The Definition of a National Strategic Concept

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A strategic concept aims at providing a consensual basis for the goals, priorities, instruments and means of the nation in the political-military context in which it will find itself during the next five to ten years. It may come under different names, such as a national security strategy or concept, a security and defence concept, or as a security and defence policy. All have in common that in the modern world the notion of defence is changing and has become part of a wider notion of security. The word 'concept' gives the impression of a rather permanent document, but in fact in most cases it is subject to continuous amendment. In itself the document could be rather short, but then it would leave many questions concerning its implementation unanswered. For that reason this chapter will discuss the strategic concept in its wider meaning of security policy.

An international survey of existing strategic concepts confirms their evolving character and the need for periodic update. The US has a legal obligation to conduct a Quadrennial Defense Review every four years (the last one just published on 1 February 2010) and complement it with a Nuclear Posture Review. NATO adapted to the ending of the Cold War by agreeing Strategic Concepts in 1991 and 1999 and is expected to adopt another one in November 2010. The European Union formulated a strategic document in December 2003 under the title "A secure Europe in a better world. European Security Strategy". The People's Republic of China published six White Papers since1998, the last one appearing on 20 January 2009.

The traditional understanding of defence was the protection of the territory of the state against external aggression. Today, the threat of aggression is less than during the Cold War, but new threats have emerged, sometimes euphemistically called new risks and challenges. Largely due to the rise of fundamentalist terrorism, but also as a result of the processes of globalisation and their impact by creating common perception of world-wide problems,

we have seen a new link emerging between internal and external security. Much of the battle against terrorist activities will have to be fought by the police under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Conversely, in peace support operations the role of the military abroad resembles what the police are doing at home, but soldiers are necessary to provide protection and, when necessary, to engage in counter-insurgency operations against guerrilla type forces. In Afghanistan today NATO is fighting a new kind of war, completely different from the static frontline positions it occupied successfully during the Cold War when it feared a massive surprise attack by the Soviet Union. Insurgents, being the weaker party, adopt versions of 'asymmetric warfare', concentrating on weak spots in the tactics of their adversary and attacking him in a 'war among the people' where they are difficult to spot and to neutralise.

A second new element is the growing recognition of the link between security and development. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was leading in the argument that without a minimum of security, all development efforts would be wasted, but that in the longer term no lasting security could be obtained without sustainable development. The EU strategy stated in this connection:

> *Conflict destroys not only infrastructure, including social infrastructure. It also encourages criminality, deters investment and makes economic activity impossible.*

Both elements mentioned underline the need for a comprehensive approach towards the threats and challenges facing a country and the policies and means to deal with them. Such a broad approach has important consequences for the conduct of military missions, particularly in peace support operations. The EU strategy emphasized that no conflict could be resolved by military means only. Consequently the link between "hard" (military) power and "soft" (political and economic influence) power has become inescapable. Success of a mission in a crisis situation is possible only if both hard and soft power are going hand in hand from the beginning of an operation. Soft power alone rarely does the trick. Or, in other words soft power is effective only if hard power is not too far away.

In peacekeeping missions under the auspices of the UN we have seen a trend towards more robust action. During the Cold War UN peacekeeping was restricted to situations in which there was a cease fire in place and agreement of the parties to the despatch of the mission. Its task literally was to keep the peace when there was at least a semblance of peace. Later, as the result of the unsatisfactory mission in Bosnia Herzegovina – where there was no peace and the parties wanted to extend the area under their control – the UN resorted to 'robust peacekeeping' which meant that the mission was allowed to use force in the implementation of its mandate and not only in self-defence. An example of such a mission was the conduct of MONUC in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The possibility to use force will make a mission more credible but also more dangerous. The military profession has become more risky in comparison with the times in which soldiers were in a static position in their own country, preparing for defence against an aggression, which hopefully would never occur. Casualties increase, as we have seen in Afghanistan. Consequently, the question whether a country should participate in a peace support mission has become a political issue in which parliamentarians take serious interest.

The European Union divides peace support missions – the so-called Petersberg Missions, named after the hill near Bonn in Germany where the Western European Union first formulated them in 1992 – into the following categories:

- humanitarian missions;
- rescue missions, i.e. the evacuation of national citizens from crisis locations;
- peacekeeping (still in the limited sense as described above);
- the role of combat forces in crisis management, i.e. peace enforcement;

In December 2008 two more missions were specified:

- disarmament of combatants, as was done in Macedonia and Aceh, Indonesia;
- crisis prevention, which usually is more a political than a military task.

