

**MOVING TOWARD
A CO-MANAGEMENT APPROACH:
CHINA'S POLICY TOWARD
NORTH KOREA AND TAIWAN**

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This article analyzes Chinese foreign policy toward two flashpoints in East Asia: the Korean peninsula and the Taiwan Strait. It argues that there has been an evolution in terms of Beijing's approaches toward these two international crises over time. One can discern three different approaches. First, historical legacies have always played a critical role in the formulation of China's policy calculations and the Korea and Taiwan issues are no exception. I call this the "history-embedded" perspective. Second, with the recent rise of China's economic and political might, nationalism in China has correspondingly been on the rise. National interests have been further prioritized over ideological considerations. This approach can be called "national interest-driven" foreign policy. Third, Beijing has become increasingly confident not only about its strengths in the world arena but also about its ability to coordinate with related powers regarding their various interests. This approach can be called "co-management of international crises" with major powers. The article argues that until recently China has emphasized the first two sets of considerations, but seems to be gradually moving toward a new approach, namely co-management with major powers.

Key words: China, foreign policy, Taiwan, Korea, international crises

Introduction

This article analyzes Chinese foreign policy toward two flashpoints in East Asia: the Korean peninsula and the Taiwan Strait. It argues that there has been an evolution in terms of Beijing's approaches toward these two international crises over time. One can discern three different approaches. First, historical legacies have always played a critical role in the formulation of China's policy calculations, and the Korea and Taiwan issues are no exception. I call this the "history-embedded" perspective. Second, with the recent rise of China's economic and political might, nationalism in China has correspondingly been on the rise. National interests have been further prioritized over ideological considerations. This approach can be called "national interest-driven" foreign policy.

Third, Beijing has become increasingly confident not only about its strengths in the world arena but also about its ability to coordinate with related powers regarding their various interests. This approach can be called "co-management of international crises" with major powers. The article argues that until recently the People's Republic of China (PRC) has emphasized the first two sets of considerations, but seems to be gradually moving toward a new approach, namely co-management with major powers. It is this latter approach that the article concentrates on.

The History-Embedded Approach

The controversies surrounding the Korean peninsula and Taiwan are not new. From Beijing's perspective there has been a clear link between Taiwan and Korea from as early as the late 19th century; both have been crucial to China's security concerns and key national interests, albeit for different reasons. The linkage between these two flashpoints emerged early in 1950 when, following Mao Zedong's victory over Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist army in 1949, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was ready to take over Taiwan. This attempt was prevented by the outbreak of the Korean War,¹ when the PLA's main target

was switched from Taiwan to Korea, where the Chinese fought against the United States from 1950 to 1953. The Korean War also prompted President Harry Truman to order the U.S. Seventh Fleet into the Taiwan Strait to guarantee Taiwan's security, thereby internationalizing the issue of Taiwan and making it a focus of future conflict between Beijing and Washington. There was a saying during that time: "It was Kim Il Sung who saved Chiang Kai-shek." Once again, one can see connections between Taiwan and Korea from Beijing's perspective. Against this background, this section will analyze Beijing's history-embedded approach toward these two hot spots, focusing primarily on developments from 2000 onward.

The Korea Policy Case

When examining the PRC's policies toward the Korean peninsula, one needs to look first at historical and then at strategic and geographical factors. China and Korea have shared complex and intimate relations, which were symbolized by a hierarchical tributary system. As Chae-Jin Lee points out, "Korea's tributary relations with China began as early as the fifth century, were regularized during the Koryo dynasty (918-1392), and became fully institutionalized during the Yi dynasty (1392-1910)."² Each ruler of China—whether the leader of a dynasty or a republic—has more or less regarded Korea as a prominent student of traditional Chinese Confucian culture, making Korea an important component of what may be called "East Asian civilization." Moreover, Korea often acted as a buffer between China and far-away nations, of which Japan is the prime example.³

Allen Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War* (New York: Macmillan, 1960); Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*, 2 vols. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981 and 1990); Sergei Goncharov, John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993); and Jian Chen, *China's Road to the Korean War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

2. Chae-Jin Lee, *China and Korea: Dynamic Relations* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution, 1996), p. 1.

3. For an excellent analysis of the historical legacy of China's security concerns over Japan, see Thomas J. Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan

1. There are many studies analyzing the Korean War. See, for example,

Tributary relations between China and Korea came to an end when China was forced to sign the treaty of Shimonoseki with Japan in 1895. Further confirmation of Japan's leading position in the region came with Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, which also introduced American intervention in Northeast Asian geopolitics. This historical event set up a broad stage for four major powers, namely, China, Japan, Russia, and the United States, to play on for the next century and beyond. In 1910 Korea became a colony of Japan, and remained so until 1945, when Japan was defeated in World War II. Immediately after the Japanese withdrawal, the peninsula was once again divided, as a result of the onset of the cold war.

The Korean War served as another historical reminder for the Beijing leadership to be fully aware of the importance of Korea to its national security. China's reentry into the Korean peninsula began in October 1950, when the new Beijing leadership made the momentous decision to cross the Yalu River and enter the war, thereby placing itself in direct military confrontation with the United States. This conflict ended in a military stalemate three years later. Although estimates vary, the casualties on both sides were tremendous.⁴

The Korean War has also had strategic implications for East Asian international relations; that is, Korea has been historically known as a place of "bingjia bizheng" (meaning a strategic stronghold for military conflict) among major powers. This strategic importance is still very much true today. All four East Asian major powers—China, Japan, Russia, and the United States—have their own vital stakes in the dynamics of the Korean peninsula.⁵

Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security*, vol. 23, No. 4 (Spring, 1999), pp. 49-80.

4. According to Chinese statistics, U.S. casualties reached 390,000, whereas Chinese losses amounted to 115,000 dead and 221,000 wounded (Deng Lifeng, *Jianguo hou junshi xingdong quanlu* [The Complete Records of China's Military Actions Since 1949] (Taiyuan: Shaanxi renmin chubanshe, 1994), pp. 312-13). Another account claimed that the number of dead on the Chinese side alone reached about 400,000. Jonathan Adelman and Chih-yu Shih, *Symbolic War: The Chinese Use of Force, 1840-1980* (Taipei: Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, 1993), p. 189.

5. For an illuminating account of the importance of the Korean peninsula,

Historical legacy has also created problems in China's relations with South Korea. Entrenched historical issues, as well as dissimilar political systems and uneven levels of economic development, contribute to friction between the two countries. About two million Koreans live in China, most of them in Jilin Province on the China-North Korea border. The best-known Korean-Chinese community area resides in the Yanbian Korean Minority Autonomous Region. In general, the large Korean population has played a positive role in facilitating Sino-South Korean relations. But as bilateral relations have further developed in past years, some problems have emerged.

One unsettling development is that a few South Korean visitors have openly advocated that these Korean-Chinese regions were historically part of Korean territory. This indicates that there is some South Korean support for reopening the issue of the China-Korea border, especially once Korea achieves unification.⁶ These problems prompted Chinese premier Li Peng to ask the South Korean government to exercise more "self-control" when he met the visiting South Korean prime minister, Lee Hong-koo, in Beijing in 1995.⁷ In 2002, there was another dispute between the two countries caused by a Chinese study on the history of Northeast China related to the issue of the Kokuryo Kingdom.⁸ Although the dispute has been put aside, it nevertheless indicates a potential territorial quarrel in the future.⁹

see Robert Scalapino, "The Changing Order in Northeast Asia and the Prospects for U.S.-Japan-China-Korea Relations," paper presented at joint East-West Center/Pacific Forum Seminar held in Honolulu, August 13-28, 1998.

6. Author's field research in South Korea, summer 1994.

7. "Nanhan pianzi pian chaoxian tongbao" [South Korean Swindlers Cheat Minority Koreans in China], *Yazhou zhouban* (Asia Weekly), November 25-December 1, 1996, pp. 50-51.

8. Kokuryo (BC 37-AD 668) was a kingdom with a vast territory ranging from the northern part of the peninsula to Manchuria. South Korea says this was a Korean kingdom, a regional regime founded by a minority people living in its outlying districts, while a China-based project indicates that the kingdom was actually a Chinese one. See "Correcting Distorted Korean History," *Korea Times* (Seoul), November 28, 2003. Online at <http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/opinion/200311/kt2003112818380711300.htm>.

9. For a detailed account from the Korean perspective, see Yoon Hwy-Tak,

The Taiwan Policy Case

Historical legacy has also played a significant role in Beijing's policy calculations toward Taiwan. It is well known that Beijing's claim to Taiwan is based on historical records from past centuries that document the ties between the mainland and the island. For example, China officially made Taiwan a province in 1885 during Qing dynasty.¹⁰ The PRC's sovereignty over Taiwan was also confirmed by the Cairo Declaration of December 1943, which declared the intention to return Taiwan to China at the end of the war. None of the major powers disagreed.¹¹ Issues of territorial sovereignty and regime legitimacy are central concerns for the PRC, and Beijing's leadership has been acutely sensitive to these issues, having shaped its Taiwan policy accordingly. No Chinese leader, conservative or reformer, wants to risk being cast as a *lishi zuiren* (a person condemned by history) for failing to prevent the split of the nation. Because of this constraint, the Beijing leadership has consistently refused to renounce the use of military means to prevent Taiwan's independence, and has refused to allow Taiwan more space within the international community.

