. China has taken a road of peaceful development, and has committed itself to building a harmonious world. By peaceful development, China means that while trying to achieve its own prosperity and advancements, it will incorporate its fundamental interests into the world’s common interests and actively promote world prosperity and harmony. To be more specific, China endeavors to preserve world peace and build up world harmony when it strives for a favorable environment for its own development. China persists in mutual benefits and collective development, while pursuing its own prosperity. China advocates the establishment of a democratic and fair world order when it merges itself into the world and abides by the established international norms. China does not seek spheres of influence or regional hegemony, when it assumes its international responsibility. China respects the diversity of the world and supports a harmonious coexistence of all civilizations when it reserves its own characteristics during the process of development. China does not impair the interests of other countries and handles differences and disputes according to the principles of equality and mutual benefit, when it protects its legitimate rights and interests in international competition. All the above principles are by no means propagandistic strategies

* The views expressed in this article are the author’s and do not necessarily reflect those of the KJDA. This article is based on a speech delivered at the 2006 International Forum of the China Association for Military Science, held in Beijing, Oct. 23–24, 2006.
of “hiding our capabilities while biding our time.”\(^1\) Instead, it is China’s chosen road of future development, as well as China’s solemn pledge to the 21st-century international community. The world is and will continue to witness this: China’s development and growth will bring to the international community more benefits rather than losses, and more stability and harmony rather than threats and conflicts.

China cannot develop peacefully without a favorable periphery and international environment. The Asia-Pacific region is home to all of us in this area. As a fighter pilot and a PLA general, I sincerely hope that the sky above us abounds with airliners carrying entrepreneurs, bankers and tourists, instead of with combat aircraft loaded with missiles, bombs or explosives. To build such a peaceful Asia-Pacific region, in conformity to the time and tide of economic globalization, a new security concept should be cultivated. This new concept should at least comprise the following three elements: common security, cooperation security and development security.

Among the three elements, \textit{common security} is the objective that all players in the region should seek. It acknowledges that the security of all countries is so closely related that one nation not only needs to safeguard its own national security interests, but also has to address the security concerns, respect the security rights, and promote the security interest of others. \textit{Cooperation security} is the approach that all countries have to adapt in an era of globalization. It advocates international and regional cooperation of various forms, to reduce threats, to prevent crises and in the case of crises arising, to control and manage them through concerted efforts and mechanisms. \textit{Development security} is the foundation. It promotes the prosperity of each individual country so as to eliminate the roots of insecurity and provide the collective economic resources for common security. Generally speaking, we seek mutual and win-win benefits, which, I think, can be achieved by applying the following five measures:

\(^1\) This is a rough translation of former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping’s quotation and cited in the \textit{Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People’s Republic of China}, 2006, issued by the U.S. Department of Defense.
Increasing Strategic Mutual Trust between the Countries.

The prerequisite for a harmonious Asia-Pacific region is mutual trust among all its states, especially among the major players. China and Russia have succeeded in solving their border disputes. Their strategic cooperative partnership is maturing in the areas of anti-terrorism, energy, trade, labor service and international affairs. From this partnership, both sides have benefited a lot, and a sound strategic trust has been forged. China and India share very much in common, such as both being the largest developing countries, both being great burgeoning economies and both facing the basic challenges of a huge population. It is not only desirable but also imperative for the “dragon” and the “bear” to “dance together.” And recent years have witnessed an obvious improvement of bilateral relations. Although it is unavoidable that there are differences between China and the United States, the more important fact is that they have increasingly common interests as well. In accordance with the consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, we should seek common ground while reserving differences. We should try to decrease frictions by developing a pragmatic and cooperative relationship based on equality and mutual benefits. We have seen cooperation in regional security affairs between the two. And such cooperation is definitely beneficial to bilateral relations.

