POLICY REPORT

Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific: The Future of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus)

S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL
OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
A Graduate School of Nanyang Technological University

Edited by
Sarah Teo and Mushahid Ali

August 2013

POLICY REPORT

Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific: The Future of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus)

Edited by
Sarah Teo and Mushahid Ali
August 2013

Contents

Introduction

Ralf Emmers

The RSIS Multilateralism and Regionalism Programme held a roundtable on "Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific: The Future of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus)" on 24 July 2013. As the region geared up for the second ADMM-Plus on 29 August 2013, the roundtable aimed to encourage timely and relevant discussions about regional security cooperation at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. Experts from around the region were invited to share country perspectives on the function and relevance of the ADMM-Plus, and on the wider issue of strategic engagement within the emerging security architecture in the Asia Pacific.

The commentaries in this policy brief arise from the presentations and discussions at the roundtable. Four main questions were addressed. First, how do regional countries implement strategic engagement—bilaterally and multilaterally—in the context of the U.S. rebalance to Asia? Most East Asian states have sought to keep the United States strategically engaged in the region and they have welcomed the U.S. rebalance strategy. Yet, they do not want to be forced to choose between the great powers. As the commentaries in this volume note, regional countries wish therefore to preserve their autonomy and diversify their engagement with various partners across several sectors.

Second, can non-traditional security issues sustain cooperation in the long-term? How long can traditional security issues be put aside in the dialogue? Cooperation under the ADMM-Plus focuses on non-traditional security areas such as counter-terrorism, disaster management, maritime security, military medicine and peacekeeping operations. A milestone in regional security cooperation was achieved in June 2013 as the ADMM-Plus held its first Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and Military Medicine Exercise in Brunei, involving about 3,200 personnel from 18 countries. This certainly needs to be welcomed as cooperation on such matters helps to promote trust and confidence in the region. Yet, a couple of commentaries in this volume argue that regional security forums such as the ADMM-Plus will have to at some point address traditional security issues to ensure their relevance to regional geopolitics.

Third, to what extent are bilateral and multilateral engagement strategies complementary? Clearly, strategic engagement is conceptualised and implemented differently between two partners as opposed to within a much larger setting involving 18 participants with sometimes divergent strategic interests. That said, the activities of the ADMM-Plus could also complement what is being done at the bilateral level. For example, the commentary on Japan's view of the ADMM-Plus highlights the multilateral forum's usefulness in helping to boost Tokyo's bilateral relations.

Finally, what role does the ADMM-Plus play in a country's strategic engagement policy? Overall, the commentaries note that the ADMM-Plus, and regional defence engagement in general, are valuable elements of regional countries' strategic policies. The importance of the ADMM-Plus stems from the transnational nature of security threats, its usefulness as a platform for regional countries to engage with one another and with the major powers, as well as its contribution to the emerging security architecture in the region.

The commentaries in this policy brief are structured around three sections. The first commentary provides an overview of the strategic engagement in the Asia Pacific. The second group of four commentaries discusses the perspectives of the United States and China, while the third group focuses on the perspectives of other regional powers, namely Australia, India, Indonesia and Japan.

Ralf EMMERS *is an Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Multilateralism and Regionalism Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore.*

Asia's Growing Defence Engagements

See Seng Tan

Defence diplomacy, or the efforts by national defence establishments to engage one another by peaceful and presumably cooperative means, is, as the analyst David Capie noted, a relatively late development in Asia. To be sure, the types of activities typically identified as within the rubric of defence diplomacy—contacts between senior military and civilian defence officials; defence cooperation agreements and training arrangements; sharing know-how on the professionalisation of the armed forces, defence management, military technical areas and other forms of military assistance; exchanges between military personnel and units; port calls; coordinated or joint military exercises, and the like—are not particularly new to Asia. These are much the sorts of intramural activities Asian members of military alliances have long been conducting within their collective defence arrangements since the Cold War.

Better Late Than Never

What may be new, however, is the late emergence, at the initiative of ASEAN, of an official gathering of defence ministers from a select number of Asia Pacific countries. In 2006, member states of ASEAN inaugurated the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), an annual forum aimed at furthering dialogue and cooperation among ASEAN defence establishments at the most senior level. In 2010, a "Plus" appendage was added to the ADMM—typical of ASEAN's engagement with the wider Asian region—with eight external partners (Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the United States), thereby making it the ADMM-Plus. Sharing the same membership as the East Asia Summit but for all intents and purposes a separate arrangement, the ADMM-Plus' mandate is primarily in confidence-building and capacity-building. Concerning the latter, the ADMM-Plus issued a joint declaration on 11 May 2010 that specified the contribution ASEAN would like its external partners to make, namely, to "enable the ADMM to cooperate with the non-ASEAN countries to build capacity and better prepare ASEAN to address the complex security challenges."

Nevertheless, Asia's security order and its supporting architecture are far from the finished article. But the inclusion of the defence ministerial to Asia's evolving and burgeoning defence engagements is like an incomplete jigsaw puzzle that has just benefited from the addition of a key piece. In a sense, the landscape of Asian military security is quite remarkable in the light of the numerous military-to-military exercises, many of them increasingly multilateral—such as RIMPAC, the world's largest maritime exercise and Cobra Gold, originally a Thai-U.S. bilateral exercise that has now expanded to include other Asian states. The region's militaries have also participated in coordinated or joint operations in HADR, as happened after the Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004, in anti-piracy patrols in the Malacca Straits, and in counter-terrorism. Beyond the tactical and operational dimensions, Asian defence establishments have also been engaging one another at the strategic dimension with senior officials, civilian and uniformed, regularly participating in multilateral meetings such as defence officials dialogues (DOD), senior officials meetings (SOM), gatherings of service chiefs and the heads of defence institutions, and the non-official forum held annually in Singapore, the Shangri-La Dialogue.

Significant as the inclusion of the ADMM and its Plus appendage is to Asian defence cooperation, serious concerns remain, not least the high level of strategic mistrust among regional countries, tensions arising from territorial disputes, the persistent lack of political will to advance collaboration beyond relatively "non-sensitive" issues that pose fewer challenges to states' sovereignty, and the paucity of assets and capabilities necessary to ensure the security of the region and its residents. That said, there is no question that defence engagements in Asia as a whole are redrawing the security map of the Asian region. To that end, the transition has at least three noteworthy facets.

Three "Froms"

First, the former chief of U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Dennis Blair, hypothesised in a 2001 article in *The Washington Quarterly* about refashioning security arrangements in Asia from "wheels"—referring to the San Francisco "hub-and-spokes" alliance system—to "webs." Fast forward to the present, the idea of defence webs has become the accepted nomenclature used by analysts and pundits to refer to the proliferation of bilateral and multilateral defence ties in the region.

Second, the late formation of the ADMM-Plus renders high-level defence engagement as the "Johnny-come-lately" of Asia-wide multilateral diplomacy. Indeed, even the Shangri-La Dialogue is a mere pup in years compared with older and more established multilateral enterprises in the region. Not surprisingly, it is Asia's foreign policy establishments that have taken the lead in multilateral diplomacy. At the same time, it is under the rubric of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), a gathering of foreign ministers, that the defence establishments of ARF member states began engaging in multilateral dialogue in the mid-1990s through the DOD and ARF Defence SOM processes as well as the ARF Security Policy Conferences. Far from emerging ex nihilo, the ADMM-Plus has presumably benefited from that history of lower-level engagements. But with their own ministerial confabs, the so-called "defence track" of Asia has for all intents and purposes graduated from the minor leagues of multilateral diplomacy, as it were, to the majors.