The PRC's dilemma with Taiwan is twofold. First, Beijing would like to achieve national reunification with Taiwan through peaceful means, but must be prepared for war if Taiwan insists on breaking from the mainland for its independence. Second, there has been consensus among China's elite since 1978 when Deng Xiaoping began his reform and openness policy that economic development should be the top priority for China. The modernization drive, however, has in turn promoted greater nationalist sentiment among Chinese people, making a compromise with Taiwan's demand for separation virtually impossible for any leader to grant. Beijing's leadership thus faces the following dilemma: If Beijing concentrates only on economic mod-

ernization without using military force on Taiwan, Taiwan may move toward permanent separation; on the other hand, war over Taiwan will almost certainly create a great economic setback on the mainland.

In dealing with the most recent regime in Taiwan, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the PRC has faced two competing scenarios: "Economic Integration Based Unification" (EIU) versus "Taiwan Independence Led War" (TIW). In the EIU scenario, the increasing economic interdependence between Taiwan and the mainland will create a favorable environment for cross-strait integration, not only in the economic dimension but also in socio-cultural dimensions, and may well lead to political accommodation in the long run. The hope of EIU increases Beijing's confidence in its long-term goal of national unification with Taiwan, thereby providing a basis for Beijing to use primarily economic means (a naturally peaceful means) as a foundation for its Taiwan policy.

The TIW scenario refers to a situation in which an independence-oriented party such as the DPP comes to power, increasing the likelihood that Taiwan will move toward independence. To prevent Taiwan from doing so, Beijing believes it may have to depend on military force and prepare for war. The PRC has further complicated matters by remaining unresolved on what actions may constitute "Taiwan independence" and lead to military action. Beijing has never provided a clear definition as to what constitutes a true declaration of "Taiwan independence"—a legal status change from *de facto* to *de jure* or other related activities, such as a change of constitution or change of state name (for example to "The Republic of Taiwan"). Beijing's exact definition of "Taiwan independence" seems to evolve over time.

China's fundamental concern is that Taiwan's prolonged separation may in fact promote its eventual independence. Thus, the PRC State Council issued a white paper on Taiwan in February 2000 that lists another situation that would prompt the PRC to use military force against Taiwan—that is, if Taiwan indefinitely delays negotiations with the mainland.¹² Beijing's

"China's Northeast Project and Korean History," *Korea Journal*, vol. 45, No. 1 (Spring, 2005), pp. 142-71.

10. Denny Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. xi.

11. Richard Bush, *At Cross Purposes: U.S.-Taiwan Relations Since 1942* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2004), p. 90.

12. In the Taiwan White Paper, the PRC government states: "[I]f a grave turn of events occurs leading to the separation of Taiwan from China in any name, or if Taiwan is invaded and occupied by foreign countries,

fears of “indefinite delays” were further fanned by the victory of pro-independence DPP candidate Chen Shui-bian.¹³ Chinese leaders became increasingly concerned about developments leading to TIW.

One of the most cited pieces of evidence of the DPP’s likelihood to pursue independence is the “independence clause” contained within the DPP’s political platform. This document was adopted in October 1991 when the DPP’s fifth party congress was held. Section A of the DPP’s platform is entitled “The Establishment of a Sovereign and Independent Republic of Taiwan,” and Article 1 of this section makes the following explicit proposal: “In accordance with the reality of Taiwan’s sovereignty, an independent country should be established and a new constitution drawn up in order to make the legal system conform to the social reality in Taiwan and in order to return to the international community according to the principles of international law.”¹⁴ One may notice, however, that there are ongoing discussions within the leading circles of the DPP about whether it should modify this “independence clause,” either by softening the language or placing it in an “historical context.”¹⁵

In sum, the two hot spots of Taiwan and Korea have remained contentious issues for the major powers for more than a century. The history-embedded analysis illuminates internal tensions and their effects on international relations, including triggering wars among the major powers in the region.

or if the Taiwan authorities refuse, *sine die*, the peaceful settlement of cross-Straits reunification through negotiations, then the Chinese government will only be forced to adopt all drastic measures possible, including the use of force, to safeguard China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and fulfill the great cause of reunification.” See “The One China Principle and the Taiwan Issue,” *Renmin ribao* (People’s Daily, Beijing), February 22, 2000. The English version was reprinted in *Issues & Studies*, vol. 36, No. 1 (January-February, 2000), pp. 161-81. Previously, the conditions for China’s intervention were a declaration of Taiwan independence or foreign power occupation.

13. Julian Baum with Dan Biers, “When a Giant Falls,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 6, 2000, p. 18.
14. “Political Platform of the Democratic Progressive Party,” online at <http://203.73.100.104/platform/a.htm>.
15. See, for example, the 1999 Resolution on the Future of Taiwan passed at the Second Plenary Meeting of the Eighth DPP Congress.

The National Interest-Driven Approach

The dynamics of Chinese foreign policy have been fundamentally influenced by changes in its domestic politics,¹⁶ most importantly in the rising influence of nationalism. Since the beginning of the Deng era in 1978, Beijing has adopted reform-oriented and increasingly practical policies, both internally and externally. Focusing on its drive toward modernization, China has totally changed its attitudes toward such previously labeled “capitalist practices” as joint ventures, foreign investment, and foreign loans. With this change from a foreign policy based on ideology to a more national interest-driven approach, China has significantly improved its relations with the U.S.-led “Western camp,” including both Japan and South Korea.

The Korea Policy Case

Changes in China’s Korea policy were motivated by a greater awareness of its national interests. In this case, China’s modernization drive required close economic ties with industrialized societies as well as with the four little East Asian tigers: South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Beijing’s first official step to enhance bilateral relations with Seoul was the agreement to set up trade offices in each capital in October 1990. South Korea quickly appointed a former assistant foreign minister as the head representative of its trade office, and both offices formally opened in the spring of 1991, leading to the normalization of relations between the two countries the next year.¹⁷ South Korea has become increasingly important as a trading partner for China. In 2004, China became South Korea’s largest trading partner for the first time, with bilateral trade reaching \$79.3 billion, surpassing trade with the United States (\$71.6 billion) and Japan (\$67.8 billion).¹⁸ In the same year, China’s trade with North Korea was a mere \$1.4

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16. For a detailed analysis on this regard, see Quansheng Zhao, *Interpreting Chinese Foreign Policy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
 17. For detailed analysis of economic relations between China and Korea, see Chae-Jin Lee, *China and Korea* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution, 1996), especially chap. 5.
 18. Trade statistics are from Korea customs service, 2004, online at <http://english.customs.go.kr/kcshome/jsp/eng/PGAS301.jsp>.

billion, despite a 35-percent increase over the previous year.¹⁹ The difference between China's economic relations with the two Koreas is striking.

South Korea's rapidly developing political, economic, and cultural relationships with China have had a profound impact on Seoul's diplomatic and security perceptions. Despite being a long-time ally of the United States, Seoul has already indicated an attitude of neutrality in the case of a military confrontation between Beijing and Washington. This tendency toward neutrality was further reinforced with the development of anti-Americanism in South Korea under new president Roh Moo Hyun. Seoul may actually now have leverage to develop a more inclusive multilateral security regime not only with Washington and Tokyo, but also with Beijing.

Beijing has had strong incentives to develop relations with Seoul because a closer relationship might increase China's leverage in dealing with the Korean problem and with East Asia as a whole. As one U.S. official in Washington suggests, "Having good relations with both [Koreas] puts China in the best possible situation" in world politics as well as in regional affairs.²⁰ Since the opening of the Deng era, Beijing's desire to avoid another major military conflict has given it a keen interest in maintaining a peaceful and stable environment on the Korean peninsula. China has to take balanced actions toward the two Koreas.

The Taiwan Policy Case

China's national interest in Taiwan is present in at least two forms. First, Beijing's desire for national unification with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao is at the top of China's national goals. Since matters relating to Hong Kong and Macao were resolved in 1997 and 1999 respectively, the Taiwan issue has become more salient. Second, ever since China's reform and opening policy

began in 1978, modernization has been a national priority. Beijing thus considers Taipei not only critical to its national interests in terms of sovereignty and legitimacy, but also important because it can accelerate the mainland's economic drive. Taiwan, like South Korea, is one of the four East Asian tigers, and is therefore also able to provide China with capital, technology, and markets. Furthermore, because of a shared culture, Taiwan is in a position to provide the mainland with capitalist know-how to help China develop a market economy and integrate itself further into the world economy.

