

FORUM



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ABOUT THE COVER:

A prototype of South Korea's KF-21 fighter aircraft departs July 19, 2022, from Sacheon Air Base with a pilot from the Republic of Korea Air Force's Test and Evaluation Unit at the controls.

KOREA AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES

Dear Readers,

Welcome to Indo-Pacific Defense FORUM's issue on national sovereignty.

Allied and partner nations in the Indo-Pacific are coalescing around a shared understanding of sovereignty to guide international relations and establish a baseline for a rules-based order that ensures regional security and stability.

This issue of FORUM explores the role that militaries and security organizations play in securing the rights of Indo-Pacific nations to exist without interference from external forces. These include the right to self-governance and the right to defend a nation against threats, foreign or domestic.

This edition examines the implications of upholding sovereignty — from training troops and developing military technologies to safeguarding internet freedoms and managing outer space. The issue also reveals the importance of allies, partners and like-minded nations uniting around a modern concept of sovereignty to preserve peace and prosperity.

In the opening feature, Dr. John Hemmings, senior director of the Indo-Pacific Foreign and Security Policy Program at the Pacific Forum, argues that differing notions of sovereignty underpin many of the mounting tensions in the Indo-Pacific, ranging from South China Sea disputes to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to coercive economic policies. Hemmings asserts that issues surrounding definitions of sovereignty, including conceptions of order, must be addressed to enable the United States, its allies and partners, and other regional states to achieve alignment.

In another insightful analysis, Dr. Shaun Narine, a professor at St. Thomas University in New Brunswick, Canada, explores how the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) defines sovereignty for its member states. Despite challenges, ASEAN has brought together forces contending for regional influence and fostered diplomatic relations and economic development in the region, Narine explains.

Singaporean Army Brig. Gen. Frederick Choo, meanwhile, shares how Singapore overcame its geographical constraints to train Soldiers and how its Army partners with other regional armies to build skills and trust and increase interoperability.

FORUM staff articles explore why allied and partner nations need to resist authoritarian controls imposed in the name of digital sovereignty and how military alliances are developing strategies to protect sanctioned activities in the commons of space, among other topics.

We hope these articles encourage regional conversations on the importance of securing national sovereignty. We welcome your comments. Please contact us at ipdf@ipdefenseforum.com to share your thoughts.

All the best,

FORUM Staff

IPD FORUM

National Sovereignty

Volume 48, Issue 1, 2023

USINDOPACOM LEADERSHIP

JOHN C. AQUILINO

Admiral, USN Commander



STEPHEN D. SKLENKA

Lieutenant General, USMC

Deputy Commander

JEFFREY T. ANDERSON

Rear Admiral, USN

Director for Operations

CONTACT US

IPD FORUM

Indo-Pacific Defense FORUM
Program Manager,
HQ USINDOPACOM Box 64013
Camp H.M. Smith, HI 96861 USA

ipdefenseforum.com

email:

ipdf@ipdefenseforum.com

Indo-Pacific Defense FORUM is a professional military magazine published quarterly by the commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command to provide an international forum for military personnel of the Indo-Pacific area. The opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent the policies or points of view of this command or any other agency of the U.S. government. All articles are written by FORUM staff unless otherwise noted. The secretary of defense has determined that the publication of this magazine is necessary for conducting public business as required by the Department of Defense.

ISSN 2333-1593 (print)

ISSN 2333-1607 (online)



DR. JOHN HEMMINGS is senior director of the Indo-Pacific Program at the Pacific Forum International in Honolulu,

Hawaii. Previously, he was an associate professor at the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, also in Honolulu. He is an adjunct fellow at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies and a James Cooke Fellow at the London-based Council on Geostrategy. He specializes in U.S. alliances and strategic competition with a focus on the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy. **Featured on Page 10**



BRIG. GEN. FREDERICK CHOO is chief of staff – joint staff, inspector-general and chief sustainability officer of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF).

He enlisted in the SAF in 1998 and was trained as an armor officer. His previous appointments include commander, 3rd Singapore Division; commander, 8th Singapore Armoured Brigade; and commanding officer, 42nd Battalion Singapore Armoured Regiment. Choo also has held positions in the SAF and Singapore Ministry of Defence, including deputy director (Personnel Policy), Manpower Division; head of Joint Plans and Transformation; and chief of staff – general staff, Army Headquarters. **Featured on Page 30**



DR. SHAUN NARINE is a professor of political science and international relations at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.

His research focuses on the institutional, political and economic development of the Indo-Pacific, with an emphasis on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). He has published two books and many articles on ASEAN issues. He has also published on topics related to Canadian foreign policy in Asia, Europe and the Middle East. His current research focuses on issues of power transition in the international system and the effect of Western-oriented theoretical paradigms on policymakers. **Featured on Page 54**

Join the Discussion WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Indo-Pacific Defense FORUM serves military and security personnel in the Indo-Pacific region. A product of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the quarterly magazine provides high-quality, in-depth content on security efforts across the region — from counterterrorism to international cooperation to natural disasters.

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PRESIDENTS BIDEN, MARCOS

Reaffirm Nations' Alliance

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and United States President Joe Biden reflected on the importance of their nations' alliance during their first in-person meeting in September 2022, as President Biden "reaffirmed the United States' ironclad commitment to the defense of the Philippines."

The leaders met on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York four months after Marcos swept to power in a landslide election.

Manila and Washington have a mutual defense treaty dating to 1951, and President Biden said the allies are in a "critical, critical relationship."

"For decades, the alliance has strengthened both of us, I believe," he said, according to the White House.

In addition to discussing the South China Sea, where the Philippines is among several nations embroiled in long-running territorial disputes with the People's Republic of China (PRC), the leaders talked about energy security, climate action, infrastructure, the effect of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on energy prices and food security, and the crisis in Myanmar, among other matters, the White House said.

Beijing refuses to accept a 2016 ruling by an international arbitration tribunal in Manila's favor over the PRC's

arbitrary claims in the South China Sea. Chinese vessels also consistently encroach in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone in the strategic waterway.

Marcos, who promised before taking office that he would assert the 2016 ruling, said "the role of the United States in maintaining the peace in our region is something that is much appreciated by all the countries in the region and the Philippines especially. [I] hope that we will be able to discuss further the roles that our two countries will play together and individually as we continue down that road, maintaining peace despite all of the complexities that have arisen in the past few months."

In March 2022, the two nations conducted one of their largest joint military exercises, Balikatan, with officials saying they hoped it would convey a message of strong bilateral ties in the face of the PRC's maritime challenges. (Pictured: Philippine and U.S. Marines conduct a raid during exercise Balikatan in the Philippines in April 2022.)

In his speech to the U.N. General Assembly, Marcos urged respect for an "open, inclusive, and rules-based international order that is governed by international law and informed by the principles of equity and justice." Benar News

Australia, New Zealand Share Common Outlook on Pacific



Australia and New Zealand are in lockstep in their policies toward the Pacific Island Countries (PICs), where the People's Republic of China (PRC) is attempting to grow influence, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told reporters at a news conference with then-New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern.

She was the first foreign leader to visit Albanese in Australia since his election in May 2022.

Australia, New Zealand and the United States have voiced concerns that a new Beijing security pact with the Solomon Islands could result in a Chinese military base being established

there. The Solomons and the PRC have denied that will happen.

"We're in lockstep on the Pacific," Albanese said. "I look forward to working with Prime Minister Ardern, working with our democratic neighbors."

Albanese said his administration promised greater action on greenhouse gas emissions. Many of the low-lying PICs consider climate change their most pressing and existential threat.

"The Pacific region has listed climate change as its No. 1 threat," Ardern said. "I know with regards to New Zealand we have a lot more to do, but we welcome being joined on that journey by Australia." The Associated Press

PHILIPPINES MARKS SOVEREIGN TERRITORY

The Philippines has installed buoys and opened command posts to assert its sovereignty in waters and islets it claims in the contested South China Sea, Adm. Artemio Abu, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) chief, said in May 2022.

The PCG set up five navigational buoys, each one about 9 meters long and bearing the national flag, near Lawak, Likas, Parola and Pag-asa islands, Abu told a local radio station, hailing “the resounding success of installing our sovereign markers.”

He said the PCG also established command observation posts on Lawak, Likas and Parola to boost Manila’s maritime domain awareness in the South China Sea, known in the Philippines as the West Philippine Sea. An estimated U.S. \$5 trillion in international trade transits through the waterway yearly. (Pictured: Philippine Coast Guard personnel install structures for command observation posts in the South China Sea.)



Vietnamese and Chinese fishing boats, as well as Chinese coast guard vessels, had been spotted near Pag-asa, the largest Philippine-held territory and home to Philippine civilians, he said.

Chinese coast guard ships had previously blocked Philippine vessels on resupply missions to outposts manned by Philippine Marines in the disputed waters, among other abuses.

The new PCG outposts will “improve our capabilities in promoting maritime safety, maritime search and rescue, and marine environmental protection,” Abu said.

Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, the People’s Republic of China, Taiwan and Vietnam have territorial claims in the South China Sea. Indonesia does not count itself as a party to territorial disputes but has claims to South China Sea waters off the Natuna Islands.

A 2016 ruling by an international tribunal affirmed Manila’s sovereign rights to a 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone and an extended continental shelf and declared Beijing’s sweeping claim to virtually the entire sea legally invalid. Benar News



Japan Applies Extra Scrutiny *to foreign students*

Japan is asking universities for greater scrutiny of foreign students and scholars to prevent technology leaks to nations such as the People’s Republic of China. The move is partly for national security but also to safeguard exchanges with United States and European universities.

A string of recent U.S. arrests of Chinese academics over spying allegations was a wake-up call for Japan, officials said.

At a time of debilitating supply-chain disruptions, intellectual property theft and cyberattacks, economic security has become a top priority for policymakers globally and a vital area of diplomatic cooperation.

The drive to increase monitoring in academia is part of a push to expand Japan’s export controls, in tandem with an economic security bill passed in June 2022.

Under the new guidelines, universities are being asked to conduct background checks and flag individuals with ties to foreign governments or defense-related institutions. (Pictured: Students walk on the University of Tokyo campus.)

The U.S. Embassy in Japan said it welcomed the revised guidelines. It said the U.S. would look for ways to help Japan and its universities protect against “real and serious” research security challenges.

Chinese nationals made up 44% of Japan’s nearly 280,000 foreign university students in 2020, according to government data, while the U.S. was the top destination for Japanese researchers, followed by China, in 2019. Reuters

Chinese police block a road leading to a courthouse in the Xinjiang region before the trial of a Uyghur scholar.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

CCP Shifts Oppression of Uyghurs from 'Reeducation' to Prison, Analysts Say

RADIO FREE ASIA

Two reports released by officials in Xinjiang — one by the region's highest court, the other by a group of prosecutors — show the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) strategy for constraining the Uyghur population is shifting from so-called reeducation camps to prison.

The reports, published in March 2022 on the official website of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) government, largely recite judicial statistics for the year. But scholars and analysts say the numbers represent a shift in strategy to use more official but still corrupt means to prosecute Uyghurs and other members of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang in northwestern China.

Public prosecutors, collectively known as the

Procuratorate, detained or convicted more than 44,600 people in 28,490 cases involving about 12,900 crimes, Li Yongjun, who is the head of the XUAR People's Procuratorate, told the fifth session of the 13th People's Congress of the XUAR in January 2022.

Li noted that "the construction of a safe Xinjiang was effectively promoted."

Chief Justice Bahargul Semet said that the region's courts handled 668,900 cases in 2021. Of those, 606,200 were closed to public review. The top-level

Human rights activists say the Chinese Communist Party has detained 1.8 million Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities in a network of detention camps in Xinjiang, including the massive Urumqi No. 3 Detention Center. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Uyghur Detainment

- ▲ TIER 1: Reeducation Center (Low-Security)
- ▲ TIER 2: Reeducation Center (High-Security)
- ▲ TIER 3: High-Security Prison
- ▲ TIER 4: Administrative Detention Center



Source: U.S. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and Australian Strategic Policy Institute

Supreme Court, meanwhile, took up 5,820 cases, 5,271 of which were closed.

German researcher Adrian Zenz, who has documented the CCP's abuses against the Uyghurs, said the number of cases and investigations in Xinjiang courts has nearly doubled since 2018.

Along with the increase in Uyghur-language translations during trials, the statistics show that, "Beijing's oppression in the region is shifting from mainly reeducation to sentencing large numbers of Uyghurs to prison terms," Zenz said. "Uyghurs are not released from the camps, but instead shifted into prisons.

"Xinjiang continues to hide how many 'criminals' are sentenced each year," he said. "It stopped reporting this figure in 2018. This unfortunately indicates that the state is concealing its strategy of shifting Uyghurs from reeducation camps to prisons to the outside world."

Teng Biao, an academic lawyer and visiting professor at the University of Chicago, who is an expert on China's judicial and legal systems, said that courts have become a tool of repression in Xinjiang.

Bahargul, the chief justice, said that courts operated by the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, a state-owned economic and paramilitary organization, handled 80,800 cases, 71,000 of which are now closed. The corps, which also is known as Bingtuan, has been sanctioned by the U.S. for its involvement in human rights violations against Uyghurs.



Activists protest the Chinese Communist Party's abuse of ethnic Uyghurs during a rally in Jakarta, Indonesia, in January 2022. REUTERS

The CCP is believed to have held 1.8 million Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities in a network of detention camps in Xinjiang since 2017. Beijing claims that the camps are vocational training centers and has denied widespread and documented allegations that it has abused Muslims in the region.

The report from the People's Court also noted the rise in court cases handled online.

Defining SOVEREIGNTY

Why the concept is key to the foundation of the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific

DR. JOHN HEMMINGS/PACIFIC FORUM INTERNATIONAL

Sovereignty is one of the most important concepts in international relations — perhaps as important as power for its central role in guiding state relations and setting the baseline for a rules-based order. The Treaty of Westphalia, signed in Europe in 1648 after the Thirty Years' War, established the concept of the sovereign state. In doing so, it also created the framework for modern international relations, many scholars contend. Although today it is taken for granted, the concept of the sovereign state — a building block for the current global order — was created by the treaty and translates into an entity that is responsible for peace within its own borders, for practicing diplomacy, enacting treaties and, ultimately, for making war.

Prior to the treaty, European principalities had limited sovereignty, with much of the legitimacy of their rulers conferred by the papacy, which exerted control over its followers. Likewise, in the Indo-Pacific, a historic Sinocentric order prescribed sovereignty, with many rulers subject to the legitimacy conferred by China's emperor in exchange for accepting the principle of Chinese hegemony, or Tianxia (translated as “all under heaven”), scholars say. In many ways, therefore, sovereignty as defined after 1648 was not merely one that established territoriality, but one that created nominal equality.

Enduring Relevance

While security practitioners might view the concept of sovereignty as peripheral to their everyday jobs, it is more important than might first appear. The United Nations Charter, in Chapter 1, Article 2, asserts that the U.N. is “based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.” This centrality is no less important in the Indo-Pacific, where post-colonialism, territorial conflict and human rights issues highlight its importance.

Nearly every speaker at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in June 2022 mentioned sovereignty at least once, including Japanese Prime Minister Fumio



Protesters in Makati, the Philippines, call for national sovereignty to be upheld in the wake of the People's Republic of China's continued occupation of disputed territory in the South China Sea. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kishida and United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin. Some speakers at the international security forum went further, with Sebastien Lecornu, France's minister of defense, and Gen. Phan Van Giang, Vietnam's defense minister, each using the term seven times. Not only is the concept of sovereignty important because of its foundational impact, but it's also behind some of the fissures and flashpoints in the region, from the South China Sea to the East China Sea; from debt-trap diplomacy to Sino-Indian relations; and from economic coercion to influence operations. Arguably, at the heart of these tensions is not merely a different conceptualization of sovereignty but a different concept of order. It is the nominal equality, included in most definitions of the concept, that is most at risk in the People's Republic of China's (PRC's) hierarchical approach toward order. It is only by addressing topics such as sovereignty at the level of principle that the core areas of alignment among the U.S. and other regional states can be found.

Demonstrators gather in Yangon, Myanmar, to demand democracy be restored after a military coup. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Consider the PRC's One Belt, One Road (OBOR) scheme — sometimes called the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) — which received a great amount of attention from the global media in the past decade and which encouraged states to accept Chinese loans for infrastructure development. While the PRC sought to portray itself as a benign provider of public goods and development, the strategic nature of these efforts was viewed critically across the region. In 2017, Indian scholar Brahma Chellaney voiced the fears of many when he coined the phrase “debt-trap diplomacy,”

Lim Jock Hoi, then secretary-general of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, addresses a meeting on humanitarian assistance to Myanmar in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in May 2022. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



arguing that China's largesse was designed to make states dependent on Beijing and thus subject to its policy preferences. This concern also extended to India's sense of territorial sovereignty: “Our position on OBOR/BRI is clear and there is no change. ... No country can accept a project that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity,” a spokesperson for India's Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement in April 2018.

Sovereignty Defined

Sovereignty rests on the principles of territoriality and noninterference in the domestic affairs of states, according to the Westphalian definition. Despite many states using language supporting that description, the region has three nuanced approaches to define sovereignty.

Traditional or Strict Sovereignty

The first is the historic notion of sovereignty derived from the Treaty of Westphalia, adhered to most closely by many states of the Indo-Pacific. Given the history of Western imperialism and conflict in the region, this makes a certain amount of sense. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), for example, prides itself as being a model of Westphalian sovereignty, because the organization was founded on principles of noninterference and self-determination, according to its charter. The reluctance of ASEAN states to get involved in the Rohingya humanitarian crisis in Myanmar, for example, stems from a



The United Nations Charter, in Chapter 1, Article 2, asserts that the U.N. is “based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.” This centrality is no less in the Indo-Pacific, where post-colonialism, territorial conflict and human rights issues highlight its importance.

lack of cohesion over how far the principle of noninterference applies. In the immediate aftermath of the February 2021 coup in Myanmar, Indonesia attempted to devise an ASEAN response but only gained support from Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore, while Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam called the situation an internal affair, the BBC reported.

that the principle of responsible sovereignty was accepted by a resolution passed by the U.N. General Assembly in September 2005 at the World Summit.

Hierarchical Sovereignty

Finally, there is a variant promoted and pursued by the PRC that is somewhat inconsistent. On one hand, Beijing prioritizes territoriality among its core issues

and noninterference as enshrined in the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence introduced in 1954. On the other hand, its territorial claims are arbitrarily applied. For example, it claims self-governed Taiwan, dating to the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), but not parts of present-day Mongolia, which was ruled by the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368). With regard to responsible sovereignty, the PRC has always insisted on the notion of the sole rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and that a country’s development, culture and values must be taken into account, while also steadfastly opposing external powers intervening in the affairs of others. Then, there are its notions on sovereignty of ethnicity. For example, it demonstrates an extraterritorial claim over foreign nationals of Chinese heritage, as both agents of

influence and in its pursuit of opponents of the CCP. Finally, the PRC has not readily accepted agreements on sovereignty such as the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The PRC has attempted to expand its rights and jurisdictions in ways that “reflect a desire to reshape the concept of sovereignty,” as Peter A. Dutton, a lawyer and professor of strategic studies at the U.S. Naval War College, testified before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission in February 2008.

Shared Modern Notions

While the U.S. and ASEAN differ on the question of responsible sovereignty, they are in broad agreement on the territoriality and rights of states defined by UNCLOS. The PRC’s expansionist outlook has still not matured into a coherent or universal approach and is, rather, a slipshod attempt to provide post-facto support to strategic Chinese claims in the South China Sea. Similarly, the U.S. and other regional states conduct diplomacy and foreign policy that accept the principle of equality of states. The PRC,



Sri Lankans protest with a coffin labeled “the death of state sovereignty” in Sinhalese outside the presidential office in April 2022 after the People’s Republic of China extended predatory loans under its One Belt, One Road scheme.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Responsible Sovereignty

The second definition, mostly held by nations such as Canada, the U.S. and many Western European countries slightly alters the original Westphalian definition by making sovereignty conditional. According to the U.N., the right to protect strengthens the concept of sovereignty, arguing that it is a responsibility. By this definition, which draws from the U.N.’s social contract tradition, states must provide for the welfare of their citizens, and that responsibility exists with the “broader community of states” when a particular state is unwilling to protect its citizens or is the actual perpetrator of human rights abuses.

It is important for Westerners to understand this different view of sovereignty when seeking support from ASEAN states over human rights violations in Myanmar, for example. On the other hand, it is notable

Samoan Prime Minister Fiaame Naomi Mata'afa, left, greets Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong in Apia, Samoa, in June 2022. Indo-Pacific allies and partners are increasingly interested in protecting the sovereignty of Pacific Island Countries.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



The USS John S. McCain transits the Sea of Japan during a routine freedom of navigation operation in November 2020.

