NEW PERSPECTIVES in foreign policy

A JOURNAL WRITTEN BY AND FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
FALL 2017 | ISSUE 14

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PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP HAS APPOINTED AN UNPRECEDENTED number of former military officers to top political posts in his first months in office. His appointments for secretary of defense, secretary of homeland security, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and director of national intelligence have all worn the uniform, while his national security adviser, H.R. McMaster, is an active duty three-star general. Such appointments have stoked fears that the administration is violating long-standing norms of civil-military relations in the United States. As David Graham wrote in The Atlantic, “too many military leaders, critics say, warp national priorities at best and slouch toward a junta at worse.”

These fears assume that civilian policymakers and military personnel operate in separate spheres: statesmen plan policy, and soldiers execute it. Such a relationship is ideal, proponents say, because military personnel lack the strategic perspective and interagency experience necessary to take on political advisory positions. However, this argument paints a simplified picture of the policymaking process, while also reducing the role of the military officer to that of a tactician. The civil-military “spheres” are intimately intertwined in a way that is often overlooked, and officers are, in fact, well-equipped to handle these overlapping responsibilities. Rather than shy away from these responsibilities, the military can better meet them by adopting a more meritocratic promotions system, promoting officers who are best suited to handle these responsibilities.

Military personnel have historically been involved in policymaking

The foreign policymaking process is a joint effort in two ways. First, it is common for presidents to appoint former military personnel to political positions. President Harry Truman appointed George Marshall, a general and chief of staff of the army, first as secretary of state and then as secretary of defense. Two of Ronald Reagan’s national security advisers, VAdm. John Poindexter and Gen. Colin Powell, were both active duty officers. Air Force Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft served as national security adviser under both Gerald Ford and George H. W. Bush, after holding lesser advisory positions while still in uniform. George H. W. Bush also appointed Lt. Gen. Douglas Lute, an active duty
general, to his policymaking team. More recently, President Barack Obama selected a former commandant of the Marine Corps as his national security adviser, and appointed Gen. John Allen to work on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. There Allen played a key part in the negotiations from 2013 to 2014 and spearheaded the development of solutions to Israeli security concerns. These appointments demonstrate that military faces in "civilian" spaces is nothing new.

Second, civil-military collaboration has long been institutionalized in the policymaking process. This became particularly pronounced with the passage of the National Security Act of 1947. The law created the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), National Security Council (NSC), and what soon became the Department of Defense (DoD). While the law subordinated the military to a civilian secretary of defense, it also streamlined the national security apparatus, officially incorporating military personnel into the foreign policy decisionmaking process. That generals were involved in decisionmaking at the operational and strategic levels is perhaps unsurprising. But the new process also cleared the way for the JCS and DoD to influence grand strategy and policy planning. One early example was NSC-68, which described a strategy to contain the Soviet Union and informed Cold War policy for decades. This foundational strategic document was drafted through a joint State Department, DoD, and NSC research process.

The policymaking power of the military was further institutionalized with the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. This formally removed the JCS from the military’s chain of command, effectively reaffirming their formal presidential advisory role. This change was intended to ensure that the JCS provide broad, objective advice to the president. The law effectively mitigated a primary concern regarding military influence in policymaking, namely the fear that individual services’ bureaucratic interests (i.e., relevancy, independence, budgetary power) might eclipse the security interests of the United States. The influence of the JCS varies with each president, but the law ensured that service chiefs would act as general advisers rather than as representatives of their respective services. Scholars Eliot A. Cohen and Janine Davidson have acknowledged this military influence in policymaking, referring to it as an “unequal dialogue.”

Officers do not see grand strategy only through a security lens

Some argue that the problem with military influence in policymaking is that officers tend to see foreign affairs purely through the security lens. That military personnel effectively lack a sufficient understanding of diplomatic and political tools, and are thus more inclined to rely on force to conduct statecraft. However, this characterization disregards the diverse
responsibilities of modern officers, which require a broad strategic perspective. Today’s complex threat environment already requires that officers understand and work with military, diplomatic, and political tools of statecraft. 

The military must continue to build an officer corps capable of meeting the demands of the modern threat environment and of their overlapping responsibilities.

Military personnel today experience unprecedented exposure to professionals in other agencies and organizations. Strategies in Iraq and Afghanistan incorporated a number of different civilian-military teams, such as the provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs). Bringing military personnel together with expert scholars and representatives from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the State Department, and other civilian agencies, PRTs were conceived to “extend the reach and enhance the legitimacy of the central government into the provinces of Afghanistan,” according to Army Counterinsurgency Field Manual 3-24.11 Other modern military undertakings, notably humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations such as during the 2014 Ebola response, show that most modern military missions require considerable civil-military collaboration. In reaction to this trend, the military has introduced efforts aimed at facilitating civil-military coordination and cultural competency like West Point’s Center for the Study of Civil-Military Relations (CSMR) and ROTC’s Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency (CULP) program. Further, State Department political advisers are now embedded in combatant commands, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and many civil servants are included at centers of professional military education, like the military war colleges. These efforts, along with officers’ personal experiences working on these missions, has greatly increased the military’s familiarity with other agencies, NGOs, and even academics, as well as officers’ understanding of grand strategy.12

An extension of this reality is that many military officers are often expected to play many roles besides “warrior.” This is exemplified in combatant commanders. Combatant commanders oversee all assets in their respective areas of operation, coordinating all military, diplomatic, intelligence, and even development assets in their commands. Thus, they must have an intimate understanding of the command’s political context, often playing a regional political or diplomatic role themselves. One well-known example is the military’s response to the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, Operation Unified Assistance. When disaster struck, the head of the U.S. Pacific Command, Adm.
Thomas Fargo, immediately began working with counterparts at the State Department and USAID to coordinate a response with the resources of host nations Indonesia and Thailand.  

Officers are also trained managers within a bureaucracy. In her critique of the appointment of James Mattis as secretary of defense, *War on the Rocks* author Erin Simpson wrote that “warriors rarely make good bureaucrats.” She explained that Mattis, like many officers, hates bureaucratic responsibilities such as managing a budget and meeting with politicians. But, as described above, officers are in fact well acquainted with interagency meetings and budget management. Many are responsible for millions of dollars in equipment even as junior officers. While military personnel do inevitably lack the congressional contacts of seasoned political operatives, an officer is no less likely to have such contacts as other siloed national security professionals, such as foreign service officers. In this way, the real question is whether positions such as secretary of defense are best filled by national security experts or political figures.

*The training of modern officers prepares them for policymaking roles*

The expectation that officers be prepared to work in a variety of roles within the national security establishment is evident in the curriculum at service academies, opportunities for post-graduate and mid-career training, and the culture of scholarship that is fostered by today’s services. Service academies have adopted a liberal arts curriculum. At West Point, for example, the curriculum is constructed with the intention of equipping students with the “knowledge and skills necessary for service and continued growth” as Army officers. Cadets are required to take courses across various disciplines, including international affairs, foreign languages, and writing, and students are encouraged to study abroad. The service academies now host prestigious conferences on foreign policymaking and national leadership, such as the Service Conference on U.S. Affairs at West Point, the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference, and the Naval Academy Leadership Conference. In this way, the academies provide an excellent foundation for national public service. Furthermore, these opportunities represent a commitment to developing officers as scholars of foreign affairs and grand strategy.

This training is also reinforced through post-graduate and mid-career opportunities. While officers have a wide variety of opportunities to learn tactical skills at schools such as Ranger School and Airborne School, they are also encouraged to develop their understanding of U.S. foreign policy, especially as they move from junior to senior officers. Between 2009 and 2010, the Navy funded more than 1,300 full-time master and doctorate degrees,
and each year the DoD sends a number of officers to fellowship programs at Washington-based think tanks and to special educational opportunities such as the Harvard National Security Fellows program or Olmstead Fellowship. In 2015, the DoD announced plans to push more senior military leaders into civilian graduate-degree programs in order to ensure that officers receive top-notch educations.