Third, the functionalism which the region's defence engagements bring to bear on regional security cooperation has highlighted the potential Asian multilateral diplomacy has for moving beyond mere dialogue to practical collaboration in non-traditional security issues. A number of things has been identified—counter-terrorism, HADR, maritime security, military medicine, peacekeeping—as areas in which ADMM-Plus members are to cooperate. Granted, working to develop and enhance the region's capacities in disaster management or military medicine is miles away from the ambitious aims and grandiloquent vision that the advocates of the ARF held in the halcyon days of that institution's formative period. But it offers the best chance for Asia's multilateral consultative mechanisms to move from "talk-shops" to "workshops."

Pragmatic, Not Transformative

Nonetheless, all this should not be taken to mean that Asian security has been fundamentally transformed as a consequence of warrior diplomats exchanging their battlefield fatigues for business suits and their jungle boots for leather brogues. Defence engagements are slowly reshaping the region, but in incremental ways. Political tensions and strategic mistrust continue to animate regional relations in Asia. Against that backdrop, the prospect of growing ties and practical cooperation among Asia's defence establishments is something to be welcomed.

See Seng TAN *is Deputy Director of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies and Head of the Centre for Multilateralism Studies at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore, where he is a tenured Associate Professor.*

The U.S. Rebalance, Multilateralism and the Dilemmas of Asia Pacific Security

Brad Glosserman

The United States has come to better appreciate the importance of multilateralism in producing stability and security in the Asia Pacific region. Significantly, however, this recognition predates the U.S. rebalance to Asia: the Bush administration promoted "ad hoc" multilateralism in the Proliferation Security Initiative and the response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The United States is equally cognisant of the limitations of security multilateralism, a view that contributes to Washington's continuing prioritisation of its alliances in Asia, which are central to U.S. engagement with the region. But, as Washington seeks to modernise and adapt them to new realities, and to link those "spokes of the wheel" to each other (and to other regional security partners), some governments consider those alliances to be a bar to greater cooperation. Finding the appropriate balance between bilateral and multilateral cooperation is a challenge, but not impossible; that task is made harder, however, by the opposition of some governments to any effort to make those alliances more relevant to 21st century security challenges.

The rebalance is designed to promote security in the Asia Pacific; this is security broadly defined and which employs a larger complement of the tools in the U.S. diplomatic toolbox. The rebalance embraces the premise that an enduring regional order demands a more expansive approach to engagement, one that distributes both power and responsibility across countries to give them a stake in outcomes and maximise the resources that can be brought to bear on new and enduring challenges. Consistent with that logic, all U.S. government discussions of the rebalance begin with its diplomatic and economic elements, and only then move to the military presence. The policy was designed to lighten the load shouldered by the U.S. military in the region: the tip of the spear carries a heavy weight in the Asia Pacific. There are, however, real limits as to how far the United States can go to substitute other elements of national power for "hard" military power—this has become particularly clear in discussions of extended deterrence.

Several forces push the United States toward a more enthusiastic embrace of security multilateralism. They include: transnational security threats, the diffusion of technology and rising capabilities among potential partners, the emergence of a multilateral albeit skeletal security architecture, a new norm of broad-based cooperation, and tightening fiscal constraints among all governments that force them to seek new efficiencies in security policy.

Two pillars of the rebalance—deeper partnerships with emerging powers and deeper engagement in institutions to promote regional cooperation—drive the United States to reach out to other security partners in the region. In recent testimony to Congress, PACOM Commander Admiral Samuel J. Locklear highlighted the critical role multilateral relationships and institutions will play in enhancing regional security. In particular, institutions such as ASEAN can serve as an organising force to harness such efforts but can likewise serve as a unifying body in establishing principles that support responsible behaviour by regional actors. Backing word with deed, PACOM joined ASEAN HADR field training exercises in May and June 2013 and is reinforcing multilateral civilian-military and military-to-military cooperation through the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Centre. Within the ADMM-Plus, the United States and Indonesia are facilitating a strategic-level multilateral table-top exercise, and are co-chairs for both the Asia Pacific Intelligence Chiefs Conference and the Experts' Working Group for the ADMM-Plus in 2014.

This new engagement also acknowledges that Southeast Asia, unlike Northeast Asia, has not received the sustained attention it deserves: U.S. policy making toward the sub-region has been somewhat sporadic and ad hoc. The rebalance aims to correct that. The United States has appointed a new ambassador to ASEAN, created a U.S.-ASEAN business council, ratified the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation and joined the East Asia Summit. Within a military context, the United States is, according to Mark Manyin et al., moving toward a "more 'flexible' approach to deployments in [Southeast Asia], in which U.S. deployments will be smaller, more agile, expeditionary, self-sustaining, and self-contained."

However, old threats continue and in some cases are intensifying. The first decade of the 21st century has witnessed a fearful reassertion of traditional security concerns: bellicose rhetoric and assertive foreign policy over territorial claims are the most worrying manifestations of this problem, but the modernisation of militaries across the region also raises the spectre of misperceptions triggering conflict as occurred before World War I. At some point, new security structures must be prepared to take on these "hard" challenges. The reluctance of ASEAN-centred institutions to deal with these sorts of problems has been and will continue to be a formidable obstacle to U.S. confidence in such security mechanisms.

The continued priority the United States attaches to its alliances in some cases poses real obstacles to revitalised multilateral security cooperation. America's five alliances provide the sinews of its engagement with Asia and they are identified in every discussion of the rebalance as one of its five pillars. For over a decade, Washington has been working to consolidate ties among the "spokes" of the U.S. alliance "wheel" in Asia. (Again, alliance modernisation predates the rebalance by more than decade.) Attempts to turn the "virtual" alliance of the United States, Japan, and South Korea into something more substantive have foundered on political tides in Tokyo and Seoul. The Trilateral Security Dialogue of the United States, Australia, and Japan has been more successful. Those alliances are genuine force multipliers, facilitating responses to security problems, creating habits of cooperation, and providing structural confirmation of U.S. commitment to the region.

Yet, for some countries the alliances are problematic by definition. They insist that the U.S. alliance system is outdated Cold War thinking and proof of Washington's commitment to maintaining regional pre-eminence and blocking the rise of any challenger to that status. Those governments oppose any effort to strengthen those alliances or to use them as the core of a regional security architecture. Those same governments impede multilateral security cooperation by denouncing the alliances and insisting that working with them divides the region. Ironically, those governments take the United States at its word—accepting that the rebalance is intended to create new forms of engagement across the board—and argue that because of its desire to perpetuate U.S. regional dominance, the entire rebalance is tainted and should be abandoned. It's a shrewd strategy that is intended to seize the moral high ground, put Washington on the defensive, and put regional governments on notice that there is no neutrality when it comes to responding to U.S. overtures.