The Contents of a Strategic Concept

During the Cold War a strategic concept primarily was a military document, which was kept secret and formulated military responses in case of aggression. In NATO the concepts were formulated by the Military Committee and focused on defence and deterrence. Nuclear strategy and its evolution from 'massive retaliation' to 'flexibility in response' was a key part. This was in line with the original meaning of the word 'strategy' which in Greek referred to the art of the general. He should conduct his operations against the enemy in such a way as to become victorious as quickly as possible and with minimal losses. Similarly von Clausewitz, the high-priest of strategy, regarded it primarily as the conduct of a battle.

For many years the term 'doctrine' was used more often than strategy to describe "what we believe to be the best way to conduct military affairs". Today 'doctrine' is applied to the more operational execution of military tasks and – as in the US – split up according to the operations of army, navy and air force. Again, the word 'doctrine' conveys a sense of permanent truth which is not compatible with rapid changes in the security environment, the tactics to be used and the new technologies which become available. Strategy is used in a wider context, sometimes using the term "Grand Strategy" to denote its comprehensive character. In the meantime civil society also has annexed the notion of strategy: commercial firms adopt strategies to define their longer term objectives to conquer markets and the means to reach them. Political parties follow a strategy to win the next election. Ambitious individuals map out a strategy for a successful career.

In this paper we use strategy in its wider meaning, not limited to military aspects, but dealing with vital interests of the nation, their protection against a multitude of threats and challenges, and the instruments needed to safeguard them.
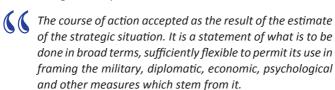
A modern strategic concept thus has multiple functions:
1. It should reflect a consensus in society about national interests and threats;
2. It should define the available options and priorities for the tasks of the uniformed services and indicate the financial framework in which they should operate;

3. It should be the basis for more detailed sectoral documents on force planning and personnel and armament policies. In other words: it should indicate the future tasks of the armed forces and how they should be organised;
4. It should serve as a tool of public diplomacy, both internally towards the own population and externally towards other players in the security environment.

In the definition of the US Department of Defense, which is followed by NATO, a strategic concept is:

> *The course of action accepted as the result of the estimate of the strategic situation. It is a statement of what is to be done in broad terms, sufficiently flexible to permit its use in framing the military, diplomatic, economic, psychological and other measures which stem from it.*

This definition is not as clear as it should be, because it moves the problem to the 'strategic situation'. Obviously this will vary according to the specific geographical location of the country concerned and its political context as well as the threats facing it and the ability to cope with them. A host of questions will have to be considered. Does the country have collective or bilateral defence agreements with other countries or does it have to rely on its autonomous capabilities? Does it adopt a formal position of neutrality? Is it wedged in between large and powerful neighbours, which may attempt to exert political or economic pressure, but also might have a mutual interest in respecting its political independence?

Security Objectives

The first step in drawing up a Strategic Concept is the description of the security situation of the country and the objectives it keeps in mind in its conduct of policy. On this work the ministries of foreign affairs and defence should be leading, but inputs will be required by the ministries of internal affairs, economic affairs and transportation and the discussion of the final version should be submitted to the Council of Ministers under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. Again, the content will depend much

on the geographical position, but some general elements can be listed as follows:

- To prevent the emergence or growth of various threats to national security;
- To uphold the territorial integrity, political independence and stability of the country;
- To defend against aggression;
- To maintain freedom of action against political, military and any other kinds of pressure;
- To protect society against assault from non-state actors;
- To preserve natural resources and other means of existence;
- To maintain access to foreign markets, e.g. by reliable transit routes to foreign ports or freedom of navigation;
- To contribute to international peace and stability and the further development of international law within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations.

The list of objectives could be further extended to include the protection of human rights, the avoidance of discrimination among ethnic groups, fair labour practices, universal education etc., but these items rather belong to the Constitution or other forms of legislation than to a strategic concept.

In Europe these objectives are implemented through multilateral organisations and alliances. NATO has a collective defence clause and comprehensive political consultations. The European Union started as an Economic Community, but gradually expanded its scope to foreign and security policy and cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs. The Treaty of Lisbon aims at making these activities more coherent, more effective and more democratic. It also includes two solidarity clauses, one in case of a terrorist attack or natural or manmade calamity and one in case of aggression. The latter is not as clear as those of NATO and the Western European Union, but has the advantage of being adhered to by all 27 member states.