In order to achieve its goal of national unification, Beijing has always maintained two different approaches—peaceful means and military force—to prevent Taiwan from gaining independence (*Taidu*). Cross-strait relations have been highly uncertain since Taiwan's presidential elections in March 2000. But instead of political and military pressure to promote integration with Taiwan, as in 1996, Beijing has increasingly relied upon economic means. Whatever the outcome, Beijing's overall strategy remains clear. A particularly important factor in Taiwan's politics is the business sector, as profit-driven businesspeople generally have viewed the mainland as a desirable market and location for investment. Indeed, Taiwan's extensive trade and economic relations with the mainland have been responsible for generating Taiwan's huge trade surplus. Thus, Taiwan's business community has pressured its politicians to allow for enhanced ties across the Taiwan Strait.

Over the years, the mainland has attracted significant levels of Taiwanese investment and the total value of bilateral trade has increased dramatically. In fact, the prolonged, substantial trade surplus in Taiwan's favor not only facilitated Taiwan's survival during the 1997-1998 Asian financial crises; it also provided enormous incentives for Taiwan to engage with Mainland China. In 2005, Taiwan's trade with the mainland reached \$91.23 billion. Taiwan's imports from the mainland were \$16.55 million, with exports at \$74.68 million, leaving a surplus of \$58.13 million in Taiwan's favor. The accumulated trade surplus for Taiwan vis-à-vis the mainland reached \$332.35 billion. In terms of investment figures, in 2005 alone there were over 3,900 approved contracts between China and Taiwan, worth \$10.36 billion.²¹ In fact,

19. "North Korea-China Trade Surges," *Chosun Ilbo*, January 31, 2005, online at <http://english.chosun.com/w21data/html/news/200501/200501310009.html>.

20. Nayan Chanda, "Chinese Welcome North Korea's Kim, But Relations Are Subtly Changing," *Asian Wall Street Journal Weekly*, October 21, 1991, pp. 24 and 26.

21. *Shijie ribao* [World Journal], January 26, 2006.

according to some 2004 reports, mainland-based projects total about 40 percent of Taiwan's total direct overseas investment.²² These involve approximately 50,000 Taiwanese companies that employ more than 10 million Chinese workers.²³ These trends fit well into Beijing's EIU strategy. It is Beijing's hope that it can use economic means to promote bilateral exchange and integration, thus demonstrating its conciliatory position.

Beijing's reaction to the change of government in Taiwan from late 1999 to early 2006 can be characterized as a pendulum swinging between alarm and conciliation.²⁴ The best example of a conciliatory gesture during this stage was China's agreement with Taipei on direct two-way flights to link them during the Chinese Lunar New Year period between January 29 and February 20, 2005.²⁵ A similar and slightly expanded arrangement was made in the spring of 2006.

Conversely, to show its determination against Taiwan's independence, Beijing began to draft an Anti-Secession Law in the spring of 2005. (See Suisheng Zhao's article in this issue.) It was passed unanimously in December 2004, and officially approved by the full session of the National People's Congress in March 2005. But the highly publicized visit to China of Taiwan's two opposition party leaders, Lien Chan and James Soong, in April-May 2005 indicated the beginning of a new stage in cross-strait relations. It clearly demonstrated Beijing's renewed conciliatory efforts with Taiwan to work in an EIU direction. But given the complicated nature of cross-strait relations, one cannot be over-optimistic and must anticipate continued to and fro maneuvering in Beijing's Taiwan policy. One thing is clear, however: The danger of an all-out war across the Taiwan Strait has been significantly reduced since spring 2005.

22. Clay Chandler, "Taiwan Looks to Boost Mainland Trade," *Washington Post*, August 28, 2001.

23. Jason Dean, "Collateral Damage," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 29, 2004, p. 32.

24. For a detailed analysis of the evolution of China's policy toward Taiwan, see Quansheng Zhao, "Beijing's Dilemma with Taiwan: War or Peace?" *The Pacific Review*, vol. 18, No. 2 (June, 2005), pp. 217-42.

25. "Direct China-Taiwan Flights Start," BBC News, online at [http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/\(2-23-05\)](http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/(2-23-05)).

In order to better understand this pendulum, one needs to analyze both hard- and soft-line views on national interest within the Beijing leadership.²⁶ A hard-liner tends to believe that the DPP government represents a clear trend toward TIW. There are general and genuine worries in Beijing that the likelihood of Taiwan's pursuit of independence may increase substantially under the new DPP regime. This deep suspicion has been strengthened by a series of official actions in Taiwan to emphasize its new identity, such as the proposal to rename Taiwan's offices abroad "Taiwan Representative Offices" from the name "Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Offices,"²⁷ printing "issued in Taiwan" on its citizens' passports, and replacing the old emblem for the government spokesman's office (which included the map of China) with a new one. Some Beijing observers view these actions as incremental steps along the line of TIW that can only be stopped, according to hard-liners, by non-peaceful means. The recommendation therefore is *xiepo*—meaning to rely on military strength to force a change—in order to force Taiwan to stop its drift toward *Taidu*. From this perspective, military takeover of Taiwan is seen as a more likely approach and outcome, even at the risk of U.S. intervention.

Along this line of consideration, PLA military regions such as Nanjing and Guangzhou have always been prepared for military action against Taiwan. Since the early 1990s, the PRC has deployed hundreds of missiles and advanced aircraft aimed at Taiwan. The PLA has conducted increasingly sophisticated military exercises in preparation for cross-strait fighting. The largest of these took place in the spring of 1996, and created a new round of military crises in the Taiwan Strait. Taipei has been warned repeatedly that Beijing is losing patience.²⁸ There can be

26. This impression is based primarily on the author's participation in a number of international conferences held in the PRC between 2002 and 2005, during which the author had opportunities to discuss Taiwan with high-ranking government officials. In this article, names of these officials and scholars will be kept confidential. My knowledge of official lines on both sides of the Taiwan Strait has also been strengthened by my experience as an observer of presidential elections in Taiwan in 2000 and 2004.

27. "China Briefing," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 7, 2002, p. 21.

28. Reuters, "China Seen as Eager for Taiwan," *International Herald Tribune*,

no doubt that Chen Shui-bian's "one country, each side" talk in 2002 has further enhanced the hard-liners' position and increased the military risks in cross-strait relations. Chen's actions during the 2004 presidential campaign, such as calling for a referendum demanding that China withdraw its missiles, proposing the creation of a new constitutional document by 2006, and enacting the new document by 2008,²⁹ have all sent alarming signals to the hard-liners in Beijing.

In contrast, soft-liners generally believe that sufficient pressure has been placed on Taiwan, including the military means indicated in the defense white paper of February 2000, to ensure that Taipei is unlikely to make an official declaration of *Taidu*. Therefore, the PRC should emphasize EIU and avoid making military threats toward Taiwan. In this way, China's modernization drive will continue and economic development, particularly along the East Coast, will not be damaged. Soft-liners tend to believe that the mainstream DPP leadership, even Chen Shui-bian himself, may have to modify its radical positions and move toward the center. To be sure, soft-liners also tend to believe that China's national sovereignty is the major principle at stake, and consequently, China would use military force if that sovereignty were violated. However, they also sound a note of caution and emphasize the importance of first engaging Taiwan peacefully.

The Co-Management Approach

On a theoretical level, cooperation among states in international relations, such as the co-management of North Korea or Taiwan, requires three basic elements. First, there must exist a coalition of willing nations. Robert Keohane and Henry Kissinger both emphasize that willing countries must have overlapping national interests such that it is mutually beneficial for all to engage in cooperative effort.³⁰ Second, there must be incentives to

overcome differences in interests between countries, since cooperation is hard to maintain.³¹ Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer both establish that while overlapping national interests may assist in the establishment of cooperation, without strong incentives to continue, divergent or competing interests among members will probably cause countries to break off cooperation. In the cases of North Korea and Taiwan, the strongest incentive is that a failure to contain either situation could result in war.

Third, Robert Keohane and Stephen Krasner show that mechanisms and institutions must be established to act as vehicles to facilitate co-management among major powers.³² In the Korea case, the Six Party Talks serve this function in an institutional fashion. In the Taiwan case, visits by top leaders and the annual strategic dialogue established in 2005 demonstrate an implicit understanding but less formalized institutionalization.

The Korea Policy Case

China's policy toward Korea has been a case of moving from a bilateral approach to a multilateral approach. During the cold war and the first year of the post-cold war era, China had maintained its traditional bilateral approach with regard to Korea, conducting separate talks with Tokyo, Pyongyang, and Washington. In the past few years, however, Beijing's position has moved toward a multilateral approach to co-manage the issues related to the Korean peninsula. This change coincided with a major shift in U.S. foreign-policy priorities dating from the 9/11 attacks, which necessitated building a global anti-terrorist coalition.

Washington's perception of Beijing gradually shifted from that of a rival and competitor to a cooperative partner. Further, the attention on North Korea intensified with the revelation of North Korea's nuclear-weapon plans. Bush labeled North Korea a member of an "axis of evil," providing a strong basis for

July 24, 2002.

28. "Chen Chases Constitutional Change," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 15, 2004, p. 10.