Regional governments also face constraints in meeting the requirements of existing institutions, such as the over 1,000 annual ASEAN-related meetings each year. This is an extraordinary drain on resources for any bureaucracy. New financial constraints increase the costs of participation in ASEAN-centred institutions and the opportunity costs. In this environment, the ADMM-Plus, like any other commitment, must show results. The ADMM-Plus needs both a vision and benchmarks. Neither the vision nor the benchmarks should be overly ambitious, but they should be realistic and provide a standard to mark progress. An open-ended process, devoid of such markers, risks frustration and eventual irrelevance.

Brad GLOSSERMAN *is Executive Director of the Pacific Forum CSIS in Honolulu, a non-profit, foreign policy research institute affiliated with the Center for Strategic and International Affairs (CSIS) in Washington, D.C.*

U.S. Participation in the ADMM-Plus: An Exception in the U.S. Rebalance to Asia

Evan Resnick

The ADMM-Plus is an exception that proves the rule in the Barack Obama administration's policy of rebalancing towards the Asia Pacific. The United States' participation in the ADMM-Plus, which was inaugurated in 2010 as a regional consultative forum for the defence ministers of the 10 ASEAN states plus the United States, China, Japan, Australia, India, South Korea, New Zealand and Russia, represents a gesture aimed at enhancing Washington's constructive engagement with China, even if at the margins. By contrast, however, several other initiatives undertaken by the United States under the aegis of the rebalance collectively make little sense other than as a nascent effort to isolate China and stunt its geopolitical expansion.

Laying the Foundations for Containment

The core elements of the rebalance appear to be the opening moves in an effort to contain China. Militarily, the United States has deployed Marines to Australia, dispatched Littoral Combat Ships to Singapore, and engaged in intensified defence cooperation with its formal allies and other regional partners. Additionally, the Department of Defense has pledged to recalibrate its distribution of naval capabilities between the Atlantic and Pacific theatres by the year 2020, from a 50-50 split to a 60-40 split favouring the latter. These initiatives followed on the heels of the administration's early 2010 announcement of a US$6.4 billion sale of advanced weaponry to Taiwan.

The United States has also pursued a more assertive diplomatic posture in Southeast Asia. The most high-profile initiative in this regard has been its constructive engagement of the reformist Thein Sein regime in Myanmar, exemplified by President Obama's highly symbolic visit to that country (as well as Cambodia) in the immediate wake of his November 2012 re-election. The administration has also adopted a more intrusive posture regarding the on-going maritime disputes in the South China Sea that directly contravenes China's expansive claims.

Even the economic pillar of the rebalance, the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a regional free trade zone consisting of 12 potential partner states, appears designed to exclude China. The TPP framework is restricted to countries capable of meeting high U.S. standards in areas such as intellectual property rights, labour and environmental standards, in which China lags far behind the other prospective members.

Why Containment Succeeded During the Cold War

If the rebalance actually represents an incipient attempt to contain China, it would be instructive for U.S. policymakers to carefully examine the last time that the United States sought to contain a rising peer competitor. The U.S. containment of the Soviet Union during the Cold War succeeded in large part because the United States sought above all to deter the Soviet Union from expanding into territories that Moscow was not highly motivated to conquer, namely Western Europe and Japan, but that Washington was highly motivated to defend.

America's defence commitments did not extend, however, to the countries of Eastern Europe that lay closer to the Soviet border, which would collectively become known as the East Bloc. Consequently, during the early years of the post-war era, U.S. leaders reluctantly granted the Soviets a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe.

As the Cold War unfolded, notwithstanding occasionally provocative rhetoric about "rollback" and limited efforts to cultivate relations with the peripheral East Bloc states of Yugoslavia and Romania, successive U.S. administrations acquiesced to the de facto partition of Europe. Although this decision resulted in consigning millions of East Europeans behind the Iron Curtain of repressive communist rule, it played an indispensable role in both keeping the Cold War cold and being catalyst for the eventual self-destruction of the Soviet Union.

Why This Time is Different, So Far

By contrast, the United States has increasingly denied China any room for manoeuvre in East Asia. To date, with the exception of Tibet, Washington has refused to cede Beijing a free hand even with respect to territories that Chinese leaders view as falling under Chinese sovereignty, such as Taiwan. Further, in recent years the United States has assiduously courted key states immediately adjacent to China such as Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos and India. Remarkably, China's only formal ally in the Asia Pacific is North Korea, whose erratic behaviour and economic dysfunction make it more of a strategic liability than an asset to Beijing.

The continued pursuit of this policy by the United States significantly raises the odds of a military clash with China on terms that do not favour Washington. International political history has repeatedly demonstrated that as states amass power, their quest for security compels them, at minimum, to seek enhanced control over their immediate neighbourhoods. As China continues its steep upward trajectory in wealth and military capabilities, however, its insecurities will remain acute if it continues to be hemmed in on almost all sides by a constellation of U.S. allies, friends and strategic commitments.

Territorial disputes between China and its immediate neighbours are of negligible salience to Washington but are of the highest possible salience to Beijing. The continued conjunction of an increasingly powerful China with an ever more tightly drawn U.S. defence perimeter surrounding it poses a serious risk to peace and stability in East Asia.

The Cold War case study imparts that the effective long-term containment of a rising adversary may paradoxically necessitate some accommodation of that state's most urgent security concerns. For U.S. policymakers, the challenge lies in ascertaining the precise line that differentiates the prudent assuaging of an increasingly powerful yet still highly insecure China from the imprudent appeasement of China that maintains Sino-U.S. peace at the expense of core American security interests in East Asia.

At this stage, China's relative military weakness fortuitously rules out the need for a dramatic act of appeasement similar to the cession of Eastern Europe to the much more powerful Soviet Union after World War II. Rather, in order to ameliorate the growing security dilemma between the United States and China, the Obama administration should consider de-emphasising the military dimension of the rebalance, adopting a more detached diplomatic posture regarding the maritime disputes in the East and South China Seas, and focusing its efforts on measures, such as the ADMM-Plus, that engage and reassure China, rather than isolate and threaten it.

Evan RESNICK *is an Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the United States Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore.*

China's Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific

Teng Jianqun

China's foreign policy since its founding in 1949 could be divided into three stages of evolution: (i) ideology-oriented engagement with the outside world from 1949 to 1978; (ii) trade-oriented engagement from 1979 to 2012; and (iii) a more balanced engagement in both trade and security with the outside world from 2012.

Ideology-oriented Engagement

During the period of ideology-oriented engagement, the newly established People's Republic of China (PRC) sided with the Soviet socialist bloc and exported communist ideas to some developing countries. The dominant vision of the socialist bloc at that time was to liberate the world from imperialism. China assisted the developing countries by providing both ideological and economic support. In exchange, these countries supported the PRC's bid for a seat in the United Nations in October 1971.

Trade-oriented Engagement

China's opening up and reform started from late 1978 under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, who to some extent abandoned the ideological standard to make friends with most countries and changed the direction for China's engagement with the outside world. China stopped providing ideological support for some anti-government groups, and reduced its economic support to some developing countries, including Vietnam and Albania. During this period, China normalised its relationship with not only the United States, but also Japan and South Korea. This new engagement strategy resulted in strong criticism from Albania and even a war with Vietnam in 1979.