This top-down emphasis on shaping military officers to be strategic thinkers has been embraced and modeled by military personnel throughout the ranks. Soldiers and sailors regularly contribute to publications like Defense One, Small Wars Journal, and War on the Rocks. West Point boasts its own research center for combating terrorism, which produces a monthly publication on terrorism and political violence. Many senior military officers advise junior officers to practice reading and writing, the same advice given to other young professionals entering government. Such a culture is representative of the military’s efforts to develop officers as strategic thinkers, rather than solely as specialists in the execution of warfare.

*The military must do more to retain its top talent*

The military must continue to build an officer corps capable of meeting the demands of the modern threat environment and of their overlapping responsibilities. As discussed above, today’s officer must be ready to work closely alongside other governmental agencies, foreign governments, and nongovernmental organizations. This requires a refined understanding of international affairs and inter-organizational coordination, and a commitment to seeking innovative solutions to solve complex problems. While today’s military attracts and does equip officers with such skills, it is failing to benefit from its best talent, and much of that talent is choosing to leave the military.

Military personnel are unhappy with the promotions system, and they are leaving because of it. Surveys show that retention rates are closely tied to the military’s stifling personnel management system. When asked, veterans attribute their decision to leave to “frustration with military bureaucracy.” They say they would have stayed if the military was “more of a meritocracy,” according to a survey conducted by Tim Kane of The Atlantic. The current promotions system evaluates soldiers in a standard, black-box manner. It requires that each soldier reach certain career milestones, called designated key developmental assignments, on a standard timeline to be eligible for promotion, regardless of their individual experiences. For example, earning a graduate degree is effectively time “lost.” Thus, officers are incentivized to keep to the standard track. While this system aims to encourage meritocratic appointment by evaluating officers in standard, measurable ways, it also reduces the room for risk-taking and discourages nontraditional career paths.
and opportunities, such as the pursuit of a master's or PhD, or even unusual military assignments like a foreign area officer position (a diplomatic liaison). It is impossible to know how many promising officers have seen their careers stunted by this promotions system; but perhaps more disconcerting is the message that such a system sends: it is better to be risk-averse rather than be curious, inventive, or intellectual in the Army.

Even junior officers are well aware of such problems. One nationally top-ranked Army ROTC cadet says that he will join the reserves rather than going active duty next year for such reasons. The cadet, who serves as a battalion commander, maintains a 3.9 GPA, and is proficient in two languages, says that he plans to work in a government agency or think tank where his skills will be used. Emphasizing his fear of losing his language proficiency, he says, “If the Army valued the expertise that some cadets acquire in college [and] opened up civil affairs or foreign area officer roles to second lieutenants, I would definitely reconsider my decision to join the reserves.” This cadet has received more language and cultural training than most civil affairs and foreign area officers, and yet is unable to compete for such positions until reaching the rank of captain. It makes sense that the Army would require that officers have spent some time in active duty before applying to these specialty positions so that the individual has time to learn the ways of the Army. However, 5 to 10 years seems arbitrary, and leads talented individuals like the cadet described above to say goodbye to the Army even before joining.

Though military personnel are today already deeply involved in the policymaking process, there are potential pitfalls to this role. Political leaders must avoid relying too heavily on them for advice, and senior diplomats, aid workers, and academic experts can all provide alternative strategic perspectives. Likewise, there is a real danger in politicians using the military for electoral gain. Should politicians make promises to support the appointments of officers to top national security positions or otherwise support their careers, officers will face an incentive to make decisions based on that politician's agenda rather than the national interest. Officers should consider the political impact of their national security advice only insofar as the policy depends on favorable political conditions; for example, officers must assess whether the public would be amiable to a long war before engaging in one. That being said, the reality of today's complex threat environment and bureaucratic structure requires that officers be prepared to take on policymaking roles. To meet this challenge, the military must promote and nurture strategic thinking in the officer corps.

Caroline Bechtel is an intelligence officer in the U.S. Army and was a research intern with the Middle East Program at CSIS.
Endnotes

1 The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official position of the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.


3 John Kelly, initially appointed as secretary of homeland security, was appointed as the president’s chief of staff on July 28, 2017.


13 Ibid.

14 Simpson, “I Love Mattis but I Don’t Love Him as SECDEF.”

15 West Point Academic Curriculum.


19 Ibid.

20 Anonymous Army ROTC cadet, email message to cadet, October 2017.
The Nutritional Gains from Trade: Enhancement of Food Utilization from Trade in Genetically Modified Foods and Crops

Rachel Paige Casey

ENDING HUNGER, ACHIEVING GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY, AND IMPROVING NUTRITION by 2030 is an enormous challenge. Climate change, conflict, disease, soil degradation, and adverse agricultural policies all have the potential to slow such progress. Even today, the state of global food security is marked by ubiquitous food insecurity, with almost 750 million undernourished individuals and a significant share of children under 5 years of age underweight around the world.

Among the more controversial methods currently used to achieve food security is the cultivation of genetically modified (GM) foods and crops. While proponents of GM crops tout their lower production costs, higher yields, and improved nutritional value, critics allege that they may have an adverse effect on human health. Despite strong evidence against this critique, GM crops are subject to many legal restrictions throughout the world, including some outright bans. In May 2016, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine issued a report providing strong evidence in favor of GM foods and crops. Despite this publication and many others, resistance to genetic modification persists, even in countries with high levels of food insecurity where the technology would be of great benefit. Through a statistical analysis of countries with and without GM food import bans, this article demonstrates that such bans may have a negative effect on key indicators of food security in those countries.

Food security prevails when all individuals in a specified region have constant physical, economic, and social access to adequate, safe, and nutritious food. Conversely, food insecurity prevails when any individual lacks such access either due to insufficient availability, economic barriers, or social restrictions. Taken together, these two concepts illustrate the four dimensions of food security: access, availability, stabilization, and utilization.

Algeria, Bhutan, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Peru, Russia, and Venezuela all currently maintain import bans on GM foods and crops. Among this set of countries, all but Peru are net importers of food and agricultural products. Of the 188 countries ranked by the 2014 human development index (HDI), a general measure of national wellbeing, none of the seven countries were in the top quartile. All of the nations that maintain import bans exhibit relatively high levels of income inequality.
Table 1: Dimensions of Food Security

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<tr>
<th>FOOD SECURITY DIMENSION</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
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<td>ACCESS</td>
<td>The economic and physical ability to procure safe and nutritious food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVAILABILITY</td>
<td>The supply of safe and nutritious food, determined by domestic production, stock levels, and net trade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STABILIZATION</td>
<td>Constancy of the other three dimensions over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTILIZATION</td>
<td>The ability of the human body to consume and utilize nutrition from food.</td>
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For this analysis, four regression models measure the effects of GM food and crop import bans on each dimension of food security. Regression models assess statistical relationships between two or more variables, and provide a line of best fit through the data distribution to illustrate the connection between the dependent and independent variables. In this study, the dependent variable for each model is an indicator for each of the four dimensions of food security from Table 1, while the primary independent variable is the existence of an import ban on GM foods and crops, present in the seven aforementioned countries.

The first dimension of food security, access, is assessed using the prevalence of undernourishment, the proportion of a country’s population whose dietary consumption falls short of minimum energy intake levels. Availability is gauged by the average dietary energy supply. For stabilization, the domestic food price volatility index measures the changes in domestic food prices over time (a higher value indicates his volatility in food prices). Access to improved sanitation facilities, the indicator for utilization, enables people to practice good hygiene so that their bodies can consume food and function healthily.