NATO refrained from revising its 1999 Strategic Concept because of fundamental differences of view on the Iraq war and the US – led 'coalition of the willing'. Under President Obama and his new multilateral approach

there seems to be a new chance. In his first Quadrennial Review of February 1, 2010, he aimed at a "multi-partner world", but also wanted to keep the US as the strongest military power in the world. The review abandoned the traditional American insistence on capabilities to fight two major wars at the same time, and formulated a new doctrine which stressed the ability to engage in a series of continuing asymmetric threats and conflicts while still being able to fight and win conventional wars. The Review was accompanied by a Nuclear Posture Review and, for the first time, by a Ballistic Missile Defense Review and a Space Posture Review.

The Strategic Threats

The next step is the definition of the threats, risks and challenges facing the country. Here the ministries of defence and foreign affairs should be leading in close cooperation with the intelligence services. The ministry of internal affairs will be involved on the internal security situation.

Both NATO and the European Union have drawn up almost identical lists of the military threats, but varied on other challenges and, particularly during the George W. Bush administration, on the way to meet them. The treats with direct military implications are:

- *Terrorism:* In its Resolution 1566 of 8 October 2004 the UN Security Council defined terrorism as follows:

  Criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organisation to do or to abstain from doing any act.

  Throughout history terrorism has always been a threat, but it has acquired new proportions with the world-wide and indiscriminate fundamentalist – or even Jihadist – killings by El Qaeda and associated groups. Even that is not entirely new, for over a century ago this kind of terrorism shook Europe at the hands of the anarchist movement.

Nor are the tactics of asymmetric warfare new. What is new is the incapability of western and UN forces to cope with it. Originally trained for collective defence and later for peacekeeping between organised parties, these forces now have to deal wit a 'war among the people' where the battle lines are blurred and change from day to night. An important element in combating terrorism is the winning of the hearts and minds of the civilian population so that their support for the motives of the terrorists will dwindle.

In dealing with terrorism one does well to recognise that in itself terrorism is a method, which says little about the underlying motives or about the best way for combating it. Therefore 'war on terror' is bereft of meaning unless it is more specific about the nature of the particular brand of terrorism, its motivation and its sources of support.

○ *Weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological):* Here the international community has been active over the past forty years by concluding a number of treaties and conventions limiting proliferation and instituting systems of verification. The Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) provides for periodic review conferences. It currently is the basis for sanctions against Iran for violating its provisions, which may lead to a very tense situation in the Middle East. The Chemical Weapons Convention also has a verification regime. However, the Biological Weapons convention does not.

○ *Regional conflicts,* like the violence resulting from the dissolution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, or ethnic warfare in central Africa.

○ *Failed states, often connected with organised crime:* The inability of governments to run their own country often leads to ethnic strife, gross violence of human rights, mass killings and movement of refugees. Somalia is the starkest example of a failed state without effective governmental authority. Its failure gave rise to an unprecedented level of piracy.

The laudable initiative of former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to define a 'Responsibility to Protect' might one day break down the

absolute notion of national sovereignty and lead to a new legitimacy of interventions for humanitarian purposes in cases where there is little or no sovereign government acting. So far, however, the implementation of his initiative has been blocked by the developing countries that feared a new form of colonialism.

- *Cyber warfare,* particularly after the attack on the electronic systems of Estonia and the Chinese action against Google, which the US Director of national intelligence described as a "wake-up call to those who have not taken this problem seriously".[1] Disruption seemed fairly easy, but defending against it is difficult. Most countries already have backup systems for storing data, but are very vulnerable in the current operation of their communication and data systems. In the military field this applies to Global Positioning Systems which are used for delivering precision guided munitions.

- *Piracy at sea,* particularly in the Gulf of Aden and the waters east of Somalia, but earlier also in the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea. Piracy threatens the safe supplies of oil and other commodities and considerably raises the insurance premium for ships passing these waters.

- *The proliferation of small arms and light weapons* and the harm done by 'remnants of war'. This subject figured on the agenda of the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The EU strategy of 2003 has added a number of challenges, which do not immediately involve military means, but are relevant to economic security and/or the tasks of the police and border guards. Over time they might become security issues:

- The supply of energy through uninterrupted transit routes, either by pipeline or by sea;
- Competition for natural resources;
- Scarcity of water and food, particularly when aggravated by the effects of climate change on particular areas of the globe;
- Poverty and the spreading of disease;

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[1] Dennis Blair quoted in the *Financial Times*, 4 February 2010.