Balanced Engagement in Security and Trade

The successful power transition in late 2012 and early 2013 marked a new era for China's engagement with the outside world. On the one hand, China has become more active in safeguarding its sovereignty and territorial integrity; on the other hand, the new leaders also prefer to have a more balanced engagement where foreign policy is concerned.

New Type of Engagement with Big Powers

The phrase, "new type of relationship among big powers," was first mentioned during former Chinese President Hu Jintao's speech at the fourth Sino-U.S. Strategic and Economic Dialogue in May 2012 in Beijing. Consequently, what new President Xi Jinping needs most at this moment is to express his ideas on administering the country. To that end, he has put forward the "China Dream."

As the two largest economies in the world, China and the United States have both been worried about the power shift between them. The national comprehensive power enhancement has given China more bargaining stake in regional affairs. At the same time, China has, to some extent, been worried about the future of the country especially after the announcement of the U.S. pivot and rebalancing strategy towards the Asia Pacific region. During the last two years of Obama's first term, the suspicion between the two sides has sharply increased. China has been worried about the disruption of its development by the United States and its allies.

The summit meeting in California early last June showed the eagerness of the two sides to communicate with each other to lay the common ground for cooperation. During the fifth round of the Strategic and Economic Dialogue held in July 2013 in Washington D.C., the special representative of President Xi Jinping, Vice-Premier Wang Yang, addressed three areas that need to be consolidated by the two sides: (i) strengthening strategic trust; (ii) enlarging the fields of cooperation; and (iii) managing or controlling the disputes between the two countries.

New Type of Engagement with Neighbouring Countries

In the last two or three years, some neighbouring countries have shown their anxiety and worry towards China. The standoff between China and the Philippines over the Huangyan Islands and the standoff between China and Japan over the Diaoyu Islands are two cases in point.

China's strong response to the state purchase of the Diaoyu Islands by the Japanese government was beyond the expectation of the Japanese leaders. From the Chinese perspective, the purchase of the Diaoyu Islands would mark a new beginning for the Japanese to permanently occupy these islands and its islets. Some Japanese conservatives insisted that Japan should deploy civil servants (policemen) on the islands and should construct permanent facilities, which would mean a complete change to the status of the dispute. China's strong response was not only to the state purchase of the islands but also to prevent the Japanese government from taking any further steps.

The Sino-North Korean relationship could also serve as a case study on China's recent engagement with Asia Pacific affairs. North Korea's third nuclear test in February 2013 further increased this momentum. Though there is strong domestic feeling that China should not abandon North Korea as a historical ally and a buffer zone, China has given a strong response to the test. The nuclear test to some extent strengthened the engagement among China, South Korea, and the United States. The relationship between China and South Korea, especially after South Korean President Park Geun-hye took office early this year, has moved into a new stage. In Northeast Asia, China-South Korean relations have been more conciliatory than antagonistic.

In conclusion, after more than 30 years of trade-oriented engagement with big powers and its neighbouring countries, China has begun to maintain a balanced engagement: safeguarding national interest while promoting trade relations with all the relevant countries.

TENG Jianqun *is Director of the Department for American Studies and a Senior Research Fellow at the China Institute of International Studies.*

China's New Foreign Policy: A Response to the U.S. Rebalance to Asia

Pang Zhongying

Since the launch of the "pivot" or "rebalance" in the first term of the Barack Obama administration, China has been concerned about the United States' new strategy in Asia. It is widely believed in China that the major target of the U.S. rebalance is China.

The United States' strategy to manage long-term developments in Asia, particularly China's transformation towards a truly great power regionally and globally, is the most important factor in shaping China's new foreign policy.

China realises that it is necessary to seek new approaches to effectively respond to the U.S. rebalance. Accordingly, Beijing has decided to use a new foreign policy doctrine entitled "a new type of great power relations" with existing and emerging great powers, including the United States, to deal with the new geo-strategic challenges. Following the decision made before the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in November 2012, China now practices the "new type of great power relations" bilaterally, regionally and globally.

On the one hand, the "new type of great power relations" is not new as it signals the continuity of existing Chinese foreign policy, set by Deng Xiaoping's famous doctrine during 1989-1992 that listed a number of "no"s and "non-"s including "not challenging the United States' primacy in the world." By offering the "new type of great power relations," China wants to reassure others in the Asia Pacific that Deng's doctrine still remains.

On the other hand, the "new type of great power relations" represents changes or early changes in Chinese foreign policy. After at least three decades of growth towards a modernised nation, today's China asks others to fully respect its great power status in a changed international system.

However, the prospects of the Chinese offer of the "new type of great power relations" are uncertain.

The United States neither agrees with nor fully endorses China's "new type of great power relations" to address the extreme importance of Sino-U.S. cooperation. In the first Xi-Obama summit in California in early June 2013, the United States said that it could have a "new model of great power cooperation" with China. China wants cooperation rather than confrontation to govern Sino-U.S. relations.

The responses of the United States' allies in Asia to China's "new type of great power relations" are complex. It is unlikely that Washington's allies, particularly Japan, would accept a Sino-U.S. partnership based on the "new type of great power relations" when China's call for a new type of relationship with the United States would equal, or even override, alliance ties. The fact that China is the biggest trading partner of Washington's Asian allies complicates the regional alliance system led by the United States.

It is clear that China's role in the Asian regional security architecture is becoming indispensable.

Towards a New Chinese Foreign Policy

China knows that its proposal of "a new type of great power relations" is not sufficient to cope with the U.S. rebalance. China has to consider its own "rebalance" strategy to Asia, which should not just be reactive, but also innovative.

With the developments in Chinese domestic politics, the growing Chinese presence around the globe, the uncertainties in Sino-U.S. ties, as well as other factors, a new foreign policy of China is inevitably emerging.

Domestically, there have been a lot of proposed strategies for a new Chinese foreign policy. Among them, the "Westward" (Xi Jin) strategy is worthy of mention. Professor Wang Jisi of Peking University argues that as the United States rebalances to Asia, China should establish and enhance its presence in Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. In Wang's perspective, the "West" goes beyond the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation region.

In practice, the efforts of forging a new Chinese foreign policy are apparent. ASEAN, Central Asia, South Asia and the Korean Peninsula have become China's top priorities. In 2013, while top Chinese leaders including Premier Li Keqiang visited a number of Asian nations, China received several key Asian leaders including Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang, South Korean President Park Geun-hye and Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. I interpret these actions as elements of the Chinese version of "rebalance" to Asia.

No doubt, China faces a number of uncertainties and difficulties in re-organising its relations with Asia, but China also has advantages in this area. One of the advantages is the interdependence between China and the other countries.

Creating Positive Sino-U.S. Relations?

Foreign policy-making is a process by which state actors act, react and interact. The rise of China invited the U.S. rebalance, which led to China's complex responses and actions. China's "new type of great power relations" is a great offer of a strategic opportunity to the United States and Asia. The United States should send out more positive signals to make the Chinese offer possible.

Thanks to the U.S. rebalance, China is revising its Asia policy. There would be a profound change in China's relations with Asia and beyond in the next couple of years. If Washington misinterprets China's regional intentions, however, there would be more tough rebalancing acts by the United States against China.