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS
MARKUS CASTANEDA/U.S. NAVY



by contrast, is less consistent in how it applies its own conceptualization of sovereignty, with different applications for itself.

This inconsistency is most likely due to a foreign policy culture that draws heavily from China's imperial culture and Marxist-revolutionary ideology. The PRC's Sinocentric political traditions, such as the previously mentioned concept of Tianxia in which the Chinese emperor was at the center of world events, can be seen in Beijing's hierarchical approach toward smaller states, which it views as holding fewer sovereign rights. In 2010, then-Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi told a group of diplomats that "China is a big country; other countries are small countries, and that's just a fact." While the phrase has been enshrined into the history of diplomatic gaffes, it is at essence an assertion of hierarchical sovereignty, which places the PRC at the core of the international system, with its sovereignty having more weight than the sovereignty of other nations.

Ultimately, the modern concept of sovereignty — drawn up by war-weary nations so many centuries ago — is foundational to the current political order, a benchmark for a rules-based society. In this order, states have sovereign control over their borders and populations, but it's also an order that makes normative demands over those states in how they treat their citizens. It is an order that enshrines the equality of Pacific Island Countries and, while recognizing their significant differences in power and weight, nonetheless insists on a nominal democracy of diplomacy: that the minister of a superpower has the same rank as the minister of a smaller city-state, and that treaties bind nations no matter their size. While the concept of sovereignty creates disagreements in the Indo-Pacific region, it is also the glue that holds it together. After all, international diplomacy, law and convention all depend on the goodwill and working relations of sovereign nations. □

EXERCISE IN STRENGTH

**Regional Military Partners Reinvigorate
Relationships, Reinforce Readiness**

FORUM STAFF



**Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, Royal Australian Navy and U.S. Navy
ships sail en route to the multinational Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise
off the Hawaiian Islands in June 2022.** SEAMAN ALEKSANDR FREUTEL/U.S. NAVY

When the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russia touted their bilateral military drills in mid-2022 as evidence of a “no-limits” friendship, they may instead have unwittingly highlighted the paucity of their circle of friends, leaving the regimes’ grandiose proclamations of partnership to sound like little more than the rattle of a saber in an ill-fitting scabbard. Contrast those belligerent Sino-Russian aerial and naval maneuvers — which were condemned by Japan and South Korea — with the multinational peacekeeping exercise being held at the same time next door to China and Russia.

Khaan Quest 2022, hosted by the Mongolian Armed Forces in conjunction with the United States Army Pacific, drew personnel from 15 Indo-Pacific and European nations for two weeks of combined training in explosive device awareness, combat first aid and riot control, conducted in coordination with humanitarian organizations. “It is not only a great opportunity to exchange lessons and techniques; it is an expression of the commitment of the participating nations to the charter of the United Nations and all that it stands for and against,” Australian Army Maj. Gen. Chris Smith, who also is assigned as deputy commanding general of strategy and plans for the U.S. Army Pacific, said in a news release. “To that end, the exercise draws from a diversity of participants matched by few other military exercises around the world.”

From the upland steppes of Northeast Asia to the volcanic islands of the Pacific Ocean, the long-awaited easing of pandemic lockdowns and quarantines has produced a flourish of multilateral military exercises throughout the Indo-Pacific, with many expanded over previous years as like-minded nations reinvigorate relationships and reinforce readiness in a time of geopolitical volatility. “Partnerships cannot be taken for granted,” Australian Army Lt. Gen. Rick Burr said during his keynote speech at the Land Forces Pacific (LANPAC) symposium in Hawaii in May 2022, where the role of multinational training and joint and coalition readiness in strengthening alliances and partnerships was a major topic. Collaboration, he said, “helps us to think bigger than ourselves ... and improves our resilience.”

Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine in early 2022 underscored “the value of partnerships and shared interests around defending sovereignty,” Burr told attendees at the Indo-Pacific’s largest conference for armies. “Government to government, military to military, people to people — strengthening alliances and partnerships in our region is a critical element of the defense strategy to shape, deter and respond. Training with other armed forces provides presence and builds capacity and connectedness in our region and actively helps to shape the region’s stability and sovereignty.”

BUILDING TRUST, INTEROPERABILITY

A week after the 18th iteration of Khaan Quest concluded at the Five Hills Training Area near the Mongolian capital of Ulaanbaatar, Australia was among the 10 participants that also sent military personnel and assets to the waters around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California for Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC). Under the theme of “Capable, Adaptive, Partners,” the U.S.-led biennial exercise from late June to early August 2022 drew 25,000 personnel from more than two dozen nations in the Indo-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, North America and South America, according to the U.S. Navy. First held in 1971, the world’s largest maritime exercise featured amphibious operations; anti-submarine, air defense, gunnery and missile drills; counterpiracy operations; mine clearance operations; explosive ordnance disposal; and diving and salvage operations.

For the Singapore Armed Forces, which participated in Khaan Quest and RIMPAC, such exercises are indispensable, providing its personnel with access to training areas many times larger than the 719-square-kilometer nation itself. “Unilateral training is but one component of our overall portfolio,” Brig. Gen. Frederick Choo, chief of staff for the Singapore Army, said during his presentation titled “Combined Joint Training — Singapore’s Experience and Future Opportunities” at LANPAC. “Opportunities to train with other armies are equally, if not more, important. It allows armies to learn from one another, foster friendships, build mutual trust and enhance our interoperability. It was such exercises in the early years of the Singapore Army that allowed us to learn, benchmark and professionalize early and quickly.”

As countries reassess their defense postures in light of the war in Europe and other global tensions, they “should work towards building collective security even as they boost their own individual defenses,” Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said during his trip to Tokyo for an international conference in late May 2022. “Security is not just [about] an individual country ... so we also have to work together with other countries to secure collective security,” Lee said, according to Singapore’s *The Straits Times* newspaper.

Shared anxieties surrounding the integrity of national sovereignty include the PRC’s attempts to grab influence in the Pacific islands region, including the security pact it signed with the Solomon Islands in May 2022, which many fear could eventually lead to a Chinese military base being built in the Solomons, a nation of 700,000 people with no military force of its own. Although both nations denied having plans for a permanent Chinese military presence — a prospect that the island nation’s prime minister again ruled out in October 2022 — a



An Australian Army Soldier and a U.S. Marine survey the terrain during the trilateral Southern Jackaroo exercise with Japan at Australia's Shoalwater Bay Training Area in May 2022.

CPL. CEDAR BARNES/
U.S. MARINE CORPS

leaked draft of the deal noted that Chinese warships could stop in the Solomon Islands for logistical replenishment, and that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) could send police and armed forces there “to assist in maintaining social order,” The Associated Press reported. Analysts also point to the CCP’s track record of reneging on promises not to militarize structures it built elsewhere, including in Cambodia, Djibouti, Pakistan and the South China Sea.

‘COMMON REGIONAL SOLUTIONS’

The potential consequences of the Sino-Solomons security arrangement were in focus during the panel discussion “Combined Joint Training in the Indo-Pacific” at LANPAC that same month. “Papua New Guinea and all the Pacific Island Countries have a shared interest for a secure and prosperous region,” Papua New Guinea Defence Force Maj. Gen. Mark Goina told attendees. “Noting that Papua New Guinea is geographically located at the gateway of the southwest Pacific and Southeast Asia, it is faced with unique challenges. ... We cannot deal with these challenges alone but require common regional solutions through partnership. For a secure and prosperous Pacific region, our partnership must be based on trust, respect,

commitment to work together and, if our interests align, we can combine our efforts to maximize our effectiveness.”

For a small force with limited capabilities such as Papua New Guinea’s, the support of traditional partners such as Australia, France, New Zealand and the U.S. through joint training exercises is critical to enhancing “the effectiveness of our defense forces and their capacity to successfully work together,” Goina said. He highlighted his nation’s participation with regional partners including Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Tonga in responding to the Solomon Islands’ request for help quelling civil unrest and restoring security and public services beginning in 2003. After a decade, the multinational mission known as Operation Helpem Fren transitioned to partnering with the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force to modernize the nation’s law enforcement capabilities. “I am sure everyone will agree that this is the best and [most] successful Pacific partnering operation we have conducted in our region,” Goina said, crediting the combined joint training the participating nations’ troops conducted in Darwin, Australia.

Such training must be viewed in the context of “the realization of the lack of strategic and operational warning time that



now exists in the geostrategic environment,” said Goins’s fellow panelist, Royal Australian Navy Rear Adm. Brett Sonter, who was posted to the U.S. Pacific Fleet staff as deputy director, maritime operations, in January 2022. “Hence, training how you fight because we no longer have the actual luxury of time. So, we have to work through those behaviors, those practices, now before in an unfortunate circumstance we have to actually use them. ... And if we want to get the maximum deterrence value and assurance values out of exercises, they need to be flexible. They need to be able to change as we see the geostrategic environment change moving forward.”

A SUPERSIZED SHIELD

Military exercises are evolving and expanding across the region. In April 2022, the Indonesian National Armed Forces announced that Garuda Shield, its long-running bilateral exercise with the U.S. in August 2022, would add a dozen participating nations, including Australia, Japan, Papua New Guinea and Singapore.

The news came after Beijing deployed coast guard vessels to block Indonesia from exploring for oil and gas near the Natuna Islands inside Indonesia’s exclusive economic zone. That makes Garuda Shield’s expansion

“especially noteworthy,” Collin Koh, a research fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore, told CNN. “Clearly, Indonesia wishes to engage in external balancing in the South China Sea, while using this as a platform to project its stature and influence in terms of multilateral defense diplomacy.”

Super Garuda Shield 2022 became the latest of more than 60 bilateral and multilateral exercises, involving dozens of nations, in which the Australian Defence Force participates each year. “Over recent years, the depth, scale and sophistication of engagements with our partners has evolved significantly,” Burr said during his LANPAC keynote speech. Those include Talisman Sabre, the largest bilateral training event involving Australian and U.S. forces, and the trilateral warfighting exercise Southern Jackaroo with Japan and the U.S. at Australia’s expansive Shoalwater Bay Training Area.

“These examples show what we all seem to increasingly seek: more ambitious, sophisticated activities with increased complexity, benefiting more of our people and, especially, our future leaders,” Burr said. “We all understand the value of the close ties of our countries to ensure security and enhance prosperity.” □

Republic of Korea Marines conduct an amphibious raid as part of a multinational littoral operations exercise during RIMPAC 2022.

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MARINE CORPS



SECURITY ACTION

Japan Advances
a Free and Open
Indo-Pacific

FUMIO KISHIDA/PRIME MINISTER, JAPAN | PHOTOS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida delivered this opening keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue security summit in Singapore on June 10, 2022. It has been edited to fit FORUM's format.

With the very foundations of the international order being shaken by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the international community stands at a historic crossroads. The last time the world faced such a major turning point was some 30 years ago. That was around the time of the Cold War, a period when the world was divided into two camps, and people were afraid that the two sides' antagonism might heat up again. The Cold War came to an end and the post-Cold War era began.

In an address to the Japanese Diet, then-Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa — who went before me as both a fellow legislator from Hiroshima and the leader of the Kochikai, the policy group I belong to — characterized the post-Cold War era as the start of an era of building a new order for global peace, squarely addressing the reality that Japan was

called upon to play a greater international role in the security arena. Miyazawa, after an extensive debate in Japan, managed to get the Peacekeeping Operations Cooperation Act passed, and he deployed Japan's Self-Defense Forces to Cambodia based on this act. With some 30 years having passed since Miyazawa's time, in what kind of era are we now living? Since the pandemic broke out, the world has become even more uncertain.

Amid continuing economic disruption, we have come to recognize the importance of reliable and secure supply chains. Then, as the world was still recovering from the pandemic, Russia's aggression against Ukraine occurred. No country or region in the world can shrug this off as someone else's problem. It is a situation that shakes the very foundations of the international order, which every country and individual should regard as their own affair.

In the South China Sea, are the rules really being honored? Neither international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to which all relevant countries agreed after years of dialogue and efforts, nor the award rendered by the arbitral tribunal under this convention [ruling in favor of the Philippines and dismissing much of the People's Republic of China's territorial claims] is being complied with. In the East China Sea, where Japan is located, unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in violation of international law are continuing.

Japan is taking a firm stand against such attempts. Peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, which is between these two seas, is also of extreme importance. Unfortunately, much activity not respecting people's diversity, free will and human rights is also taking place in this region. Furthermore, since the beginning of 2022, North Korea has repeatedly launched ballistic missiles, including a new type of ICBM [intercontinental ballistic missile], with unprecedented frequency and in new ways. As such, North Korea is strengthening its nuclear and missile activities in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, posing a clear and serious challenge to the international community. It is deeply regrettable that the recently proposed Security Council resolution was not adopted as a result of the exercise of the veto. The abductions [of Japanese citizens] issue, which is a top priority for my administration, is also a serious violation of human rights. At the root of all these problems is a situation in which confidence in the universal rules that govern international relations is being shaken. This is the essential and most serious underlying problem.

Can the rules-based international order we have built through hard work, dialogue and consensus be upheld and the march of peace and prosperity continue? Or will we return to a lawless world, where rules are ignored and broken, where unilateral changes to the status quo by force are unchallenged and accepted, and where the strong coerce the weak militarily or economically? That is the choice we have to make today. Japan is the world's third-largest economy and has consistently sought to bring about peace and prosperity in the region since the end of the Second

World War, making contributions mainly in the economic field. Accordingly, the responsibility Japan must fulfill is heavy. With that understanding, what role should Japan play in realizing peace and prosperity as we face this crossroads in history?

While focusing on universal values that everyone should respect and defend, we must firmly hold aloft the banner of our ideals for the future, such as a world without nuclear weapons, while also responding astutely and decisively as the situation demands. I am committed to realism diplomacy for a new era that adheres to this kind of thorough pragmatism. In the midst of all this, Japan will not lose its humility, flexibility in valuing diversity or tolerance that respects the individuality of others. However, we will be more proactive than ever in tackling the challenges and crises that face Japan, Asia and the world.

VISION FOR PEACE

Taking that perspective to maintain and strengthen the peaceful order in this region, I will advance the Kishida vision for peace and boost Japan's diplomatic and security role in the region by promoting the following five pillars of initiatives.

- The first is maintaining and strengthening the rules-based free and open international order. In particular, we will press forward in bringing new developments toward the FOIP [Free and Open Indo-Pacific].
- The second is enhancing security. We will advance the fundamental reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities in tandem with reinforcing the Japan-U.S. alliance and strengthening our security cooperation with other like-minded countries.
- The third is promoting realistic efforts to bring about a world without nuclear weapons.
- The fourth is strengthening the functions of the U.N., including U.N. Security Council reform.
- The fifth is strengthening international cooperation in new policy areas such as economic security.

To bring peace to the international community, it is imperative that we first press forward in maintaining and strengthening the rules-based free and open international order. The rule of law serves as

Japanese and U.S. fighter jets fly over the Sea of Japan in June 2022. Japan's Defense Ministry calls the security environment "increasingly severe" as North Korea continues to conduct ballistic missile tests.

the foundation supporting this kind of international order. Alongside it are the peaceful resolution of disputes, the nonuse of force and respect for sovereignty. On the sea, it is freedom of navigation. And in the economy, free trade.

Respect for human rights is also critical, as is a democratic political system that reflects people's free will and diversity. These are common and universal principles developed by all people worldwide who, longing for world peace, have amassed collective wisdom. The rules and principles I have just mentioned are also consistent with the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter. Rules must be respected. Even if they become inconvenient, one cannot be allowed to act as if they did not exist, nor can one be allowed to unilaterally change them. If one wants to change them, a new consensus must be made.

Japan has been promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific with a view to maintaining and strengthening the rules-based free and open international order in this region. And the vision we have advocated has come to gain broad support in the international community. Japan has consistently and vigorously supported the ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, which ASEAN has developed as its own basic policy. Looking around the world, a variety of actors, including Australia, the European Union, France, Germany, India, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the U.S., have all laid out visions for the Indo-Pacific, sharing a common grand vision.

SHARED SECURITY INTERESTS

Like-minded partners are each taking action on their own initiative, not at the behest of others. This is the very concept of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, which is based on inclusiveness, the so-called FOIP concept. In particular, here in the Indo-Pacific region, collaboration with ASEAN is absolutely essential. After assuming the post of Prime Minister, I first visited Cambodia, which holds the 2022 ASEAN chairmanship. Later, I visited Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand. And today, I am here in Singapore. I have also held meetings with the leaders of ASEAN countries. The history of Japan and Southeast Asia is underpinned by a long history of goodwill and friendship. After the war, Japan supported the development of Southeast Asia. And Southeast Asian countries extended a helping hand to Japan in our recovery from the unprecedented earthquake and tsunami disaster.

I would like to continue to work hand in hand with the leaders of ASEAN countries to deepen discussions on ways to ensure peace and prosperity in the region. Along with ASEAN countries, Pacific Island Countries are also important partners for the realization of FOIP. We will contribute to strengthening the foundation for their sustainable and resilient economic development, including addressing the existential challenge of climate change.

We have provided timely assistance in response to recent changes in the security environment, such as

laying an undersea cable in east Micronesia in partnership with Australia and the U.S., and we will work together with our Pacific Island partners to ensure a rules-based, sustainable maritime order. Cooperation based on FOIP is cooperation built upon long-standing trust. It is not limited to hardware, such as infrastructure construction, but instead also focuses on supporting the development of local human resources, promoting autonomous and inclusive development, and fostering the industry through public and private initiatives. As potential investment partners, we have also supported efforts to strengthen ASEAN's connectivity.

It is also necessary for like-minded countries to work together to increase the investment of resources in this region. In addition to the ASEAN and Pacific Island countries, Japan, Australia, India and the U.S., also known as the Quad, are playing an important role in promoting a FOIP. At the May 2022 Quad leaders' meeting in Tokyo, we confirmed that the Quad will seek to extend more than U.S. \$50 billion of further infrastructure assistance and investment in the Indo-Pacific over the next five years, which will be essential in promoting productivity and prosperity in this region. I will further accelerate these efforts. We intend to enhance existing FOIP cooperation by beefing up our diplomatic efforts, including by expanding our official development assistance (ODA) while engaging in an optimized, efficient and strategic use of international cooperation through ODA.

I will lay out a FOIP plan for peace by next spring [2023], which will strengthen Japan's efforts to further promote the vision of a FOIP with an emphasis on providing patrol vessels and enhancing maritime law enforcement capabilities, as well as cybersecurity, digital and green initiatives, and economic security. In recent years, Japan has particularly been strengthening its maritime security efforts while utilizing advanced technologies, such as satellites, artificial intelligence and unmanned aerial vehicles, and we will continue to share our knowledge and experience with other countries. From this perspective, over the next three years, we will make use of technical cooperation, training and other means conducive to strengthening the maritime law enforcement capabilities of at least 20 countries to promote efforts to train at least 800 maritime security personnel and strengthen their human resources networks. In addition, we will provide at least approximately U.S. \$2 billion in assistance, such as the provision of maritime security equipment, including patrol vessels, and development of maritime transportation infrastructure in Indo-Pacific countries over the next three years.

We will strengthen our support in the Pacific countries, utilizing cooperation of Quad and frameworks of international organizations. In addition, to maintain and strengthen the international order based on rules and universal values, such as the rule of law, we will strengthen connections and networks among countries and peoples. To this end, we will train more than 1,500 personnel in

the fields of the rule of law and governance over the next three years.

JAPAN'S ROLE

Second, I would like to talk about the role Japan should play in the realm of security. In light of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, countries' perceptions on security have drastically changed around the world. Germany has announced that it will shift its security policy and raise its defense budget to 2% of its gross domestic product. Finland and Sweden, Russia's neighbors, have changed their historical policy of neutrality and announced they have applied for NATO membership.

I, myself, have a strong sense of urgency that Ukraine today may be East Asia tomorrow. Japan has also made the decision to shift our policy toward Russia and is united with the international community in our efforts to impose strong sanctions against Russia and support Ukraine. As the Prime Minister of the peace-loving nation Japan, I have a responsibility to protect the lives and assets of the Japanese people and to contribute to a peaceful order in the region. I will seek to build a stable international order through dialogue, not confrontation. At the same time, however, we must be prepared for the emergence of an entity that tramples on the peace and security of other countries by force or threat without honoring the rules. As a means of preventing such a situation and protecting

ourselves, we need to enhance our deterrence and response capabilities.