- ○ Illegal immigration;
- ○ Drugs smuggling;
- ○ Trafficking in human beings.

The Regional Context

After the end of World War II international cooperation has taken various forms, which sometimes include security aspects. Europe is by far the most organised continent with often overlapping organisations. Until the fall of the Berlin wall in November 1989 the continent was divided in two parts. The western half started a process of economic integration which took place under the security umbrella of NATO. America's military presence with substantial forces served as an effective deterrent to the massive conventional capabilities of the Soviet Union and its satellites in the Warsaw pact. After 1989 many of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe gained their independence and gradually joined both NATO and the European Union, which together made an unprecedented contribution to the stability of the region. Criteria for membership in the EU included the rule of law, pluralistic democracy and market economy. As a rules-based organisation with binding commitments reached in a process of majority voting, the European Union clearly is the most advanced international organisation. The Treaty of Lisbon, which entered into force on 1 December 2009 continued this process and took a step in combining the two strands of a communitarian system in the spheres of economics, trade, environment, justice and home affairs (with the initiating role of the European Commission and co-decision between Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, complemented by a Court of Justice to apply the rules equally throughout the Union) and the more traditional intergovernmental cooperation in the fields of foreign policy, security and defence. The relationship between the EU and NATO, however, remains a delicate one, partly because the dominating influence of the US in NATO, but also because of the differences in membership between the two organisations.

Europe-wide the Council of Europe concentrates on developing conventions and legislation societal issues. Its Court on Human Rights allows individual complaints against the conduct of governments. The Organisation for European Security and Cooperation dates back to the Final Act of Helsinki

of 1975 and has played an important role in negotiating an agreement on conventional forces in Europe. Another important function is performed by the High Commissioner for National Minorities, who has a behind-the-scene role in persuading governments to refrain from discriminatory policies. The future of the OSCE is in doubt after Russia proposed to create a new pan-European security structure.

Other continents developed their own regional organisations, like the African Union, Mercosur in Latin America, and the Association of South East Asian States (ASEAN), but none of them have reached the same level of institutional arrangements and binding commitments which characterise the European Union. Originally ASEAN focused on economic cooperation, but had a problem because except for Singapore the economies of the participating countries were similar in their reliance on exports of food and raw materials and had few complementary characteristics. Their industrial development is changing this situation and creates more interest in establishing a free trade area and perhaps even a common market. Gradually the ASEAN ministers in their meetings also discussed political issues, but the inclusion of Myanmar in the organisation made joint positions difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, the meetings of "ASEAN + 3" which included China, Japan and Korea and the meetings with "dialogue partners" US and EU have provided a useful function by enabling informal contacts.

In 1993 ASEAN took the initiative in creating the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) which deals with security issues and today has 27 members including countries from outside the region like the US and Russia and the European Union. Its purpose is twofold:

1. To foster constructive dialogue and consultations on political and security issues of common interest and concern;
2. To make significant contributions to efforts towards confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the Asia Pacific Region.

Apart from annual ministerial meetings the ARF holds meetings of senior officials, of 'experts and eminent persons', of peacekeeping experts and an inter-sessional support group continues working on confidence building measures (CBM) and preventive diplomacy, but also on disaster relief and counter terrorism cum transitional crime. The ARF is chaired by the rotating

chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee. An interesting detail in the criteria for participation is a provision on gradual expansion, which stipulates that efforts should be made to control the number of participants to a manageable level to ensure the effectiveness of the Forum. Indeed, at 27 the number has become rather large, as large as the European Union, but there the institutional structure is tighter and goes beyond an intergovernmental conference.

In the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) India is the largest country and plays an important role. In 1983 in New Delhi the Association was launched with a Charter defining its objectives, largely in the economic and social fields, but also referring to mutual trust and cooperation on matters of common interest:

- to promote the welfare of the people of South Asia and to improve the quality of life;
- to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals the opportunity to live in dignity and to realise their full potential;
- to promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among the countries of South Asia;
- to contribute to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems;
- to promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social cultural, technical and scientific fields;
- to strengthen cooperation with other developing countries;
- to strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums on matters of common interests; and
- to cooperate with international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes.

At the same time an integrated Programme of Action was launched for nine areas: agriculture, rural development, telecommunications, meteorology, health and population activities, transport, postal services, science and technology, and sports, arts and culture.