30. See Robert Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1989), p. 138, and Henry Kissinger, *Does America*

Need a Foreign Policy? (New York: Touchstone, 2001), p. 152-53.

31. See Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979), p. 106, and John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), p. 373.

32. See Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 244, and Stephen Krasner, *Problematic Sovereignty* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), p. 182.

increased cooperation between Beijing and Washington. During the same period, China's relations with Taiwan deteriorated, partially because the independence-oriented DPP moved into power. In order to get help from Washington to curtail this movement toward independence, Beijing must show its own gestures of goodwill on the Korean front.

Finally, there has been a movement toward East Asian community building, starting with economic initiatives, including ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3, and a number of forthcoming free trade agreements. Increased discussions of the security dimension have brought some unprecedented possibilities to the table regarding a regional security framework that would include all the major powers as well as South Korea. This mood of coordination on the security front has also provided a foundation for China's shift of foreign policy toward the Korean peninsula, mainly from a passive role to a more active position.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, China has developed a new line of thinking regarding its security framework known as a "new security concept." This notion was elaborated by then-Vice Foreign Minister Wang Yi as a "comprehensive, common, and cooperative" security framework.³³ In implementing this new idea, China emphasizes gentler and friendlier relations with its neighboring countries, as well as more agreeable policies on multilateral security arrangements in the region.

In August 2003, a multilateral arrangement for discussion of the North Korean nuclear issue materialized in the form of the Six Party Talks between China, the United States, Japan, Russia, and the two Koreas. By the end of 2005 five different rounds of talks had been hosted by the Chinese in Beijing. Pyongyang reluctantly accepted this multilateral approach out of necessity. In order to understand Beijing's policy directions, we must examine the four factors that influenced its decision to host the talks. First, China's foreign-policy priority continued to be ensuring a stable and peaceful international environment so that it might concentrate on economic modernization. A nuclear North Korea would not be conducive to this development but would almost inevitably stimulate a new arms race in Northeast Asia, prompting both South

33. Michael Vatikiotis and Murray Hiebert, "How China is Building an Empire," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 20, 2003, pp. 30-33.

Korea and Japan to consider their own nuclear options. With Sino-Japanese relations at a low, Beijing definitely did not want to see Japan move in this direction. Second, China wanted to counterbalance U.S. unilateralism in international affairs. Third, Beijing has its own national interests and foreign-policy headaches around the issue of Taiwan, which requires close coordination between China and the United States in order to curb a possible shift in Washington's Taiwan policy. Fourth, the highly visible Six Party Talks increase China's international standing. Beijing can credibly portray itself as a responsible major power that can take the lead in handling difficult international issues.

It is believed that Beijing does have a certain degree of influence on Pyongyang, as demonstrated in the Six Party Talks. On the other hand, however, one must recognize the limits of Beijing's influence over Pyongyang. North Korea safeguards its independent foreign policy and autonomous decision making. One may even suspect that North Korea has enjoyed using the nuclear issue as a bargaining chip to play with its long-time rival, the United States. Furthermore, increasing trends of nationalist sentiment in North Korea have also counterbalanced China's potential influence. Beijing is thus keenly aware of its limitations and behaves cautiously. For example, in 2004 Beijing leadership was pressured by Pyongyang to shut down an influential policy-oriented journal, *Zhanlue yu guanli* [*Strategy and Management*], after the magazine published an article highly critical of the North Korean regime that included the suggestion that China should adopt a more balanced policy toward North Korea.³⁴

Common Ground as a Basis for Co-Management

There is much common ground between Beijing and other powers regarding the North Korean nuclear crisis that has made co-management possible. First, all powers would prefer a peaceful and stable international environment in their own country's national interest; they do not want to see a military confrontation on the Korean peninsula. There has long been consensus that they oppose nuclear proliferation in general and prefer a

34. John J. Tkacik, Jr., "China's 'S & M' Journal Goes Too Far on Korea," *Asia Times*, September 2, 2004, online at www.asiatimes.com.

nuclear-free Korean peninsula in particular, putting stability and peace as all the parties' top policy choices. China has certainly been in line with this consensus in the Six Party Talks, since China's top priority is continued economic modernization, which requires a peaceful environment. Thus, China has conducted a highly visible and unprecedented shuttle diplomacy to ensure that North Korea comes to the negotiation table. Furthermore, of the two flashpoints in the Asia-Pacific, namely Taiwan and the Korean peninsula, the former is clearly more at the heart of China's core national interests. Therefore, the Chinese government would prefer to focus its energy and resources on a settlement of the Taiwan issue and not let a potential military confrontation on the Korean peninsula jeopardize its position regarding Taiwan as happened during the Korean War in the 1950s.

Second, China concurs on the regional security implications of a nuclear-armed North Korea. Even though the PRC may not feel its security is threatened, given the close relationship between Beijing and Pyongyang, it may nevertheless be concerned that a nuclear North Korea may cause Japan to develop nuclear weapons of its own. For Tokyo, on the other hand, it has genuine security concerns about a possible nuclear attack from North Korea, given the long hostile relationship between the two countries. Thus, for their own reasons, leaders in both Beijing and Tokyo do not want an arms race to begin on the Korean peninsula.

Third, all major players view the Six Party Talks as an excellent vehicle not only for increasing their international profile in the region but also for providing mechanisms to solve their individual problems by simultaneously conducting bilateral negotiations with Pyongyang as well. For example, right before the fifth round of Six Party Talks, Japan and North Korea conducted bilateral negotiations in Beijing on November 3-4, 2005, focusing on three key issues in bilateral relations: North Korea's abductions of Japanese citizens, nuclear missile and security issues, and historical problems. Both sides agreed to continue these bilateral negotiations with the ultimate goal of eventual diplomatic normalization.³⁵ At the same time, Beijing enhanced its ties to Pyongyang in a substantial way. During the Six Party Talks, China and North

35. *Asahi Shimbun*, November 5, 2005.

Korea conducted frequent visits, both at state and working levels. One instance of this occurred in late October 2005 when Hu Jintao visited Pyongyang in preparation for the talks and held lengthy meetings with Kim Jong Il.³⁶ Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda openly praised this visit, saying "We believe there will be a good impact" on the forthcoming Six Party Talks.³⁷ In turn, Kim Jong Il visited China in January 2006, traveling not just to Beijing but also to cities in southern China. This trip is believed to have been made in the name of economic reform and aid from China, as well as in preparation for the next round of the Six Party Talks.³⁸

Fourth, all powers in the region have recognized the special stabilizing role of the United States in the Asia-Pacific. Because of this, they are willing to cooperate with Washington, albeit to different degrees. In other words, no country wants to challenge the U.S. position in the region or withhold cooperation, as long as the U.S. stance is in accordance with its own interests.

Furthermore, all participating parties have clearly recognized the ground-breaking nature of the Six Party Talks. It is the only multilateral security forum led by the United States and China, and it may evolve into a new security framework (which will be discussed in detail later). Therefore, it is only natural that other players, such as Japan and Russia, have also had a positive attitude toward this new framework. In virtually all opening statements from the Japanese government, for example, Japan's attitude has been very positive. After the three-day talks of the fifth round in November 2005, Japanese delegation leader Kenichiro Sasae spoke highly of the statement issued by the Chinese delegation leader who also served as chairman as "taking into account all parties' interests."³⁹

36. During this visit President Hu also visited a new Chinese-financed glass factory in Pyongyang. See Anthony Faiola, "N. Korea Gains Aid Despite Arms Standoff," *Washington Post*, November 16, 2005.

37. "Japan Expects Hu's Pyongyang Visit to Move Nuclear Talks Forward," *Agence France Presse* (English), October 21, 2005.

38. "Kim's China Visit a 'Detour' Around US Sanctions Experts," *Global News Wire*, January 19, 2006.

39. "Japan Delegation Head Praises Six-Way Talks Statement," *British Broadcasting Corporation*, November 11, 2005.

Different Concerns to be Coordinated

Although consensus and mutual interests have made co-management possible, it is important also to examine the areas where interests and concerns differ. First of all, China and the United States take different positions on the option of regime change in Pyongyang. The hard-liners in Washington, particularly within the Pentagon, have long believed that the ultimate way to solve the North Korean problem is to facilitate regime change, as U.S. military forces did in Iraq (although the war option with North Korea has been constantly cautioned). Beijing, however, has made it clear that it does not favor a quick regime change, which may lead to the total collapse of the Pyongyang government. Tokyo is more or less in agreement with Washington, although their rhetoric may differ.

Second, Beijing has its own security concerns over the possible collapse of the regime in North Korea, which may cause a massive influx of refugees across the border into China. The refugee issue has already become a burden for the Chinese. Due to the widespread famine in North Korea that began in the late 1990s, North Koreans have been crossing illegally into China in the hopes of escaping the famine.⁴⁰ According to the Seoul-based humanitarian group, Good Friends, the estimated number of North Korean "food refugees" in China had reached 300,000 by 1999; a number at odds with the official estimate of 1,500.⁴¹ China does not want this situation to deteriorate further, as would happen in the wake of a regime collapse. Another undesirable consequence in this scenario would be that a quick collapse of the Kim Jong Il regime would bring U.S. military forces up to the Yalu River at the Sino-North Korean border.