Several controls included in the models account for differences in national income, HDI, a country’s classification as a least-developed country, and five governance indicators. These models employ cross-sectional data for 2014 and averages for the period between 2013 and 2015 in the cases of prevalence of undernourishment and average dietary energy supply. Figure 1 presents the four models analyzed in this article, including the dependent variables, independent variable, and controls.
Evidence from this analysis suggests that the existence of an import ban on genetically engineered foods and crops has a statistically significant impact on food utilization. This suggests a correlation between an import ban and a 9.63 percent reduction in the percentage of the population with access to improved sanitation facilities.

This result supports the idea that a ban would be detrimental to food security, at least with regard to food utilization.

Utilization requires individuals to have clean drinking water, sufficient sanitary facilities, and safe food preparation and storage. The correlation between GM food import bans and a significant loss in access to sanitation facilities corroborates the conclusion of the National Academies that GM foods are safe. Figure 2 shows the food utilization model line of best fit, along with the prediction values of the regression analysis using the access to improved sanitation facilities indicator.
Particular control variables showed statistically significant results as well. HDI demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with average dietary energy supply and access to improved sanitation facilities, respectively. Political stability and the absence of violence and terrorism, as well as the rule of law, were statistically significant for average dietary energy supply as well. Regulatory quality was statistically significant for domestic food price variability index.

Expanded academic research should be conducted on the effects of GM food labeling policies and GM crop cultivation restrictions on food security. This study lacked disaggregated trade data specific to the exchange of genetically modified foods and crops. Furthermore, this study could be improved by the creation of an index or composite estimate for each of the four dimensions of food security, to include a variety of sub-components for each.

Nonetheless, the results of this analysis highlight the importance of international trade in GM foods and crops on improving food security, especially in developing countries. Although a single study is insufficient to claim certainty, countries with GM bans and restrictions should consider relaxing the limitations placed on GM imports in order to better nourish their citizens. GM foods provide an opportunity not only to purchase more and higher quality food from abroad, but also to increase agricultural output domestically. This also presents a potential opportunity for the U.S.
development policy. The Department of Agriculture, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), and USAID should collaborate on research and initiatives to expand trade relationships, broaden markets for U.S. farmers, and improve global food security.

Rachel Paige Casey was a research intern with the Project on Prosperity and Development and the Project on U.S. Leadership in Development at CSIS.
Endnotes


3 Genetically modified foods and crops are developed via scientific techniques in biotechnology, such as artificially transplanting desirable plant traits into other sexually compatible (cisgenesis) or sexually incompatible plants (transgenesis). International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications, “Pocket K No. 1: Q and A about Genetically Modified Crops,” August 2017, http://www.isaaa.org/resources/publications/pocketk/1/.


7 Ibid.


13 Food and Agriculture Organization, “An Introduction to the Basic Concepts of Food Security,” EC-FAO Food Security Programme, 2008. Data for the prevalence of undernourishment and average dietary energy supply were collected as a three-year average covering 2013–2015, and the model equation is described as follows: Prevalence of Undernourishment (\(\%\)) = \(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{GMOBan} + \beta_2 \text{HDIndex} + \beta_3 \text{HDIRank} + \beta_4 \text{LDCC} + \beta_5 \text{GDPPc} + \beta_6 \text{GovEffectEst} + \beta_7 \text{PolStabVioTerEst} + \beta_8 \text{RegQualEst} + \beta_9 \text{RuleLawEst} + \epsilon\), where i = Country.

14 Ibid. The model equation is as follows: Average Dietary Energy Supply % (3 year average) = \(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{GMOBan} + \beta_2 \text{HDIndex} + \beta_3 \text{HDIRank} + \beta_4 \text{LDCC} + \beta_5 \text{GDPPc} + \beta_6 \text{GovEffectEst} + \beta_7 \text{PolStabVioTerEst} + \beta_8 \text{RegQualEst} + \beta_9 \text{RuleLawEst} + \epsilon\), where i = Country.

15 Ibid. The domestic food price volatility index is logged in order to better interpret the regression coefficient estimates, since indices are unit-less. Data for the domestic food price volatility index and access to improved sanitation facilities cover 2014. The model equation is as follows: Domestic Food Price Volatility Index = \(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{GMOban} + \beta_2 \text{HDIndex} + \beta_3 \text{HDIrank} + \beta_4 \text{LDCC} + \beta_5 \text{GDPPc} + \beta_6 \text{GovEffectEst} + \beta_7 \text{PolStabVioTerEst} + \beta_8 \text{RegQualEst} + \beta_9 \text{RuleLawEst} + \epsilon\), where i = Country.
Ibid. The model equation is as follows: \( \text{Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities (\% 3 year average)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{GMObani} + \beta_2 \text{HDIindex} + \beta_3 \text{HDIrank} + \beta_4 \text{LDC} + \beta_5 \text{GDPpc} + \beta_6 \text{GovEffectEst} 
+ \beta_7 \text{PolStabVioTerEst} + \beta_8 \text{RegQualEst} + \beta_9 \text{RuleLawEst} + u \), where \( i = \text{Country} \).


18 Ibid.
Nuclear Stability in a Post-Arms Control World

William Caplan

Introduction

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA is at its most complex since the end of the Cold War. While perhaps the most pressing issue between the two countries is the potential Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, there remain lingering issues from the previous administrations that endanger cooperation, such as the Syrian civil war, the annexation of Crimea, and continued Russian sabre rattling vis-à-vis NATO. These extremely sensitive and public conflicts make finding areas of mutual agreement on any issue difficult for the two countries.

In particular, arms control agreements between the United States and Russia could fall prey to growing fissures between the nations. Since the 1960s, arms control initiatives established a solid base of cooperation within the bilateral relationship. Regulations on the size and makeup of each country’s nuclear arsenal were acknowledged as an area of mutual agreement.1 The two treaties that remain in force today, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and New START, provide broader benefits outside of simple stockpile management, such as data exchanges and on-site inspections that bolster confidence about each side’s arsenal, producing nuclear stability between the two countries and broader stability and cooperation that can spill over to other contentious areas in the bilateral relationship.

Current disagreements and noncooperation on nuclear treaties are undermining what has been a bedrock of cooperation between the United States and Russia for nearly 50 years. It is possible that both treaties could collapse in the coming years, either by violation or expiration without replacement. The United States should prepare for a scenario in which both treaties are defunct and regulations no longer exist on either Russian or its own nuclear arsenals, and should advocate for continued compliance on specific, attainable measures within each treaty—even if the two countries break with the treaties at large. To that end, the United States needs to push for continued on-site inspections and data exchanges while moving forward on its current planned nuclear modernization strategy to cover its deterrence needs. Unilateral downsizing would send a negative signal.
to U.S. allies and embolden adversaries, but growing its nuclear stockpile would potentially encourage an arms race between the two powers.

**Arms Control Treaties 101: The INF Treaty and New START**

*The INF Treaty*

The INF treaty was negotiated to prohibit the deployment of missiles, both conventional and nuclear armed, in Europe with launch systems that had the potential to fuel instability between NATO and the Soviet Union. The negotiating process began in response to the deployment of new Soviet intermediate-range missiles with mobile launchers in the late 1970s, a move that allowed the Soviet Union to threaten political and military targets in NATO countries without deploying vulnerable air- or sea-launched systems. The United States pursued a strategy known as the “dual-track decision” in response, whereby it replaced its aging missiles in Europe while simultaneously pushing for the elimination of all intermediate-range missiles and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles (GLCMs). These actions were premised on a belief that the United States would be better positioned to ensure the security of Europe if it could ban all of weapons in these ranges, while maintaining the ability to deter the Soviets with like capabilities if it could not achieve the so-called “Zero Option,” whereby all problem weapons were banned. Ultimately, the Soviets agreed to the propositions of the INF treaty.