This will be absolutely essential if Japan is to learn to survive in the new era and keep speaking out as a standard-bearer of peace. As the security environment surrounding Japan becomes increasingly severe, we will set out a new national security strategy by the end of 2022. I am determined to fundamentally reinforce Japan's defense capabilities within the next five years and secure a substantial increase of Japan's defense budget needed to effect such reinforcement. In doing so, we will not rule out any options, including the so-called counterstrike capabilities, and will realistically consider what is necessary to protect the lives and livelihoods of our people. To all of you, I stress that Japan's posture as a peace-loving nation will remain unchanged. Our efforts will proceed within the scope of our constitution and in compliance with international law in a manner that does not alter the basic roles and missions shared between Japan and the U.S. under our alliance. We will continue to explain our approach to other countries in a transparent and thorough manner. No country can ensure its security entirely on its own. That is why I will promote multilayered security cooperation with like-minded countries that share universal values, positioning the Japan-U.S. alliance as the linchpin. In my meeting with U.S. President [Joe] Biden during his May 2022

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, right, greets, from left, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, U.S. President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue leaders' summit in Tokyo in May 2022.



visit to Japan, he strongly supported my determination regarding Japan's defense capabilities. We were also in full agreement on expanding and deepening Japan-U.S. security and defense cooperation. We will further reinforce the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. alliance, which has become the cornerstone of peace and stability in not only the Indo-Pacific but also the entire world.

At the same time, we will actively promote security cooperation with Australia and other like-minded countries. I am extremely pleased to begin negotiations with Singapore to conclude a defense-equipment and defense-technology transfer agreement. We will continue to promote our efforts to conclude such agreements with ASEAN countries and materialize specific cooperation projects, according to their needs. Regarding reciprocal access agreements, or RAAs, following the signing of an agreement with Australia in January 2022, we have reached an agreement in principle with the U.K. Japan will work closely with like-minded partners in Europe and Asia toward the conclusion of these agreements. In addition, to contribute to the realization of a free and open maritime order, Japan [dispatched] a Maritime Self-Defense Force unit, led by the destroyer Izumo, to the Indo-Pacific region in June 2022 to conduct joint exercises with countries in the region, including Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

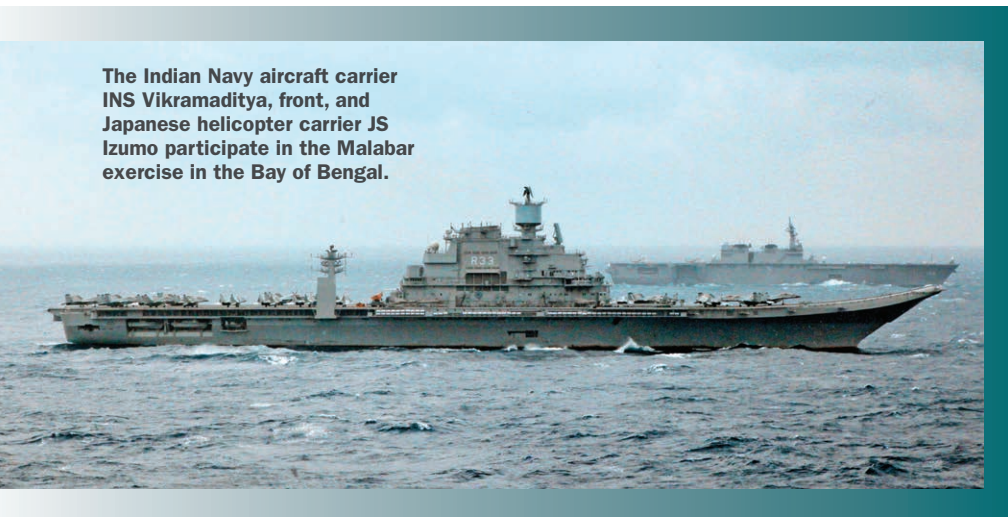
may have already caused serious damage to the nuclear nonproliferation regime. It may have already made it even more difficult for countries seeking to develop nuclear weapons to abandon their plans. Moves to develop and possess nuclear weapons might even spread further to other countries.

These are among the various concerns that have been voiced. Even before the Ukraine crisis, North Korea frequently and repeatedly launched ballistic missiles, including ICBM-class missiles, and we have great concerns that yet another nuclear test is imminent. The nontransparent buildup of military capacity, including nuclear arsenals, that can be seen in the vicinity of Japan has become a serious regional security concern. The return to compliance with the Iran nuclear agreement has not yet been realized.

The path to a world without nuclear weapons has become even more challenging. It is, however, precisely because of this extremely difficult situation that I, a Prime Minister with roots in Hiroshima, where an atomic bomb was dropped, have decided to speak out, work tirelessly to reverse the current situation and contribute to any scale of improvement toward achieving a world without nuclear weapons. There is no contradiction between ensuring Japan's national security, while squarely facing the reality of the harsh security environment surrounding Japan, and at the same time advancing toward the ideal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Based on the relationship of trust we enjoy with the U.S., our sole ally, Japan will present a road map that will take us from the reality to our ideal and press forward with realistic nuclear disarmament efforts. Greater transparency of nuclear forces is what underpins such efforts. It serves as the first step in supporting the irreversibility and verifiability of nuclear disarmament and in building trust among nuclear weapon states, as well as between nuclear weapon states and nonnuclear weapon states.

Mindful of the nontransparent manner in which some countries have been increasing their nuclear capabilities, we call for all nuclear weapon states to disclose information regarding their nuclear forces. Together with countries concerned, we will encourage the U.S. and China to engage in bilateral dialogue on nuclear disarmament and arms control. In addition, it is also key to bring back discussions on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, which have recently become nearly forgotten. More than ever, we need to maintain and strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the very



The Indian Navy aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, front, and Japanese helicopter carrier JS Izumo participate in the Malabar exercise in the Bay of Bengal.

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

Third, we will do our utmost toward achieving a world without nuclear weapons. Amid the crisis in Ukraine, the use of nuclear weapons by Russia is being discussed as a real possibility. We must not repeat the scourge of nuclear weapons. The threat of nuclear weapons, let alone the use of them, should never be tolerated. As the Prime Minister of the only country that has suffered the devastation of atomic bombings, I strongly appeal for this. The ramifications of Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons are not limited to the threat itself. The threat

cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation regime.

We will do everything to ensure that the NPT Review Conference conducted in August 2022, in which both nuclear weapon states and nonnuclear weapon states participated, achieves a meaningful outcome. With the use of nuclear weapons now becoming a real possibility, reminding the world once again about the scourge and inhumanity of the use of nuclear weapons is vital. As the only country to have suffered the devastation of atomic bombings, Japan will seize every opportunity, including the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons [in June 2022], to convey the stark realities of atomic bombings to the world. With a view to further bolstering discussions taken by the Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, which I established when I served as Foreign Minister, and to rekindle the momentum for international nuclear disarmament, we will establish the international Group of Eminent Persons for a World Without Nuclear Weapons.

This group will enjoy the involvement of incumbent and former political leaders of various countries, and our plan is to hold its first meeting in Hiroshima in 2022. With regard to North Korea, working toward the complete denuclearization of North Korea in accordance with the U.N. Security Council resolutions, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the U.S. will work closely together in the areas of regional security, deliberations at the U.N. and diplomatic efforts. And Japan will further act in cooperation with the international community as a whole. Through each and every concrete effort, we will strive to move step by step toward a world without nuclear weapons.

UNITED NATIONS REFORM

Fourth, no time can be lost in reforming the U.N., which should serve as the guardian of peace. Russia, a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, a body having primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, has engaged in an outrageous act that has shaken the very foundation of the international order, causing the U.N. to face a time of trial. Japan's stance of attaching importance to the U.N. remains unchanged.

Since my time as Foreign Minister, I have been actively working toward the reform of the U.N. Now, having assumed office as Prime Minister, I have taken advantage of summit-level diplomatic opportunities to hold discussions with leaders of various countries on ways to strengthen U.N. functions. U.N. reform is not an easy task given the complexity of the intertwined interests of various countries.

But Japan, as a peace-loving nation, will lead discussions to strengthen the functions of the U.N., including the reform of the Security Council. Japan will join the U.N. Security Council starting in 2023, and in the Security Council, too, we will work tirelessly. At the

same time, we will also seek a way forward for global governance that responds to the new challenges in the international community.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Finally, I would like to discuss international cooperation in new policy areas such as economic security. In the midst of an unprecedented pandemic, the vulnerabilities of the global supply chain have come to the fore. Exerting unjustifiable economic pressure on other countries to impose unilateral claims or intentionally disseminating disinformation can also never be accepted.

The aggression against Ukraine has made us even more aware of the clear and urgent need to make our own economy more resilient as it directly affects our everyday lives. Taking into account that the economy is directly linked to national security and that areas such as cybersecurity and digitalization are becoming increasingly important for national security, we will promote economic-security initiatives to ensure the security of the nation and our people from an economic perspective.

In Japan, to address this challenge, the Economic Security Promotion legislation was enacted under my leadership. However, Japan cannot go at this alone. International cooperation is essential, including within frameworks of like-minded countries, such as the G7 [Group of Seven leading industrial nations]. Japan and ASEAN have long been building multilayered supply chains. It is crucial that our public and private sectors continue to invest in maintaining and strengthening these supply chains. To this end, Japan will support more than 100 supply-chain resilience projects over the next five years.

In addition, once a country's status in the international community, including its economic development, has been elevated, that country should not only enjoy the benefits, but more importantly, it should also fulfill the responsibilities and obligations commensurate with that status. Economic cooperation and financing must be characterized by transparency, and they should lead to the long-term welfare of the people of the recipient country.

We will continue to promote economic cooperation based on the idea of human security, respecting the ownership of each country and the interests of its nationals. To achieve prosperity in these difficult times, ASEAN and the Indo-Pacific region must remain the growth engine of the world. Japan will contribute to building resilient nations that can overcome any great or difficult challenges they may face.

I ask you to contemplate our future. The vision I have shared with you today, the vision of a rules-based free and open international order, is one in which we all work together. We will elevate a FOIP to the next stage. I firmly believe that if we do so, a future of peace and prosperity will surely await us, a bright and glorious world full of hope, where there is trust and empathy shared amongst us. □

HOMEGROWN DEFENSE



FORUM STAFF

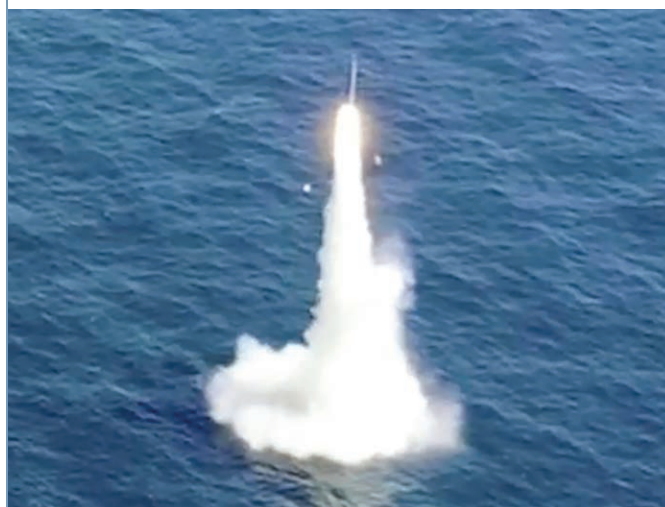
*Generation-defining challenges drive domestic
defense development across Indo-Pacific*

With its MK44 Bushmaster 30 mm chain gun giving it a firing range of 3 kilometers, the Taiwan Army's CM-34 Clouded Leopard can stalk an enemy across all terrains and in all conditions at speeds up to 100 kilometers per hour. By 2023, more than 300 of the eight-wheeled armored vehicles manufactured in central Taiwan should be operational. Named for a big cat believed to be extinct on the island but considered sacred to Taiwan's Indigenous peoples, the Clouded Leopard also is a potent symbol of a rapidly accelerating domestic defense industry — part of a trend of homegrown military advances seen across the Indo-Pacific region.

A few weeks before Taiwan showcased the CM-34 at a mountainous test site in June 2022, South Korean researchers unveiled an artificial intelligence-based application that could, one day, complement military vehicles such as the Clouded Leopard. The self-driving technology analyzes unconventional terrain to plot navigable routes with limited human input, even at high speed, the Yonhap news agency reported. The project is spearheaded by Seoul's state-run Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA), which promotes domestic development of technologies vital to national security. In the days surrounding its self-driving technology announcement, DAPA also revealed plans for a mobile laser device to disarm unexploded ordnance, a long-range radar to monitor the nation's airspace and a lightweight helmet capable of withstanding stronger rounds. In late July 2022, South Korea became one of a handful of nations with a domestically built supersonic fighter jet, with the maiden flight of the KF-21 Boramae. By 2030, the Republic of Korea Air Force is expected to deploy 120 KF-21s as part of the joint development project with Indonesia, CNN reported.

A litany of generation-defining challenges — from a crushing pandemic to communist China's aggressive military expansion and Russia's assault on Ukraine — is spurring such efforts throughout the Indo-Pacific to boost domestic development of weapons systems and other defense assets. To lessen reliance on imports, particularly from

problematic sources such as Russia, whose arms industry has been decimated by international sanctions, governments in India, Japan, South Korea, Thailand and elsewhere are investing heavily in their defense sectors as they secure the means of protecting national sovereignty amid geopolitical vagaries and evolving threats.



South Korea's first domestically built, underwater-launched ballistic missile is test-fired from a submarine in September 2021. SOUTH KOREAN DEFENSE MINISTRY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

“In order to adapt to increasingly rapid changes in the security environment, Japan must strengthen its defense capability at speeds that are fundamentally different from the past,” Japan's Defense Ministry declared in its “2021 Defense of Japan” white paper, which called for the development of aircraft, destroyers, a submarine, missiles, combat vehicles, satellites and electronic warfare systems. The Defense Ministry sought a ninth consecutive increase in military spending as it builds a multidomain force. “Chinese military trends, combined with insufficient transparency about China's defense policies and military affairs, have become a matter of grave concern to the region including Japan and the international community,” the white paper noted.

Japan also is developing hypersonic aircraft and weapons, including cruise missiles, that can travel at least five times the speed of sound. As part of the project by the Japanese Defense Ministry's Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency, researchers in mid-2022 conducted their first

The Indian Defence Ministry has contracted with a local manufacturer to equip the domestically developed Tejas Mark-2 fighter with air-to-air missiles. REUTERS



Royal Thai and U.S. Marines operate a Royal Thai Marine Corps amphibious assault vehicle during exercise Cobra Gold 2022 in Thailand. GUNNERY SGT. TYLER HLAVAC/U.S. MARINE CORPS

combustion flight test for hypersonic capabilities, The Japan Times newspaper reported. To fortify its domestic defense industry while also nurturing multinational collaboration, the Japanese government may ease export rules to add to the dozen or so defense equipment and technology transfer agreements it has with partners such as Australia, India and the Philippines, Kyodo News reported in mid-2022. Not only has the world faced “unprecedented difficulties due to COVID-19, but various security challenges and destabilizing factors became more tangible and acute, and the international order based on universal values, which has underpinned the peace and prosperity of the international community, has been greatly tested,” then-Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi noted in the white paper’s introduction. “In order to counter these challenges in the security environment, it is essential not only to strengthen Japan’s own defense capabilities and expand the roles we can fulfill, but also to closely cooperate with countries that share the same fundamental values.”

Reinforced Resolve

Nowhere, perhaps, are the region’s security challenges more tangible than in Taiwan, separated from the Chinese coast by 160 kilometers of the Taiwan Strait — a natural moat that may seem evermore narrow to the self-governed island’s 24 million residents as a bellicose Chinese Communist Party (CCP) increasingly threatens to use force to impose its claims of sovereignty over Taiwan. A record number of People’s Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft breached Taiwan’s air defense identification zone in 2022, widely seen to be part of the CCP’s gray-zone warfare to wear out and, eventually, overwhelm Taiwan’s defenses. In August 2022, the PLA conducted its largest live-fire drills in and around the strait, including launching multiple ballistic missiles,

several of which landed in waters inside Japan’s exclusive economic zone. The destabilizing drills were condemned as being an apparent retaliation for visits to Taiwan by lawmakers from Indo-Pacific democracies including Japan and the United States. Meanwhile, Chinese Defense Minister Gen. Wei Fenghe threatened during an international security summit in Singapore in June 2022 that the CCP would “not hesitate to fight” if Taiwan pursued independence, even though the island has never been part of the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 heightened fears of a CCP assault on Taiwan, with analysts contending that CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping may see the war in Europe as an opportunity to fine-tune PLA war plans. Xi refused to condemn Russian President Vladimir Putin or join much of the world in sanctioning Moscow over its unprovoked attack, instead reiterating the CCP’s “no-limits” friendship with Russia. For Taiwan, the clearest parallel with Ukraine is that both “are peace-loving democracies that are the objects of belligerent irredentism on the part of more militarily powerful and threatening neighboring autocracies,” noted a March 2022 analysis by the United States Institute of Peace, an independent think tank.

Since first being elected in 2016, Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen has prioritized modernization of the island’s military forces, including domestic development of submarines, stealth warships, minelaying ships and high-tech, mobile weapons that can deliver precision strikes and are difficult for an enemy to target. Known as the “porcupine strategy,” Taiwan’s focus on asymmetric defense is designed to make the costs of conflict unpalatable for an invader. “The idea is to become so hard to swallow that the enemy thinks twice about launching any action,” retired Adm. Lee Hsi-min, who served as chief of the Taiwan Armed Forces general staff, told The New York Times newspaper in June 2022.

Taiwan’s Defense Ministry announced a more than doubling of its annual missile production capacity to nearly 500 in 2022, including developing a bunker-busting weapon with a range of 1,000 kilometers that could hit military bases in China, and a surface-to-air munition that could destroy fighter jets and cruise missiles. That came on the heels of plans to manufacture attack drones, Reuters reported. To further harden its defenses, Taiwan approved U.S. \$8.2 billion in extra military spending over the next several years, about two-thirds of which is earmarked for domestically manufactured missiles and anti-ship weapons.

Those homegrown projects are reinforced with military sales from traditional Indo-Pacific



Taiwan Army Soldiers stand near domestically built self-propelled howitzers during the island's annual Han Kuang military exercise. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

partners, including U.S. \$120 million in naval equipment and parts from the U.S. in June 2022. The purchase, Taipei's third from Washington in six months, "once again demonstrates that the robust cooperative partnership between Taiwan and the U.S. is helping bolster Taiwan's self-defense capabilities," Taiwan Presidential Office spokesperson Xavier Chang said in a statement. "Taiwan, situated on the frontline of authoritarian expansionism, will continue to firmly demonstrate its resolve in self-defense while ... enhancing cooperation with like-minded countries in order to uphold peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and the Indo-Pacific region, jointly strengthening global democratic resilience."

Seeking Self-Reliance

For India, the world's third-biggest military spender in 2021, relations with the PRC and Russia are fueling its push toward self-reliance in defense manufacturing. In the Himalayas, India is locked in a border standoff with the PRC, a decadeslong dispute that erupted in a deadly skirmish between the nations' military forces in mid-2020 and threatens to tumble into conflict again as disengagement talks move at a glacial pace. More recently, Russia's invasion of Ukraine — broadly denounced as a war on democratic ideals and the rules-based international order — has raised questions about India's long dependence on Moscow as its major source of weapons, particularly given the stringent sanctions levied against Putin's regime and the strain on Russia's military and industrial base. Such factors compound persistent concerns among foreign buyers, including India, over the poor quality of Russian-made fighter aircraft, tanks and other weapons systems. "We estimate that the pervasive corruption in the Russian defense industry and the system of state defense orders hangs this country 20-25 years behind the world arms leaders," the Robert Lansing Institute for Global

Threats and Democracies Studies, a nonprofit think tank, noted in an April 2021 report.

Since 2010, 62% of India's arms imports have come from Russia, making New Delhi the biggest foreign customer for Moscow's arms dealers, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). "The requirements of the Russian military itself, with the kind of losses that it is suffering [in Ukraine], may mean some of those spares that we need will probably get diverted," retired Indian Army Lt. Gen. D.S. Hooda told *The Diplomat* magazine in April 2022.

India's military spending spiked by 33% in the past decade, topping U.S. \$76 billion in 2021 and placing it behind only the U.S. and the PRC, SIPRI reported in April 2022. "In a push to strengthen the indigenous arms industry, 64% of capital outlays in the military budget of 2021 were earmarked for acquisitions of domestically produced arms," the report found. The Indian government established two defense industrial corridors, and the nation's Defence Ministry expects orders totaling U.S. \$28 billion to be placed with domestic state-run and private defense firms in the next five years, according to *The Diplomat*. Under the auspices of the Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO), Indian firms are producing air defense and electronic warfare systems, multibarrel rocket launchers, short- and long-range missiles, tanks and light combat aircraft. The nation's first domestically built aircraft carrier, the *INS Vikrant*, was commissioned in September 2022.

In mid-2022, the Defence Ministry signed a contract with a state-run company to equip Indian Air Force and Indian Navy aircraft with Astra Mk-I air-to-air missiles, using technology developed by the DRDO. The project

“There are so many things changing right now, from technology to weapons development to concepts to the review of the types of capabilities that [nations] are making investments in and the amount of money that it takes.”