The Sino-Japanese summit and high level meetings resumed since October 2006 were the first talks in the past five years. They indicate the thawing of the bilateral relationship and the opening of a door toward a better political relationship. At the same time we should be aware that more efforts must be made to transform the Sino-Japanese relation of “cold politics and warm economy” into “warm politics and economy,” and to realize peaceful coexistence, amity for generations, cooperation, mutual benefits, and common development. When we look back into European history right after the Second World War, we see France and Germany rose up hand in hand. We also see no reason why in Asia, China and Japan cannot rise up together, blossoming side-by-side into “two beautiful flowers.” To secure such a bright prospect, the Sino-Japan relationship has to be dealt with from a strategic and long-term perspective. We have to be fully aware of the interdependence between us, and seek a win-win approach in dealing with our
relations. Some arguments, though outdated, are still popular in Japan. Among them are: “Japan should secede from Asia and join Europe,” and “One mountain cannot accommodate two tigers.” This kind of thinking was shaped since the “Meji Reform,” nearly one and a half centuries ago and badly needs reviewing and updating. If rightist forces playing domestic politics were encouraged in the name of “democracy,” the prospects for a lasting friendly Sino-Japanese relationship would be harmed. In addition, a shadow would also be cast over peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Both Germany and Japan, the two defeated countries in the Second World War, must have drawn one very important historical lesson from the war: extremist nationalism had been the hotbed for fascism. China is opposed to Japanese leaders’ visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, not purely out of national sentiments, nor exploiting the historical issues to suppress Japan’s international aspiration, but mostly out of genuine concern about the peace and security of the Asia-Pacific region. The WWII war criminals are definitely not “martyrs sacrificing for the country.” A country will not diminish itself by self examination, nor humiliate itself by sincere apology. To the contrary it will win the trust of the countries it had invaded, and the respect of the peoples it had severely harmed. China hopes that the new Abe administration will be able to win both respect and trust from the Asian neighbors, just like the German administrations did after the Second World War.

**Joining Hands to Keep Cross-Taiwan Strait Peace and Stability**

The Mainland, with the help of the international community, has made strenuous efforts for many years to maintain cross-strait peace. Since President Hu Jintao’s “Four Points of Suggestion” and the first “Hu-Lian Meeting” (meeting between President Hu Jintao and Chairman of Taiwan’s Nationalist Party, Lian Zhan), the cross-strait situation has been more or less stabilized. However, the secessionist activities by pro-independence forces on the island are increasingly intensifying. Recently, getting bogged down by the campaign to impeach him for corruption accusations, Chen Shui-bian, the so called president of the island, stirred up cross-strait tensions again by brazenly declaring the
promotion of a “constitutional reform” process that touches upon issues of sovereignty like territorial definition. This reckless move tests the bottom line of the Mainland and challenges the “One China Principle” accepted by the overwhelming majority of the world’s countries. If such a gamble succeeded, it would be a very dangerous step toward “de jure independence.” However, Chen’s attempt to take independence as a lifesaving straw in his personal political crisis cannot succeed, for the longing for peace and stability is still the dominating trend across the strait. Facts have proved time and again that the Taiwan issue is not only a struggle between secessionism and anti-secessionism, but also a struggle between peace and crisis. Prevention of the separatist forces on the island from pursuing “de jure independence” is the greatest common interest for the peace forces across the Strait and the international community at large. We will firmly implement President Hu Jintao’s “Four Points of Suggestion”, and take “preventing secessionism” and “curbing secessionism” as the most important, most urgent strategic task. We will continue to bend ourselves to the maintenance of cross-strait stability. Once Taiwan authority accepts the “Consensus of 1992”, and acknowledges that people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to the same nation-state, i.e., one China, the two sides can sit down and discuss Taiwan’s international space and military confidence building measures across the Strait. Our departure point is the common welfare of the people on both sides of the Strait, and what we preserve is regional peace and stability. However, there are times when “the trees want to remain still but the wind keeps blowing.” Faithlessness is Chen Shui-bian’s nature as a politician, the Mainland, therefore, is obliged to make military preparations, in order to deal with any malignant emergencies. If we were not prepared, the diehard pro-independence forces would have their fling and regional peace would be at risk.