**THE INTERMEDIATE-RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES (INF) TREATY**

- Negotiated between the United States and Soviet Union, inherited by Russia.
- Prompted by Soviet replacement of S-4 and S-5 missiles with longer-range, more accurate SS-20. The United States responded by Pershing II and GLCM deployments, combined with negotiation.
- Prohibited all ground-launched cruise missiles and ballistic missiles with ranges between 500km and 5,500km.

The INF treaty remains relevant for preserving nuclear stability in Europe. Weapons with medium and intermediate ranges present a unique problem, as they tend to be lower-yield payloads used for warfighting purposes and carry the potential to bridge escalation from the conventional to nuclear levels. While the treaty does not regulate air- or water-breathing systems, it still provides a meaningful check on weapons that could hit a range of targets in Europe or Russia and serves as a confidence-building measure for the greater
arms control community, as it is the only treaty that bans an entire class of nuclear weapons. Failure to uphold this treaty would lift the only institutional safeguard on a dangerous and destabilizing pursuit of weapons that have short flight times and may be able to evade a large amount of defensive systems, placing large swaths of territory and targets at risk for limited nuclear use. Russia may be in the early stages of this arms race now. Since 2014, State Department arms control compliance reports have indicated that Russia has built a new GLCM that places Russia out of compliance with the treaty. The missile, known as the SSC-8, is alleged to fly within ranges prohibited by the treaty. Russia has denied these allegations, and in turn accused the United States of violating the treaty by deploying missile defense systems to Europe with canisters that could launch INF-violating missiles. The U.S. Congress has considered policies that would place the treaty in jeopardy, most notably the “INF Treaty Preservation Act,” which would require the United States to officially condemn Russia as being noncompliant with the treaty and begin research and development into capabilities that would make the United States similarly noncompliant. There is a strong chance that either the United States or Russia will refuse to back down, and the treaty will either break due to an explicit or alleged violation on either side.

**New START**

New START was negotiated in 2010 to continue U.S. and Russian strategic-level nuclear reductions past the expiration of previous arms control treaties, most notably the original START treaty. The treaty includes limitations on delivery vehicles and warheads. New START also allows for on-site inspections to verify that each state’s declarations are correct and data exchanges that demonstrate progress on disarmament goals. In addition, each state is required to share flight data on its missiles, representing an important bulwark against the risks of accidental nuclear war. The treaty expires in 2021 but can be extended by both sides, without any requirement of congressional or parliamentary approval in the matter.

New START upholds the series of arms reduction treaties between the United States and Russia and continues the broader norm of arms reduction between the two countries. Measures like New START allow the United States and
Russia to continue downsizing from their massive cold war arsenals, which still compose 95 percent of the world's inventory, and striving toward the disarmament goals outlined in Article VI of the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). If the treaty is not extended, both sides will have the opportunity to break out of the limits imposed on their strategic arsenals as well as lose important insight into the other side’s nuclear forces. During the ratification debates for New START in the U.S. Senate, key witnesses from both civilian and military backgrounds indicated that there would be nothing worse for nuclear stability between the United States and Russia than losing visibility over their arsenal as provided by START treaties. Expiration of the treaty would open the potential for a return to the type of arms races on strategic systems seen in the 1960s.

However, this treaty too has come under fire. President Trump indicated over the phone to President Putin that the treaty was “a bad deal” and should be renegotiated rather than extended, putting the future of New START into jeopardy. In addition, Russia’s alleged noncompliance with the INF Treaty has soured many in the arms control community over New START. The prevailing view among detractors is that Russia should not be given an additional arms control agreement with the United States when overwhelming evidence indicates that it is already cheating on another and cannot be trusted.

Strategy for a Post-Reduction World

Prospects for the Future

There appears to be little appetite for any diplomatic engagement with Russia, even outside of arms control. The United States and Russia have deep-seated structural and ideological disagreements over Syria and eastern Ukraine, as
well as over the role and appropriate reach of NATO, which are compounded by Russia’s interference in the U.S. election. These issues play into a broader anti-Russia narrative that bleeds into arms control. The attempted “reset” with Russia at the beginning of the Obama administration that precipitated

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<th>REASONS FOR LEAVING ARMS CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS</th>
<th>INF TREATY</th>
<th>NEW START</th>
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</table>
| RUSSIA                                     | • Desire to deploy intermediate-range systems in response to NATO threat  
• Belief that U.S. missile defense is in violation of the INF Treaty | • Desire to build larger arsenal than allowed under treaty |
| UNITED STATES                              | • Belief that Russian cruise missiles are in violation of the treaty  
• Desire to respond to Russian intermediate-range systems | • Belief that Russians are violating INF Treaty  
• Belief that Russians will not meet disarmament targets of treaty |

the negotiation of New START is largely viewed as a failure. New START specifically was seen by arms control skeptics as a measure to lull the United States into a false sense of security as Russia pressed ahead with its own nuclear modernization, including the new INF Treaty-violating SSC-8 missile. In addition, Russia had not made the same pace of disarmament for meeting the deadlines put in place by New START for force levels until recently, which made some pessimistic that Russia will follow through on its commitments to this treaty as well. Thus, there is a strong possibility that the Russians are noncompliant with the INF Treaty and that one or both sides will withdraw from the arrangement, while New START is not extended. The United States needs to prepare for this possibility and begin putting in the military and diplomatic footwork necessary to maintain nuclear stability with Russia, in terms of keeping mutual vulnerability and deterrence between the two nations, and avoid an arms race reminiscent of the Cold War. To determine the United States’ strategy for the post-reduction world, the points of mutual agreement must be salvaged from each treaty and wrapped into a new arrangement between the United States and Russia.

Ultimately, there is not much cause for optimism for salvaging much of the INF Treaty. Because the treaty completely bans two systems with similar
capabilities, if one side demonstrates a willingness to violate it, there is not much left to salvage. In particular, both sides’ interest in developing GLCMs would almost certainly prevent any sort of treaty that would ban that category of weapon for the time being. The range limit on ballistic missile systems could be reinstated, though the cruise missile threat is the real challenge at this juncture given Russia’s focus on the development of this technology for its warfighting purposes in Europe given U.S. vulnerabilities. On-site inspections for the treaty expired in 2001 and would not likely be favored by the Russians, as they would demonstrate that the Russians were in noncompliance. Even if inspections were somehow agreed to by the Russians, the Russian narrative that U.S. missile defense installations violate the treaty would likely lead to Russians pushing for on-site inspections to be broadened to U.S. missile defense sites in Europe and the United States, something that would likely be strongly opposed by U.S. policymakers given the systems’ sensitivity.

New START provides the basis for aspects to be salvaged from previous arms control treaties. While the reduction aspect may be challenged, by both the Trump administration and potentially the Russians, the data exchanges and on-site inspections may be continued for the sake of nuclear stability. Given national security professionals’ insistence that the United States retains a ‘boots on the ground’ presence in Russia to keep an eye on their nuclear capabilities, there is a strong chance that this could be sold as a mutually beneficial transparency measure as opposed to an arms control ‘gift’ to the Russians, which is how New START has been framed by many of its detractors.