— Gen. Charles Flynn, commander of U.S. Army Pacific

is a major step toward self-reliance, retired Indian Air Marshal Anil Chopra told the Hindustan Times newspaper. “We have been dependent on Russian and Israeli missile systems,” said Chopra, director general of the New Delhi-based Centre for Air Power Studies. “The local production of the Astra missile fills a critical gap in indigenous capabilities.”

In 2020, the Indian government announced a phased import ban on more than 100 types of weapons and systems ranging from sniper rifles to missile destroyers, according to Forbes magazine. The prohibition has expanded to more than 300 categories of military assets as part of the government’s “self-reliant India” campaign, or *Atmanirbhar Bharat*. At the same time, India is inviting partners such as the U.S. to collaborate with its defense industry. The India-U.S. relationship is built on “cooperation on the enhancement of defense capabilities and now a new emphasis on co-development and coproduction,” Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told the American Chamber of Commerce in India in April 2022, days after attending ministerial-level meetings in Washington, D.C. “In a decade, starting from a negligible base, defense supplies from the U.S. have exceeded U.S. \$20 billion,” Singh told the business group in New Delhi, according to The Times of India newspaper. “With increasing business, we aspire for increased investments by the U.S. defense companies in India under the ‘Make in India’ program.”

Securing Sovereignty

Defending territorial integrity — whether in the Himalayas or the South China Sea — is one of multiple factors driving domestic defense projects across the Indo-Pacific, according to the head of U.S. land forces in the region. “There are so many things changing right now, from technology to weapons development to concepts to the review of the types of capabilities that [nations] are making investments in and the amount of money that it takes,” Gen. Charles Flynn, commander of U.S. Army Pacific, told FORUM during the international Land Forces Pacific symposium in Hawaii in May 2022. “I’m certainly hearing and seeing and sensing more of a territorial-defense type of discussion. Between 2014 and 2018, when I was here as a major general in the 25th [Infantry

Division] and then as the deputy commanding general, that was not part of the discussion.

“There is this sense that there’s a competition for resources,” Flynn said. “And national sovereignty and the sovereign rights to minerals, fresh water, food and those things that maintain a stable society ... I think there are tensions and threats against those. And I think that, in some ways, that’s a change that’s happening here in the region.”

For Thailand, a treaty ally of the U.S. and partner for 190 years and the second-largest economy in the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the perils to its national security and sovereignty encompass territorial disputes, such as those with neighboring Cambodia and Laos in recent decades, as well as domestic terrorism and transnational crime, particularly the drug trade in the notorious Golden Triangle cross-border region. The constitutional monarchy’s defense budget was projected to top U.S. \$7 billion in 2022, equating to 1.3% of gross domestic product, according to the International Trade Administration (ITA), an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department. “The Thai government also plans to develop its domestic defense industry to reduce the country’s dependence on imports, promote technology transfer, and strengthen national security,” the ITA reported in August 2021.

Among other measures, the Thai government prioritized the local defense industry in its 20-year national strategy and is establishing a defense industrial zone to promote public-private partnerships. “Thailand has been transiting away from an import-based defense procurement using foreign manufacturers by building a resilient, indigenous defense industrial base,” according to “A Glimpse of Thailand’s Defence Industry in the 21st Century,” an October 2021 webinar by the nation’s Defence Technology Institute, which is targeting dual-use advances such as unmanned vehicles, virtual reality and simulators, communications, and rocket guidance systems. “The priority is on technology transfer for defense procurement programs which support the development of local industry and increase the efficiency of Thai military activities, supplying domestic military forces, focusing on R&D [research and development] and upgrading both efficiency and technology.”



A Looming Challenge

Thailand's defense spending helped push global military expenditures past U.S. \$2 trillion for the first time in 2021, with the top five nations — the U.S., the PRC, India, the United Kingdom and Russia — accounting for 62% of the total, according to SIPRI. Among Indo-Pacific partners that hiked their budgets, a common threat loomed. "China's growing assertiveness in and around the South and the East China seas has become a major driver of military spending in countries such as Australia and Japan," SIPRI senior researcher Dr. Nan Tian said in a news release. "An example is the AUKUS trilateral security agreement between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States that foresees the supply of eight nuclear-powered submarines to Australia at an estimated cost of up to [U.S.] \$128 billion." Under the AUKUS pact signed in September 2021, the three allies also are collaborating on advanced capability initiatives such as artificial intelligence, cyber, electronic warfare, hypersonics and counterhypersonics, and quantum technologies. "As our work progresses on these and other critical defense and security capabilities, we will seek opportunities to engage allies and close partners," the White House said in a statement marking AUKUS's first anniversary.

Despite the pandemic's catastrophic economic fallout, with shuttered factories and stalled supply chains, the PRC's military spending jumped 4.7% to more than U.S. \$290 billion in 2021, according to SIPRI estimates. That extended a streak of annual increases dating to 1995 — the same year that the People's Liberation Army sparked what came

The Taiwan Navy's domestically manufactured corvette Ta Chiang fires flares during combat readiness drills in January 2022. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

to be known as the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis by firing missiles and conducting war games in the strategic waterway as Taiwan prepared to hold its first democratic election for president. The CCP's menacing of the island ended after the U.S. deployed aircraft carrier battle groups to the region.

The prospect of another crisis in the strait is of acute concern to Tokyo, which has protested Beijing's territorial incursions around the Japanese-controlled and Chinese-claimed Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. Japan's Defense Ministry cited Taiwan in its annual white paper for the first time in 2021, noting that: "Stabilizing the situation surrounding Taiwan is important for Japan's security and the stability of the international community. Therefore, it is necessary that we pay close attention to the situation with a sense of crisis more than ever before."

Deterring a calamitous conflict in the region was a catalyst for Japan to boost defense spending by 7.3% to U.S. \$54.1 billion in 2021, its biggest increase in 50 years, according to SIPRI. The upward trajectory is unlikely to change anytime soon; Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in mid-2022 pledged to "substantially increase" defense spending to buttress his nation's military capacity, Reuters reported. "There have been attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force in East Asia, making regional security increasingly severe," Kishida's administration noted in a draft economic policy. "We will drastically strengthen defense capabilities that will be the ultimate collateral to secure national security." □



TARGETED TRAINING



SINGAPORE ARMY REIMAGINES FORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

BRIG. GEN. FREDERICK CHOO/SINGAPORE ARMY

AS military professionals, I believe training is a topic that is dear to all of our hearts. Each and every one of us has gone through the paces of training as Soldiers, conducted training as we rose through the ranks and now, at this level, perhaps review training systems and frameworks for our forces. So, I shall not be delving into the science of training, the pedagogy. Instead, I thought I would share Singapore's experience in overcoming our geographical constraints

to train our Army and how we have partnered with many of your armies to train and learn together and build mutual trust and interoperability.

Let me begin by sharing the Singapore context. Training is the lifeblood of our Army. As we like to say, "Train hard, fight easy."

As a conscript force, we enlist all men above 18 years every quarter and train them into capable fighting units within two years. After the completion of their conscription service, all national servicemen or our reserves return every year for 10 years, each time for up to two weeks, and this is mandated by law. All in, we train over 100,000 Soldiers each year across all

A Singapore Air Force AH-64 Apache attack helicopter prepares for takeoff at the Idaho Army National Guard's Orchard Combat Training Center. The United States is one of multiple partner nations that host Singapore Armed Forces personnel for training.

THOMAS ALVAREZ/IDAHO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD





The Australian Defence Force provides the Singapore Army access to Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, an area about six times larger than Singapore.

SPC. MICHAEL SHARP/U.S. ARMY

because space is a binding constraint for us. This is why in the Singapore Army we think hard about how to conduct training using creative solutions. Singapore's land mass is 725 square kilometers ... [and] is home to around 6 million individuals. We devote just over 10% of our scarce land resource to defense. This is a significant investment as the space could otherwise be utilized for competing demands, such as a new university or new industrial hub.

These constraints have driven the Singapore Army to anchor our training strategy in three ways. First, maximizing our local training space. Second, seeking support for overseas training and, third, doubling down on simulation technology.

First, to maximize our local training space, we are currently building SAFTI City in Singapore. SAFTI stands for Singapore Armed Forces Training Institute. It is a state-of-the-art urban operations facility that will replicate the extent of dense urbanization which will characterize our future battlefield. Phase one of this project will be ready by 2025. At 88 hectares, which is the size of about 100 football fields, SAFTI City consists of two sectors. The first sector replicates Singapore's

levels of training — basic, vocational, unit-based, maneuver, as well as live fire. Unlike many other countries, however, we are unable to conduct all this training on home soil

industrial area to enable training for island defense operations. Main features include ferry terminals, warehouses and petrochemical factories. The second sector comprises 69 buildings to replicate a typical city center landscape and streetscape. The main features in this sector will include an integrated transport hub with a mockup of a subway with multiple surface exits, interconnected high-rise buildings, dense building clusters and multiple ingress/egress road networks.

RANGE OF OPTIONS

SAFTI City is not just an infrastructure project. We seek to leverage data analytics and advanced battlefield instrumentation to make training and learning smarter, effective and efficient. We will also develop and adopt smart technologies to create a realistic and challenging environment for training. Smart, interactive targetry systems that respond and shift positions in accordance with the fire that will be put on them would aid in creating training realism rather than using existing dummy targets. The facility will also be fully equipped with sensors and videos for near real-time tracking and monitoring of individuals. The data collected would then be analyzed to improve learning via evidence-based feedback loops. In addition, as the Singapore Army moves toward greater motorization, three instrumented battle circuits, or IBACs, will be set up, with the first scheduled for completion in 2023. These are our training playgrounds, so to speak, optimizing the least amount of space to generate the key effects and scenarios that will make a small unit battle-

ready in as short a time as possible, and enable our Soldiers to train with greater realism with the use of technologies such as 3D mobile targets, battlefield simulation and interactive avatars. These IBACs are strategically located to complement the concurrent usage of SAFTI City such that it enables training continuity from the conventional terrain to the urban terrain.

SINGAPORE IS DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE TO OUR PARTNERS FOR ALLOWING THE SINGAPORE ARMED FORCES ACCESS TO OVERSEAS TRAINING AREAS, BOTH UNILATERALLY AND BILATERALLY.

Another example of effective and efficient use of training time is through the development of the multi-mission range complex (MMRC), which was completed more than 10 years ago. The MMRC is sited on what used to be a single 100-meter, outdoor live-firing range. Now it is a three-story, indoor live-firing range that provides a total of seven ranges with a mix of both single- and double-story multitier ranges. These ranges are also able to provide conditions from 50 meters to 1 kilometer, made possible by the advanced targetry system developed

indigenously. By providing our Army with realistic day, night and all-weather marksmanship training practices, our training efficiency has increased greatly. As an example, about 900 Soldiers are now able to complete the marksmanship test package in a day, as compared to two or three days in outdoor ranges previously. This effectively replaces seven physical outdoor ranges.

The second thrust of our strategy is about seeking support for overseas training. Utilizing overseas training land is a critical aspect of our training space strategy as you can see from the limited size of Singapore. There is essential training overseas that we cannot possibly undertake in Singapore because of size constraints: for example, air-land integrated training in the United States and Australia, armor live-firing training in Germany and India, and live firing of long-range weapons systems in Thailand and New Zealand. Today, we conduct unilateral training in seven countries and across 10 time zones under the kind auspices of the respective host nations. And we take the chance also to conduct combined arms maneuver training where possible and live-firing exercises in almost all of the countries where we train. In short, do what we are unable to do back home. Recognizing that the combined arms and joint training is necessary for our Army's warfighting capability, we are currently planning to expand the Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia, thanks to the support of Lt. Gen. Rick Burr [chief of the Australian Army] and the Australian government. This would afford us three times the amount of training access and a training area that's 10 times the size of Singapore.



Singapore Army Soldiers defend their position during a live-fire drill with the U.S. Army as part of the bilateral Exercise Tiger Balm in Hawaii. STAFF SGT. ARMANDO R. LIMON/U.S. ARMY

Singapore is deeply appreciative to our partners for allowing the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) access to overseas training areas, both unilaterally and bilaterally. For example, Exercise Forging Sabre in the U.S. allows us to conduct a larger-scale and realistic joint-level exercise, and Exercise Trident allows us to conduct a tri-service exercise with the Australian Army. These exercises expand our experiences as a small Army and ensure that we are able to build interoperability with our partners.

SIMULATING SUCCESS

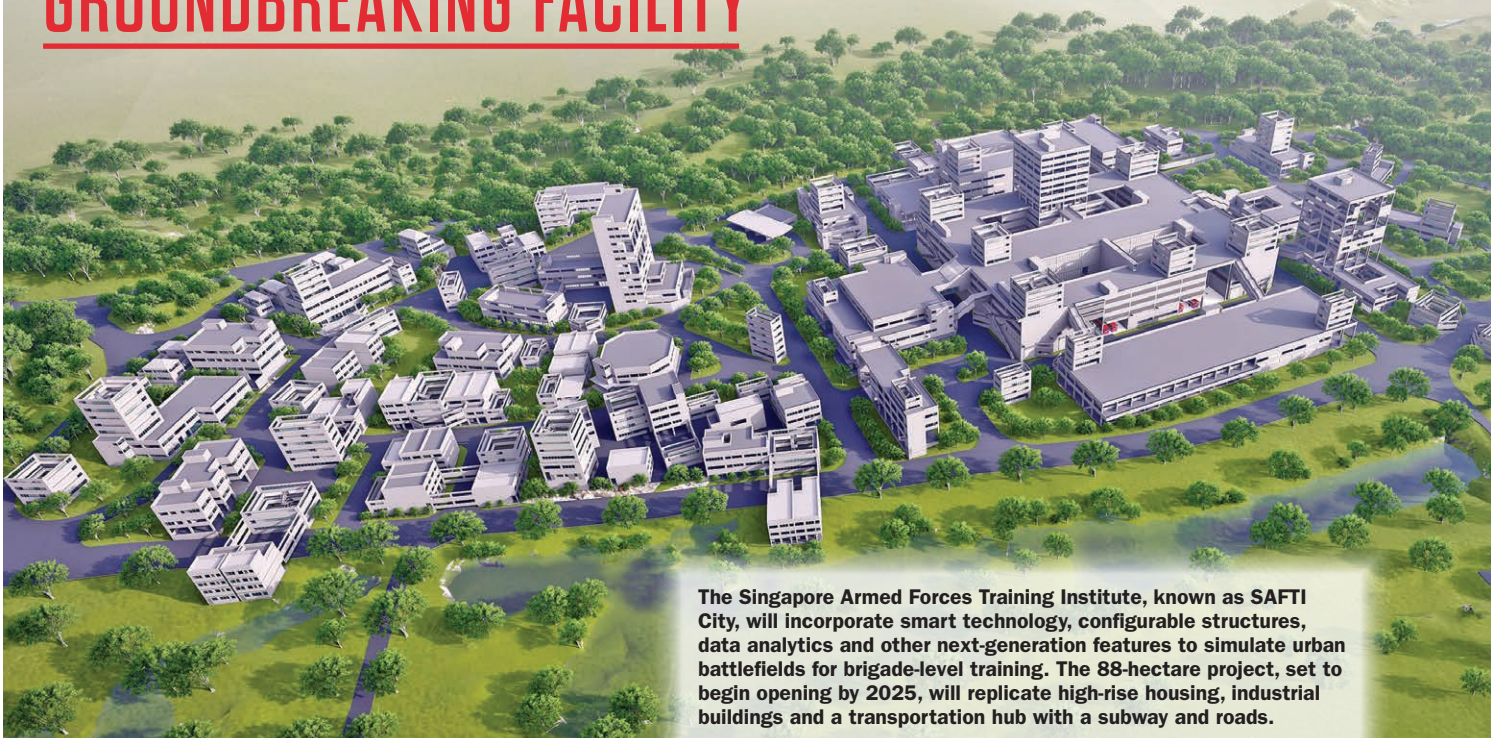
The third thrust is on simulation technology. Simulation technology and training is strategic for the Singapore Army. It allows us to do things better by covering our spectrum of training needs at lower cost, time and land demands, meeting our increased training requirements more sustainably. At the same time, simulation also enables us to exercise a larger range of cross-service and combined arms operational scenarios safely and progressively. It also enables experimentation of new gray-zone and multidomain warfighting concepts. Simulators also provide a hedge against uncertainty, making our training system more resilient to any global disruptions, as we have most recently experienced with the COVID pandemic. The next bound of warfighting concepts will be underpinned by integrating multidomain assets and effects, and the more we are able to do so in peacetime training the better we can execute when the time calls for it. The previous mantra of simulation training by type and conducting task-

based live training thereafter will not be good enough for the next bound. To do so, we will develop a common simulation environment to provide a harmonized battlespace with a simulation architecture and data standards predefined to ensure interoperability across existing and new training systems. What this means, potentially, is one combat team training on a virtual simulator in one part of Singapore and one motorized company training in SAFTI City when it's completed, all connected with an air-land, live firing taking place in Shoalwater Bay, Australia, in real-time and all monitored at the exercise control center in Singapore.

This is the vision, and we're working toward it. But what makes simulation truly revolutionary in the next bound is the advent of data, big data and cloud technologies. For the first time, we are now able to collect, organize and exploit the rich training data on an industrial scale and in near real-time to provide detailed assessments and personalized feedback, and to track learning progress over time. The analogy I have is that every Soldier of the future will have a digital career scorecard — much like every sports person will have in a sports team — that details his or her marksmanship results and vocational competencies from the time of their enlistment to the time they retire. This will transform the way we train and engage our Soldiers. Think of providing differentiated training approaches and customizable training for our Soldiers and units. Individuals can now receive quantitative insights on their strength and weakness, and this evidence-based

SINGAPORE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

GROUNDBREAKING FACILITY



The Singapore Armed Forces Training Institute, known as SAFTI City, will incorporate smart technology, configurable structures, data analytics and other next-generation features to simulate urban battlefields for brigade-level training. The 88-hectare project, set to begin opening by 2025, will replicate high-rise housing, industrial buildings and a transportation hub with a subway and roads.



Singapore Army Soldiers coordinate operations during a live-fire drill with the U.S. Army as part of Exercise Tiger Balm at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

STAFF SGT. ARMANDO R. LIMON/U.S. ARMY

more accustomed to digital and personalized training and learning from their education system and their workplace outside of the military, as well as commercial and gaming applications. Our next generation of simulators will have to incorporate gamified and intuitive design to engage our Soldiers and provide training motivation for skill mastery. This will allow us to train smarter and motivate a new generation of Soldiers by improving their training experience.

EMPOWERING TRANSFORMATION

In summary, we envisage that the usage of simulations will empower and transform the way our Army trains in the next generation. With more effective, engaging and efficient training, we will be well positioned to raise, train and sustain our citizen Army with limited training time and within Singapore's land constraints. Unilateral training is but one component of our overall portfolio. Opportunities to train with other armies are equally, if not more, important. It allows armies to learn from one another, foster friendships, build mutual trust and enhance our interoperability. It was such exercises in the early years of the Singapore Army that allowed us to learn, benchmark and professionalize early and quickly. The SAF was able to strengthen our

approach can also be used by our trainers to design targeted training. Besides, there is also a human element to this.

Our Soldiers today are

relations with regional partners through bilateral and multilateral exercises, such as Tiger Balm with the U.S. Army, Semangat Bersatu with the Malaysian Army, Maju Bersama with the Royal Brunei Land Forces and exercise Kocha Singa with the Royal Thai Army, to name a few. I have through the course of my career been involved in these training serials and have gained much professionally and, of course, at the personal level, too.

These interactions underscore the close and long-standing bilateral defense ties, and we look forward to a full resumption of these training opportunities. And, soon enough, we look forward to training together in the SAFTI City of the future or in the IBACs. With a common simulation environment, there is great potential for all of us to rethink the exercise design for future bilateral and multilateral exercises. Training innovation will continue to be a strategic priority for the Singapore Army in land-scarce Singapore. We will not cease our efforts to maximize, intensify and reimagine the design of our training facilities. This will be complemented with our overseas training strategy, as well as our simulation master plan. We will also continue to participate in bilateral and multilateral training exercises and leverage these platforms to strengthen mutual trust and enhance interoperability. I hope we will continue to learn and work with all of you in this journey ahead. □

Brig. Gen. Frederick Choo, chief of staff of the Singapore Army, delivered this keynote address at the Land Forces Pacific Symposium & Exposition in Honolulu, Hawaii, in May 2022. It has been edited to fit FORUM's format.

SECURITY CONVERGENCE



Ships sail in formation off the coast of Hawaii during the multinational Rim of the Pacific exercise in 2020.