Two interesting questions arise: Will China's proposal for a "new type of great power relations" create a positive atmosphere for Sino-U.S. relations? Alternatively, will China's response to the U.S. rebalance, such as the "Westward" strategy, lead to further tensions with the United States?

PANG Zhongying *is a Professor of International Political Economy at the Renmin University of China (RUC). He was a Visiting Senior Fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore.*

Australia's Defence Diplomacy: Presumptive Engagement Revisited?

Brendan Taylor

Defence engagement is not a new enterprise for Australia. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Australia funded a range of cooperative defence activities with a number of countries in Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines) and in the Southwest Pacific (Papua New Guinea and a number of the South Pacific Islands). In the 1970s, Australia conducted military exercises with Malaysia and Singapore under the auspices of the Five Power Defence Arrangements.

Starting in the late 1980s, and spearheaded by Australia's activist Labour Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, Canberra embraced a philosophy known as "common security" which involved the search for security "with" states in the region rather than "against" them. Central to this vision was the use of policy instruments and approaches residing "in the border-zone between defence and diplomacy." By the mid-1990s, Australia was exercising more with the key ASEAN players than they were with one another.

Even against that backdrop, international defence engagement has been given especially strong emphasis in Australia's May 2013 Defence White Paper. This document describes Australia's defence engagement as "both a strategic necessity and a strategic asset." It asserts that Canberra "will continue to take a leading role" in the ADMM-Plus. It outlines how Australia "will direct increasing efforts to the development of deeper defence cooperation, bilateral and multilateral exercises and other forms of defence engagement with our neighbours."

Three factors appear at play for the renewed emphasis given to international defence engagement in Australia's new Defence White Paper.

First, it needs to be seen as part of a larger, longstanding effort to avoid Australia's marginalisation and potential exclusion from Asia's evolving security order. The Defence White Paper acknowledges Canberra's acute sense of insecurity here: "Seizing opportunities to build deeper partnerships will be important because competition for access and influence will be greater, and consideration of Australia's interests and views less assured." Kevin Rudd's ill-fated June 2008 Asia Pacific community proposal was driven in part by similar fears. Somewhat ironically, its unintended consequence was to alienate Australia from nonplussed Southeast Asian neighbours. The Defence White Paper's renewed emphasis on defence engagement might also thus be seen as part of an on-going effort to repair that damage.

Second, Australia's renewed emphasis on international defence engagement can be seen as a response to the uncertainties associated with geostrategic change. It is no coincidence that Australia's last major push in the area of international defence engagement coincided with the ending of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Today, international defence engagement is described in the 2013 Defence White Paper as "a critical component of the Government's approach to managing the strategic transformation occurring in our region."

As have others in the region, Australia has embraced a hedging strategy in the face of China's rise. On the one hand, Canberra is engaging with Beijing as evidenced by the announcement in April 2013 of a new Sino-Australian strategic partnership that will involve annual leader-level dialogues, annual ministerial-level Foreign and Strategic Dialogues and Strategic Economic Dialogues, and annual working levels talks between the Australian Department of Defence and the People's Liberation Army.

Yet Canberra's renewed emphasis on international defence engagement with Southeast Asia can also be read as part of an attempt to shield Australia from the geopolitical machinations that China's rise has the potential to create further North. As the Defence White Paper observes, "the archipelago to Australia's north shapes our strategic geography. Denying an adversary our air and sea approaches in the archipelago is vitally important for deterring and defeating attacks on Australian territory … As Indonesia comprises much of this archipelago, Australia's strong partnership with Indonesia

remains our most important regional strategic relationship and the partnership continues to deepen and broaden in support of our significant shared interests."

Third, Canberra's enthusiasm for international defence engagement needs to be viewed in the context of growing pressures on the Australian defence budget. At approximately 1.5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), the Australian defence budget is currently at its lowest levels since 1938. The 2013 Defence White Paper announced an aspiration to return Australian defence expenditure to 2 per cent of GDP as and when fiscal conditions permit. No timeframe is specified here, however, and few commentators expect to see defence spending increasing anytime soon. Interestingly, during the early 1990s Australia's declining defence budget also provided further impetus for Canberra's growing interest in international defence engagement.

While reasons for the intensification in Australia's international defence engagement seem clear, its likely consequences are far less certain. Early indications point towards somewhat incoherent, potentially contradictory outcomes, in view of Australia's strategic alliance with the United States.

Almost immediately following the announcement of Australia's new strategic partnership with China, for instance, reports emerged that an Australian warship was embedded and conducting military exercises with the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Japan. Likewise, little analytical attention seems to have been given to how Canberra's deepening ties with Jakarta will play throughout Southeast Asia and how these might impinge upon Canberra's efforts to engage with this broader sub-region. As Tim Huxley of the International Institute for Strategic Studies has cautioned, "Canberra should not neglect its other defence relationships in Southeast Asia as these provide crucial depth to regional engagement and also a hedge against any future complications or cooling ties with Jakarta."

Against that backdrop, in their seminal 1996 study, Desmond Ball and Pauline Kerr criticised Australia's approach to international defence engagement on the grounds that it was unduly "presumptive." In their terms:

> Australia does not have a strategy for Asia-Pacific security—i.e. a clear and coherent set of policies, balanced objectives, and means of implementation which are carefully tailored to the political and resource constraints. Rather, Australia has a high level of professed commitment to a set of policies which have been articulated in varying degrees of detail, but the connections between these policies have been sketched only in outline and contain both conceptual tensions and potential policy dilemmas. In this respect Australia's policy of security engagement is quite presumptive.

Almost two decades on, the aforementioned contradictions in Australia's approach to its international defence engagement suggest that this critique continues to resonate.

Brendan TAYLOR *is an Associate Professor and Head of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University.*

India's Strategic Engagement in the Asia Pacific: The Role of the ADMM-Plus

Anit Mukherjee

India has been a strong supporter of the ADMM-Plus, which held its inaugural session in Hanoi in 2010. The promise and concept of the ADMM-Plus, with its emphasis on a consensus-based multilateral approach to security issues, plays well into India's overall diplomatic and strategic engagement towards the region. This engagement supports the cooperative security architecture that is being driven by its ASEAN partners. Although the ADMM-Plus is only three years old, it has already brought together the militaries of different countries for unique, multilateral initiatives, and Indian sentiments toward it are overwhelmingly positive. Significantly, unlike with some other multilateral exercises, domestic political opinion is supportive of this initiative. This commentary examines India's approach towards the ADMM-Plus and explores four specific issues concerning its attitude towards the U.S. rebalancing, efficacy of the emphasis on non-traditional security, the complementarity of multilateral and bilateral relations, and its overall strategic engagement.

