

weapons. In addition, negotiations should be held as soon as possible for the conclusion of a legally-binding international agreement with the above contents.”¹²

The Chinese position reflected ongoing and very serious concern as to whether space weaponization would result in the utter negation of its own modest nuclear deterrent. Also, while recommending a complete ban to the technologically advanced great powers, China declined to support an immediate prohibition of landmines: “As a country with long borders, China has to reserve the right to use APLs on its territory pending an alternative solution is found....”¹³

The 16 October 2000 white paper on defence came surprisingly close on the heels of the reportedly comprehensive white paper of 1998. The 2000 paper reiterated the importance of the RMA and the need for related adaptation in the modernization and of China’s defence structures and strategy; however, what makes this new paper so interesting is the fact that the “new security concept” was re-emphasized despite a deliberate list of intervening “negative developments” that the Chinese felt had operated at cross purposes to the overall trend towards relaxation of international conflict. The changing context required extended white paper evaluation, and it had seriously tested the new security concept, but the latter survived without serious qualification.

The 2000 report gave more emphasis to the possibility of local wars and the possible strengthening of military alliances especially in relation to the Taiwan question. The downturn in Sino-US relations was predictably blamed on “neo-interventionism, new gunboat diplomacy and neo-economic colonialism”. The UN’s charter was allegedly violated by NATO’s action in the former Yugoslavia. Arms control and disarmament progress had been adversely affected by “a certain country” (i.e., the US) for continuing in the development of systems to support the national missile defence and theatre missile defence systems. The latter was negatively correlated with US attempts to strengthen its military presence in the Asia Pacific Region and with its bilateral security relations, particularly with Japan and Taiwan.

¹² Ibid., p. 22.

¹³ Ibid., p. 22.