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS DAN BARD/ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

INDO-PACIFIC ALLIES AND PARTNERS TAKE COLLECTIVE ACTION TO KEEP THE REGIONAL PEACE

FORUM STAFF

Mutual security interests are aligning in the Indo-Pacific to form a shared security capacity that continues to grow.

Although the region is not ready for an elaborate series of treaties or agreements that bind nations in defense commitments, multiple countries are coalescing around common security threats to informally strengthen bonds and improve military cooperation and interoperability, defense analysts said.

The increasing number of multilateral military exercises represents the most visible hallmark of this trend. Cobra Gold, which began in 1982 as a bilateral drill between Thailand and the United States, has evolved into one of the world's largest multinational exercises, involving 20 countries across the Indo-Pacific, including Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea. Garuda Shield, traditionally a bilateral exercise, went multilateral in 2022 to include 12 nations along with its original partners Indonesia and the U.S. Similarly, Malabar, which started between India and the U.S., now regularly includes Australia and Japan. The massive Rim of the Pacific exercise, conducted in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California, epitomized the multilateral movement in 2022 with 26 participating nations: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, the United Kingdom and the U.S.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida discussed the security trend during his keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in June 2022: "Looking around the world, a variety of actors, including Australia, the European Union, France, Germany, India, Italy, the Netherlands, the U.S. and the United Kingdom, have all laid out visions for the Indo-Pacific, sharing a common grand vision," he said at the annual forum, which is sponsored by the International Institute for Strategic Studies and is in its 19th iteration. "Like-minded partners are each taking action on their own initiative, not at the behest of others. This is the very concept of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, which is based on inclusiveness."

More multinational presence and cooperative exercises in the Indo-Pacific also demonstrate the coalescence



U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, center, hosts a meeting with Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles, left, and then-Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi during the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in June 2022. CHAD J. MCNEELEY/U.S. DEFENSE DEPARTMENT

among nations seeking peace and stability. Australia, France, Germany, Japan, the U.K. and the U.S. all participated in such operations in the past year.

EXPANDING BILATERALISM

At the core of this collective security convergence, Indo-Pacific nations have been enhancing an array of bilateral relations at the ground level, engaging in military exercises, trainings and other exchanges. For example, Japan and Singapore traded port visits. Relations between Japan and South Korea are also strengthening. In June 2022, South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin moved to normalize security cooperation with Japan, according to The Korea Herald newspaper. Meanwhile, Australia and Japan deepened their practical defense engagement with plans announced in June 2022 to "step up the sophistication" of their joint exercises and activities, according to the Kyodo News agency.

A few days after the Shangri-La Dialogue, then-Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi met with new Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles in Tokyo. "It is clear that our region faces the most complex set of strategic circumstances we have had since the end of World War II, and what the region does matters," Marles

“OUR MANTRA WILL BE NOTHING IN THE PACIFIC WITHOUT THE PACIFIC. WE ARE NOT GOING TO BE TAKING DECISIONS OR ENGAGEMENTS WITHOUT THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENT WITH PACIFIC PARTNERS.”

~ KURT CAMPBELL, INDO-PACIFIC AFFAIRS COORDINATOR ON THE U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

told a joint news conference, according to The Associated Press (AP). “Only by working together can we uphold the rules-based international order, contribute to an effective balance of military power, and ensure our region remains stable, peaceful and prosperous.”

In addition to discussing their concerns about Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the ministers said they opposed any unilateral change of the status quo in the East and South China seas and remained committed to a shared vision of “a free and open” international order of the seas. “It is important to strengthen our cooperation with our regional partners, especially with ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] and the Pacific Islands, to maintain and reinforce the Free and Open Indo-Pacific,” Kishi said.



A Royal Thai Army Soldier drinks from a vine to demonstrate jungle survival techniques during Cobra Gold in Thailand in February 2022. PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS JOHN R. REED/U.S. ARMY

Later in June 2022, Marles met with Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi for the nations’ first bilateral defense ministers’ meeting and to strengthen security cooperation. “The rules-based international order that has brought peace and prosperity to the Indo-Pacific for decades is experiencing pressure, as we face shifts in the geostrategic order. Australia stands ready to work closer with India in support of an open, inclusive and resilient Indo-Pacific,” Marles said.

Indian defense leaders also held similar talks with their counterparts from Japan and the U.S. around the same time. In the past year, leaders from Australia and Indonesia, Australia and South Korea, India and South

Korea, and Indonesia and South Korea have taken similar action, evidence of a growing list of Indo-Pacific nations seeking to strengthen bilateral relations.

Security-minded nations are also increasing involvement with ASEAN-led defense and security initiatives, including the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting-Plus. In mid-June 2022, foreign ministers from India and ASEAN convened a special meeting to strengthen ties amid increasing stresses on food and energy security, prices and supply chains that have been exacerbated by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and tensions between the U.S. and the People’s Republic of China (PRC), according to AP.

“India fully supports a strong, unified, prosperous ASEAN whose centrality in the Indo-Pacific is fully recognized,” Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said. India and ASEAN have been dialogue partners for more than 30 years. Jaishankar pushed for enhancing land and sea connectivity among ASEAN members; the ASEAN-India Connectivity initiative includes upgrading the India-Myanmar-Thailand highway, AP reported.

Trilateral relations are also proving pivotal for building collective security. Uniting around the Indo-Pacific flashpoints, security leaders of Australia, Japan and the U.S., for example, have held talks each year for more than a decade, and the three nations regularly conduct joint exercises such as Southern Jackaroo and Cope North. “On the stability of the Korean Peninsula, the U.S., Australia and Japan have a shared history of active military commitments to South Korea — as recently as last year Australia had peacekeepers deployed to the United Nations Command on the Demilitarized Zone. Any military confrontation on the peninsula would activate U.S., Japanese, and Australian forces immediately and cause those countries direct consequences,” Hayley Channer, a senior policy fellow with the Perth USAsia Centre, an independent, foreign affairs think tank based in Australia, wrote in the online magazine *The Diplomat* in June 2022.

Trilateral initiatives to foster ties beyond the Indo-Pacific are also materializing, such as the recent creation of AUKUS, a security alliance among Australia, the U.K. and the U.S.

SHARED VISIONS

Collective action also underpins the updated U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy unveiled in February 2022 by U.S.

President Joe Biden. Under the strategy, the U.S. will tap the collective capacity of regional countries and its five treaty partners through a broad range of formal and informal relationships and organizations to build collective capacity. Dr. Joshy M. Paul, research fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies in New Delhi, wrote in an essay on the think tank's website. "Instead of depending on the U.S.'s sole material capability to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific, it seeks the material capability of regional countries to contribute to regional security. It also shows that it is not the U.S.'s unilateral vision enforcing upon the regional countries, rather the U.S. attaches considerable importance to the choices of regional countries such as India's strategic autonomy, Japan's economic priority over security, ASEAN's centrality in Asian multilateralism, and Australia's balancing acts between the U.S. and China."

To enhance regional security, the U.S. is also deepening its engagement with Pacific Island Countries (PICs), according to Kurt Campbell, deputy assistant to the president and Indo-Pacific affairs coordinator on the National Security Council. "We do not take these bonds for granted," he told participants at a June 2022 Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Pacific Partners Initiative event in Washington, D.C. "What we also think is important is protecting sovereignty. Sovereignty is central in terms of how we see the Pacific overall. Any initiative that compromises or calls into question



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, left, meets with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Tokyo in May 2022. REUTERS

that sovereignty, I think we would have concerns with," Campbell said, according to a transcript of the event, titled "Building a Blue Pacific Agenda for the 21st Century."

"Our mantra will be, nothing in the Pacific without the Pacific. We are not going to be taking decisions or engagements without the closest possible engagement with Pacific partners," he said. "We will do this in the most open, transparent manner. And our focus is, again, going to be on dealing with the issues where the Pacific Islanders live, trying to address those key issues — from COVID to recovery, enhanced tourism, trade, across the board — that we believe will be animating in the 21st century."

"Pacific people and their governments would welcome an enduring partnership with the U.S. that is there for

A container ship docks at a Tokyo port. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



the long term,” Fiji’s ambassador to the U.N., Satyendra Prasad, told event participants, calling for “a highly stepped-up and broader relationship between the U.S. and the Pacific. And that there’s great predictability across the areas that we are engaging with deeply.”

Fatumanava-o-Upolu III Pa’olelei Luteru, Samoa’s ambassador to the U.N., advocated during the CSIS event for the U.S. to help island nations access concessional financing and encouraged expanding a U.S. treaty with PICs concerning tuna catches.

Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the U.K. also demonstrated their intent to strengthen bonds with PICs in 2022 amid the PRC’s push to increase its economic, military and police links with the region, Reuters reported.

Without naming the PRC, Luteru noted that “in the context of our Pacific countries, we’re fully aware of what we’re dealing with.”



U.S. President Joe Biden, center, hosts, from left, Federated States of Micronesian President David Panuelo, then-Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama, Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, Papua New Guinean Prime Minister James Marape and other leaders at the first U.S.-Pacific Island Country Summit held at the White House in Washington, D.C., on September 29, 2022. REUTERS

In late September 2022, the U.S. strengthened its commitment to PICs thorough the first U.S.-Pacific Island summit held in Washington, D.C., at which U.S. President Joe Biden announced more than U.S. \$810 million in expanded programs. The U.S. has provided over U.S. \$1.5 billion for the Pacific Islands over the past decade.

GLOBAL COOPERATION

Like-minded Indo-Pacific nations are also increasingly looking to international forums to help counter emerging security threats. For example, Kishida and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol attended the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit in Madrid in late June 2022, signifying their intentions to expand cooperation with the transatlantic group. “Russia’s invasion [of Ukraine] violates the peace and order of the world and can never be tolerated,” Kishida said in announcing plans to attend the summit, according to Bloomberg. South Korean officials, meanwhile, said they aspire to increase information sharing, combined exercises and research cooperation with NATO.

NATO, for its part, said bolstering its relations with Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea is a priority, and it’s also increasing cooperation with Indo-Pacific partners on cyberspace, technology and maritime security, among other challenges, according to a June 2022 NATO news release. “In today’s complex environment, relations with like-minded partners across the globe are increasingly important to address cross-cutting security issues and global challenges, as well as to defend the rules-based international order,” the release said.

“The security of Europe and Asia are closely intertwined, especially now with the international community facing serious challenges,” Kishi, Japan’s then-defense minister, said.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

Enhanced security relations are increasingly interlaced with the economic sphere. Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong encouraged more inclusive collaboration in security and the economy to mitigate risks of hostilities by giving countries a stake in each other’s economic success during his keynote speech at the 27th International Conference on the Future of Asia in late May 2022 in Tokyo.

“Security is not just (about) an individual country, because they will each do what we are trying to do to make ourselves safe,” he said, according to The Straits Times newspaper. “Collectively, we may all make others feel unsafe, and then we may all end up worse off. So, we also have to work together with other countries to secure collective security.”

For this reason, Singapore is participating in both the U.S. Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), which launched in May 2022, and PRC development initiatives such as One Belt, One Road (OBOR), Lee explained. IPEF will help participants strengthen relationships and engage in economic and trade matters crucial to the region. “I do not see that the two are mutually exclusive or just because one side is deepening its cooperation that means it is bad for the other side,” Lee told reporters.

Many countries continue to hedge their bets on the PRC’s infrastructure scheme regardless of the financial and security pitfalls evident in OBOR projects worldwide. However, others are acting on lessons learned by nations that succumbed to the PRC’s predatory lending practices and others that were economically vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic. Allies and partner nations continue to offer alternatives to Chinese investment, which is closely tied to the Chinese Communist Party. In 2019, Australia, Japan and the U.S. launched the Blue Dot Network to promote infrastructure development. In collaboration with countries such as India, the network is promoting sustainable projects, including through a planned Blue Dot Marketplace to assist countries in creating infrastructure by factoring food security, health and natural disasters. The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or Quad, also is focused on ensuring prosperity



The German Navy frigate Bayern docks in Tokyo after exercises with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyer Samidare in the Pacific Ocean in November 2021. In August 2021, the Bayern joined freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

across the Indo-Pacific region by promoting cooperation in areas ranging from developing critical technologies and materials to building reliable supply chains to cybersecurity response.

Supply chain cooperation has become a focus of collective security activities among like-minded nations. “The stability and resilience of the supply chain cannot be achieved by a single country alone,” Wang Yunjong, South Korea’s secretary to the president for economic security, said during his keynote address at the seventh annual Republic of Korea-U.S. Strategic Forum in early June 2022, sponsored by CSIS. “In addition to reshoring, which relocates the overseas production facilities to the homeland, friend-shoring, which strengthens cooperation in supply and demand over strategic materials and technologies among like-minded countries, is becoming more and more important,” Yunjong said. “The key is trust. We can enhance supply chain security by promoting mutual trust.”

COMFORTABLE COOPERATION

Across the Indo-Pacific, this largely uncodified security convergence is moving at a comfortable pace for the participating nations, given it is built on a foundation of shared values, analysts said. In the meantime, the region’s existing mutual defense treaties provide a framework to move forward. The overall structure of the emerging matrix of security cooperation is flexible and likely will remain so for now, analysts said. The movement

is unlikely to crystalize into a U.N.-type organization any time soon in the Indo-Pacific, although some policymakers have advocated creating a formal collective security body in the region.

In 1954, Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the U.K. and the U.S. formed the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), largely to stop the spread of communism in the region, according to the U.S. State Department. Unlike NATO, however, SEATO had a limited ability to muster collective security action. The organization also had no mechanism for obtaining intelligence or deploying military forces, and it was formally dissolved in 1977, two years after the Vietnam War ended, according to the U.S. State Department.

Today, Indo-Pacific nations are making defense moves that align with their individual national interests but also with their interests to collectively counter mutual security challenges and threats. The resulting security convergence is a positive shift in the outlook for regional prosperity and stability, analysts said.

Nations must continually consider the quality of their security and defense relationships and the benefits that such arrangements bring, not only in terms of regional stability but also in realms ranging from sharing information and technology to protecting human rights and freedoms. Such reflection and strategic calculations are in keeping with the time-honored definitions of sovereignty on which like-minded nations intend a Free and Open Indo-Pacific to be built. □



CYBERSPACE FREEDOM

Allied and Partner Nations
Resist Authoritarian Controls
Imposed Under the Guise
Of Digital Sovereignty

FORUM STAFF

FORUM ILLUSTRATION



Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Airmen discuss a simulated cyber environment at the RAAF's Air Warfare Centre in Edinburgh.

CPL. BRENTON KWATERSKI/
AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE DEPARTMENT

When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, the internet in the People's Republic of China (PRC) echoed the Chinese government's noncommittal stance, declining to portray Moscow's military assault in Europe as an unprovoked attack. Censors commissioned by the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) were similarly vigilant in early 2022, limiting online exchanges during a COVID-19 lockdown, including information on how cloistered residents could get food and medicine. Though a few online posts thwarted government surveillance, the crackdown largely was successful.

The internet in the PRC is neither open nor free. Posts that criticize government actions disappear, subscribers' accounts are suspended or dropped, and propaganda espousing the state's viewpoint is rampant. Externally, the Chinese government uses threats and false promises to influence opinion, solicits other nations to further its strategies and embraces hackers who steal military technology and intellectual property.

Authoritarian regimes such as those in the PRC, Russia and North Korea typically cite cyber sovereignty as justification for their online surveillance and actions. They maintain that sovereignty applies in cyberspace as it does within nations' physical boundaries.

How nations choose to manage their cyber resources is complex and sometimes nefarious.

But there's another approach, one taken by allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific and embodied in the Declaration for the Future of the Internet and other multilateral initiatives. The declaration (see Page 44), adopted in April 2022 by 61 nations, territories and multinational organizations, calls for an internet that is open, free and global.

The declaration's subscribers don't ignore bad actors. Japan, for example, has established a Cyber Defense Command and plans "to drastically strengthen cyber defense capabilities," according to the Ministry of Defense's white paper released in July 2022. By reinforcing specialized cyber defense units, participating in practical exercises and conducting training, Japan plans to "be fully prepared for modern warfare, including information warfare and cyber warfare," the white paper states.

Supporters of the declaration, however, largely channel the internet's original promise. "Here in New Zealand, we are great believers in the internet as a force for good," Paul Ash, the prime minister's special representative for cyber and digital, said at the declaration's launch. "The principles outlined in this declaration really matter for us."

Managing Boundaries

While most Australians understand territorial sovereignty, digital sovereignty is another matter, said Marcus Thompson, a retired Australian Army officer who served as the first head of information warfare for the Australian Defence Force.

Though hard to conceptualize, digital sovereignty is drawing much interest, Thompson wrote in an article for the Australian Strategic Policy Institute. “Increased tensions with China, a constant flow of fake news, frequent references to cyberattacks conducted by sophisticated state actors and public announcements on foreign espionage have placed sovereignty front and center in the Australian psyche,” he wrote. “We’re in an era of cyber spies and cyber warriors.”

International law supports geographic sovereignty, which is the understanding that each nation has a right

to self-government within its borders. The internet has no physical demarcations. Each nation can follow its own path, from the repressive domestic and aggressive international stances taken by the PRC and Russia to the approach adopted by declaration signers. “The debate on cyber sovereignty is often over whether sovereignty in cyberspace should be an extension of traditional sovereignty,” according to Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs in the U.S.

Increasingly, there’s a tendency to impose rules. “Amid declining faith in the international system, a different form of protectionism is gaining steam with adverse consequences for billions of internet users,” Freedom House, a research institution based in Washington, D.C., said in “User Privacy or Cyber Sovereignty?” “Authorities in a growing number of

“Increased tensions with China, a constant flow of fake news, frequent references to cyberattacks conducted by sophisticated state actors and public announcements on foreign espionage have placed sovereignty front and center in the Australian psyche.”

*Marcus Thompson,
Former head of information warfare for the Australian Defence Force*

Declaration for the Future of the Internet

FORUM STAFF

“We are united by a belief in the potential of digital technologies to promote connectivity, democracy, peace, the rule of law, sustainable development, and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

Thus begins the Declaration for the Future of the Internet, adopted in April 2022 by 61 nations, territories and multinational organizations. The pronouncement calls for a commitment from “all partners who actively support a future for the Internet that is open, free, global, interoperable, reliable, and secure.”

The nonbinding document “aims to ‘reclaim the promise of the internet’ and decries recent trends by authoritarian governments to repress freedom of expression and deny human rights and fundamental freedoms,” according to an assessment by Georgia Tech’s School of Public Policy in the United States.

The document’s signers acknowledge that a free and open internet presents risks and challenges. Every nation governs data to address vital concerns such as crime, terrorism and other national security threats, whether internal or external, according to the Council on Foreign Relations, a U.S.-based think tank.

The declaration rejects the use of the internet to repress freedom of expression or deny other human rights as seen in

authoritarian nations. Offensive actions include broadcasting false information, conducting surveillance of citizens, installing domestic firewalls and staging shutdowns to prevent access to differing points of view.

“State-sponsored or condoned malicious behavior is on the rise, including the spread of disinformation and cybercrimes such as ransomware, affecting the security and the resilience of critical infrastructure while holding at risk vital public and private assets,” the document says.

Although the declaration does not mention the People’s Republic of China or Russia, many of the signers have criticized those regimes for their broad assertions of cyber sovereignty and denials of illicit online practices.

In this respect, a Brookings Institution report concluded, the document frames a global divide and says as much about nations that did not sign as those that did.

The declaration cites the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which proclaims that “the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online, in particular freedom of expression, which is applicable regardless of frontiers and through any media of one’s choice.”

The Declaration for the Future of the Internet “is a great sort of articulation of everything we have done and need to continue to do,” said Paul Mitchell, chairman of the U.N. Internet Governance Forum’s Multistakeholder Advisory Group. “The most important thing to do is to keep engaged ... to make sure that this thing continues to be supportive in a positive way for society.”



Australian Army Soldiers participate in cyberspace training at the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra.

CPL. NUNU CAMPOS/
AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE
DEPARTMENT

countries are weighing measures to control the flow of data in and out of their national borders.”

The move to institute such directives, often taken with the intent of ensuring security and protecting citizens, was a motivation for the consensus-building declaration. Other factors were the increased prevalence of surveillance, ransomware and cyberattacks.

Usually, a nation’s stance on the internet aligns with its accepted practices and laws. Where free speech, privacy and human rights are valued and protected, internet use generally reflects those standards. Conversely, where a government maintains tightfisted control over its citizens and has an aggressive, often surreptitious outward approach, the notion of cyber sovereignty offers convenient cover.

The commitment by the declaration’s signatories to an internet that prioritizes human rights and is “open, free, global, interoperable, reliable and secure” presents a conundrum. Idealistic visions of a pure and beneficial internet sidestep the growing need to monitor what appears online, both for national security and to uphold domestic laws and standards. “Increased international tension, a resurgence of nationalism and failures to deliver security and privacy have undermined this original ideology,” said a report



Royal Australian Air Force personnel work in a cyberspace simulator. CPL. CRAIG BARRETT/AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE DEPARTMENT

by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), titled, “Sovereignty and the Evolution of Internet Ideology.”

