

that “outer space belongs to all mankind and should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes”.⁸

The 1995 paper highlighted China’s growing interest in arms control multilateralism; however, it did not specifically cite a “new security concept”. The latter was explicitly endorsed in the 27 July 1998 “White Paper on China’s National Defence”. Economic security was again highlighted as the basis of state security. In the general context of changing world politics and in the specific regional context of the Asian financial crisis it was argued that while “geopolitical, military security and ideological factors still play a role”, the role of economic factors “are more outstanding” as countries must depend upon one another economically. While not disputing the general relevance of ideology, official Chinese policy on common development through economic cooperation seems to contemplate seriously how to adapt to the new possibilities of a neo-liberal trade agenda without sacrificing national self-determination.

The 1998 paper also carried over reference to “people’s war”, but it made explicitly new reference to “a profound reform in the military field led by the development of high-tech weapons” that would require many countries to adjust their defence policies, to reduce the scale of armaments and to pay greater attention to the quality of their armed forces. This was partly the handiwork of the new leadership of Jiang Zemin who attempted to upgrade Deng’s earlier formulation, “people’s war under modern conditions” and to settle internal debates concerning the significance of the Gulf War with a doctrinal synthesis which newly emphasized “Local Wars under Modern High-Tech Conditions”. In other words, the spreading RMA was deployed in the justification of China’s second large-scale demobilisation of the people’s army in September 1997. The emphasis on high-tech came with the reiteration of the “active defense” of the economic assets of China’s modernization as China moved from warfighting, on an internal continental basis, to a new emphasis on the protection of China’s littoral. Also, the new emphasis on waging high-tech local war related to the future disposition of the Taiwan question.

The modernization of the PLA was generally a matter of reducing quantity and enhancing the PLA’s technological and informational quality in the new context of rapid

⁸ Ibid., p. 29.