**Striving For Peaceful Solution of the DPRK Nuclear Issue**

On the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) nuclear issue, China has always promoted peaceful denuclearization through dialogue, seeking a political solution through consultations and com-
promises. In September 2005, the Six-Party Talks agreed to a Joint Statement, giving hope to a political solution of the DPRK nuclear issue. However, a series of following events led to the worsening of the situation which was topped by the DPRK brazenly conducting an underground nuclear test on October 9, 2006. The news shocked the world and pushed the nuclear issue into a critical stage, making it all the more urgent for the parties to come back to the Six-Party Talks. China remains steadfast in achieving the goal of denuclearization. For whatever reason and in whatever name, DPRK’s possession of nuclear weapons is unacceptable. However China also cares about the process of denuclearization and insists on peaceful means. As a party who has a lot at stake in the issue, China holds a “three-no’s principle” in solving the DPRK nuclear crisis—namely “no nuclear weapons, no war, and no chaos.” The Six-Party Talks are still the most effective way and maybe the only feasible channel to resolve the issue, at least at present. By “no nuclear weapons,” China means that the principle of denuclearization on the peninsula must not be abandoned. And the DPRK cannot possess nuclear weapons. By “no wars,” China means that no parties concerned with the crisis management process should ever resort to the use, or the threat of use of military means. By “no chaos,” China means that it does not want to see violent turbulence, caused by deliberate external efforts to change the status quo on the peninsula, which would threaten the stability thereof, and the security of the neighboring countries. Only by implementing this principle, can the common interests of all parties concerned, including the DPRK, be served. The DPRK has the right to safeguard its national security, but it must do so without nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons cannot safeguard its security. On the contrary, such weapons would make the country less safe and secure. The only wise choice for Pyongyang is to give up nuclear weapons and to solve its security concerns through the Six-Party Talks. At the same time, other parties concerned should be more responsive to the DPRK’s request for security assurance and show more flexibility in the negotiations. By continuing to work together, we still have ample chance to accomplish a political solution.
Promoting Regional Security Cooperation

Recent years have witnessed robust security exchanges and cooperation among Asia-Pacific countries. New organizations, mechanisms and approaches are emerging. Taking China as an example, it has established and developed multi-area, multi-level, and multi-form dialogues and cooperation with countries or organizations like the United States, Russia, ASEAN, South Korea, Japan, India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Australia, etc. For instance, China sponsored the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and set up summit and/or strategic-level consultative mechanisms with many countries.

In order to push forward regional security cooperation, we have to fulfill four requirements: The first is that we must be steadfast and explicit in pursuing our objectives. These objectives are to maintain regional peace and stability and enhance common security. The second is that we must share our responsibilities and rights. That means cooperative organizations should not be dominated by any single country demanding the submission of other countries to the strategic interests of its own. The third is that regional cooperation must be inclusive. That means no security organization or mechanism should be exclusive, or set up against a third party. The fourth is comprehensive cooperation in both traditional and non-traditional security areas. That means the region should emphasize more the common security threats posed by non-traditional issues. And security cooperation in this regard is more practical, urgent and necessary.

To promote regional security cooperation, it is necessary to enhance military confidence-building among the countries in the region. China has been blamed for the “China Threat” while taking off economically. Recently, there are also allegations that China’s military modernization would pose a so-called “China military threat” to the region and the world. In my view, these concerns are totally unnecessary. China’s national defense modernization is solely for the purpose of safeguarding security for China’s peaceful development. To meet the challenges it is facing in its security environment, China has to improve its self-defense capabilities. One purpose for China to build a stronger national defense is to possess more capabilities to assume international
responsibilities. For example, China is willing to assume more humanitarian missions like peacekeeping, disaster-relief, anti-drug trafficking, non-combatant evacuation, and civil police, so that China can contribute more to regional as well as international security.