Regardless of their respective nation’s commitment to internet freedoms, military forces in the Indo-Pacific and elsewhere strive to secure their cyber systems and ensure they’re prepared if conflicts arise.

Meanwhile, autocratic regimes intent on promoting self-serving initiatives foster what Freedom House viewed as “grave implications for the future of internet freedom.”

Even staunch defenders of free expression on the internet acknowledge having more questions than answers. But their collective belief remains firm: An accessible, robust internet featuring wide-ranging viewpoints is preferable to one that’s tightly controlled under the guise of cyber sovereignty.

Future Directions

Australia and the United States in November 2020 launched the first agreement to continuously develop a virtual cyber training range. The Persistent Cyber Training Environment (PCTE) is a platform for real-world defensive missions across boundaries and networks, the U.S. Cyber Command reported. It's designed to evolve through shared use and development, sharpening readiness in cyber tactics, techniques and procedures. The agreement is an example of the networked approach that advocates of an open, free and global internet say is essential to deter malicious intruders. Communication and an exchange of information are vital, Maj. Gen. Susan Coyle, head of information warfare for the Australian Defence Force, told The Cognitive Crucible podcast. "We have great relationships here within Australia, within the industry, with academia. We have wonderful and very long partnerships with allies and partners, in particular the United States.

"There are so many opportunities, I think, for building really strong and authentic relationships, and it's just something we've got to continue to do as we work together," Coyle added.

Leaders of many Indo-Pacific nations believe their countries are stronger together. They have joined bilateral and multilateral alliances to leverage their collective heft in tackling a range of issues. The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, comprised of Australia, India, Japan and the U.S., has refined its initiative to address cyber technology and cybersecurity. The Quad, as it's called, "seeks to build resilience across our four countries in response to cybersecurity vulnerabilities and cyber threats,"

according to a White House summation of the coalition's accomplishments at its summit in Tokyo in May 2022.

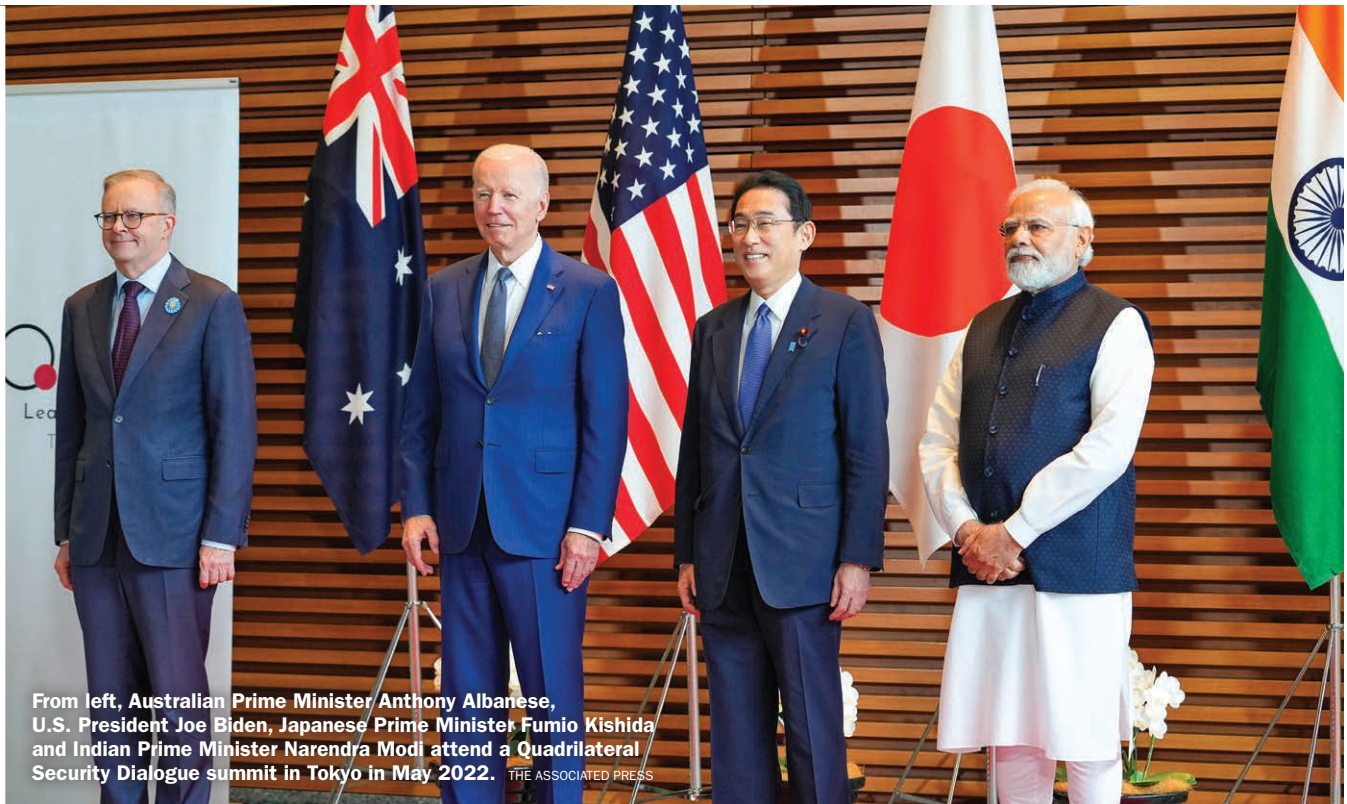
Areas of focus are: critical infrastructure protection, led by Australia; supply chain resilience and security, shepherded by India; workforce development and talent, directed by Japan; and software security standards, steered by the U.S.

The four nations' leaders vowed to improve cybersecurity by sharing threat information and identifying potential risks. Each member country also will develop software for everyone's benefit, according to The Record, a cybersecurity newsletter.

Also, the White House summary said the Quad will:

- Strengthen information-sharing among computer emergency response teams in each nation, including exchanges on lessons learned and best practices.
- Improve software and managed service provider security by coordinating cybersecurity standards for Quad governments' procurement of software.
- Launch a Cybersecurity Day campaign to increase awareness and provide information and training in partnership with industry, nonprofits, academic institutions and communities.

The Quad is just one of the partnerships sharing resources and expertise to address technology and cybersecurity, which are major priorities for military organizations that rely heavily on communications and satellite networks for weapons systems and situational awareness. Australia, the United Kingdom and the U.S. formed AUKUS in September 2021 to "focus on cyber capabilities, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies



From left, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, U.S. President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi attend a Quadrilateral Security Dialogue summit in Tokyo in May 2022. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

and additional undersea capabilities.”

Decades earlier, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations committed to “promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields,” reaffirming its pledge in May 2022.

Such partnerships respect international law and support integrated deterrence, which counters attempts to intrude on a nation’s internal operations through cyberspace, gray-zone tactics or direct conflict.

Supporters of the coalitions scoff at Beijing’s accusations that the partnerships amount to a containment effort, according to *Newsweek* magazine. They say the partnerships are an effective way to stymie incursions, cyber and otherwise, throughout the region.

Balancing Act

It’s a difficult line to walk: uphold principles of an open, free internet while striving to ensure private information, including military secrets, is not breached.

The need for effective cybersecurity intensifies with the continuous development and ubiquitous nature of digital technology. The COVID-19 pandemic increased that need as more people went online to work remotely and businesses scrambled to speed their transformation to digital-based platforms.

“The steady extension of sovereign control into cyberspace occurs as nations seek to protect their citizens and find that the laissez-faire approach developed in the 1990s is too weak to do this,” the CSIS report stated. “Between the two poles of laissez-faire and overregulation, however, there is middle ground, and the task for policymakers is to identify if there are ways to meet legitimate concerns without damaging the prospects for innovation and growth.”

The Indo-Pacific is vulnerable to cyber spying and cyberattacks as democracies and partner nations compete with the PRC and other restrictive countries for influence.

Governments in the region have varying perceptions of cybersecurity. The signers of the Declaration for the Future of the Internet believe digital technologies should promote “connectivity, democracy, peace, the rule of law, sustainable development and the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”

The PRC, meanwhile, asserts that cyber sovereignty gives governments the right to develop and regulate the internet as they choose within their borders. In the PRC, that means an approach that routinely garners the lowest internet-freedom rating among 70 nations assessed by Freedom House. The nonprofit



organization, which is largely funded by the U.S. government, is founded on the premise that freedom flourishes where governments are accountable to their people, and diversity of expressions, associations and beliefs is encouraged and protected.

“China is home to one of the world’s most restrictive media environments and its most sophisticated system of censorship, particularly online,” Freedom House stated in its 2022 report. “The CCP (Chinese Communist Party) maintains control over news reporting via direct ownership, accreditation of journalists, harsh penalties for comments that are critical of party leaders or the CCP, and daily directives to media outlets and websites that guide coverage of breaking news stories.”

The Chinese state blocks websites, removes smartphone apps and deletes social media posts that discuss banned political, social, economic and religious topics, the think tank reported.

Meanwhile, Australia, India, Japan and other Indo-Pacific nations have accused the PRC of external offenses such as hacking computer grids and devices.

The PRC’s insistence that sovereignty applies to the internet surfaced in a government paper in 2010, according to *The Diplomat*, an online news magazine. The document proclaimed that within the PRC, the state has authority to control access to the internet, which it has subsequently done by imposing restrictions.

Aware of efforts to infiltrate and disrupt their networks, Indo-Pacific signers of the declaration and their partners recognize the need to institute standards to preserve the integrity of the internet while preventing hackers from compromising security measures.

“The divide between nations that support governance models based on cyber sovereignty, primarily China and Russia, and those that believe in the multi-stakeholder model, including most liberal democracies, is one of the most prominent ideological conflicts dividing cyberspace,” according to Harvard’s Belfer Center. □

SOVEREIGNTY IN SPACE

NO ONE CAN OWN IT, WHICH DRIVES COMPETITION, COOPERATION

FORUM STAFF

The People's Republic of China (PRC) fired off a letter to the United Nations in December 2021 complaining it had been forced to maneuver its newly occupied space station twice in four months to avoid colliding with two Starlink satellites, part of the constellation launched by United States-based SpaceX to bring the internet to underserved areas of the globe.

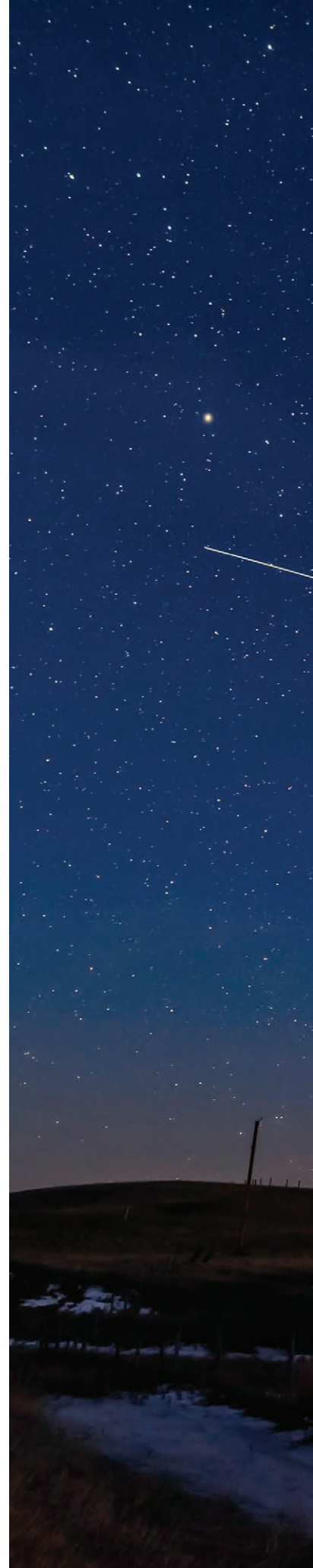
In its complaint letter the PRC selectively interpreted the terms of the U.N.'s Outer Space Treaty and did not admit that it failed to proactively consult with other nations as outlined in the treaty. Countries are to consult with one another if they see a collision is possible. The treaty also specifies that anyone placing an object in space must be prepared to adjust its orbit with respect to other established satellites. At the time, hundreds of Starlink satellites were in place and the PRC even acknowledged it had known the path of the two satellites in question. They already were in orbit when the PRC launched the inaugural three-member crew of its Tiangong 3 space station.

Moreover, the PRC made no complaint to the U.N. a few weeks earlier when Russia deliberately destroyed an inoperable satellite in a test of a ground-based missile. The blast shattered the satellite into 1,500 pieces of "long-lived debris" that threatened lives aboard the International Space Station (ISS). The

much larger ISS has a crew of a half-dozen and 16 modules compared with the three modules that will make up Tiangong.

In its letter, the PRC did more than call out SpaceX. It targeted "Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX) of the United States of America." Under the Outer Space Treaty, responsibility for the things and the people launched into space, and liability if something goes wrong with them, lies solely with a sovereign nation: "The activities of non-governmental entities in outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, shall require authorization and continuing supervision by the appropriate State Party to the Treaty." The full name of the Outer Space Treaty, which took effect in 1967 and has been ratified by 112 U.N. member states, reflects this sovereignty provision: "Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies."

But once in space there are no sovereign borders, no protectorates or territories or geographies carved out as exclusive zones to defend at all costs against incursion from other countries. The Outer Space Treaty forbids possession and emphasizes sharing among nations. Article 1 declares space "the province of all mankind," saying "there shall be free access to all areas of celestial bodies." Article





SpaceX Starlink satellites orbit the night sky in Canada. STOCKTREK/GETTY IMAGES

2 reads, “Outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by any other means.”

Space, to put it simply, is different.

Still, a history of hard experience on this planet with competing regional and ideological self-interests attunes every sovereign nation to the potential for conflict in space. They prepare for a new domain of battle, driven by a familiar motive — to keep the enemy from the gate through satellite-enhanced command and control of Earth-based forces — but also, for the signers of the treaty, by an extraterrestrial priority: Ensure no one covets the path and the destination that is space.

DEFENDING THE PEACE

In a 2022 essay in Air University’s Aether magazine, Lt. Gen. John E. Shaw, U.S. Space Force deputy commander, described one of the missions of the nation’s newest military branch and its newest combatant command, U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM): “the protection and defense of space to ensure free and unfettered access to the domain and continued delivery of space-enabled capabilities to the terrestrial spheres.” In the same way that they work to protect freedoms on Earth, the U.S. military and its partners are developing strategies and devices to protect sanctioned activity in the commons of space. Today, that chiefly means safeguarding the satellites that orbit along varying paths and altitudes to help enable life on Earth — tracking weather, steering people and cargo, and providing internet connection, among other vital functions.

In a future where an orbiting space gateway, mining on the moon and colonization of Mars are envisioned, that military role is likely to change. One reason: a growing call to recognize the need for private ownership in some form to encourage the kind of entrepreneurial investment that will help humankind make the most of space. Under terms of the Outer Space Treaty, sovereign nations, to whom militaries attach, are the only players in space. It’s time now to invite private and commercial entities to the table, too, many in the space community argue.

“They offer expertise, practical knowledge and experience that lawyers and politicians lack,” Dr. Michelle L.D. Hanlon, co-director of the Air and Space Law Program at the University of Mississippi and a founder of the nonprofit space heritage group For All Moonkind, told a subcommittee of the U.N. Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 2019. Private entities are spearheading advances in technology that make space more accessible and improve life on Earth. Consider the Starlink constellations, a network that will consist of 42,000 small satellites, and the reusable rockets pioneered by SpaceX and by Rocket Lab USA with its roots and launch center in New Zealand. What’s more, three companies in the U.S. alone are considering building private space stations.

SPACE COMMERCIALIZATION

Accelerating commercialization of space is an important strategy for USSPACECOM, its leader told the annual Space Symposium in Colorado in April 2022. “This is because partnering with commercial entities enables us to adapt faster, innovate more readily and integrate cutting-edge technology,” said U.S. Army Gen. James Dickinson. “We can also bolster space architecture resilience, better understand the space domain, expedite decision-making, and devise economical solutions to strategic problems.”

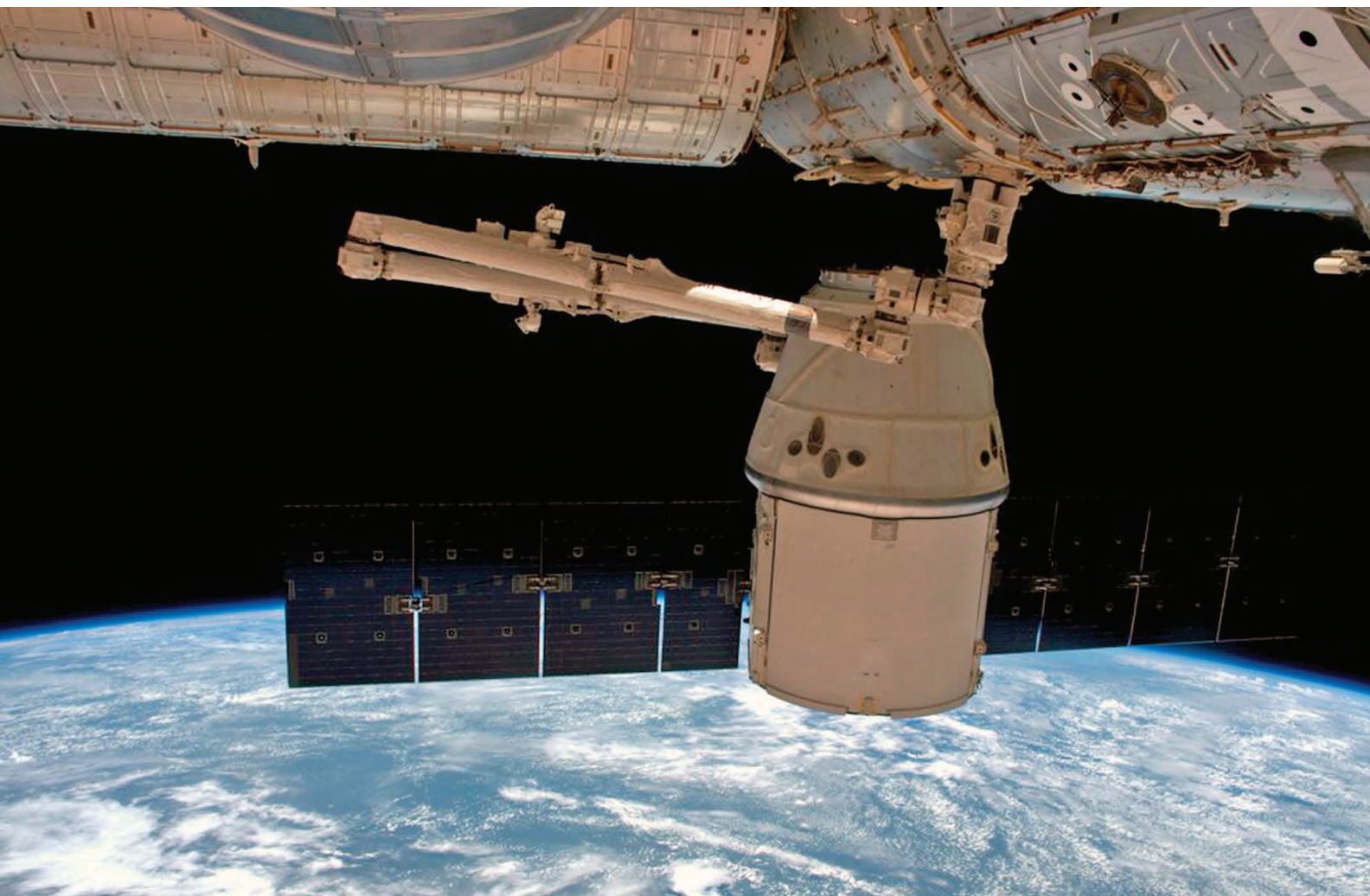
To encourage entrepreneurship, among other reasons, the U.N. faces pressure to revisit the Outer Space Treaty, regarded as the Magna Carta of space law but now more than 50 years old. Nuclear nonproliferation was a driving consideration for the U.S. then as it joined the then-Soviet Union and the United Kingdom in sponsoring the treaty. Another reason for a new look: to erase the apparent contradiction between the prohibition against possession in space and the right to property ownership outlined in the U.N. declaration on human rights. “There has to be some concept of ownership,” Hanlon told FORUM. “Do we call that ownership? I don’t think we can because of the baggage it carries.”