First, given that India's engagement with the region is independent of U.S. policy, the rebalance should, officially, not affect India's policy. As long as peace and tranquillity prevail in the region, India does not have an opinion on bilateral issues between the United States and its partner nations. However, in private, most Indian strategists welcome this shift in U.S. policy. Such sentiments reflect a remarkable geopolitical development as historically, India's policy has been to keep great powers away from its neighbourhood. The fact that India has no problems with the U.S. rebalance to the region reflects the transformation in the bilateral relationship. In turn, U.S. officials have described India, at different times, as the "lynchpin" and the "key ally" for U.S. strategy towards Asia. There is also another sentiment in New Delhi that the U.S. rebalance may complicate regional security and lead to unforeseen developments. For instance, it may provoke nations to undertake actions detrimental to regional peace and security. These fears are not unique to India and reflect the dilemma faced by other countries—within and outside the region. Regardless of such fears, India's own strategic engagement, at both the bilateral and multilateral levels, is not affected by the U.S. rebalance to the region.

Second, India does not have an official position on whether regional security cooperation should move from non-traditional to traditional security issues. However, most would argue that to achieve its goal of creating a stable, peaceful and cooperative security architecture, the ADMM-Plus would have to deal with traditional security issues. The emphasis on non-traditional security issues for the initial exercises was entirely appropriate as this gave an opportunity to participating nations to engage with each other under a cooperative framework. This was then an essential confidence building measure, aimed at assuaging all countries that the ADMM-Plus is not designed to threaten any one nation. But militaries, by design, are primarily meant to deal with traditional security issues and at some point this will have to be addressed by the ADMM-Plus. Not doing so might run the risk of making this organisation irrelevant to the emerging geopolitics of the region. Hence, it is not infeasible that some ASEAN countries may be tempted to engage on a bilateral or multilateral basis to ensure their legitimate security needs are met. Understandably, this will not be easy to do but a decision on this appears to be an important evolutionary step for the ADMM-Plus.

Third, India views that bilateral and multilateral engagement strategies are entirely complementary. Hence, while it takes part in exercises conducted by the ADMM-Plus, it also maintains and emphasises its bilateral relationships with all the ASEAN countries. In addition, India also hosts multilateral exercises in the Indian Ocean region that include a number of ADMM-Plus members. In 2012, Exercise Milan was held which involved 13 participating countries including Singapore, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. This indicates that India values both bilateral and multilateral engagements. However, there is a price associated with trying to do too much. Hectic bilateral and multilateral engagements place an enormous demand on different bureaucracies including the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Defence and the armed forces. As bureaucratic attention, capacity and, perhaps most importantly, military resources are finite, Indian policymakers have to prioritise their engagement. This can have an unintended consequence of being misunderstood

as a lack of strategic attention and interest. Indian officials have tried to push back against this narrative, but at times, bilateral and multilateral engagements suffer. While this has not affected India's engagement with the ADMM-Plus so far, it has to be kept in mind for the future. One manner of doing so, if it is not already being done, is to consult widely while scheduling meetings, events and exercises.

Overall, the ADMM-Plus plays an important role in India's strategic engagement policy. India's "Look East" policy had originally been imagined as a transformation in bilateral ties with individual ASEAN countries. While bilateral relationships are still valued by India, increasingly it has been comfortable and supportive of engaging at the multilateral level. Towards that end, the ADMM-Plus is an initiative that is highly valued in India and enjoys widespread support with the hope that it may be able to create an effective security architecture. At the same time, India is aware of rising strategic tensions due to competing territorial claims in the region. According to some, these developments are even affecting ASEAN unity. Ultimately, India's views of the ADMM-Plus will be dependent on the strategic weight, direction and prominence of this organisation. And Indian officials are keenly tracking its evolution.

Anit MUKHERJEE *is an Assistant Professor with the South Asia Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore.*

The U.S. Rebalancing and Indonesia's Strategic Engagement

Ristian Atriandi Supriyanto

The U.S. "pivot" or "rebalancing," announced by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in November 2011, aims to shift the focus of U.S. strategic attention towards Asia. The rebalancing is essentially a U.S. response to Asia's growing economic, diplomatic, and security heft, enabled by increased linkages between the Indian and Pacific Oceans—the Indo-Pacific. Through the rebalancing, Washington seeks to increase its attention, resources, and influence in the region. Located at the crossroads of the Indo-Pacific rim, how should Indonesia respond?

The U.S. Rebalancing

Although the U.S. rebalancing is multifaceted, its military dimension seems to be the most transformational. It has called for increased regional presence of U.S. military forces, which includes the rotational deployments of 2,500 U.S. Marine Corps in Darwin, Australia, as well as the transfer of 60 per cent of U.S. naval assets to the Pacific by 2020. Deployments of these assets will see increased U.S. military presence in Singapore and Australia.

With the rebalancing, Indonesia's global and regional role has also become more critical for the United States. As the world's largest Muslim nation and third largest democracy, Indonesia presents a potential model of development strategy that the United States could leverage to engage other countries. Indonesia is also quite influential in key regional architectures, such as the ARF, the East Asia Summit, and the ADMM-Plus. Having Jakarta as a close partner, then, would enhance Washington's clout within ASEAN-centred architectures. Most importantly, the Indonesian archipelago hosts three critical maritime chokepoints through which pass half the world's seaborne trade, namely the Straits of Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok. Maintaining a friendly power in control over these chokepoints could guarantee Washington's commercial and military freedom of navigation, as well as unfettered access, throughout the Indo-Pacific rim.

Indonesia's Reaction

Despite Washington's assurances, Jakarta's initial reaction to the U.S. rebalancing was cautious at best. While welcoming Washington's deeper diplomatic engagement in regional architectures, Jakarta was concerned that the military dimension of the rebalancing could trigger misunderstanding and miscalculation with countries that are suspicious of an increased U.S. military presence, like China. However, Indonesia's reaction is actually quite mixed.

Some view the U.S. Marine Corps in Darwin as a blatant disregard of Indonesia's security concerns, considering that they are deployed close to the restive Papua region without effective consultation with Jakarta. Having been traumatised by U.S.-supported secessionist rebellions in Sumatera and Sulawesi in 1950-1955, Indonesia is deeply concerned about the possibility of foreign military support for the separatist movement in Papua, the Papua Freedom Organisation. U.S. forces in Australia could be deployed to Papua in a humanitarian intervention mission to protect Papuan civilians, as well as to restore law and order, or to safeguard U.S. nationals, property, and interests in Papua, should a chaotic situation arise.

Others observe that the rebalancing actually provides wider opportunities for Jakarta to cultivate closer security ties with Washington. During his visit to Darwin in July 2012, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono proposed that the U.S. Marines there could assist regional militaries, including China, in HADR training and operations. Some pundits interpreted Yudhoyono's Darwin visit as a signal of Indonesia's tacit understanding and approval for increased U.S. presence in Australia. However, questions linger over whether Indonesia's Western-friendly stance, and benign views toward rebalancing, will continue after Yudhoyono leaves office in 2014. A more nationalistic Indonesian president and administration would likely be more cautious and reluctant, although not necessarily more antagonistic, toward closer military engagement with Washington.

Strategic Engagement

Notwithstanding its security concerns, Jakarta seems to benefit from the U.S. rebalancing. Jakarta exploits the U.S. rebalancing as an opportunity to enhance bilateral ties with Washington, and uses it as a leverage to strategically engage with other countries. In November 2010, Indonesia and the United States signed a comprehensive partnership that, among others, oversees enhanced security cooperation. Apart from resuming full military personnel exchanges, the United States granted Indonesia US$57 million worth of integrated maritime surveillance system in 2011 to monitor the Straits of Malacca and Makassar, US$2.2 million to enhance training capacity of the newly formed Indonesian Peacekeeping Centre, and most notably, 30 F-16 combat aircrafts, along with Apache helicopters and Javelin anti-tank missiles, to boost Indonesia's military capability.