Making the Strategy

The United States needs a strategy that confronts the threat posed by the Russian nuclear arsenal, upholds strategic stability, and keeps open the possibility of future negotiations on arms control treaties. Accordingly, the United States should undertake the following measures to build a workable strategy for a post-arms reduction world:

- **Immediately begin negotiations on a strategic nuclear transparency treaty with Russia.** The United States and Russia could negotiate an agreement that would allow both sides to keep an eye on the other’s strategic nuclear forces via arsenal declarations and associated inspections to verify declarations. Even if the arms control caps are not followed by either side, knowing what the other side has (outside of relying on one’s own national technical means of verification) with inspection procedures to back up the declarations would play a part in avoiding miscalculations that may be present in a world without New START. These transparency measures would likely not include systems previously banned under the INF Treaty at the onset due to the fact that it would likely still be a hot button issue, but eventually transparency could be broadened once the inspections regime is perceived as legitimate.
• **Continue with current nuclear modernization plans.** The current U.S. nuclear modernization plan will recapitalize every aspect of the United States’ nuclear arsenal and provide a twenty-first-century deterrent equipped to respond to a wide range of threats.\(^{20}\) The plan will replace aging systems in just enough time to prevent any loss of capabilities, though the time lines will be cutting it incredibly close. The United States must stick to this plan in order to keep deterrence intact and avoid any sort of strategic mismatch between the United States and Russia.

• **Consider the deployment of additional air- or water-breathing systems.** Violations of the INF Treaty by Russia introduces another capability that puts U.S. and allied forces at risk throughout Europe without a clear counter. Deployment of additional conventional capabilities, such as the Joint Air-to-Surface Standard Missile (JASSM-ER) air-launched cruise missile, to allied countries would provide weapons with similar ranges to Russian systems that threaten them and hedge against any reassurance challenges that the United States may face. In addition, the development of a follow on to the TLAM-N nuclear-tipped sea-launched cruise missile would give the United States an INF Treaty-compliant nuclear capability that would further expand its range of potential responses to new Russian nuclear capabilities.\(^{21}\)

In addition to these positive actions, the United States must also do its part to avoid any overtures that could be read as antithetical to nuclear stability. Accordingly, the United States should avoid the following:

• **Break out of New START limits.** Russian budget cuts mean that they will likely not be able to grow their nuclear forces in the short term, removing the need for the United States to attempt to gain the upper hand by growing its own arsenal.\(^{22}\) If the United States breaks out of limits first, however, it would eviscerate U.S. moral authority and potentially negotiating power in future negotiations by being painted as the instigator in the situation and make it hard to pick up where both sides left off in terms of reductions. This could potentially be exploited by Russia to build an anti-U.S. coalition on nuclear issues and beyond.\(^{23}\)

• **Building and attempting to deploy a new GLCM.** While this would be a tit-for-tat response to Russian INF Treaty violations, it would not be a helpful decision for nuclear stability for similar reasons to breaking out of New START limits. First, it would demonstrate that United States is unwilling to cling to INF Treaty limitations and thus weaken the U.S. stance on the issue if a follow-on treaty were attempted at some point in the future. Second, the same capabilities could be procured in a way that is compliant with the INF Treaty, such as through air- and water-breathing cruise missiles. Third, U.S. allies do not want to base U.S. GLCMs, aggravating rather than solving assurance problems.\(^{24}\)
• **Unilaterally downsize.** While it is not the time for growth in the U.S. arsenal, it is also not the time to reduce nuclear forces in this scenario. Downsizing while outside of the treaty would put a cap on U.S. leverage in future negotiations, as the United States would have fewer forces to negotiate away. In addition, it would send a weak signal that might be read by allies and the Russians alike that we are willing to accede to Russian nuclear dominance.

**Conclusion**

The combination of staying the course on modernization, not inciting an arms race, and pushing for increased transparency measures between the United States and Russia would go a long way toward maintaining nuclear stability between the two countries and keeping the future open to the possibility of additional negotiations on arms control. The existential threat posed to the entire world from nuclear escalation means that the United States compartmentalize nuclear stability away from other issues plaguing the U.S.-Russia relationship. If the United States is able to do so, it could lead by example and encourage similar behavior on the Russia side that could lead to substantive agreement on further diplomatic efforts. During the Cold War both sides were able to bracket off nuclear issues as a unique area of potential cooperation. Cooler heads should similarly prevail in this instance, to prevent an arms race reminiscent of the most dangerous time in the history of the world.

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Endnotes


3 Air-breathing systems refer to air-launched cruise missiles, such as the United States’ AGM-86 nuclear cruise missile. Water-breathing systems refer to sea-launched cruise missiles, such as the United States’ Tomahawk Land Attack Missile (TLAM).


5 Ibid.

6 Woolf, “Russian Compliance with the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.”


10 Article VI of the NPT stipulates that all signees must strive for a world free of nuclear weapons. Both the United States and Russia have ratified the treaty.

11 Auerswald, “Arms Control.”

12 Ibid.


NUCLEAR STABILITY IN A POST-ARMS CONTROL WORLD

18 Woolf, "Russian Compliance with the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty."
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Balancing Mongolia’s Growth and Sovereignty: Up, Down, or Out?

Rob Gill

AS A LANDLOCKED AND SPARSELY POPULATED COUNTRY wedged between two continental giants, Mongolia is understood to have limited options for consequential diplomacy: Russia to the north, China to the south, and non-contiguous partners farther afield. Mongolia has theoretically attempted to cultivate balanced relations along these three lines. In practice, its partnerships have failed to meet that goal. Following Mongolia’s democratic revolution in the early 1990s, China fully supplanted Russia as Mongolia’s main developer, and non-contiguous neighbors continue to play a comparatively insignificant role in Mongolia’s growth. Though this dynamic is well understood, a recent development warrants renewed discussion: Khaltmaa Battulga of the Democratic Party became Mongolia’s new president in an election that was widely regarded as a referendum on China’s role in the economy.1 Despite winning the election, Battulga, a China-skeptic, has put himself in an unwinnable situation. If he is to maintain the support of Mongolian voters, he must somehow distance the country from China while sustaining economic growth, engaging in what will prove to be a difficult balancing act.

Many Mongolians resent their Chinese neighbors, viewing them as hegemonic and exploitative. This attitude is rooted in a complex history of domination and exploitation, and more recently, indirect Chinese hegemony through control of Mongolia’s mineral resources. Today, resources are the crux of pervading sinophobia, as investment by China in Mongolia’s extraction and transportation infrastructure is perceived by Mongolians as having resulted in foreign (mostly Chinese) domination of trade and high-level corruption within the government and mining industry.2 Many Mongolians limit their opinions of China to disapproval, but some have taken more extreme stances, organizing themselves into specifically anti-Chinese, ultra-nationalist groups such as Tsagaan Hass and Dayar Mongol.3 While there are no known connections between Battulga and these groups (whose numbers are politically insignificant), it is undeniable that Battulga’s campaign capitalized on anti-Chinese sentiment.4 Battulga’s supporters contributed much to this strategy, labeling his opponent, Miyegombyn Enkhbold, “erliz (a person of mixed Mongolian and Chinese
Inconveniently for Battulga, economic realities undermine the nationalist platform upon which he was elected. The first and foremost of these realities is that Mongolia is very much economically dependent on China. For example, 90% percent of Mongolia’s exports go to or through China, and China plays a crucial role in developing the infrastructure required by Mongolia’s mining industry. China’s importance as an importer is partially reflected in Mongolia’s growth rates. After dipping to 1 percent in 2016, growth increased to 5.3 percent reportedly because China’s ban on North Korean coal created better market conditions for Mongolian exports (growth also owes much to a May agreement with the International Monetary Fund for a bailout package of $5.5 billion). Furthermore, China has become Mongolia’s largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) during a time of particular need, as overall FDI from other sources fell from $4.5 billion in 2011 to less than $100 million in 2015. But such investment is not guaranteed. Mongolia needs China’s development capacity far more than China needs Mongolia’s coal and copper. Should Battulga seek to undo Chinese hegemony without undoing the Mongolian economy itself, he must somehow counterbalance China’s role with other partners.

