

as they interpret it.

5. The Western states who have pursued the RMA in the post-Cold War era have by no means rejected arms control as a means of fostering global stability. They are concerned about the proliferation of WMD and conventional weapons. However, there appears to be a reluctance to make a link between the RMA and the WMD proliferation problem. Because they use, "conventional," indeed civilian technologies, the weapons systems associated with the RMA are for the most part considered, particularly by the United States and its allies, as outside any arms control regimes. Yet, one of the major concerns with the RMA is the possibility of an asymmetrical response by states or groups against whom RMA technologies are to be used. This in turn has contributed to efforts by the United States and its allies to deal with the WMD threat through multilateral arms control measures, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty and unilateral counter-proliferation efforts. Amongst the latter is the retention by the United States and NATO of the threat of nuclear response in the event that WMDs are used against them. Thus the West now has a new reason not to fully abandon nuclear deterrence, fear of asymmetrical responses to the RMA.
6. Nevertheless, concern about WMD is very much on the international agenda and much has been done to establish new norms. In some areas of arms control, such as with regard to conventional forces in Europe, major progress has been made.
7. What this suggests is that, despite the RMA, existing efforts to control WMD can and should be pursued while acknowledging that the future international security environment is likely to be one where *both* the RMA and arms control will present competing, but not always mutually exclusive, claims for the enhancement of international strategic and political stability.