

Chinese concerns have deep historical/cultural roots. Its own unhappy experience since the mid-19th century and the struggle to regain respect and the rightful place in the international system of nation-states makes the protection of state sovereignty a sensitive, non-negotiable issue for China. The emphasis on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and the UN Charter as the bases for building a new international order reflects at least a desire to have a more equitable international structure that reaffirms the principle of state sovereignty and has no place for hegemonism and power politics.

But there are areas where Canadian and Chinese interests converge. For instance, both share some common concerns over the issue of weaponization of outer space. The existing international treaties were negotiated over three decades ago and new regulations are urgently needed to prevent the space from being weaponized. An international framework for maintaining the outer space as a weapons-free environment would benefit human kind generations to come. The NMD and TMD systems leading to increasingly military use of space (and to weaponization) for defense purposes could (and already has caused) serious concern. China has already voiced serious concerns but has yet to elaborate specifically on what its concerns are. What is more important is not only to identify the possible negative impacts NMD and TMD can bring but also innovative thinking on what arms control alternatives can effectively address both the concerns of those threatened by the proliferation of missiles and the objections against their deployment.

The difficulty Canada faces in engaging China and hopefully influencing the latter's security perception and policy is Ottawa's credibility, as is its perceived weight in Beijing's foreign relations. While post-Cold War Canadian foreign policy, in particular under the stewardship of Lloyd Axworthy, has sought to move beyond alliance constraints and ventured into issue-based coalition building through the use of "soft power" (e.g., anti-personnel landmines; nuclear weapons policy within NATO), a case has yet to be made that Ottawa now has an independent foreign policy, even though it still enjoys the benefits of being a member of the old club. At the same time, even though Beijing may respect and indeed share some of Ottawa's views on certain issues, it nevertheless realizes that for anything to be done, the "Ottawa process" may be an exception rather than the rule in the international deal making. Innovative policy must be sought in that channels for dialogues should be maintained and further developed. In addition, new avenues must also be sought; a bold step would be to more actively engage the Chinese military through the establishment of mechanisms for regular exchanges and consultation on security matters. It is not enough just to identify issues of common interests, what is needed is to elaborate possibilities of cooperation and coordination in various international and regional arms control and security forums to seek results. Finally, a better understanding of what underline the differences in perceptions, interests, and policy choices between Canada and China is urgently needed,⁶⁸ in particular in the context of the on-going debates over the implications of China's rise as a major global

⁶⁸ Howard Balloch, "China and the 21st Century: Collision or Convergence?" *Behind the Headlines* 54:3 (Spring 1997), pp.4-9.