The Charter was formally adopted on 8 December 1985 by the Heads of State or Government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and

Sri Lanka. Afghanistan was added in 2005 at the behest of India. Not without difficulty a number of observers were admitted, starting with the US, the European Union and South Korea, followed later (in alphabetical order) by Australia, China, Iran, Japan, Mauritius, and Myanmar. Full membership of China is supported by Pakistan, and for Myanmar by India. Observer's status for Russia is supported by India and for Indonesia by Sri Lanka, but decisions are still pending. A permanent SAARC secretariat was established in Kathmandu in January 1987, headed by a Secretary General appointed by the Council of Ministers for a three-year term.

Initially there was little enthusiasm for signing free trade agreements, but progress was made in 1995 with a 'preferential trading agreement' based on overall reciprocity, mutuality of advantages, and step by step tax reforms. In 2004 the Agreement on the South Asian Free Trade Area was reached, aiming at zero tariffs by 2012 (and three years later for the four least developed nations, including Nepal).

SAARC has been criticised for the slow pace of economic integration of the region, but obviously the political difficulties were serious. An attempt was made to separate the economic and social issues from the more divisive political problems like the Kashmir issue or the civil war in Sri Lanka, but it was not surprising that this was not entirely possible. In any case, India and Pakistan have not yet ratified the Free Trade Area Agreement. One of the few concrete results has been the creation of a South Asian University.

After the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia tried to keep the former Soviet republics together in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) but with limited success. The newly independent countries did not want to return to Moscow's orbit. The same applied to the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), a kind of replica of NATO with a collective defence guarantee. They took more kindly to the emergence of the Shanghai Cooperation Council (SCO) which included both China and Russia and therefore posed less risk of being dominated by either one of their large neighbours. Originally the SCO seemed to have an anti-western bias by calling on NATO and the US to set a timetable for the withdrawal of their forces in the countries concerned, but this was overtaken by their concerns about terrorism. The primary security aim of the new rulers of the

Central Asian republics is the survival of their own regime against domestic challenges, which might be supported from neighbouring territories. Hence their preoccupation with the "three evils" of terrorism, separatism and extremism, which led them to conclude the Shanghai Convention of 2001 and to create a Regional Anti-Terrorism structure in 2005 with its headquarters in Tashkent. The SCO also promoted economic cooperation by establishing a Business Council and an Interbank Association and efforts to create an Energy Club continue. A large scale infrastructure project concerns a railway between Andijan, Torugart and Kashgar. Chinese interest in creating a free trade zone is being resisted by the other members. Apart from Russia these include Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Observers are Mongolia, India, Pakistan and Iran.

The Future Perspective of Regional Cooperation

The burgeoning array of multilateral groupings poses the question of redesigning the regional security architecture more effectively to avoid duplication and overlapping institutions. Similar questions are being asked in Europe. In the Asia-Pacific region the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd took a big jump in 2008 by suggesting the creation of an Asia Pacific Community (APC) by 2020 as a single organisation able to address the region's security, economic and political challenges. He stressed the necessity for effective management of the relations between China, India, Japan and the United States. In the context of the rise of the former two powers there was a need for mechanisms to cope with the likely 'strategic shocks and discontinuities' to avoid a potentially dangerous 'strategic drift'. In the words of the Strategic Survey 2009 of the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) the APC proposal is "essentially for a concert of powers to help manage the incipient regional transition to greater multipolarity".[2]

The proposal received a mixed, in some cases even frosty reception, particularly from the countries left out of the new concert, like the members of ASEAN. Many Asian leaders were more inclined to favour incremental

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[2] IISS Strategic Survey 2009 p. 71. The issue contains an interesting section "Towards a New Asian Security Architecture", p. 64 – 73.

progress over grand designs with unforeseen consequences. Moreover, the ASEAN approach had paid off by maintaining and strengthening the peaceful relations among the members, which earlier had been quite delicate and even confrontational. This was done by stressing the principles of non-interference in internal affairs and mutual respect for each other's sovereignty. The periodic meetings of ministers and senior officials had a mitigating effect on bilateral issues and prevented their escalation, like the border clashes between Thailand and Cambodia.

The Chinese Approach

On 20 January, 2009 the government of the People's Republic of China issued its sixth White Paper[3] describing the state of China's national defence in 2008. It started by saying that the security situation had improved, especially across the Taiwan straits, but also noted the growing impact of uncertainties and destabilising factors in China's external security environment. In the words of the White Paper, national defence policy placed the safeguarding of national sovereignty, security, territorial integrity and the interests of national development above all else.

