

While the RMA may challenge established arms control regimes,³⁶ and it threatens to outstrip the political capacity of nation-states to develop politically new prospects for arms control cooperation, there is an unhelpful lag in US policy perception of, and adaptation to the potential implications of China's "new security concept" which may adversely impact on the future of arms control cooperation. It may seem bizarre that the Chinese constitute such an extraordinary challenge to overwhelming US technological superiority. Dated Cold War argument calling for containment of a high-tech China can seriously and needlessly complicate the atmospherics of arms control negotiation; and one might even consider whether the so-called "China threat" is as real as what the Chinese call the single superpower's quest for "absolute security".

Currently, the Chinese are strategizing as to how to participate most effectively in globalization and they are involved in a new political offensive to internationalize their own "new security concept". In these latter developments one might see a tantalizing new opportunity for new arms control initiatives that might well include the Chinese as responsible partners in new arms control negotiations. Despite recent "negative developments" and the significant setback relating to US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the Chinese are continuing to emphasize the need for a treaty against space weaponization. The "new security concept" offers new opportunities for cooperation with the Chinese, but the gratuitous reference to a "China Threat" and the overlap of the Taiwan issue with missile defense could potentially sour the prospects for effective Chinese participation in American-led arms control initiatives. The Chinese are likely to continue with their own selective and limited RMA while politically and diplomatically projecting their "new security concept" on to the international stage. They are not likely to accept a politically passive position in the post-ABM context of space weaponization. They are not, on the other hand, ready to engage in a costly arms race that will sacrifice their own deep aspirations for "peace and development".

³⁶ Joel Sokolsky takes the two sides of the coin at once when discusses "the susceptibility of the RMA itself to credible and verifiable arms control measures" as well as "the possible adverse impact of the RMA on existing efforts to control Weapons of Mass Destruction". See Joel Sokolsky, "The Revolution in Military Affairs and the Future of Arms Control and Verification", International Security Research and Outreach Programme, February 2001, *passim*.