Japan has its own grievances with North Korea, namely the issue of North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens over the past few decades. This has caused outrage in Japanese society

and made a hard-line policy toward Pyongyang quite popular. Japanese leaders and diplomats have repeatedly raised this issue whenever they have an opportunity to meet with representatives from North Korea, both within and outside the negotiation tables of the Six Party Talks. Obviously, this abduction issue has no direct linkage with Chinese interests.

Third, China and the United States differ in their policy preferences, China preferring to rely more on "carrots," and the U.S. favoring the use of "sticks." Beijing has advocated a more patient policy with Pyongyang, providing more incentives for North Korea to change its policy. Tokyo, in contrast, would not oppose a harsher policy, including economic sanctions on North Korea.

Fourth, it is obvious that Beijing and Washington/Tokyo carry different weight in terms of their political and economic influence over Pyongyang. In addition to being a long-time ally with relations rooted in the Korean War, China enjoys considerable economic leverage over North Korea. As a chief provider of energy and food, China is able to use economic means to indicate its policy preferences, as mentioned earlier. The United States and Japan, on the other hand, have time and time again been an easy scapegoat for Pyongyang's propaganda. Whenever there is something that requires pinning blame, the United States and Japan are ready targets.

Despite the above mentioned differences, there is every reason to believe that the common interests between China and other powers will prevail and the four factors behind China's decision to host the Six Party Talks will hold. There remain enough incentives for all involved parties to keep the Six Party Talks operating, at least for the foreseeable future, and to be optimistic that the talks may produce some positive results.

Coordination Mechanisms

Naturally, there is frequent coordination among the six parties. As one can imagine, the Six Party Talks, even in a technical sense, are not easy; they require interpreters for five languages—Chinese, English, Korean, Russian, and Japanese. But it is perhaps even more difficult to coordinate among different positions and concerns. Fortunately, the common ground is large enough

40. Kim Ji-ho, "N.K. 'Food Refugees' in Northern China Suffer Abuses Without Legal Protection," *Korea Herald* (Seoul), September 7, 1999, online at www.koreaherald.co.kr/news/1999/09/_11/19990907_1140.htm.

41. "Human Rights of N.K. Refugees," *Korea Herald*, September 6, 1999, online at www.koreaherald.co.kr/news/1999/09/_03/19990906_0318.htm.

that the Chinese have been able to coordinate with and include all parties in different ways.

There are frequent gatherings and discussions among leaders from the five countries regarding their policies toward North Korea. In addition to periodic high-level state visits, these countries' leaders have met from time to time in international settings, such as the annual meetings of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and ASEAN+3. The issue of North Korean nuclear crisis management was one of the topics discussed at such meetings. In addition, leading politicians and leaders other than heads of state have visited each other, and taken these opportunities to discuss the issue of North Korea.

China has fully utilized its shuttle diplomacy to coordinate different parties' positions. China's envoys paid periodic visits to other capitals in order to brief their counterparts and to make preparations. China has also opened some new diplomatic channels to discuss issues of concern. In early 2005, for example, China proposed to set up strategic dialogue between Beijing and Tokyo at the deputy foreign minister level.⁴² General security issues, including North Korea, will be among the major points discussed. Frequent informational exchanges through diplomatic channels have taken place, primarily between the American, Korean, Russian, and Japanese embassies in Beijing and the Chinese embassies in other capitals. Frequent working discussions at the lower level of the government hierarchy have also taken place between diplomats from China and the other countries.

The Taiwan Policy Case

The nature of the North Korean problem is different from the issue of Taiwan. A co-management posture, however, can also be discerned in the interactions between Beijing and Washington (and to a lesser degree Tokyo). Nevertheless, the newly emerged co-management approach to the Taiwan issue between China and the United States is implicit at best, far from the explicit style of the Six Party Talks on the North Korean nuclear crisis. One should bear this in mind when analyzing the Taiwan policy case.

The issue of Taiwan itself is the product of a combination of factors, including domestic rivalry (the civil war of 1946-1949 between the CCP and the KMT), the intervention of external powers, and changing international relations in the Asia-Pacific region. The dynamics of the international environment frequently and significantly affect Beijing's policy considerations toward Taiwan.

Beijing has long considered the Taiwan issue as its own internal affair from both the history-embedded perspective and the national interest-driven approach. China, therefore, is very attentive to any signs of involvement by major powers on the issue of Taiwan. One can nevertheless observe some subtle changes in Beijing's approach that suggest Beijing has begun to move toward a co-management approach with Washington at the beginning of this century.

This move is the result of four factors. First, the long separation between the mainland and Taiwan, and more importantly, the government change in 2000 from the KMT to the DPP, enormously enhanced the likelihood for Taiwan to pursue independence. Beijing's influence (not to mention control) over Taiwan's future direction significantly declined. Second, China has had to acknowledge that involvement by the United States in regard to Taiwan is part of the "historical legacy" of the issue. It is clear that while Taiwan's separation from the mainland could not continue without the commitment and defense of the United States, China is nevertheless not yet in a position to compete with the U.S. military. This leads to the third point, which is that Taiwan's near-total dependence on the United States for its defense has become clearer on the island and has considerably increased the influence of Washington on Taipei. Last but not least, with the DPP government continuing to push the envelope for its independence and with the rise of nationalism on the mainland, a fatal clash between the two seems to loom large. Given the commitment Washington has under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, this escalation may lead to military confrontation between China and the United States. The increasing likelihood of this scenario is a nightmare both Beijing and Washington wish to avoid for obvious reasons. Thus China and the United States have gradually come to an implicit agreement to co-manage the development of the Taiwan Strait so that the most unde-

42. *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), February 8, 2005.

sirable outcome, namely war, can be effectively prevented.

The possibility of a war scenario over the Taiwan Strait between the two powers drew world attention in 2004, during the March presidential elections in Taiwan and summer PLA military exercises around the Taiwan Strait. The PLA conducted military drills on Dongshan Island on the western edge of the Taiwan Strait, involving about 18,000 troops. The purpose of these exercises was to demonstrate China's air and sea superiority over Taiwan.⁴³ On the other side of the Taiwan Strait was an annual Hanguang drill. Taiwan's air force tested emergency take-offs and landings of their Mirage 2000 fighter jets on highways. The United States did not sit idly by; it launched "Summer Pulse 04," the biggest exercise in naval history—although the main purpose of the deployment of seven aircraft carrier strike groups from mid-July to August of 2004⁴⁴ was to enhance global coordination among U.S. naval forces, the Taiwan Strait was clearly a target of the exercise. During the same period, the Washington-based National Defense University performed a war game titled "Dragon's Thunder." This war game targeted a potential PLA attack on Taiwan and was attended by U.S. civilian and military leaders, as well as fourteen congressmen.⁴⁵ The unprecedented U.S. naval exercise is believed to serve as a part of the strategy of extended deterrence to forestall a Chinese invasion of Taiwan.⁴⁶

The first obvious signs of willingness to co-manage the Taiwan Strait came in December 2003 when Premier Wen Jiabao met with President George W. Bush in Washington. Bush made a clear statement of the U.S. position on the Taiwan issue: "We oppose any unilateral decision, by either China or Taiwan, to change the status quo of Taiwan's relationship with the mainland."⁴⁷ This

43. "Military Exercises in the Taiwan Strait," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 29, 2004, p. 26. Also see Yu Bin, "All Still Quiet Across the Taiwan Strait, but for How Long?" *PacNet*, No. 33, July 22, 2004.

44. "Seven Carrier Strike Groups Underway for Exercise 'Summer Pulse 04,'" Special Release from the Department of Defense, June 3, 2004. Also see *World Journal*, July 22, 2004.

45. *World Journal*, July 16, 2004.

46. See Steve Chan, "Extended Deterrence in the Taiwan Strait," *World Affairs*, vol. 166, No. 2 (Fall, 2003), pp. 109-25.

47. Susan Lawrence and Jason Dean, "A New Threat," *Far Eastern Economic*

referred to Chen Shui-bian's call for an unprecedented referendum—asking voters to demand that China remove its missiles—on the day of the 2004 presidential election.⁴⁸ Bush, for the first time, rebuked Chen's referendum action as a move that would change the status quo. At the same time, he warned Beijing that the United States would intervene if the mainland attacks Taiwan. Several days later Hu Jintao, in a telephone conversation with Bush, made it clear that "China would not tolerate the island's independence."⁴⁹

The other clear official signal from Washington came in October 2004, when then U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell stated: "Those who speak out for independence in Taiwan will find no support from the United States." Powell made the U.S. position even clearer by further saying that "Taiwan is not independent, it does not enjoy sovereignty as a nation and the two sides should improve dialogue" and "move forward to that day when we will see a peaceful unification."⁵⁰ This view reflects a fresh look at the scenarios across the Taiwan Strait by advocating a detached policy toward Taiwan.