In describing the elements of national defence policy the second part of the White Paper listed the all-round, coordinated and sustainable development of China's national defence and armed forces, pushing forward the quality improvement of the armed forces with informatisation as the major criterion; implementing the military strategy of active defence; pursuing a self-defensive nuclear strategy; and fostering a security environment conducive to China's peaceful development. China would never seek hegemony or engage in military expansion.

The third part defined strategic guidelines for implementing the military strategy for the new period. Its core aspects were: insistence on the principal features of defensive operations; self-defence and gaining

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[3] See International Strategic Studies, 2009, issue 3, Serial No. 93, the journal of the China Institute for International Strategic Studies, Beijing. P. 1-5 on 'China's Outlook on Comprehensive Security', and p. 62-67 on 'Views on China's National Defense White Paper in 2008'.

mastery by striking only after the enemy has struck strategically; emphasis on deterring crisis and war; giving priority to winning local wars under conditions of informatisation; making efforts to improve the capabilities of countering various security threats and accomplishing diversified military tasks; adherence to and carrying forward the concept of people's war. The military build-up should strike a balance between economic development and the requirements of national security. On nuclear strategy the White Paper says that China remains committed to the policy of no first use of nuclear weapons and pursues a self-defensive nuclear strategy and will never engage in a nuclear arms race with any other country.

Obviously these statements are of a rather general nature, but they are not dissimilar to western strategic thinking. The notion of 'ínformatisation' resembles the Revolution in Military Affairs, which dominated American policy some time ago. Equally the relationship between the state of the economy and the budget available for defence is all too familiar in the rest of the world. The White Paper carries this point a step further by arguing that China does not possess the capacity to threaten others. The average annual increase of defence expenditure (3.5 % in the period 1978-1987, 14.5 % in 1988-1997, and 15.9 % in 1998-2007) was much lower than the increase in GDP (12.5 % in 1998-2007). Moreover the modernisation level of the Chinese armed forces was relatively low and was still at the stage of semi-mechanisation with weaponry mostly of the second generation. On the issue whether a country constitutes a threat to the outside world the Paper said that it could be measured by two factors: strategic intention and military capacity. China had no strategic intention to threaten others. However, this argument could be turned around. NATO used to say that intentions could change, but capabilities constituted a lasting element in force relationships.

In any case, it remains to be seen whether these statements will reassure the neighbours of China, for the military potential of the People's Republic continues to grow substantially. It has settled the borders with most of its neighbours, most recently with Russia in the Amur region. The exceptions are the borders with India, where a short war was fought in 1962 and with Bhutan, where a long series of talks is continuing. China and India have attempted to improve their economic relations while setting the border

issue apart. In practice that proved difficult. On balance it seemed to work to the advantage of China, which could raise the pressure on the border with India every time there was another problem with India.

The Chinese outlook on comprehensive security distinguished between traditional security threats and the emerging non-traditional security problems. The traditional threats should not be neglected.

Firstly, local wars and armed conflict around the globe appeared to be characterised by "staying high in number and being relatively concentrated in area but diversified in cause".

Secondly the world's major countries had stepped up the new information-centred revolution in military affairs with constant adjustments.

Thirdly, the nuclear issue was posing as a more acute problem.

The author in International Strategic Studies summed up the Chinese position as follows:

> *China follows an independent foreign policy. We have not achieved the full reunification of the motherland, we are facing problems of secessionism and subversion, and we have not resolved all disputes over territorial sovereignty. Therefore, we need to broaden our view on security in a wider sense without neglecting traditional security problems.*

He listed the non-traditional problems as follows:

1. The rapid spread of the financial crisis;
2. The anti-terrorist campaign faces a grave situation;
3. Energy security becomes more pressing with the violent fluctuation of international oil prices;
4. The problem of food security is increasingly prominent with the fluctuation of international grain prices;
5. The problems of climate change, information security, food security and public health security are also increasingly felt.

His conclusion was that the military should, under the guidance of the comprehensive security outlook, develop the capabilities to cope with non-

traditional security threats other than war. Several examples were given such as the disaster relief in Sichuan province after the earthquake in 2008; the contribution of large numbers of officers and soldiers for security work during the Beijing Olympic Games; the active participation of the Chinese army in international peacekeeping (1952 personnel in 2009); international anti-terrorism exercises with Russia in 'Peace mission 2005' in the Vladivostok / Shandong area, and with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in 'Peace Mission 2007. In the Chelyabinjsk / Xingjian area and the planned exercise in Kazakhstan in 2010. In the naval field China had sent ships to cooperate in fighting against piracy at sea.