China has solemnly pledged that it will never change the defensive nature of its national defense policy. China will never “sail their warships wherever their commercial interests go,” like the Western colonists did in history. The increasing Chinese energy demands in recent years have taken the blame for rising oil prices. However, the Chinese policy is to contain its energy demands by more effective use of energy, increased domestic production and robust development of energy substitutes.

The increase of Chinese military expenditure is also frequently cited to prove the “China military threat.” Why has China increased its military spending? There are several reasons. One is that the Chinese military had for a period of time been asked to be patient and concensive, while national economic development is the top priority. Recent military expenditure increases are, to a certain extent, “compensatory” in nature, so as to maintain the normal vitality of our national defense development. Second, with an accelerating process of revolution in military affairs, there is an urgent need to informatize China’s mainly mechanized armed forces, which is costly. Third, in weapon modernization and acquisition, China as a late developer has many disadvantages. Besides, Chinese military has to depend on its own resources in most cases, which further increases the cost of modernization, making China’s military modernization more expensive than those who cooperate with allies. Therefore, China has to maintain a moderate increase in military expenditure for a certain period of time. Particularly, China has to keep at bay the provocations from the forces promoting “Taiwan Independence.” Indeed, if that sum of money can be spent on the national economy and the people’s livelihood, China would be all too happy to do so! Given the recent increase, China’s military expenditure remains at a low level in global terms. It ought to be pointed out that with the different composition of military expenditure and different way of calculation, the estimated figures can vary greatly. For example, part of the maintenance expenses of the U.S. National Guard has not been included into the Federal defense budget. The Japanese govern-
ment budget has also covered the financial risks of R&D in its defense industry, which is not part of the defense budget. Therefore, a deliberate exaggeration of China’s increase in military expenditure is not justified or conducive to the building of military trust.

Lack of military transparency is the most recent accusation against the Chinese military. It is acknowledged that enhancing military transparency is beneficial to building strategic and military trust. China has already taken a series of measures to increase transparency and will continue to do so in the future. There are two ready examples to show China’s efforts toward improving transparency recently. One is Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld’s visit to the command center of the Second Artillery headquarters in October 2005. He is the first foreign guest received by that center. Another is the recent joint exercise held by the Chinese and American navies. Having said that, I want to emphasize that military transparency is relative, rather than absolute, and mutual rather than unilateral. When we talk about military transparency, we should be reasonable. At the technological and tactical levels, every country keeps many things secret. China is very transparent at the strategic level. We have an aversion to the fact that some countries blindly demand more transparency from China, while sticking to a Cold War-way of thinking themselves.

Enhancing Regional Cooperation in Areas Other Than Security

International cooperation in areas other than security is a powerful driving force for achieving common security, and in this regard the experience of Europe can be a useful source of reference. In European history there have long been conflicts among major powers, and the two World Wars humankind has ever suffered both broke out there. In 1952, only years after the ending of the Second World War, France and Germany built up the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), thus starting the process of reconciliation in Europe. From there to the European Economic Community (EEC), and then to the European Union (EU), the economic integration of the Continent has helped to maintain European peace and prosperity for more than half a century. Now, in the Asia-Pacific region, there are several regional cooperative organiza-
tions in the field of economy and trade, it is possible to have all kinds of exchanges and cooperation in the fields of energy, environmental protection, banking and finance, information technology, protection of intellectual properties, etc., to boost the process of regional integration. With the development of an all-benefiting, all-winning relationship in areas other than security, the common bond to regional security will be expanded, strengthened and enhanced.

To achieve China’s peaceful development, and to enhance regional peace and stability, we must keep our minds abreast of the times. We must look ahead with fresh eyes, and think about peace and development in the Asia-Pacific region with fresh mindsets. A world in the era of globalization is no longer governed by the law of the jungle. Nations depend on each other for preserving their national interests. It is high time to distance ourselves from the social Darwinist law, which advocates “What you’ve gained is what I’ve lost.” Security concepts featuring all-benefiting and all-winning approaches should be ushered in, and cultivated to be the global norms of today.