

as exists with regard to the Russian or American nuclear arsenals. Such a degree of transparency would call into question the survivability of China's nuclear weapons. Accordingly, a better political climate will be necessary before China can be more transparent.²²

In other words, military transparency for China can only proceed step by step, and can never achieve the degree compared to the United States because of China's weaker military forces.²³ The purpose of transparency is to enhance confidence and trust, not to obtain unavailable information. In other words, the aim of increasing transparency should be to enhance security rather undermine it.²⁴ And transparency itself is not a panacea and should go hand-in-hand with other efforts in promoting political trust and a peaceful environment.

Asia Pacific and China's Regional Agenda

China's basic assessment of the security situation in post-Cold War Asia Pacific is a dialectic one. On the one hand, the security environment in the region is characterized as stable and peaceful, with economic development being the priority for most countries; on the other hand, there remain factors of uncertainty and sources of instability, highlighted by the recent economic crisis in the region and political and social unrest in a number of countries.²⁵ Within such contexts, the establishment of a new political order in the region, according to Chinese analysts, requires the following: (1) resolving existing conflicts and preventing new ones; (2) promoting regional arms control and disarmament; (3) establishing state-to-state relations based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence; (4) respecting each country's right to decide its own course of democratization conducive to political stability; (5) promoting regional economic cooperation and prosperity; and (6) setting up regional security dialogues based on regional specificities.²⁶

This rhetoric aside, what has really transpired over the past few years is the fact that balance of power features prominently in Chinese thinking about the post-Cold War order not by choice but out of necessity. While short on specific proposals, there seems to be a working consensus among Chinese analysts as to the preferred mechanism for managing regional security *problematique*. There is a marked emphasis on great power relations and how they may affect the contour of regional security arrangement. What have emerged in recent Chinese discussions on Asia-Pacific security are such concepts as the "new trilateral relationship" (Japan, China, and the US) replacing the Cold-War strategic triangle (the US,

²² Liu and Zheng, "Confidence-building Measures in Asia," p.7.

²³ Xia Liping, "The Evolution of Chinese Views Toward CBMs," in Krepon, ed., *Chinese Perspectives on Confidence-building Measures*, p.17.

²⁴ Luo Renshi, "On the Ways of and China's Efforts in Increasing Transparency in the Asia-Pacific Region," *International Strategic Studies* 4 (1995), pp.11-12.

²⁵ Lu Zhongwei, "Yatai anquan xingshi xiangdui wending [A Relatively Stable Asia-Pacific Security Environment]," *Liaowang [Outlook Weekly]*, no.27 (4 July 1995), pp.41-43; Liu Jingsong, "Jinrun fenbao zhongde yatai anquan [Asia-Pacific Security under the Financial Storm]," *Shijie zhishi [World Affairs]*, no.7, (1998), p.20.

²⁶ Chen Qimao, "Seeking for a New Political Order in the Asia-Pacific Region," pp.5-8.