Chinese scholars pay much attention to the three sets of bilateral relationships within the triangle of China – Russia - United States and tend to neglect the role of smaller countries. The Chinese resent most the American ambitions to lead the world as a hegemonic power as expressed by President George W. Bush in his policy to prevent a 'peer competitor' from arising, and his notions of unilateralism and pre-emption. It remains to be seen whether President Obama's approach of a 'multi-partner world' will make the triangular relationship any easier in practice. In NATO it has improved the transatlantic climate considerably, which augurs well for its new strategic concept.

On the Asian side the strategic picture remains more complex, in spite of the appearance of an increasing number of international actors. India is closer to Russia than to China and has a hostile relationship with Pakistan, which in the past received support from China. The US is the main strategic protector of Japan and Taiwan. Recent American arms deliveries to Taiwan have led Beijing to take measures against US defence companies. Japan might have to recognise the future economic preponderance of China. Relations between South Korea and Japan have always been difficult. For all of them, combating terrorism will be a common cause, but farther reaching security cooperation does not look promising.

India's Defence Doctrine

Relations between China and India gradually improved after the visit of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to China in 1988, but recently have deteriorated

again. The recent visit of the Dalai Lama to the Tawang monastery claimed by Tibet did raise the temperature. For several years China has extended its claim to the entire area of the new Indian state of Arunachal (formerly the North East Frontier Agency) which makes a settlement even more difficult. Previously there seemed to be a possibility for swapping the Indian claim on the desolate area of Aksai Chin in the West occupied by China and the Chinese claim in the East on Indian territory, even though this would be difficult to accept for Indian public opinion. India's objectives with regard to China are twofold and simple:[4]

- How to prevent a repeat of 1962 by maintaining an adequate level of conventional military capability to deter any Chinese temptation to enforce its territorial claims. This has been done by a considerable build-up of forces along the border and road construction to facilitate rapid reinforcement. In 1968 the Border Security Force Act entered into force to prevent unauthorised entry and trans-border crime. The BSF is complementary to the Indian Army and in wartime comes under its command. It has 157 infantry battalions and 20 artillery battalions.
- How to maintain a credible nuclear deterrent against China.
- India's objectives regarding Pakistan are manifold and much more complex:
- How to find a controlled retaliatory response to Pakistan's proxy war without allowing it to escalate to another war.
- How to neutralise Pakistan's attempt to intimidate the Indian population, like the attack on the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai.
- Whereas any war with China will be fought on Indian territory, war with Pakistan is likely to move to Pakistani territory. How to avoid panic reactions among the Pakistani military, in view of the conventional superiority of India.
- How to achieve early success in any operation, before international intervention takes effect.

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[4] The paragraphs on India's doctrine are taken from a commentary by 'B. Raman' in the Asia Times on Line of 11 January 2003

Chinese reactions to the revision of India's doctrine to meet the challenges of a 'two front' war felt that now not Pakistan but China was seen as the priority target, which could make a limited border war more likely. The improvement of India's relations with the US probably has something to do with this chill across the Himalayas, which will also affect neighbouring countries.

Both India and China have embarked upon military modernisation programmes, especially in the fields of fighter aircraft and medium range missiles.

Much of the talk about partnerships remains rather empty and progress will be slow. Yet, the increasing opportunities for personal contacts among the leaders will exert a restraining influence and hopefully will prevent processes of escalation. Under the circumstances the ASEAN method of focusing on possibilities for cooperation while leaving aside controversial issues will be the most promising, but also carries its own limitations.

A Comprehensive Approach

Prior to 1989 security concepts often were secret documents of a primarily military character. The NATO concepts were drafted by the Military Committee. Today these are political documents, embodying a comprehensive approach towards the security sector in a broad sense. Sometimes they become so general and almost philosophical that they give little direction to the planning and organisation of military forces. Notions of uncertainty and rapid change lead to an emphasis on flexibility, mobility, and the multipurpose functions of the armed forces, which says little about the priorities the Concept will have to set. This easily leads to an attitude of keeping as much as possible of what we have and trying to saddle the forces with additional tasks without a clear vision of the best force structure for the coming period. many restructuring programs have been based on 'posteriorities' rather than priorities, which led to cutting tasks where it seemed least painful, without much attentions to new requirements.