In the same period, the Japanese government also sent messages to Taipei expressing strong concern about developments on the island and urging Taiwan not to move toward independence.⁵¹ In the United States, these events have been referred to as "dangerous games across the Taiwan Strait" and have further demonstrated that the Taiwan Strait is one of the two most dangerous flashpoints in the Asia-Pacific region.⁵² Washington's

Review, December 18, 2003, pp. 16-18.

48. After Bush's criticism, Chen Shui-bian revised the questions for his proposed referendum. The new version asks whether Taiwan should buy more advanced weapons if China refuses to withdrawal its missiles, and whether the island should try to open talks with Beijing. Beijing rebuked both proposals as provocative. See Philip P. Pan, "China Rebukes Taiwan's Leader on New Plans for Referendum," *Washington Post*, January 20, 2003.

49. Philip P. Pan, "China Thanks Bush for Taiwan Stance," *Washington Post*, December 22, 2003.

50. See Colin L. Powell, "Interview with Mike Chinoy of CNN International TV" and "Interview with Anthony Yuen of Phoenix TV," October 25, 2004. Online at www.state.gov/secretary/rm/37366pf.htm.

51. *Shijie ribao*, January 1, 2004.

52. Andrew Peterson, "Dangerous Games across the Taiwan Strait," *The*

clear statement and its willingness to co-manage with Beijing over the Taiwan Strait has exerted enormous impact on Taipei and effectively curbed the island's independence campaign.

It was a huge step for the United States to come to this implicit co-management with China. Indeed, Beijing has long regarded the United States as a major obstacle to its goal of reunification with Taiwan. This view can be traced back to the Chinese civil war, when the United States supported the Chiang Kai-shek regime and, at the cessation of the Korean War in the early 1950s, signed a Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan that effectively prevented the PRC from taking over the island. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, both Beijing and Washington were willing to normalize their relations due primarily to their mutual concern about the threat from the Soviet Union. Richard Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972 spotlighted the two countries' rapprochement, although seven years would pass before the PRC and the United States completed their normalization process in 1979.⁵³

While Washington has recognized Beijing officially and broken off official relations with Taipei, there are two issues that Beijing still views as unwarranted "intervention in internal affairs." First, the United States continues to sell arms to Taiwan despite the August 17, 1982 Shanghai Communiqué, which stipulates that the United States should reduce its arms sales to Taiwan both quantitatively and qualitatively. An example of this trend is the Bush administration's decision in spring 2004 to sell Taiwan a large amount of advanced arms. The other issue relates to the Taiwan Relations Act which, in addition to restricting the United States to non-official economic and cultural relations with Taiwan, requires a U.S. commitment to peaceful settlement of the Taiwan Strait conflict. Both actions, from Beijing's perspective, represent continued intervention in China's internal affairs.⁵⁴

Furthermore, President Bush did not withdraw his earlier comments that the United States will intervene in any future mili-

tary crisis around the Taiwan Strait. Beijing's decision makers and PLA leaders, therefore, have no illusion about U.S. intentions and have already figured the U.S. factor into their calculations of potential military actions. China's deep concern is that America's arming of Taiwan may in fact prolong Taiwan's separate status, thereby promoting its eventual independence. Beijing is even more worried that given the leading status of the United States in world politics, other nations may follow suit. Therefore, the Taiwan issue will continue to be a major controversy between China and the United States for some time to come.

However, the international environment has changed in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001. Notably, President Bush has modified his confrontational approach to China by including it in his counter-terrorist coalition. Also, Bush needs China's cooperation, particularly in regard to regional security issues, such as stemming proliferation of missile weaponry and promoting stability on the Korean peninsula. China's active contribution in solving the North Korean nuclear crisis and hosting the Six Party Talks have caused it to be viewed as a key and constructive player in Northeast Asian security issues.⁵⁵ China hopes that this kind of cooperative effort with the United States will lead to reciprocal good faith efforts. In particular, China hopes that by living up to Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick's appeal to China to become a "responsible stakeholder" in the international community, Washington will then reward Beijing by complying more with the PRC's effort to solve the Taiwan issue based on the one-China principle.⁵⁶

When it comes to policy analysis, the bottom line is the calculation of cost and the price that each party is willing to pay. Beijing is well aware of the potential damage to the mainland, including its top priority, economic development, if there is cross-strait warfare. But careful calculation reveals that the loss may be even greater if Taiwan achieves permanent independence. China learned this lesson from the former Soviet Union. In Beijing's understanding, the collapse of the former Soviet Union began

Washington Quarterly, vol. 27, No. 2 (Spring, 2004), pp. 23-41.

53. For an excellent historical account of U.S. policy toward Taiwan, see Richard C. Bush, *At Cross Purposes: U.S.-Taiwan Relations Since 1942* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2004).

54. See Alan Romberg, *Rein In at the Brink of the Precipice: American Policy Toward Taiwan and U.S.-PRC Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Henry L. Stimson Center, 2003).

55. Murray Hiebert and Susan V. Lawrence, "China Talks on Korea," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 1, 2003, pp. 18-19.

56. Robert Zoellick, "Whither China: From Membership to Responsibility?" Issued by the U.S. Department of State, September 21, 2005.

with the independence status achieved by three small Baltic States. Beijing is concerned that Taiwan's independence will not only remove the regime's legitimacy in the eyes of the Chinese people, but may also serve as a catalyst for China's other independence-seeking regions, particularly its minority ethnic-group regions, such as Tibet, Xinjiang, and inner Mongolia.

Therefore, many people in Beijing believe that Taiwan's independence could be more debilitating than potential war damage. This has prompted clear calls from hard-liners, particularly military groups, that China fight against Taiwanese independence to the end. They make it clear that they are willing to pay the price and undertake sacrifices, including possible sabotage of the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 or the Shanghai World Trade Fair in 2010, the loss of twenty years of economic development, huge damage to major coastal cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, as well as U.S.-led military intervention and Western economic sanctions.⁵⁷ Despite soft-liners' argument for continuation of the EIU strategy, it seems that the hard-liners have the upper hand as China gradually makes ready for a military showdown in the preparation for TIW.

If Beijing pursues a military option under TIW circumstances, as analyzed above, there are a number of options for its military strategies. If Beijing has such capacity, it may prefer to swiftly occupy the island and control the situation in a time short enough to prevent the U.S. military from reacting. This kind of decisive military victory is very much dependent upon Beijing's overall military capacity, which many observers do not consider capable of a swift occupation. In any case, a quick military victory would leave the remaining issues basically political and economic in nature. Beijing's other option is to execute small-scope military operations, on and off for weeks, months, or even years—something like the ongoing confrontation between Israel and its Arab neighbors. This kind of military action will have a disastrous impact on the economies of both sides, but the damage will be much more critical to Taiwan, considering its relatively small size and geographic location as an island.

As for Taiwan, there is a tough-minded core leadership

57. The deputy minister of China's Taiwan Affairs Office, Wang Zaixi, made a similar statement on July 28, 2004; see *World Journal*, July 29, 2004.

group, particularly within the DPP regime. These independence fundamentalists are willing to pay any price to achieve independence, even a war with the mainland. Despite this group, there is, overall, a substantial majority of people who prefer to maintain the status quo and not move toward open independence. By this calculation, this majority realizes that no matter what status they may achieve in the future, they will still have to deal with Beijing. This is not only determined by historical, political, economic, and cultural ties across the Taiwan Strait, but also geographic proximity.

Militarily, Taipei has also made the necessary preparations for a possible attack from the mainland. Taiwan has developed its own advanced military forces, including capable air and naval forces. Nevertheless, Taiwan depends almost entirely upon support from the United States. Over the past half century, Taiwan's security has been largely provided by the United States and the U.S. Seventh Fleet has come to rescue Taiwan on a number of occasions. Logistically, Taiwan will need a large amount of supplies from the United States; therefore the United States has become virtually the only external and reliable protector of Taiwan's security. There have also been discussions within the island about adopting an offensive rather than defensive policy toward the mainland, namely to launch preemptive attacks on major cities along China's eastern coast. This kind of thinking has been largely dismissed and is considered a suicidal action, given China's retaliation capacity, including missiles and nuclear weapons. Although Beijing has pledged that it will not use nuclear weapons against Taiwan, they still serve as a deterrent to keep Taiwan from launching preemptive attacks.