It may come as a surprise to some, considering overall negative trends in global opinion toward Russia and mixed perceptions among former Soviet republics and satellites, but Mongolians generally see Russia in a favorable light. This is in part because the Soviet Union, though guilty of exporting political horrors, did guarantee Mongolia’s independence in the decades after the fall of the Qing empire (excluding Inner Mongolia, which remains part of China). Later in the century, the Soviet Union invested heavily in what was then known as the Mongolian People’s Republic. As Gregory Delaplace writes, “Russians are remembered as great providers, and their liberality in dispensing the products of socialist ‘modernity’ has secured their position until today as ‘elder brothers’ to Mongolia.” Indeed, this sentiment is corroborated economically. At their height, Soviet subsidies comprised 37 percent of Mongolia’s GDP, and the railroad infrastructure built by the Soviets in the 1960s is still essential for commercial transport, despite receiving few upgrades since then. Mongolians have not forgotten their country’s twentieth-century relationship with Russia,
and Khaltmaa Battulga tapped into this amity by aligning himself with Russia and Vladimir Putin during the campaign.\textsuperscript{17}

Considering Russia's popularity in Mongolia, an obvious choice would be to expand the trade and investment partnerships between the two. The problem is that Chinese demand dwarfs Russian demand for Mongolian resources, and Russia is unlikely to invest in Mongolia's infrastructure out of pure goodwill for a Soviet-era comrade. To incentivize Russia, Mongolia may have to leverage its intermediary position between north and south. Russia cares much more about its economic relationship with China, so Mongolia's opportunity to expand its Russian relationship can come about via trilateralism. Mongolia's previous president embraced this strategy by working his way to the negotiating table of the China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor.\textsuperscript{18} However, this type of project cannot increase Russia's economic stake in Mongolia without also increasing China's. For example, the corridor project is very publicly part of China's larger Silk Road Economic Belt, which makes deemphasizing China's outsized role rather difficult. Trilateralism could be a gainful strategy, but it cannot significantly dilute Chinese hegemony in the short term.

If counterweighting Chinese influence by turning to Russia is problematic, Mongolia's remaining choice would be to reinvigorate the Third Neighbor policy, which was always meant to prevent monopolization of the economy by contiguous neighbors. After all, large democratic states such as the United States or Japan should take interest in supporting Mongolia, a fledgling democracy in a rather undemocratic neighborhood. Unfortunately, the Third Neighbor policy has had time to prove itself, and it has yet to live up to expectations. Chinese monopoly has persisted, and FDI from the United States, Japan, and Germany has not yet materialized in significant quantities.\textsuperscript{19} This could be because Western investors were put off by the rise of resource nationalism,\textsuperscript{20} the logistical difficulty of investing in the resource sectors of a landlocked economy, or the perceived insignificance of Mongolia as a country of only 3 million people. Despite these economic factors, there are reports of new Western investments in Mongolia,\textsuperscript{21} and Battulga did promise to resume the Third Neighbor policy at his inauguration.\textsuperscript{22} The new administration seems committed to the policy, but meaningfully reducing dependence on China remains a tall order.

Despite his anti-Chinese, pro-Russian, and pro-anyone-else campaign positions, Battulga has curtailed anti-China rhetoric in the months since his inauguration and even congratulated Xi Jinping on the PRC's 68th anniversary. This behavior, though cordial and pragmatic, is inconsistent with the values that got Battulga elected. If it foreshadows the rest of his term, Battulga's supporters could become disaffected by the time he runs
for reelection. Realistically, Chinese dominance cannot be undone in the short term without disastrous consequences, Russia is largely uninterested in counterbalancing China’s economic role, and Third Neighbors are unlikely to alter the dynamic in a meaningful way. Thus, by encouraging resource nationalism and sinophobia in a country whose economy depends on China, Battulga put himself in a lose-lose scenario. If he is to ensure the success of his administration, he must adopt a balanced approach that recognizes China’s essential role in the Mongolian economy while acknowledging the deep distrust among Mongolian voters. If he cannot negotiate this impasse, Battulga is likely to suffer politically and Mongolia will still be in search of a better path forward.

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Endnotes


5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.


10 Ibid.


BALANCING MONGOLIA’S GROWTH AND SOVEREIGNTY: UP, DOWN, OR OUT?


19 Ibid., 5.


23 Yang, “President Khaltma Battulga, Mongolia’s Pragmatist.”

ACROSS EURASIA, AUTHORITARIAN LEADERS are seeking public support through the construction of massive infrastructure projects. The projects being undertaken by the leaders of China, Russia, and Turkey are intended to capture the public imagination and to evoke the grandeur of a bygone imperial era. An example of this is Chinese President Xi Jinping’s Belt and Road initiative. This ambitious infrastructure project hearkens back to the days of the famous Silk Road and seeks to draw the nations of central Asia more closely together in economic cooperation. This has huge benefits for China because, on the one hand, the flow of investment plays a significant role in addressing Asia’s collective $26 trillion infrastructure burden through 2030. On the other, encouraging economic performance paves the way for domestic political benefits. It is ultimately here on the national level that one may gauge authoritarian preference for infrastructure as a political instrument. Looking to Turkey, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s domestic ambitions provide a stark example of this.

Erdoğan’s national projects have furthered a foundation of political patrimony achieved via urban development primarily in the country’s northwest, with megaprojects surpassing the conceptions of Ottoman sultans. By announcing Vision 2023 in 2011 to commemorate a hundred years of the modern Turkish Republic, Erdoğan is attempting to consolidate his authority by providing impressive physical symbols of progress, fitted within Turkey’s historical context. With the help of the onset of strong economic growth in the 2000s, buoyed by infrastructure investment, the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) has increased its popular support from 34 percent to 50 percent since coming to power in 2002.2 However, megaprojects often carry great risks, associated with their financial, environmental, and transparency aspects, potentially stretching the Turkish economy beyond its means. This, in turn, could sour the patrimonial relationship that helped expand AKP’s appeal.

The Gecekondu Experiments

Courting political support on a large scale by AKP and Erdoğan began by weaving a political patrimonial system derived by urban development from the late 1990s, among Istanbul and Ankara’s network of gecekondu (shanty, squatter homes,
It is clear that past political successes have emboldened the governing party to push the limits of imagination, utilizing development as a tool for popular support in Turkey.

Gecekondu settlements became particularly pertinent in the contemporary context with Erdoğan's rise in the mid-1990s. During this time, the Welfare Party, predecessor of the AKP, began to harness urban discontent into political support in the 1994 local elections and the 1995 parliamentary elections. Once he was elected mayor of Istanbul in 1994, Erdoğan mobilized support among the dwellers of gecekondu by emphasizing his humble roots in the Kasımpaşa suburb. Subsequently, urban development and regeneration of Istanbul became a priority for him as prime minister in successive AKP governments after 2002. The Housing Development Administration (TOKI) was transformed into a powerful development entity from a once bank-type institution and directed to working toward a new a target of constructing 1 million housing units as part of Vision 2023. In addition to appeasing the lower segments of society, the party also attracted a wealthy entrepreneurial class with public-private partnerships (PPPs), attracting foreign investment with the construction industry in particular enjoying significant gains. Thus, AKP strengthened its ties to this crucial wing of the private sector in Turkey that currently employs 2.15 million people and accounts for 7.5 percent of economic activity, with spillover effects on the rest of the country.

