

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the mid-1990s the Chinese have been involved in new thinking on security that reflects the rapid development of their own national economy and their adaptation to the changing post-Cold War context of world politics, economic globalization and the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). The Chinese are now strategizing as to how to participate more effectively in globalization at the same time as they are engaged in a new political offensive to internationalize their own “new security concept”. Chinese diplomacy has pitted the latter against an “old security concept” premised in hierarchical alliances and allegedly absolute American military superiority. Chinese participation in prospective arms control cooperation has been rationalized from within this “new security concept” that emphasizes the mutual and relative character of inter-state security and rejects “absolute security”

Given the 13 June 2002 US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, and ongoing concern over the developing overlap of missile defence issues with the Taiwan issue, future Chinese arms control positions may reflect an even greater predilection towards conditionality whereby participation in specific arms control regimes is explicitly linked to the resolution of competing national interests and the bilateral advance of Sino-US relations, but this positioning continues to reflect more generally a new focus on multilateralism and multipolarity.

Despite what the Chinese term recent “negative developments”, they are likely to continue to highlight multilateralism and to press for a treaty to prohibit the weaponization of space. At the same time, the Chinese will continue to work on the gap between their technological development and their doctrinal aspirations by carefully highlighting select areas of high tech wherein they might begin to compete with the US in the new era of high-tech local war. Given that their “new security concept” continues to assume the policy primacy of national economic development, they are wary of the costs associated with a more widely construed arms race that would excessively burden the economy and possibly affect the legitimacy of the contemporary Party-State. Given this context, the notion of an enhanced “China threat” due to China’s domestic economic