As traditional powers such as the PRC, Russia and the U.S. take the lead in exploring the new domain, developing nations warn against a repeat of the oppressive colonialization that marked human history in centuries past. Hanlon is among those who see a future in space that transcends the need for nationhood. “I hope we never use the term sovereign in space,” she said. “We need to kick out the concept of colonialization that everyone fears so much. We’re very different than we were in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, for the most part.” Who would manage human activities in space is a discussion still in its infancy. Some authorities point as possible models to the U.N.’s International Telecommunication Union, which oversees the allocation of satellite orbits, and to the International Seabed Authority, born from the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea but largely rejected so far as a guide to updating the Outer Space Treaty.

Hanlon spoke of future colonists on Mars, trusting that they’ll be inspired by principles such as freedom and democracy. “At some point, they’re going to be tired of answering to the United States, Russia and China, and they’re going to create their own civilization with their own norms,” she said. “It’s our job today to make sure that the people that end up on Mars, with the capacity to become independent, are people who will respect human rights and human freedoms.”

EXPANDING SPACE ALLIANCES

Meantime, nations pursue their agendas in space individually and in blocs while their militaries prepare for the possibility of conflict. India, for example, plans to again attempt landing a spacecraft on the moon in 2023 after an earlier effort achieved lunar orbit but ended in



A SpaceX Dragon capsule releases from the International Space Station. REUTERS

a hard landing. New space alliances have emerged with varying degrees of capabilities, including the African Space Agency with 55 member states, the Latin American and Caribbean Space Agency with seven member states, and the Arab Space Coordination Group with 12 Middle Eastern member states. The PRC leads the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization, formed in 2005 and including Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Mongolia, Pakistan, Peru, Thailand and Turkey. Developing and launching satellites is the broad goal, but the organization also works to expand and normalize the use of the Chinese version of Global Positioning System (GPS).

The ISS, one of the most ambitious international collaborations ever attempted and visited by astronauts from 18 nations, continues to expand as it approaches its 25th year. Russia announced in July 2022 that it would leave the ISS by late 2024 and begin building its own orbital base. This represents another move away from the West, accelerated by international resistance to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Still, the U.S. space agency NASA has reiterated that it continues working with the Russian space agency Roscosmos, its biggest partner in the ISS. In addition,

the European Space Agency's 10 members have joined NASA in the Artemis Accords to pursue sustainable lunar exploration and to prepare for a human mission to Mars. Artemis is open to all nations, but Russia and the PRC have stayed away from what they claim is an attempt at a U.S.-led international order in space. The regimes are partnering to pursue their own manned missions to the moon, also open to all nations. No Artemis countries have joined.

The U.S. has forged key space defense partnerships, too, chiefly with Australia, Canada, France, Germany, New Zealand and the U.K., all operating or collaborating with the Combined Space Operations Center at Vandenberg Space Force Base in Southern California. In total, the U.S. has more than 30 space situational agreements with other nations. The PRC, by contrast, has shied away from formal military alliances but in recent years has expanded joint exercises with countries including Iran, Pakistan and Russia. A broader look at nations sharing the PRC's values emerged in December 2021 with a U.K.-introduced U.N. resolution to reduce the chances of dangerous miscalculations in space. Opponents in the 164-12 vote were largely authoritarian



India's geosynchronous satellite launch vehicle, carrying a communication satellite, blasts off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. REUTERS

regimes: Cuba, Iran, North Korea, the PRC, Russia, Syria and Venezuela. The PRC and Russia are rapidly developing space capabilities that “threaten the stability and security of the domain,” USSPACECOM’s Dickinson said during a speech in May 2022. But he emphasized that the command’s top objective is to “deter conflict from beginning or extending into the space domain” and that, in the end, space “need not be hostile.”

DOMAIN AWARENESS

Whatever the future holds, Hanlon sees a vital role for the military. “I really think that we will get peace from space, and I think that the U.S. military has a huge role in promoting that peace. ... Not just to lead by example and be peaceful ourselves but to make sure we’re bringing emerging nations with us and to make sure that nobody feels like they’re being left behind.” The first steps into space were taken for purposes of national defense. Military spending has yielded great advances in space technology, including the promise of space solar power — a potential game changer for humankind. Domain awareness, meanwhile, is vital in space, and a USSPACECOM component tracks and communicates to the public any potential collisions through the website Space-Track.org.

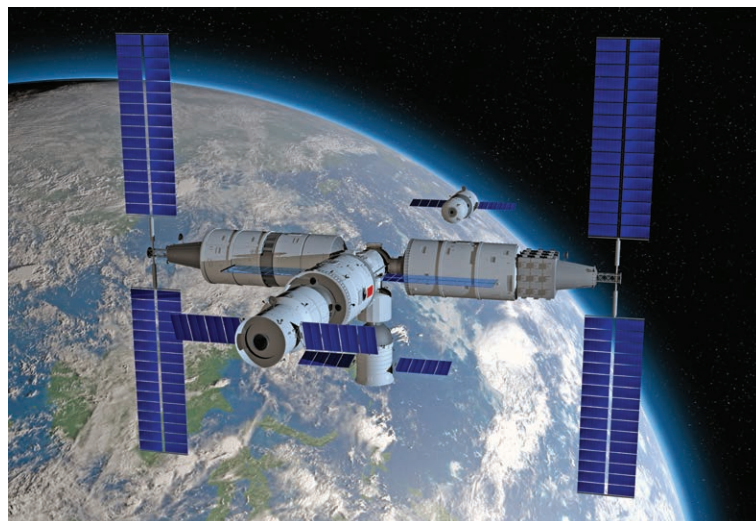
“We need to have space traffic management, and the fact is that defenses around the world have the best capabilities and the most eyes,” Hanlon said. A space “guard” may be necessary, she said — a concept being explored by the U.S. Air Force Research Lab.

The military will need to evolve to answer the challenges space presents, which are unlike any faced before and distinguished by the seemingly infinite layers in space, Hanlon said. The crowding of orbit adjacent to Earth’s atmosphere, for example, will require a different approach than exploration in the distant asteroid belt or beyond.

Expanded forays into the domain are producing questions of sovereignty and national defense. More than 70 countries have space agencies, with 14 capable of orbital launch. Just two years after the Outer Space Treaty took effect, pioneering space law professor Stephen Gorove suggested private ownership in space might be allowed under the treaty because it isn’t expressly prohibited. Seven equatorial nations in 1976 declared sovereignty over geostationary orbit — the track 35,400 kilometers above the equator where certain communications, intelligence and missile-warning satellites are placed because they can remain fixed on one Earth location. Met with widespread opposition, the sponsors backed off the Bogota Declaration and asserted lesser “preferential rights” to space. Even afterward, though, Ecuador claims geostationary orbit through a provision of its rewritten 2008 constitution.

OWNERSHIP POSSIBILITIES

Among other questions emerging: The Outer Space Treaty requires that nations not interfere with objects



The People’s Republic of China complained to the United Nations that Starlink satellites from U.S.-based SpaceX forced adjustments in the orbit of the Tiangong 3 space station, shown in this photo illustration alongside the crewed Shenzhou space vessel. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

launched by others, so does this amount to sovereign ownership of a particular orbital slot? Would it constitute possession if military forces act to protect an object in space against threats? Key provisions of the treaty refer to “space, including the moon and other celestial bodies.” Lacking further definition, does this mean every speck of cosmic dust must be respected as a celestial body?

The PRC was poking at these cracks in the treaty when it sent its complaint about Starlink to the U.N. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is grappling with the complexities of the Space Age, wrestling with how to record satellite launches that once sent aloft a single object but now deploy dozens, while also dabbling in farther-reaching issues such as space resource utilization. But each turn of Earth highlights how little the foundational Outer Space Treaty addresses human activity in space today. Who will have standing? How will it be managed?

For now, the world uses the tools available. The U.S. responded to the PRC complaint with its own letter to the U.N. outlining measures in place to address the at-times conflicting concerns of sovereign nations in the commons of space. The response boils down to this: Update your contacts, pay attention to readily available data and talk to one another. These steps are vital as space gets busier with private sector activity. Since November 2014, the response noted, the U.S. has provided emergency notifications about high-risk collision hazards between crewed and robotic PRC spacecraft and other space objects. In the case of the Starlink satellites, USSPACECOM didn’t see a significant probability of collision. But to put its mind at ease, the response advised, the PRC should reach out directly rather than declaring an international incident — and avail itself of the free Space-Track.org website. □



A SOVEREIGNTY SUCCESS STORY

ASEAN Remains a Reflection of its Member States

DR. SHAUN NARINE

Five countries founded the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei joined in 1984, followed by Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999. Timor-Leste, which has been an independent nation only since 2002 and is the remaining Southeast Asian state, is expected to join at some point. Since its creation, ASEAN has remained committed to a Westphalian notion of state sovereignty, wherein each state has exclusive sovereignty over its territory under the set of rules, norms and standards generally recognized as binding between nations.

ASEAN's major focus has centered on protecting and enhancing its members' sovereign powers. Over the decades, critics have questioned this effort and suggested reforms to give ASEAN more autonomy and influence over its members' domestic and foreign policies. Critics argue that for ASEAN to exercise real international influence, its members need to coordinate their political, economic, and social domestic and foreign policies in a way that allows the organization to credibly claim to be the voice of nearly 700 million people. However, it is unlikely that a radical change in how ASEAN approaches sovereignty is imminent. Even 55 years later, many of the political,



2022

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SPECIAL SUMMIT

2022





social and economic factors that shaped ASEAN's founding persist.

Origins of its Commitment to Sovereignty

Understanding ASEAN's commitment to a maximalist form of state sovereignty requires understanding Southeast Asia's experience with colonialism. Western imperial powers colonized or dominated almost every Southeast Asian country. Spain colonized the Philippines for more than 300 years. In 1898, the Spanish lost their empire to the United States, which would not support Philippine independence for nearly 50 more years. The Dutch (and other European powers) colonized Indonesia for more than 300 years. The British colonized Malaya (which became Malaysia and Singapore), Myanmar and Brunei. France colonized Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Only Thailand avoided colonization by practicing a foreign policy of "bending with the wind" — that is, placating whatever power was regionally dominant at any time.

Japanese imperialism led to the end of European and U.S. control of Southeast Asia at the start of World War II, but also proved to be intolerable. After the Allied victory, the U.S. returned to the Philippines but granted it

independence in 1946. The British reasserted control over Brunei, Malaya and Myanmar. The French and the Dutch attempted to regain their former colonies. Such efforts to reimpose control met firm resistance. Indonesia expelled the Dutch; Vietnam defeated the French. The British gradually (and reluctantly) withdrew from their former colonies, granting Brunei independence from its status as a British protectorate in 1984.

In 1963, Indonesia, under then-President Sukarno, launched the policy of Konfrontasi (Confrontation) against the new state of Malaysia. Sukarno viewed Malaysia as a British colonial imposition on the region. Indonesia tried to destabilize Malaysia (and Singapore, a part of Malaysia until 1965) through military and economic coercion. The Philippines, which had territorial disputes with Malaysia, participated in the conflict. Konfrontasi ended in 1966, when the Indonesian military staged a coup against Sukarno and then sought to purge Indonesian society of alleged communists, killing, perhaps, more than 1 million people. The Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore were also concerned with the threat of communist insurgency. Fighting one another made them all more vulnerable to political destabilization. Thus, ASEAN was created as part of an agreement among its founding members that they would respect each other's sovereignty to allow all of them to concentrate on fighting domestic insurgents.

State-Building Struggles

After decolonization, most Southeast Asian states faced the next major concern of many former colonies: how to create cohesive national identities out of many disparate ethnic, tribal, linguistic and religious identities.

ASEAN leaders pose with U.S. President Joe Biden outside the White House in Washington, D.C., in May 2022. From left: Then-Secretary-General of ASEAN Dato' Lim Jock Hoi from Brunei, Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, Thailand Prime Minister Prayut Chan-ocha, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, Sultan of Brunei Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, President Biden, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Laos Prime Minister Phankham Viphavanh, Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Yaakob and then-Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Southeast Asia is probably the world's most diverse region. Not surprisingly, this diversity of identity and the accompanying struggles over control of geographical regions and economic and political resources has led to considerable strife.

In the 1960s, beyond the terrible violence in Indonesia and insurgencies in the other ASEAN states, Vietnam was wracked by a civil war. Myanmar, then known as Burma, came under military dictatorship. In the 1970s, Cambodia's Khmer Rouge regime committed genocide against the nation's people, and Vietnam encouraged the outflow of hundreds of thousands of refugees, many of them ethnic Chinese. The Philippines continued a long-

running conflict with Muslim separatists in Mindanao. The list of domestic conflicts goes on.

Many Southeast Asian governments subscribe to the theory that creating functional and sustainable states out of many complex identities may be a long and often violent process that requires the protection of state sovereignty. While much of the violence within Southeast Asian states has been mitigated by the economic successes of the past 35 years, most regional states remain potentially unstable actors.

Sustaining Relations

Despite the great regional upheavals during its decades of existence, ASEAN can claim that no two member states have gone to war with each other. There has been limited interstate violence, however, and it remains debatable how much credit ASEAN deserves for mitigating regional tensions. Economic self-interest in stability has also played a role. Still, it is probable that the social and political connections ASEAN has built among leaders and officials in Southeast Asia has smoothed relations. The hundreds of meetings that ASEAN's various agencies hold every year put the organization at the center of a network of relationships.

The expansion of multilateralism in Southeast Asia is unique to the region and does not necessarily follow traditional Western models. However, there are indications that Southeast Asian nations have tried to move toward a more cohesive form of regional arrangement that would require member states to pool their sovereignty, or at least create that impression. ASEAN's members understand that their individual influence on the international stage is greatly enhanced when they can speak with one regional voice. Maintaining ASEAN's credibility is a major foreign policy concern.

However, events have challenged ASEAN's international image and influence. In the late 1990s, ASEAN lacked the ability to address such challenges as the devastation caused by a regional economic crisis due in large part to inflated asset values and the collapse of currency rates; the environmental catastrophe of the regional haze from forest fires in Indonesia; and Indonesia's aggression toward Timor-Leste. Afterward, the ASEAN states implemented reforms to restore the organization's credibility. In 2003, ASEAN proposed creating the Economic Community, the Socio-Cultural Community and the Political-Security Community. These are the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, which was established in December 2015. In 2008, the ASEAN Charter became enforceable. In 2012, ASEAN introduced its Human Rights Declaration and its Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR).

Symbolic Power

Nonetheless, ASEAN's moves toward creating a more cohesive and institutionalized structure cannot compete with the political and economic realities of the ASEAN

ASEAN's 10 member states hold two key Summit Meetings each year hosted by the nation holding the ASEAN chairmanship for that year, which will be Indonesia in 2023. The ASEAN Charter calls for ASEAN to develop friendly relations and mutually beneficial dialogue cooperation and partnerships with countries, subregional, regional, and international organizations and institutions. ASEAN has 10 dialogue partners, including Australia, Canada, the European Union, India, Japan, New Zealand, the People's Republic of China, Russia, South Korea and the United States, with which it holds high level exchanges, including additional ministerial meetings and summit meetings.

The U.S.-ASEAN Strategic Partnership, for example, is built on shared principles, as outlined in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, including ASEAN centrality, respect for sovereignty and rule of law, good governance, transparency, inclusivity, rules-based frameworks and openness. During U.S.-ASEAN special summits, participating countries work together to strengthen public health systems for the future, build connectivity through human capital development, advance partnerships in economic cooperation, and promote maritime cooperation for a secure Indo-Pacific.

South Korea's Park Jin attends the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in August 2022. REUTERS





Thai Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul, right, and U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra meet during the 15th ASEAN Health Ministers meeting in Bali, Indonesia, in May 2022. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh participates in a summit commemorating 45 years of U.S.-ASEAN relations in Washington, D.C., in May 2022. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Indonesian President Joko Widodo attends the U.S.-ASEAN Special Summit in May 2022. REUTERS

states. On careful analysis, the ASEAN Community and its various elements are more symbolic than they are binding. ASEAN is still not designed to challenge the sovereignty of its individual members. For example, the ASEAN Charter calls on member states to support democracy and human rights even as it recognizes ASEAN's guiding principles of sovereignty and noninterference. However, the Charter privileges the latter principles by stating them first and reemphasizing them multiple times. ASEAN has no mechanism by which to eject or punish recalcitrant members and the AICHR is extremely limited in what it can address.

Today, the most obvious problem facing ASEAN is the crisis in Myanmar. After shifting toward democracy in 2012, Myanmar was the victim of a military coup in 2021, and the junta remained in power as of late 2022. Even before the coup, widespread prejudices against the Rohingya Muslim people, generally instigated by the military, resulted in ethnic cleansing and genocide. How to deal with Myanmar has led to divisions within ASEAN and greatly complicated its relations with its Western partners. Some members, such as Vietnam, insist that ASEAN continue to adhere to its strict Westphalian approach to state sovereignty. Other members want to sanction Myanmar and are concerned with how condemnation from the West is affecting ASEAN's international reputation and, therefore, its international influence.

Defining Sovereignty

A maximalist understanding of state sovereignty will remain the norm in ASEAN for the foreseeable future. The pressure for ASEAN to alter this norm is likely to decrease with time. Largely driving this push is the desire to fit into the norms of a system defined by the Western

world. However, the gradual decline of Western power, combined with the corresponding rise of China and its support for a traditional definition of sovereignty adds further weight to the status quo.

However, the rise of China also creates more of a reason for ASEAN states to speak with one diplomatic and political voice.

ASEAN remains a reflection of its member states. Southeast Asian countries have made considerable political, economic and technological advancement over the past 50 years. However, their political gains are quite fragile. As a result, their relationships with ASEAN are complicated. It benefits ASEAN members to have the world see ASEAN as representative of the governments and people of Southeast Asia. At the same time, it is also imperative for many of them to prevent the organization from becoming an autonomous entity that can put political pressure on them. ASEAN's seemingly ambivalent and sometimes contradictory response to the concept of sovereignty captures this tension. Nonetheless, the form of sovereignty that will remain paramount for the region for some time is the traditional Westphalian version. The need to project ASEAN as unified and effective will produce the impression of an organization that is more united than it actually is. Even so, ASEAN remains important to its members and to the region's relations with the world. The fact that ASEAN was founded by middle powers rather than more powerful external states allows it to bring together the many forces contending for regional influence. It has created networks of interaction that enable diplomatic contact. It has helped nurture the conditions that allow for economic development. ASEAN's contributions to Southeast Asia may be less deliberate than they seem, but they are still consequential. □

GARUDA SHIELD

A 'SUPER' EXERCISE TRANSCENDS GROWING REGIONAL, GLOBAL SECURITY CONCERNS

GUSTY DA COSTA

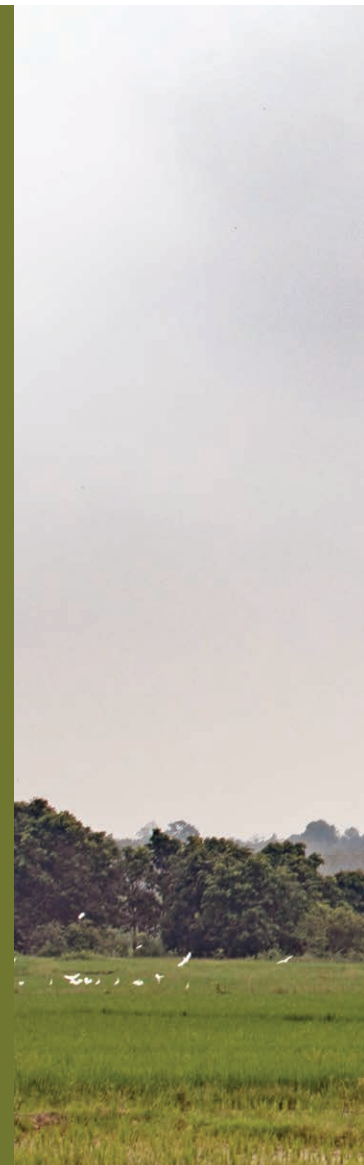
Airborne Soldiers descended from the sky in a synchronized pattern over the island of Sumatra in the Indonesian archipelago in early August 2022, landing in the rice fields and in openings of dense tropical forests of Baturaja. This wasn't an ordinary jump. Paratroopers from Indonesia, Japan and the United States completed their first leap together at Super Garuda Shield, a multinational and joint military exercise led by the Indonesian National Armed Forces, also known as the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI), and the U.S. military.

The jump was not the only first at the annual exercise, which was conducted from August 1-14. Garuda Shield 2022, which garnered the moniker Super Garuda Shield for its size, marked the first time that Australia, Japan and Singapore participated in the exercise, which was staged amid starkly heightened global tensions, reflecting participants' commitment to countering threats to regional security.

Gen. Andika Perkasa, TNI commander, and Gen. Charles A. Flynn, commander of U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC), launched the exercise at the Baturaja Combat Exercise Center and drew more than 4,300 participants. Military personnel joined from 12 nations in addition to Indonesia and the United States. Participants included Australia, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, South Korea and Timor-Leste. Observers hailed from Canada, India and the United Kingdom.