While cultivating closer ties with Washington, Indonesia is also leveraging on partnerships with other countries to reduce reliance on U.S. arms imports—based on lessons learnt from the embargoes imposed in 1991 and 1999—as well as to gain favourable terms by hedging between the major powers. For example, China and Indonesia have begun maritime security cooperation in naval armaments and surveillance systems. Beijing has also offered Jakarta US$157 million worth of coastal surveillance systems to be placed along the Straits of Karimata, Sunda, and Lombok. With South Korea, too, Indonesia has defence industry cooperation, which includes the sales of warships and military aircraft. With India, Indonesia has agreed to joint training and maintenance of combat aircraft, and look into the possibility of missile technology cooperation.

Multilaterally, Indonesia's strategic engagement is viewed through the lens of "dynamic equilibrium," (DE) as championed by Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa. DE essentially seeks to encourage the participation of as many major powers as possible in regional architectures so that none of them can dominate the agenda. By keeping them diplomatically engaged, Jakarta and ASEAN could leverage its influence to remain in the driver's seat of regional security architectures and determine common areas for cooperation, such as ADMM-Plus cooperation in non-traditional security issues. For example, Indonesia could raise its regional profile by hosting ADMM-Plus multinational exercises in the Indonesian National Defence Forces' Peacekeeping Centre in Bogor, West Java.

Jakarta could also utilise the ADMM-Plus platform to moderate the effect of U.S. rebalancing and overcome potential misunderstandings in the region. For example, in June 2013, Indonesia and Australia conducted an HADR table-top exercise, HADREX13, at Robertson Barracks in Darwin which also involved the U.S. Marine Rotational Force. Based on a similar arrangement, Jakarta could propose to co-host ADMM-Plus exercises with Australia and the United States to be held in Darwin. Through this approach, Jakarta could increase its profile in regional architectures, while benefiting more from closer military cooperation with Washington.

Ristian Atriandi SUPRIYANTO *is an Associate Research Fellow with the Maritime Security Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore. He was a researcher at the Center for East Asian Cooperation Studies (CEACoS), University of Indonesia.*

The ADMM-Plus: A View from Japan

Bhubhindar Singh

Japan has probably adopted the most proactive measures in support of the U.S. rebalancing strategy towards Asia since it was announced in November 2011. In light of China's increase assertiveness in the East China Sea dispute and North Korea's repeated destabilising actions, Japan's leadership under previous Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko and present Prime Minister Abe Shinzo have articulated support for the rebalancing strategy in a sustained way.

One visible area has been Japan's strengthened strategic cooperation with Southeast Asia—a sub-region whose importance has risen in the rebalancing strategy. Though strategic engagement has strengthened overall, Japan's cooperation in the area of maritime security has been notable. Japan signed strategic partnerships with Vietnam and the Philippines, provided capacity-building assistance to East Timor and the Philippines and provided equipment to boost capabilities of other Southeast Asian states.

Complementing the bilateral measures, Japan has also stressed the importance of strategic engagement at the multilateral level, such as the ADMM-Plus meeting. The ADMM-Plus is the first ASEAN-centred meeting that is exclusively meant for defence ministers/officials of ASEAN and its dialogue partners. Though convened only once so far (October 2010), the ADMM-Plus has become an important platform for defence officials to strengthen security and defence cooperation, and work towards the peace and stability of the Asia Pacific region.

Japan and the ADMM-Plus

The following discussion on Japan's perspectives and expectations of the ADMM-Plus is based on 30 interviews conducted during a three-month period (1 September-30 November 2012) of officials from Japan's Ministry of Defense (MOD), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), former officials from MOD and MOFA, and academics from think tanks and universities.

Japan fully supports the ADMM-Plus meeting/process. It is regarded as an important basis for regional stability. Though the ARF and the Shangri-La Dialogue have contributed positively to regional security dialogue, the ADMM-Plus meeting is special as it is a Track 1 meeting exclusively for defence officials. It is important that the defence officials (both civilian and uniformed officials) have their own forum that contributes to the discussions on regional stability.

From a national interest perspective, the ADMM-Plus enables Japan to:

1. Promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation with other countries, especially in terms of strengthening defence links and exchanges with ASEAN and the dialogue partners.
2. Contribute to discussions on regional stability and key issues affecting the region.
3. Promote transparency and sharing of information between member states.
4. Share knowledge and expertise in humanitarian issues, joint exercises and military medicine.
5. Ensure the strong engagement of the United States in the regional security architecture, thereby reinforcing U.S. presence in the region. It enables defence officials from Japan and other member states to engage U.S. defence officials and facilitate the strengthening of trilateral security cooperation among U.S.-Japan-Australia and U.S.-Japan-South Korea.
6. Engage China to manage regional challenges, in which Japan is particularly interested because of the involvement of China. Japan sees the involvement of and support shown by China as a strong point of the ADMM-Plus. This is particularly important in the context of recent reservations expressed by China towards the Shangri-La Dialogue. Japan is concerned about China's economic and military rise, and more recently with its perceived "aggressive" behaviour in the domain of maritime security, particularly in the East China Sea and South China Sea. In regard to China, the ADMM-Plus would allow Japan to: (i) address concerns related to the rapid expansion of Chinese military modernisation, and hopefully reveal or clarify Chinese intentions; (ii) build

military links and diplomatic channels with China in both bilateral and multilateral terms; and (iii) build cooperation with other law-abiding participating countries to ensure stability in the domain of maritime security and open and safe sea lanes, with particular reference to the South China Sea, East China Sea, Indian Ocean and the seas around Australia.

Japan perceives that the cooperation within the ADMM-Plus process could progress in the area of non-traditional security with a special focus on HADR efforts, which could materialise in the form of joint training between member states. According to a former MOFA official, member states could also work on coming up with measures to prevent conflicts/contingencies in the region, such as mutually agreed limits for each military to manoeuvre in the sea and airspace, which is important to avoid misunderstandings.

Though there was strong support, the expectations expressed by the interviewees of the ADMM-Plus process were muted. The reasons for this were:

- The ADMM-Plus process/meeting is new. Discussions have progressed on cooperation in HADR operations. Nevertheless, these discussions are still in the preliminary phase and it would be difficult for this meeting to address the key strategic challenges facing the region.
- There were questions on whether the ADMM-Plus meeting is the right forum to discuss security cooperation. The reason is because these issues do not just involve the defence ministry but the foreign ministry. Hence, the 2+2 and other meetings should complement this meeting.
- There were questions on whether the ADMM-Plus meeting would be able to function effectively within the existing regional architecture. This concern is related to the complementarity of this meeting with other more advanced Track 1 meetings involving ministers from other ministries.
- Some interviewees raised the challenge of keeping China interested in the meeting/process.