Earlier in this paper we have mentioned the crucial inputs in the drafting of a Strategic Concept by the ministries of foreign affairs, defence and finance,

but this does not mean that any one of them should be leading in the process. In countries possessing a National Security Council (NSC) with a sufficiently wide-ranging membership and a competent secretariat (possible under the direction of a National Security Advisor) the coordinating task could be given to them.[5] Alternatively, an ad hoc inter-ministerial committee could be appointed, but this would not have the benefit of a standing secretariat and lack continuity in the monitoring of developments.

In a country where the president plays a substantive role in policy making, the following persons should be involved in the drafting process:

- The President
- The Prime Minister
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs
- The Minister of Defence
- The Minister of Justice
- The Minister of Internal Affairs
- The Minister of Police (if this responsibility is not covered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs)
  and the following officers and senior civil servants:
- The Secretary General of the Ministry of Defence
- The Chief of Defence Staff/Chief of the General Staff
- The Chiefs of Staff of Army, Navy and Air Force
- The Chief of Police
- The Director General for Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- The Director of the Situation Centre
- The Head of the Intelligence Services
- The Secretary of the NSC

This list is somewhat larger than the usual composition of a National Security Council. It is not necessary for all personalities to participate in the drafting process all the time, but they should be aware of the progress made and be able to make their views known. In practice, the actual writing is best done

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[5] The Nepali Constitution of 1990 provided for an NSC consisting only of the Prime Minister, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence and the Chief of the Army Staff and his deputy, with the limited mandate of making recommendations to the Council of Ministers on the mobilization, operation and use of the Nepal Army.

by a small group, which regularly reports to their principals. The adoption of the concept should take place in a plenary session of the NSC, followed by approval in the full Council of Ministers and promulgation by the President/ Prime Minister.

The composition of the individual inputs will require substantial work within the respective ministries to come up with a coherent response. Within each ministry contradictory arguments are at play, depending on the particular tasks of the various directorates. Internal coordination also is important to avoid a mismatch between, for example, the incoming new equipment and the availability of trained personnel and infrastructure. Much depends on the way the governmental departments are organised. If the Ministry of Defence focuses only on personnel recruitment, acquisition of equipment and legal matters, the analyses of the threats and future needs are left to the Chief of Defence Staff. If the ministry also has a policy department it should play an important role in the drafting. In the evaluation of the international situation the ministry of foreign affairs is leading, but should be in close contact with the intelligence services. If existing, think tanks or an institute of international relations could be asked for advice. In defining the security objectives the ministry of economic affairs and the head of the national planning Bureau (and possibly others) should contribute to evaluating the vital interests of the country.

The main issue undoubtedly will be the arbitration between military requirements and the means available in the multi-annual planning by the ministry of finance. Some solutions might be found by phasing military expenditure for materiel, which always stretches out over many years. Defence is for the long haul and equipment may have to be used for decades. The bargaining process is a political process wherein risks have to be assessed and defence and security are given their proper place within the entire gamut of governmental tasks, including education, health and social affairs. Ultimately a bargain is struck, for which the government will have to accept responsibility, also for its potential future inadequacies.

A model sequence of the steps taken in drafting a strategic concept

1. Decision to draft a strategic concept by the President/Council of Ministers
2. Attribution of the task to the National Security Council or an ad hoc committee
3. Formation of a secretariat
4. Determination of format and main chapters
5. Attribution of tasks within the NSC or Committee covering
   - International security environment
   - Current international commitments
   - Security objectives
   - Consequences of conflict among neighbouring countries
   - Threats and challenges
   - Current capabilities and inadequacies
   - Alternative responses
   - Budgetary framework for the next 10 years.
   - Preferred force structure
   - Consequences for personnel and equipment, including the ratio of volunteers / conscripts and reserve personnel
   - Multi-annual planning for the acquisition of equipment
6. Coordination of the inputs and mediating controversial aspects
7. Taking a comprehensive view of the inputs and asking some difficult questions:
   - Does the resulting framework enhance security?
   - Where do we want to be in 10 years time?
   - Can we afford it?
   - How long will it take to implement the various programmes?
   - What are the risks and should (some of) these be defined in a secret document?
   - Are there provisions for dealing with unexpected developments?

8. Compilation of a comprehensive draft
9. Submission to plenary NSC or Ad hoc committee
10. Identification of remaining differences of opinion
11. Provision for amendment and periodic review
12. Submission to the full Council of Ministers for final decisions
13. Publication of the Strategic Concept and submission to Parliament
14. Hearing organised by Parliament, followed by debate
15. Possible amendments, which may be referred back to the NSC for advice
16. Promulgation by the Head of State