Garuda Shield also emphasized maritime operations, with warships from Indonesia, Singapore and the U.S. exercising together for the first time.

"When we're together like this, we are stronger," Flynn said at the launch of the exercises, calling them "an important expression of our teamwork, our interoperability and our unity as a group of nations that seek to have a Free and Open Indo-Pacific and maintain a rules-based order."





As in the previous 15 iterations, Garuda Shield featured a range of activities and capabilities, including weapons interoperability and field coordination, satellite support and identification, friend or foe systems, and jungle survival and urban terrain training. Amphibious operations and an airfield seizure exercise were also conducted.

Super Garuda Shield built upon previous exercises, allowing personnel to test equipment and procedures, and giving the U.S. a better understanding of the defense infrastructure needs of the TNI and other allied and partner militaries, Dr. Teuku Rezasyah, a lecturer in the Department of International Relations at Indonesia's Padjadjaran University, told FORUM.

Super Garuda Shield also enabled

the TNI to expand collaboration and experimentation with combined and joint forces as part of USARPAC's Operation Pathways, which is a symbol of regional friendships and cooperation.

"I'm proud to see how Garuda Shield has grown since last year — expanding this summer to a joint, multinational exercise that includes all of our service components," Flynn said. "It's a symbol of the U.S.-Indonesia bond and the growing relationship between land forces in this consequential region ... because land forces are the glue that binds the region's security architecture together. We do that together by building readiness, building relationships and by building trust. Bringing our forces together like this, we stitch the fabric of regional security into something lasting."

Indonesian, Japanese and U.S. paratroopers conduct operations during Super Garuda Shield in Baturaja, Indonesia, in August 2022.

SGT. NICHOLLE SALVATIERRA/U.S. ARMY



A U.S. Army AH-64 Apache attack helicopter engages a target during Super Garuda Shield 2022. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HEIGHTENED TENSIONS

The exercise's supersized name, new faces and geopolitical aims reflected the circumstances under which it took place.

Since the inaugural Garuda Shield in 2009, tensions have steadily grown in the Indo-Pacific due to competing territorial claims in the South China Sea, as well as what is widely seen as the People's Republic of China's (PRC's) growing military presence and strategic ambitions across the region and beyond.

In response, regional partners have joined together to demonstrate that destabilizing actions by the PRC and People's Liberation Army (PLA) would be met by a strong alliance, which Garuda Shield exemplifies. "The exercise is part of Indonesia-U.S. defense cooperation, but it also sends a message to potential regional powers that there is close defense coordination when changes occur," Nikolaus Loy, an international relations expert at Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, told FORUM.

"I believe the exercise represents an attempt to respond to global and regional strategic shifts," Loy said. He listed the growing number of security challenges beyond the headline-making tensions

over Taiwan: the disputes between Japan and the PRC regarding the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands and between India and the PRC over the mountainous border region of Ladakh; nuclear-armed North Korea's unpredictable behavior, including its destabilizing missile tests; as well as Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent war.

Although not a party to any of the South China Sea disputes among Beijing and other littoral states, Indonesia has related concerns. The PRC's expansive maritime claims, which were rejected by an international tribunal in 2016, overlap with Indonesia's exclusive economic zone in the southern portion of the South China Sea, known to Indonesians as the Natuna Sea. Beijing's claims have led to confrontations that have further eroded the PRC's public image, such as illegal fishing by Chinese fleets and mistreatment of Indonesian crew members on Chinese vessels.

The TNI's decision to stage some of Super Garuda Shield in the Riau Islands along the Malacca Strait in the South China Sea was significant, according to analysts, given nearby incursions by Chinese fishing boats and the islands' status as the administrative capital of the maritime area.



U.S. Army Pacific Commander Gen. Charles A. Flynn, left, and Japanese Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Kizuki Ushijima pin jump wings on an Indonesian Soldier after he completed trilateral jump training with Japanese and U.S. Army paratroopers during Super Garuda Shield. U.S. ARMY PACIFIC



Indonesian National Armed Forces Gen. Andika Perkasa, left, and Adm. John C. Aquilino, Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, observe Super Garuda Shield 2022. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Meanwhile, beyond the PRC's increasingly ambitious regional posture, the growth of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) military capabilities is causing concern. In 2021, U.S. intelligence assessments described the PLA as gradually but steadily transforming into a highly agile, power-projecting arm of the CCP's foreign policy machine, engaged in military diplomacy and operations globally, according to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

REALIGNING NONALIGNMENT

Officially, Indonesia's long tradition of nonalignment remains robust, and the country's civil and military leaders say its defense posture and foreign policy are not aimed at any nation. "We are all friends with our neighboring countries. This is what makes us stronger, our solidarity," Perkasa told reporters, stressing that "there is no message for anyone" in the exercises.

Perkasa noted that the PRC's participation in the first Garuda Shield and in two Indonesian-Chinese military exercises in 2012 and 2013 had not been followed by interest from Beijing in the 2022 exercise. "If they do not see the drill as a priority, then it is fine," Perkasa said, adding that Indonesia remains open to holding exercises with the PRC.

Padjadjaran University's Teuku said concerns over the CCP made the PLA's participation in Super Garuda Shield impossible. Issues such as continuing maritime territorial disputes between the PRC and Southeast Asian nations and the importance of maintaining a Free and Open Indo-Pacific presented barriers to cooperation.

While the PRC remains Indonesia's largest trading partner, changing economic patterns are seen as reducing Indonesia's dependence on the region's economic powerhouse. Indonesia's status as the

largest country in Southeast Asia — and the fourth most populous in the world — means that it is fully able to be its own player, especially in the Indo-Pacific. Australia's hardening line toward the PRC and Jakarta's warming ties with Canberra, for example, are seen as important regional developments.

There are other indications that Indonesia, like other participants in Super Garuda Shield, is working more closely with allies and partners to foster security in the region and beyond. Indonesian President Joko Widodo reportedly made Japan's participation in the exercise a key point during an official visit to Tokyo in July 2022, and Japanese Parliamentary Vice Minister of Defense Tsuyohito Iwamoto was in Jakarta for meetings shortly before the kickoff in Baturaja.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

As in past decades, the U.S. will play a key role in regional security and stability. Because most of the Super Garuda Shield participants are U.S. allies or partners, Indonesia's military is still perceived as a close partner of the U.S., Soleman Pontoh, a former head of the TNI's Strategic Intelligence Agency, told FORUM.

Yet Super Garuda Shield proved more than just a means to address a regional threat to Indonesian sovereignty. While the exercise defined the essence of security partnerships in the region, Super Garuda Shield also transcended geopolitics in many aspects. At the ground level, it provided a platform for personal and cultural relationships among Indonesia and the U.S. and other Indo-Pacific countries.

Participants achieved a deeper appreciation for trust among like-minded allies and partners and for a shared understanding among different cultures that will provide a solid foundation for genuine future relationships among the militaries. □

Gusty Da Costa is a FORUM contributor reporting from Indonesia.

Capable, *Adaptive,* *Partners*



Australian Army Soldiers, Malaysian Army paratroopers and Sri Lankan Marines form up on the flight deck of the Royal Australian Navy's HMAS Canberra in preparation for an air assault amphibious raid drill at RIMPAC 2022. SEAMAN MATTHEW LYALL / ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

FORUM INTERVIEWS TWO KEY INDO-PACIFIC LEADERS DURING THE RIM OF THE PACIFIC EXERCISE

FORUM STAFF

Twenty-six nations represented by 25,000 personnel gathered from June 29 to August 4, 2022, for the biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) — the largest international maritime exercise. Taking place in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California, the five-week training mission strengthened the collective ability of allies and partners to ensure a Free and Open Indo-Pacific and fostered an environment for forces to build relationships and skills that promote accessibility, safety and security on the high seas.

Against this backdrop, Rear Adm. Toshiyuki Hirata, Commander Escort Flotilla Four, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), and Commodore Paul O’Grady, Royal Australian Navy Commodore Flotillas, spoke with FORUM about RIMPAC and the ideas and essence of the exercise theme: “Capable, Adaptive, Partners.”

Hirata has a specialty as a surface warfare officer. During RIMPAC, he served as vice commander of the combined task force and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) force commander. O’Grady has also served extensively as a surface warfare officer. During RIMPAC, he was the combined forces maritime component commander.

FORUM: What was most significant about RIMPAC 2022?

HIRATA: I was commander of the HADR force during the RIMPAC HADR exercise, July 11-18. It was very exciting for us as it was not only JMSDF

and the United States, but also other nations joined our headquarters and subordinate organizations — not only military, but also some civilian agencies joined us, and we coordinated everything. And also, we conducted this as a combined exercise with the state of Hawaii. So it was a very good experience for us overall.

O’GRADY: It has been a personal and professional highlight to command the maritime component, comprising 38 ships, three submarines, many aircraft and all their fabulous crews. Just as importantly, the 250 multinational headquarters staff that ran and coordinated all the different task forces. That staff included core staff planners from Australia and Canada, who also provided the deputy maritime component commander. We incorporated staff at the whole range of command levels from 19 total countries and had to get them working together to not only support the ships but build up their tactical warfighting capabilities. This ensured that at the tactical phase they could function operationally, including medical support, dynamic fires across not only the maritime component but into the air component, as well as other supporting elements. That’s been a very exciting journey as a multinational force commander, and personally as a career highlight, too — to have an opportunity to have a team and a force like that to coordinate is unprecedented for me personally.

FORUM: RIMPAC Commander Vice Adm. Michael Boyle stated during the exercise that it is not only interoperability but also interchangeability that is key to working with international partners. What does that mean for your respective forces?

HIRATA: I think in maritime operations this interchangeability is a very wide spectrum. For example, I conducted HADR operations with other maritime operations. On the other hand, the commodore conducted maritime operations such as maritime security and other multilateral operations, so [there are] many types of operations that we have. Sometimes some countries, due to their national objectives, do not have as much experience in some of these due to their differences, and sometimes these experiences allow us to adapt to many situations.

“From a professional perspective, the most satisfying aspect of RIMPAC was serving as commander for HADR operations. But, in my private perspective, the most positive aspect of RIMPAC is working with my friends.”

— Rear Adm. Toshiyuki Hirata



O'GRADY: There were some great examples across all the forces. One I am very familiar with is the HMAS Canberra, the amphibious assault ship of the Royal Australian Navy, which had Australian Army embarked onboard but also during the passage from Australia had Sri Lankan Marines and Tongan Marines embarked, and they trained together all the way to Hawaii. ... So before RIMPAC started, the exercise had already started for them. When they got here, U.S. Marine Corps MV-22 Ospreys joined and stayed embarked for three weeks. That's the first time we've done that, operating as well as doing all their maintenance with the crews and teams living on board that ship. So, from an Australian ship, the Marine Corps aircraft deployed Tongan Marines, Sri Lankan Marines and Australian Army. We talk about interchangeability; I think that is the epitome. There are many other examples across RIMPAC; that is one I happen to be familiar with as the Australian contingent commander and think it is a real highlight: Partners enabling one another in that [when] they can bring capabilities that others do not have, together they deliver much more.

FORUM: For this exercise, which countries did you work closely with?

HIRATA: The U.S. is part of our alliance, so their Navy, that is our closest relationship. Japan and Australia, similarly, we have a very tight relationship.

O'GRADY: This close relationship allows us to consider other ways in which we do exercises and coordinate activities, like through the Quad [Quadrilateral Security Dialogue]. A number of those multinational and bilateral relationships are strengthened through the broader framework of RIMPAC, which means we are not starting from zero; we have some continuity as we move on to other exercises and activities together — which is exciting.

FORUM: Is this the first time you have met each other?

O'GRADY: Adm. Hirata and I are old friends. We, and [Royal Canadian Navy] Rear Adm.

From left, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Rear Adm. Toshiyuki Hirata, Royal Canadian Navy Rear Adm. Christopher Robinson and Royal Australian Navy Commodore Paul O'Grady reunite on Ford Island, Hawaii, during RIMPAC 2022. The three graduated from the U.S. Naval War College in 2015. SEAMAN KYLIE JAGIELLO/ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

Chris Robinson, deputy commander of the Combined Task Force, all went to the U.S. Naval War College in Rhode Island together in the class of 2015, so it was an amazing experience and personal privilege for me to work closely with some very good friends. We have visited each other previously and learned how to work together as well as being commanders in the leadership team for RIMPAC, and it's been fabulous.

FORUM: When is the next opportunity for the two of you to work together?

O'GRADY: We are still working that out!

HIRATA: I hope so! From a professional perspective, the most satisfying aspect of RIMPAC was serving as commander for HADR operations. But, in my private perspective, the most positive aspect of RIMPAC is working with my friends.

O'GRADY: Absolutely, this has taken RIMPAC to a completely different personal level. To share these things and the relationships with the other commanders — these relationships were not just shaped over the past few months, but they were built over years. This allows us to have a depth in our conversations and actions that would not normally happen in a short period of time.

FORUM: As the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) become more of a joint force, how will that affect the JMSDF?

HIRATA: Joint operations are very important for many reasons, including resources. The current security situation is complex. For JSDF, operations are conducted cross-domain. Every domain is involved in these operations. So, the air domain, maritime, ground domain, cyber domain and sometimes space domain are involved in operations — very complex. Joint exercises help us achieve the goal of cooperating and enable our forces to conduct combined operations. In conducting HADR [during RIMPAC], we conducted operations with joint and combined forces in our headquarters.

O'GRADY: One of the other great things about RIMPAC is I have met people on ships and aircrews, who I will then see again soon for exercise Kakadu 2022, which is being held in [September 2022 in Australia]. It is also a large-scale multinational exercise — not of the same scale as RIMPAC, but it includes some of our other partners from Southwest Pacific nations, allowing us to continue building our relationship that we renewed or started at RIMPAC into another environment. That's very exciting.



Australian Army Soldiers form up on the flight deck of the HMAS Canberra in preparation for a drill during RIMPAC 2022.

SEAMAN MATTHEW LYALL/ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

FORUM: How do these events help deter evolving threats in the Indo-Pacific region?

O'GRADY: It continues to build genuine trust as well as interoperability/interchangeability. It provides the human relationships from which trust flows. You can't buy it. You have to invest in it, and you have to keep investing in it. We had a bit of a hiccup through COVID, when we did a lot via video teleconferencing. But it's wonderful to come back to RIMPAC and Kakadu and do things face to face again, which is truly how you build relationships.

FORUM: Any final perspectives on maritime security?

HIRATA: We always attempt to realize a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. Opportunities such as this exercise to work together and share a common understanding of maritime security are important to ensure a free and open region. It is also very important to achieve interchangeability and interoperability.

FORUM: Would you like to see any changes to RIMPAC?

O'GRADY: RIMPAC provides an amazing world-class training environment hosted by the U.S. Navy, and we are very lucky to be here. But it does take us a very long time to get here and get home. It is sometimes challenging to get the right sustainment of forces, and the ability for all the partner nations to commit the forces that they would desire. That is just the tyranny of distance, and sometimes dealing with the tyranny of distance is dealing with the size and scale of the Indo-Pacific region. So even getting to and from Hawaii is part of the adventure as well. □

TURNING NORTH KOREA'S TRASH *Into Treasure*

STORY AND PHOTO BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



When waves wash trash onto the shores of front-line South Korean islands, Kang Dong Wan can often be found hunting for what he calls his “treasure” — rubbish from North Korea that provides a peek into a place off-limits to most outsiders.

“This can be very important material, because we can learn what products are manufactured in North Korea and what goods people use there,” said Kang, a professor at South Korea’s Dong-A University.

He was forced to turn to the delicate information-gathering method because COVID-19 has made it much harder for outsiders to find out what’s going on inside North Korea, one of the world’s most cloistered nations even without pandemic border closures.

The variety, amount and increasing sophistication of the trash, he believes, confirms North Korean state media reports that leader Kim Jong Un is pushing for the production of various consumer goods and a bigger industrial-design sector to meet people’s demands and improve their livelihoods. Kim, despite his authoritarian rule, cannot ignore the tastes of consumers who now buy products at capitalist-style markets because the country’s socialist public rationing system is broken, and its economic woes have worsened during the pandemic.

“Current North Korean residents are a generation of people who’ve come to realize what the market and economy are. Kim can’t win their support if he only suppresses and controls them while sticking to a nuclear development program,” Kang said. “He needs to show there are some changes in his era.”

Before the pandemic, Kang regularly visited Chinese border towns to meet North Koreans living there. He also bought North Korean products and photographed North Korean villages across the river border. He can’t go anymore, however, because China’s antivirus restrictions limit foreign travelers.

Since September 2020, Kang has visited five South Korean border islands off the country’s west coast and collected about 2,000 pieces of North Korean trash including snack bags, juice pouches, candy wrappers and drink bottles.

Kang said he was amazed to see dozens of colorful packaging materials for goods such as seasonings, ice cream bars, snack cakes, and milk and yogurt products. Many have graphic elements, cartoon characters and a variety of fonts. Some seem out of date by Western standards and are apparent copies of South Korean and Japanese designs.

Other experts study the diversity of goods and packaging designs in North Korea through state media broadcasts and publications, but Kang’s trash collection allows a more thorough analysis, said Ahn Kyung-su, head of a website focusing on health issues in North Korea.

Kang’s work also opens a fascinating window. Ingredient information on some juice pouches, for instance, shows North Korea uses tree leaves as a sugar substitute. Kang suspects that’s because of a lack of sugar and sugar-processing equipment.

He said the discovery of more than 30 kinds of artificial flavor enhancer packets could mean that North Korean households cannot afford more expensive natural ingredients such as meat and fish for soups and stews. Many South Koreans have stopped using artificial enhancers over health concerns.

Plastic bags for detergents have phrases such as “the friend of housewives” or “accommodating women.” Because the assumption is that only women do such work, it could reflect their low status in male-dominated North Korean society.

Some wrappers display exaggerated claims. One says that a walnut-flavored snack cake is a better source of protein than meat. Another says that collagen ice cream makes children grow taller and enhances skin elasticity. And yet another claims that a snack cake made with a certain kind of microalgae prevents diabetes, heart disease and aging.

Kang said his trash collection is an attempt to better understand the North Korean people and study how to bridge the gap between the divided Koreas in the event of future unification.



EYES RIGHT

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sri Lankan Army Soldiers march during Independence Day celebrations in Colombo in February 2022.

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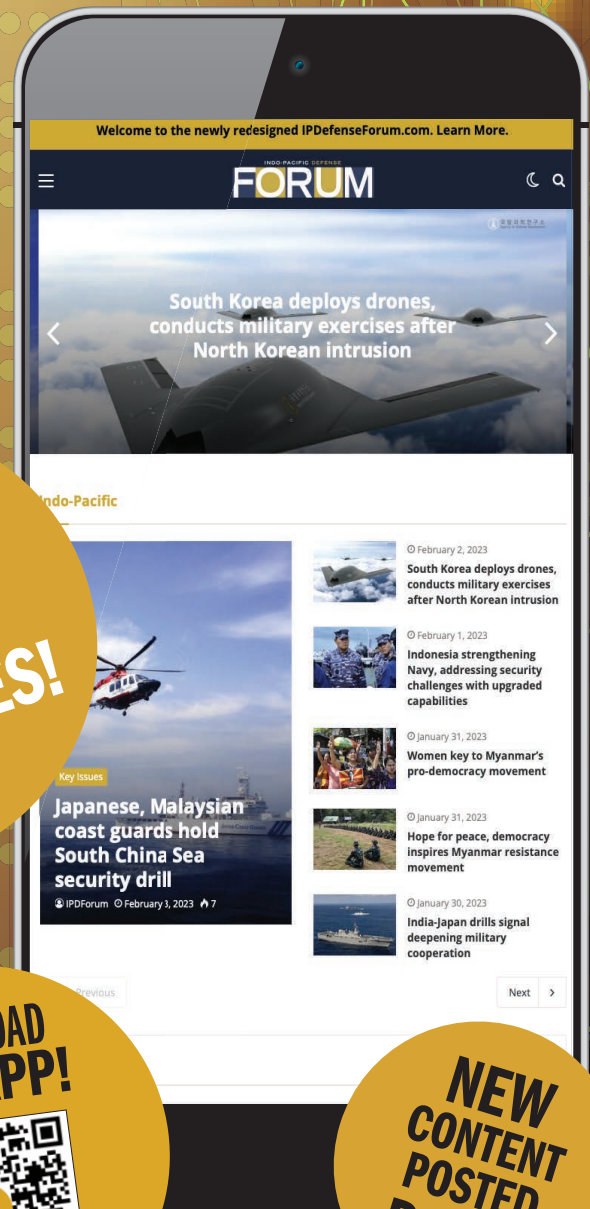


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