Çılgın Projeler – “Crazy Projects”

Since 2002, AKP has overseen a phase of development during which the Turkish economy has tripled in size, capitalizing on gains afforded by infrastructure investment. Given the aforementioned political success with gecekondu settlements in Istanbul and Ankara, attention turned to major projects to capture the imagination of Turkish citizens on a wider scale. Many of its transportation projects fall in line with leading Oxford economic geographer Bent Flyvbjerg's seminal characterization of megaprojects—carrying significant cost (over $1 billion), attracting significant public and political attention, with a substantial direct or indirect impact on communities, environment, or state budget.
Erdoğan’s embrace of what he has termed “crazy projects,” with a view toward the historically significant 2023 target, concentrates on monumental size and effective timing. In April 2011, months before the general election, Erdoğan announced the $20 billion Kanal İstanbul to rival the Panama and Suez canals,9 to ease the heavily congested Turkish Straits. This project would utilize a concept first proposed as far back as Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent in the mid-sixteenth century. Another recent project, the Marmaray Tunnel in 2013,10 was a Sultan Abdülmecid I era idea in the mid-nineteenth century that established the first standard gauge rail connection between Europe and Asia. Weeks before the 2014 presidential election,11 the AKP government inaugurated the Istanbul-Ankara High Speed Railway. Finally, August 2016 saw the opening of the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, named after Sultan Selim I, an early sixteenth-century ruler that expanded the Ottoman Empire into the Middle East and took over the Caliphate. The latter provides the finest example of historical symbolism conveyed through physical reminders of Erdoğan’s ambitions for his “New Turkey.”

*Ayağımı yorganına göre uzat - Stretch your feet as far as your quilt*

Turkey has made undeniable strides toward addressing its portion of the $1 trillion global deficit in infrastructure investment,12 yet wide-scale construction of this nature places enormous risk on the economy. Following popular campaigns in urban regeneration, projects of this size bring with them long-term financial burdens that risk stirring discontent within the wider population. A common trait among megaprojects, construction phases have resulted in soaring costs thus incurring public losses. This was an important factor in prompting the government to transfer liquid public assets into a sovereign wealth fund under its control, notwithstanding Turkey’s current account deficit,13 with the goal of preserving financially risky megaprojects. Currency fluctuations alongside rising contingent liabilities due to a continued expansion of PPPs14 add pressure to the financial foundations of many projects. In addition, Treasury guarantees to subsidize revenue losses incurred by operators15 are based on projections of sustained 5 percent annual growth in Turkey, with any underperforming project bound to enlarge public deficits.

Lack of transparency and crony capitalism, in addition to environmental concerns, have publicly plagued several of these projects during the past five years. Members of Turkey’s largest construction companies close to the government have been investigated in the bidding process alongside questionable methods of obtaining credit.16 The projects also pose enormous environmental risks. The colossal scale of Kanal İstanbul and the Istanbul’s third airport, for example, threaten surrounding waters, along with forested
and agricultural land.\textsuperscript{17} Despite environmental groups’ lawsuits, political ambitions have encouraged defiance of court orders over such concerns.

It is clear that past political successes have emboldened the governing party to push the limits of imagination, utilizing development as a tool for popular support in Turkey. Building upon the foundations of political patrimony with prior urban development, megaprojects have received considerable public attention and have been used effectively before elections for the past decade. However, the risks are evident in the construction phase and repayment, requiring serious consideration of the effect on the rest of the Turkish economy. While credit is due to the addressing of Turkey’s infrastructure deficit, there are very serious financial and environmental considerations. It remains to be seen whether projects of this magnitude will prove to be success stories or beyond Turkish capabilities.

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Endnotes


ON AUGUST 28, 2017, CHINA AND INDIA WITHDREW TROOPS from the disputed Himalayan region of Doklam, formally ending a two-month standoff that had threatened to incite armed conflict between the Asian neighbors. The crisis had begun on June 16 when the Indian Army obstructed road construction by China at Doklam, near the trijunction of China, Bhutan, and the Indian state of Sikkim, sparking the most serious Sino-Indian border conflict since the war of 1962. While the tension at Doklam has since defused, this standoff marked but one point in a long and ongoing race between China and India to assert authority in disputed territories through infrastructure construction. In this race shaped by history, geography, and economic and strategic concerns, China has far outpaced India.

The Doklam standoff draws political intrigue because it was never really about a border disputed between India and China. Both countries agree that while the Indo-China border is disputed in Arunachal Pradesh in the east and Kashmir in the west, the Sikkim sector is a settled matter. Doklam—known as Donglang in China—is in fact part of a territory disputed between China and Bhutan. Grand tales of India-Bhutan friendship1 aside, India’s primary concern was that the road being built threatened India’s security by giving China easier access to the strategically vulnerable Siliguri Corridor via Sikkim. Also known as the “chicken’s neck,” the Siliguri Corridor is a 12-mile-wide strip that forms the only physical link between the seven northeastern states and the rest of India.

Anxiety over territorial incursion is a running theme in the history of Indo-China relations, and provided the main pretext for the war of 1962. The outcome of this war—China’s victory over India—shaped how both countries engaged with the border between them for decades. Today, India and China are both rolling out ambitious plans for strategic infrastructure on their respective sides, but China has had a head start in this race.

Following their success in the war, China built aggressively on its side of the Line of Actual Control, as part of its strategy to maintain control over Tibet.2 In recent decades, China’s roads3 and rail lines4 have expanded further toward its borders with India, Bhutan, and Nepal. These linkages enhance not only China’s ability to move troops in these strategic areas, but also expand Chinese influence. A rail link between Nepal and

Behind Doklam Lies an Uneven Infrastructure Race between China and India

Shivangi Borah
China, for instance, provides an alternative to Nepal’s dependence on trade with India.5

India, by contrast, adopted a defensive strategy toward China after its defeat in 1962. This resulted in a decades-long hesitation to build in disputed territories. The unspoken rationale was that roads near the border would facilitate the advance of Chinese troops into Indian territory.6

A shift in this strategy came about in the early 2000s when Indo-China relations began to improve. In 2003, India and China signed an agreement whereby India recognized Tibet as a part of China and China acknowledged Indian authority over Sikkim. In 2006, the Nathula Pass in Sikkim was opened for trade between India and China.7 To catch up to China’s infrastructural head start, India sanctioned 73 strategic roads as part of the India-China Border Roads (ICBR) initiative. This was followed, in 2010, by the identification of 28 potential rail lines bordering China, Pakistan, and Nepal. However, progress on these projects has been slow. Out of the 73 ICBR, originally planned to be complete by 2012, only 27 have been completed thus far.8 Construction has not progressed on any of the strategic railways.9

The lack of strategic infrastructure compromises the security of India’s northeastern states. Pot-holed, avalanche-prone roads severely restrict troop mobility along the border. Indian troops take three hours to cover the 25-mile distance between Bumla (the last outpost on the Indian side) and the nearest town of Tawang. China, on the other hand, has four-lane highways within 2.5 miles of the border, enabling Chinese troops to cover the 23-mile distance between Bumla Post and the Chinese town of Sonajung in a mere 45 minutes. Limited funding, bureaucratic red tape, and lack of experience building in mountainous terrain are often blamed for India’s infrastructure deficit along the China border.10 Geography also favors China in this contest: the Tibetan plateau presents China with a distinct topographical advantage over the difficult mountainous terrain on the Indian side. In fact, the Sikkim sector is the only section of the 3,500-km-long border where India may have a strategic advantage over China, since the latter is sandwiched between India and Bhutan. This explains India’s fixation with maintaining status quo at Doklam.