To be sure, Washington will continue to deliberate its policies toward the PRC and Taiwan based on its own national interests. When a crucial juncture is reached, namely the possibility of fighting a war with China due to Taiwan's determination to seek its independence, a fundamental question that Washington will face is whether the United States is willing to pay the cost of a war with China to defend Taiwan. As James Hoge, the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, put it, the issue of Taiwan "could explode into large-scale warfare that would make the current Middle East confrontations seem like police operations."⁵⁸ Given U.S. military supremacy and

58. James F. Hoge, "A Global Power Shift in the Making," *Foreign Affairs*,

its lone-superpower status, it is almost certain that it would defeat China in such a confrontation. But how would the United States handle a defeated China under the circumstances if it supports the permanent separation of Taiwan? The consequence would be quite ominous, as Chalmers Johnson has stated in his discussion about the likely result of a U.S.-China military confrontation over Taiwan: "We will halt China's march away from communism and militarize its leadership, bankrupt ourselves, split Japan over whether to renew aggression against China and lose the war. We also will earn the lasting enmity of the most populous nation on Earth."⁵⁹

In order to avoid such ominous consequences, Washington may have to adjust its policy for the future. As Michael Swaine argues, the chances of a confrontation between China and the United States could be reduced further "if China's leaders believed that the option of ultimate reunification remained on the table for the foreseeable future." Washington, therefore, "must reassure the Chinese that their fear—independence for Taiwan—will not be realized without their consent."⁶⁰ In other words, it is necessary for the United States to send a clear signal to Taipei that if its leaders pursue independence, they should not expect military involvement from the United States. In his briefing at Capitol Hill in July 2004, Ted Carpenter of the Cato Institute severely criticized the United States for "following a dangerous policy of 'strategic ambiguity,'" and he advocated a decisive turnaround of American policy toward Taiwan. Carpenter stated that the "highest priority" for Washington is "to get America out of the line of fire."⁶¹ Another interesting example along this line comes from an *Atlantic Monthly* article published in December 2004. In this article Trevor Corson argues that if Taiwan insists on moving toward *de jure* independence, provoking a war with China, then "the U.S. should let Tai-

wan defend itself."⁶² One may expect continued and increased debates on America's China-Taiwan policy in Washington in the near future.

Washington also faces a dilemma. On the one hand, decision makers have recognized the enormous importance of U.S. relations with China. This relationship is crucial in terms not only of China's rising economic and military powers, but also its increasing influence in international affairs, such as China's constructive role in the Six Party Talks. China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and is a key factor in the stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region. All of this requires Washington to maintain a working, if not cordial, relationship with Beijing. For example, during the campaign leading to the U.S. presidential elections in November 2004, one could hear such calls as "don't break the engagement [with China]."⁶³ On the other hand, some elites in Washington may believe that the Taiwan issue can be used as a way of containing China's further development. Taiwan's democratization adds to its ideological value. Furthermore, the issue of Taiwan may serve as a test of the U.S. defense commitment to the region, given the importance of the Taiwan Relations Act and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Therefore, the United States has tried very hard to perform a balancing act across the Taiwan Strait. Washington warned Taipei to refrain from moving toward formal independence, thus unilaterally changing the status quo. At the same time, the United States also demonstrated its willingness to intervene, as shown by large arms sales to Taiwan and aircraft carrier maneuvers in 1996 and 2004, as mentioned earlier. The primary purpose for such military actions from the American perspective is to deter the use of force by China against Taiwan.⁶⁴

A war scenario will present a similar challenge to other players in the international community, particularly in the Asia-Pacific. Japan is perhaps the most important international player in this

vol. 83, No. 4 (July-August, 2004), p. 2.

59. Chalmers Johnson, "Into a Storm," *Los Angeles Times*, July 17, 2004.

60. Michael D. Swaine, "Trouble in Taiwan," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 83, No. 2 (March-April, 2004), pp. 39-49.

61. See the report from Beth R. Alexander, "U.S. 'In the Line of Fire' in China-Taiwan War," *United Press International*, July 19, 2004. For a Chinese view on the U.S. policy of 'strategic ambiguity,' see Pan Zhongqi, "US Taiwan Policy of Strategic Ambiguity," *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol. 12, No. 35 (May, 2003), pp. 387-407.

62. Trevor Corson, "Strait-jacket," *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 294 (December, 2004), pp. 54-58.

63. Elizabeth Economy, "Don't Break the Engagement," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 83, No. 3 (May-June, 2004), pp. 96-109.

64. See Robert S. Ross, "Navigating the Taiwan Strait," *International Security*, vol. 27, No. 2 (Fall, 2002), pp. 48-85.

“Taiwan Game,” after the United States. There are at least two key elements worthy of consideration. First, the historical legacy of Japan’s colonization of Taiwan from 1895 to 1945 places Japan in a fairly awkward position with China, as China always regards the issue of Taiwan as part of a 100-year period of humiliation prior to the 1949 establishment of the People’s Republic. On the other hand, this historical experience gives a sense of a “special relationship” between Japan and Taiwan, reflected in the sentiment of many Japanese who prefer a permanent separation between China and Taiwan.

Antagonistic political relations may promote hostile security policies. The best example in this regard is China’s Japan policy. Japan has long been cautious not to offend China by openly including Taiwan in its military alliance with the United States, not only because of Japan’s past colonial history, but also in recognition of Taiwan as a key national interest of China and a desire to refrain from antagonizing China. But beginning with a state visit by President Jiang Zemin to Japan in 1998, bilateral relations worsened significantly. On the one hand, Japan understands that China is unhappy with Japanese actions, but on the other hand, Japan may now feel that it has a free hand not to care so much about China’s reaction.

In February 2005, a “two plus two” meeting occurred in Washington between Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld from the United States, and Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka and Defense Agency Director Ono Yoshinori from Japan. The meeting issued a statement on February 19 indicating that the countries had produced a “revised U.S.-Japanese strategic understanding,” which for the first time included security in the area around Taiwan as a “common strategic objective.”⁶⁵ Actually, it is reported that an informal anti-Chinese submarine alliance among the United States, Japan, and Taiwan has been formed. This was revealed after the Chinese submarine intrusion into Japanese waters in late 2004.⁶⁶

65. Edward Cody, “China Protests U.S.-Japan Accord,” *Washington Post*, February 21, 2005, p. A24. Also see *Shijie ribao*, February 19, 2005.

66. *Qiao Bao* [China Press], “Anti-Submarine Alliance Among U.S., Japan, and Taiwan Triangle Against PLA,” December 3, 2004.

The second key element has more to do with the current agenda, namely the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and its new guidelines as of 1996. These new guidelines practically spell out Japan’s participation in a military confrontation between China and the United States with regard to Taiwan. The nature of Japan’s participation is still unclear, as it may be strictly logistic or may include military combat as well. In either scenario, Japan’s participation in such military actions will almost certainly invite retaliation from China, which will put Japan’s major cities in great danger. Therefore, maintaining the status quo, namely the separation between the mainland and Taiwan with a relatively peaceful situation, is the scenario Japan would prefer the most. Nevertheless, as a number of scholars also argue, this presumption may still shift; for example, if Sino-U.S. relations spiral downward to a level of hostility similar to the EP-3 incident or if Sino-Japanese relations continue to deteriorate, then Taiwan’s strategic position may move up in the global calculations of the United States and Japan.⁶⁷

Other players may be in a more neutral position. The European Union will almost certainly not participate in a war scenario involving Taiwan. Actually, there have been major differences between the United States and the EU over the ban on arms sales to China. During Bush’s trip to Europe in February 2005, he expressed his deep concerns over the EU’s determination to lift the ban. He indicated that this decision would change the military balance across the Taiwan Strait and hinted that the EU might encounter retaliation from the United States over such a move. But Bush’s EU counterparts were reportedly unconvinced.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, should there be a military confrontation in the Taiwan Strait, the EU, while maintaining a neutral position, might condemn the war and join the Washington-led Western economic sanctions against Beijing.

Russia’s neutral position can also be expected, even though the country may continue to sell military equipment to China. The neutrality of South Korea has become increasingly apparent

67. Robert Sutter, “Recent Convergence in China-U.S. views—Rethinking U.S. Policy Options,” paper presented at an international conference on U.S. Taiwan Policy and the Dynamics of the Taipei-Beijing-Washington Triangle, American University, Washington, D.C., January 28, 2005.

68. *Shijie ribao*, February 23, 2005.

in the past few years as its interdependence with China has increased. In fact, after their meeting last January, Secretary of State Rice and South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon announced agreement on a policy of “strategic flexibility” for U.S. troops in South Korea. In a joint statement, South Korea stated that it “fully understands the rationale for the transformation of the US global military strategy, and respects the necessity for strategic flexibility of the US forces in the ROK,” whereas “the US respects the ROK position that it shall not be involved in a regional conflict in Northeast Asia against the will of the Korean people.”⁶⁹ This wording is yet another indication that South Korea may follow a strictly neutral position, despite its military alliance with the United States.⁷⁰

North Korea will remain a wildcard. Pyongyang will without doubt be on China’s side if such a military confrontation takes place. What is uncertain is how they will take the opportunity to gain from this event. In other words, it is unclear how China may utilize North Korea to deter Japan. The ten ASEAN countries are unlikely to help the United States attack China; rather, they are more likely to attempt to act as mediators between the two powers. By the same token, India, Pakistan, and the central Asian countries, which are China’s western and northern neighbors, will probably try to maintain neutral positions. Overall, it will be extremely hard for Washington to build an international coalition against China over the issue of Taiwan. Washington may have to take this into consideration in its policy deliberations and preparation for a possible war over Taiwan.