Implications

Based on the above discussion, Japan strongly supports the ADMM-Plus meeting/process. Despite the challenges, this meeting is regarded as an important and positive addition to the regional security architecture by the Japanese security policymaking elite. The main point is that the ADMM-Plus is not a "magic wand" to resolve the key security challenges of the region but one approach to strengthen confidence-building between Japan and the member states and address the key strategic challenges facing the region.

From the Japanese perspective, it is important that this Track 1 meeting receives strong support and participation from all members, and ASEAN's central role in this meeting is maintained. Japan will play its part through strong active strategic engagement with the region both bilaterally and multilaterally. This was reflected in the title of the speech delivered by Japan's Defence Minister Onodera Itsunori at the 12th Shangri-La Dialogue—"Defending National Interests, Preventing Conflict." An active and strong Japan will be welcomed by the region.

Bhubhindar SINGH *is an Assistant Professor with the Multilateralism and Regionalism Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore.*

About the ADMM-Plus

The ADMM-Plus, inaugurated in October 2010, comprises the Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN member states, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as the eight Dialogue Partners, Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, South Korea and the United States. The ADMM-Plus is scheduled to meet once every two years. In between it holds periodic meetings of senior officials and Experts' Working Groups (EWG), which focus on five areas of non-traditional security—maritime security, counter-terrorism, HADR, military medicine and peacekeeping operations.

No.	Event	Venue	Dates
1	1st ADMM-Plus	Hanoi, Vietnam	12 October 2010
2	ASEAN-Plus Defence Senior Officials' Meeting (ADSOM-Plus) Working Group (WG)	Dalat, Vietnam	5-8 December 2010
3	ADSOM-Plus WG	Surabaya, Indonesia	24 February 2011
4	ADSOM-Plus	Yogyakarta, Indonesia	29 April 2011
5	1st ADMM-Plus EWG on Maritime Security	Perth, Australia	19-20 July 2011
6	1st ADMM-Plus EWG on Military Medicine	Singapore	28-30 July 2011
7	1st ADMM-Plus EWG on Counter-terrorism Meeting and Workshop	Makassar, Indonesia	19-20 September 2011
8	1st ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR	Beijing, China	3-5 November 2011
9	1st ADMM-Plus EWG on Peacekeeping Operations Meeting and Seminar on the Legal Aspects of Peacekeeping Operations	Wellington, New Zealand	21-23 November 2011
10	2nd ADMM-Plus EWG on Maritime Security	Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia	8-10 February 2012
11	ADSOM-Plus WG	Phnom Penh, Cambodia	23 February 2012
12	2nd ADMM-Plus EWG on Counter-terrorism Meeting and ADMM-Plus Counter-terrorism Exercise Initial Planning Conference (IPC)	Washington, D.C., United States	3-5 April 2012
13	ADSOM-Plus	Siem Reap, Cambodia	26 April 2012
14	2nd ADMM-Plus EWG on Peacekeeping Operations Meeting and Regional Capabilities Workshop	Manila, Philippines	25-29 June 2012
15	2nd ADMM-Plus EWG on Military Medicine Table-Top Exercise (TTX)	Tokyo, Japan	17-20 July 2012
16	2nd ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR	Hanoi, Vietnam	7-10 August 2012
17	ADMM-Plus HADR / Military Medicine Exercise IPC	Brunei Darussalam	28-29 August 2012
18	3rd ADMM-Plus EWG on Maritime Security and TTX	Langkawi, Malaysia	3-7 September 2012

No.	Event	Venue	Dates
19	3rd ADMM-Plus EWG on Peacekeeping Operations Meeting and Regional Workshop on Operational Challenges Facing United Nations Peacekeeping Operations	Sentul, Indonesia	5-9 November 2012
20	4th ADMM-Plus EWG on Maritime Security	Sydney, Australia	26-28 November 2012
21	ADMM-Plus HADR / Military Medicine Exercise Middle Planning Conference (MPC)	Singapore	21-25 January 2013
22	ADSOM-Plus WG	Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam	7 February 2013
23	ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Field Exercise (FTX) IPC	Sydney, Australia	14 February 2013
24	3rd ADMM-Plus EWG on Counter-terrorism and ADMM-Plus Counter-terrorism Exercise Final Planning Conference (FPC)	Jakarta, Indonesia	11-13 March 2013
25	ADMM-Plus EWG Military Medicine Disaster Needs Assessment Course	Darwin, Australia	12-14 March 2013
26	ADSOM-Plus WG	Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam	1 April 2013
27	ADSOM-Plus	Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam	4 April 2013
28	ADMM-Plus EWG Workshop on Peacekeeping Operations Force Generation Issues	Wellington, New Zealand	8-11 April 2013
29	ADMM-Plus HADR / Military Medicine Exercise FPC and Site Visit	Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam	15-19 April 2013
30	5th ADMM-Plus EWG on Maritime Security and ADMM-Plus Maritime Security FTX MPC	Penang, Malaysia	27-30 May 2013
31	ADMM-Plus HADR / Military Medicine Exercise	Brunei Darussalam	16 - 20 June 2013
32	ADMM-Plus Maritime Security FTX FPC	Sydney, Australia	27 June 2013
33	ADMM-Plus Counter-terrorism Exercise Final Site Survey	Sentul, Indonesia	13-15 August 2013
34	2nd ADMM-Plus	Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam	29 August 2013
35	ADMM-Plus Counter-terrorism Exercise	Indonesia	7-13 September 2013
36	6th ADMM-Plus EWG on Maritime Security and ADMM-Plus Maritime Security FTX	Sydney, Australia	28 September-01 October 2013
37	3rd ADMM-Plus EWG on Military Medicine	Singapore	9-11 October 2013

Sources:

"ADMM and ADMM-Plus Calendar of Events," ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, last updated 26 February 2013, https://admm.asean.org/index.php/events.html.

"Past Meetings and Events (2006 - 2012)," ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting, last updated 18 June 2013, https://admm.asean.org/index.php/events/past-meetings-and-events.html.

About the Multilateralism and Regionalism Programme

The RSIS Multilateralism and Regionalism Programme conducts advanced, cutting-edge research, networking and teaching/training in and on cooperative multilateralism and regionalism in the Asia Pacific. Since its inception in 2002, the Programme's output has contributed to the systematic accumulation of scholarly and policy-based knowledge on multilateralism and regionalism. Its agenda covers trans-regional, regional and sub-regional arrangements such as APEC, ASEAN, ASEAN-Plus-Three, ARF, ADMM, ADMM-Plus, East Asia Summit, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Six Party Talks, as well as non-official networks such as the Shangri-La Dialogue and Track 2 processes. The Programme has been funded by international foundations such as the Sasakawa Peace Foundations of Japan and the United States, the MacArthur Foundation of the United States, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation of Germany, and Singapore's Ministry of Defence.

About the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) is a professional graduate school of international affairs at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. RSIS' mission is to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of security studies and international affairs. Its core functions are research, graduate teaching and networking. It produces cutting-edge research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Conflict Studies, Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Area Studies. RSIS' activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia Pacific.

For more information about RSIS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg.

S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

A Graduate School of Nanyang Technological University

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University
Block S4, Level B4, Nanyang Avenue, Singapore 639798
TEL 65 6790 6982 | FAX 65 6793 2991 | EMAIL wwwrsis@ntu.edu.sg | WEBSITE www.rsis.edu.sg