The most logical move forward for India would be to narrow down the deluge of overly ambitious projects to what is actually feasible and most pressing. China’s
systematic approach over decades make India’s recent attempts look haphazard. The recently completed Dhola-Sadiya mega-bridge, for example, connects two strategic points in the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, and can handle the weight of battle tanks.\textsuperscript{11} However, without strategic roads connecting these remote areas to a greater road network, this bridge cannot be utilized to its full potential.

To successfully connect its border regions, India needs to shift focus from prestige projects that never move beyond the drawing boards to priority projects that can be implemented with the resources available. A case in point is the construction of the Guwahati-Tawang road via Tashigang in Bhutan. By allowing bypassing of avalanches and cutting travel time between Guwahati (the most connected city in northeast India) and Tawang (closest town to the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh) by six hours, this road would reduce India’s vulnerabilities along the northeastern stretch of the border. Another strategy that neatly ties good domestic policy with good foreign policy is increasing cooperation with Bangladesh. Land connections via Bangladesh could potentially provide alternative routes for maintaining connectivity with the Northeast in the event of a Chinese siege of the chicken’s neck.

Realistically, China’s 40-year head start has created a chasm that will be extremely challenging for India to close. However, under Modi rule, India appears determined to renegotiate power dynamics with China as it attempts to correct its infrastructure deficit. This is evident in India’s strong response to China’s road construction at Doklam. Interestingly, despite this reaction and the ensuing standoff, China may not have given up on its Doklam dreams just yet. A state-run Chinese daily recently asserted that road building at Doklam is “logical” and that China has “no obligation to indulge India’s capriciousness.”\textsuperscript{12} With both countries pushing their regional influence through infrastructure construction and neither willing to make territorial concessions, the end of the crisis at Doklam is no guarantee against future altercations along the murky border between these Asian giants.

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Endnotes


Since Department of Defense Directive 3000.09 on autonomy in weapon systems was signed in 2012, it has failed to generate consensus on the definition of “autonomy” or make progress to regulate autonomous weapon systems (AWS). With the directive set to expire at the end of 2017, the Department of Defense has an opportunity to clearly chart a course for the future of AWS.

Rather than relying on imprecise phrases like “appropriate level of human judgment in the use of force,” DoD should outline domain-specific applications of autonomous technology to clarify how AWS will be used. While U.S. allies like Britain have recently ruled out pursuing fully autonomous weapons, adversaries like Russia and China are heavily investing in and integrating these technologies. The proliferation of autonomous technology from adversaries and in the commercial sector will require the United States to add AWS to its forces. Ultimately, AWS must be integrated across domains, but for now, domain-specific analysis can dispel the counterproductive fears peddled by the technology’s opponents and demonstrate the potential of AWS to change warfare.

Referred to by opponents as “killer robots,” AWS have been branded to make casual sci-fi fans tremble at the possibility of their television nightmares coming to life. The AWS emerging in battlespaces today, however, more resemble unmanned versions of recognizable platforms like tanks, airplanes, and submarines. For the current discussion, an AWS will be defined as a system that, once activated, identifies and engages targets without using preprogrammed instructions and requiring no further human input.

AWS operate in unique physical spaces that affect how the technology engages combatants. The characteristics of a domain should be used to frame the discussion of how and whether emerging technology abides by the international law of armed conflict.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Autonomous Swarms

While most people are familiar with large military unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) like the MQ-9 Reaper and MQ-1 Predator, smaller systems are often overlooked and undervalued. Large UAVs are vulnerable to even...
moderate air defenses, which is why they are most successful when deployed in asymmetric conflicts where adversaries lack air defenses. In addition to performing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) missions, small autonomous UAVs operating as “swarms” will be capable of penetrating environments defended by more advanced technology. By saturating the airspace with many targets, swarms mitigate the effectiveness of air defense, and could be used in ordnance delivery against targets that are well defended. Converting models like the Israeli Harpy, which target radar systems, into AWS that can reliably strike other soft military targets would help address issues presented by advanced defenses.4

Some might worry, however, that greater penetration of air defenses brings lethal AWS into close proximity to combatants and noncombatants. Whereas high-flying large military UAVs are wrongfully criticized for being detached from the battlespace, future systems may be condemned for the exact opposite reason. Yet, the fear elicited by AWS operating in populated areas must not be allowed to paralyze policy development. As Benjamin Wittes argued in 2012, it is entirely possible that in some environments AWS might “distinguish military targets far better and more accurately than humans can.”5

Unmanned Ground Vehicles, First on the Shore, First through the Door

Unmanned ground vehicles (UGVs) have already demonstrated their utility in the land domain for several tasks, including the removal of IEDs, and are being prepared to take on even more offensive roles. In ship-to-shore exercises in April 2017, the Marine Corps Warfighting Lab showed how two Multi-Utility Tactical Transport (MUTT) robots and a Weaponized Autonomous System Prototype (WASP) could substitute for marine forces as the first units to storm an enemy’s shore. Commenting on the exercise, Col. Daniel Sullivan, deputy commander of the warfighting lab, said, “going forward, the first one in the room should never be an air breather. It should be a robot with a lethal capability, [and] it’s the same thing coming ashore.”6

As dual-use autonomous capabilities are developed commercially and by adversaries, U.S. and allied warriors will be put under the cognitive strain of fighting at machine speed.7 As with soldiers, a UGV’s ability to abide by the law of armed conflict may be mitigated in confined spaces where combatants and civilians are mixed. Whereas UAVs can loiter and evaluate targets from above,
UGVs are afforded less time to make targeting decisions. The close spatial and temporal relationship between UGVs and combatants warrants a higher degree of scrutiny on their use and on the algorithms that guide their actions. This especially true when compared to systems operating in less populated environments, like in the naval domain.

*Unmanned Undersea Vehicles as the Future Leg of the Nuclear Triad*

The revolutionary impact autonomous unmanned undersea vehicles (UUVs) will have on maritime warfare is hard to overstate. Large and Extra Large Displacement Unmanned Undersea Vehicles (LDUUV and XLDUUV), like the Echo Voyager, will be designed to perform below-water ISR, clandestinely deliver mines, and launch precision-guided weapons. Additionally, UUV swarms of small long-endurance drones could perform dangerous below-water ISR in littoral waters and in surface missions.8

Because UUVs operate in the vast sea domain, there is more certainty that the weapon can safely identify and engage solely military targets. Additionally, leveraging autonomous capabilities underwater will have dramatic effects on strategic posture, especially as states like North Korea and Iran continue to develop nuclear weapons.9 UUVs armed with strategic weapons, like manned submarines before them, project power in dangerous and denied environments, extending U.S. military capabilities. While some U.S. officials hesitate, the Russian Navy has reportedly already tested a nuclear-capable UUV designed to spread radioactive contamination along enemy coastal areas “rendering them unusable for military, economic, and other activity for a long time.”10 Although an autonomous nuclear-armed submarine is not likely to be deployed in the immediate future, the need to hedge against such a threatening capability is clear.11

*Conclusion*

The United States’ adversaries are vigorously developing AWS, threatening to eclipse the United States and its allies in a future world that will be dominated by these emerging technologies. While overarching regulation may be premature, it is important the Department of Defense continues to think critically about the legal and strategic implications of AWS. As then-deputy secretary of defense Bob Work outlined in the Third Offset Strategy in April 2016, AWS will only continue to grow in importance and play a key role in future multidomain battle. Thinking creatively about how the physical space in which autonomous systems operate affects their use in combat can provide a framework for future doctrine and regulation of autonomous systems.

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Endnotes


11 Predicting the consequences of deploying a long-endurance nuclear-armed UUV in contested waters or off an adversary’s coast requires more consideration than can be given in this piece.
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