In sum, all these developments have become favorable conditions for Beijing and Washington to co-manage the potential Taiwan Strait crisis. The nature of this co-management is fragile, however, since the Taiwan case is still in its initial stages and is largely composed of implicit understandings rather than the explicit co-management style represented by the Six Party Talks.

69. “(2nd LD) Korea, US Agree on Strategic Agenda, USFK Deployment Flexibility,” *Global News Wire*, January 19, 2006.

70. For an analysis of South Korea’s dilemma over China, see Jae Ho Chung, “South Korea between Eagle and Dragon: Perceptual Ambivalence and Strategic Dilemma,” *Asian Survey*, vol. 41, No. 5 (September, 2001), pp. 777-96.

Beijing’s and Washington’s indirect arrangements over Taiwan have increased stability in the region, but the potential for serious conflict has not been totally removed.

Co-Management: A New Security Framework

The above analysis of China’s policy toward North Korea and Taiwan has presented a comprehensive picture of major domestic and international considerations facing Beijing. It has been argued that in addition to the traditional history-embedded and national-interest driven perspectives, China has moved toward a co-management approach in dealing with international crises—North Korea and Taiwan in particular—in the region. There are, of course, similarities and differences between the two areas. China’s changing approaches in these two hot spots have reflected the increasing confidence of Chinese foreign policy and its ascending influence in the international community.

It is crystal clear that both the North Korean and Taiwan issues are critical to China’s national interests. But in terms of priority order, Taiwan is more of a core concern. Furthermore, both issues are closely related to China’s overall foreign policy strategies. Beijing, for example, is keenly aware of the key role played by the United States in dealing with these two hot spots. The PRC is expected to intensify its efforts to gain Washington’s forbearance so that the United States will not play a one-sided role in the cross-strait relationship. This effort, along with similar attempts to gain the understanding of other key countries (such as Japan) and international organizations (such as the United Nations), will remain an important focus of Chinese foreign policy in the future.

Taiwan’s centrality in Beijing’s national interests is obvious. The PRC is much more comfortable using a multilateral framework to deal with North Korea, and is more cautious with regard to Taiwan. To be sure, Beijing has made substantial efforts to mobilize international support for its Taiwan policy, but in terms of international co-management there are only implicit understandings between Beijing and Washington. There is no multilateral security framework yet with regard to the peaceful settlement of the Taiwan issue. Also, one should note that there have been opposing views regarding the co-management approach in

both Beijing and Washington. Because of their competing interests over Taiwan, the co-management approach is only a second best approach for all parties, but Beijing and Washington may reluctantly agree to it as the only practical way to avoid war.

Now we may ask what the implications are for international relations in the Asia-Pacific, including the effects on power relations and the future directions of security arrangements in the region. One may even wonder whether the settlement of these two hot spots may lead to a new regional security framework.

Although the Six Party Talks have experienced ups and downs since their inception in 2003, there are nevertheless optimistic opinions about their future. In the long run, the Six Party Talks may not only bring the parties concerned to the table to work together on a peaceful solution for the region; they may also present a move toward the institutionalization of a new security framework in the Asia-Pacific.

China's main concern is the United States. It is known that there are hard-liners and soft-liners within the U.S. foreign policy apparatus.⁷¹ In Washington, there have been advocates of a "soft landing" in Korea—a gradual process of unification in which neither side is swallowed up by the other and the United States helps North Korea to achieve a China-style economic reform.⁷² Beijing has deep suspicions about the role played by the United States, however. It does not believe that the United States truly wants to solve the Korean problem.⁷³ But, as a China specialist pointed out, "China cannot change the U.S. forward deployment or its web of alliances in Asia in the foreseeable future. Working with the U.S. has become not a choice but a necessity."⁷⁴ Consequently, the two countries must further develop confidence-building mea-

sures and coordinate routine consultations over the issue of Korea. These mechanisms are extremely important to both China and the United States. The same considerations can be applied to the relationship between China and Japan.

It has been speculated that Beijing may use its advantageous position as host of the Six Party Talks as a bargaining chip in its relations with Tokyo. For example, it may appear less warm toward Tokyo's participation in the talks in order to push Japan's changing attitude toward China. This speculation has not yet materialized due to the following three reasons.

First, it is indeed in the common interest of China and Japan to solve this issue, since North Korea is not only Japan's problem but also China's. China needs Japan's cooperation. Second, the Six Party Talks themselves are still ad hoc in nature and full institutionalization is pending. Third, the main powers that provide leadership in the Six Party Talks are China and the United States, whereas Japan has only played a marginal role. Therefore, for the time being, there is not much China can do to use this issue as a bargaining chip with Japan. It nevertheless may serve as a vehicle to prevent Japan from playing an even greater role in this important international forum, particularly if the negotiations become more substantial.

North Korea and Taiwan are different problems, but there are linkages between the two hot spots, although the connections between the two are usually not mentioned. Beijing has recognized that its own national interests around the issue of Taiwan require close coordination with the United States (and, to a lesser degree, Japan) in order to curb a possible shift in its Taiwan policy. One incentive for China's cooperation on the North Korean nuclear issue is Beijing's desire to gain Washington's support on the Taiwan issue. Therefore, Beijing has moved from being a passive player to being an active one to demonstrate its cooperative goodwill to Washington. At the same time, however, Beijing has been cautious in using the North Korean issue as a bargaining chip to push the United States over Taiwan, as the two carry different weights in China's foreign policy calculations.⁷⁵

It is clear that a key factor confronting all regional conflicts in

71. For a detailed analysis and debate over U.S. foreign policy toward North Korea, see Victor D. Cha and David C. Kang, "The Debate over North Korea," *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 119, No. 2 (2004), pp. 229-54.

72. Selig Harrison, "Promoting a Soft Landing in Korea," *Foreign Policy*, No. 106 (Spring, 1997).

73. Yu Meihua, "Xin shiqi Me-Ri dui chaoxian bandao zhengce tedian jiqi zoushi," [The Korea policies of the United States, Japan, and Russia in the new era and future direction], *Contemporary International Relations* (Beijing), January 1997, p. 33.

74. Suisheng Zhao, "China's Periphery Policy and Its Asian Neighbors," *Security Dialogue*, vol. 30, No. 3 (September, 1999), p. 345.

75. Conversation with Chinese Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Zhou Wenzhong, Beijing, March 9, 2005.

the Asia-Pacific is how to manage the relationship between the United States and China. China, as a rising power, is quite different from the United States, which may be considered a status-quo power, enjoying many well-developed bilateral security arrangements. With a new approach to its security environment, Beijing is increasingly inclined to work within multilateral security frameworks. From the Chinese perspective, the Six Party Talks on the North Korean nuclear crisis may develop into mechanisms for dealing with Northeast Asian security issues, just as the ASEAN Regional Forum deals with Southeast Asian security issues and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization tackles Central Asian security issues. On that latter front, Beijing has also worked with India and Pakistan to improve relations. Indeed, China and India held their first joint naval exercises in November 2003, involving two Indian warships and a Chinese tanker and frigate off Shanghai. A month earlier, similar naval exercises involving China and Pakistan were held.⁷⁶ More recently, in 2005 China and India announced plans to join forces when it comes to energy needs; their groundbreaking partnership would consist of a broad range of measures including joint-venture bids, farm-ins and farm-outs, lease-sharing, and infrastructure financing projects.⁷⁷ China has also looked beyond the region, cultivating its relations with Europe. Bilateral trade with the European Union is on the rise, reaching levels that match those of China's other two major trading partners, Japan and the United States.⁷⁸

It is important to pay attention to a positive trend toward the institutional development of multilateralism in the region, including incentives and other opportunities. For example, when facing the international crisis of September 11, a natural development in Washington was to establish a global anti-terrorist network. This provided an opportunity for other players to encourage multilateralism and reduce the incentives for U.S. unilateralism. Major players may also wish to emphasize overlapping

76. "China Briefing," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 22, 2003, p. 29.

77. Diane Francis, "China, India in Innovative Power Play," *Financial Post*, September 8, 2005.

78. David Murphy, "It's More Than Love," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 12, 2004, pp. 26-29.

interests as a base for cooperation, rather than emphasize conflicting interests. As demonstrated by post-EP 3 China-U.S. relations, the two great powers have placed their common strategic interest above concrete disputes. This has prompted unanticipated close cooperation in a multilateral direction, as in the case of the Six Party Talks. It has also highlighted the significance of the issue of leadership. It is crucial for the sensible development of a regional multilateral framework to include great powers in leadership roles. Although there are still no tangible results, the very fact that the major powers have come together to deal with the North Korean crisis is itself a success in terms of providing a base for a multilateral security framework. The relative success of this framework has further demonstrated the importance of cooperation among the great powers. The next step is to continue the institution-building process, which will be essential if any stable security framework is to develop.

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