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ON THE EVOLUTION OF CHINA'S MILITARY POLICY AND MILITARY STRATEGY

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In recent years, the attention of both experts and the public has been increasingly drawn to the military policy and military strategy of China as one of the world's centers of power. What sort of country is it: a friend or a potential adversary, a rival or a partner? In the Russian mass media, one can find the most varied of opinions on this subject. Nevertheless, also of no little importance in elucidating this topic is the way Chinese military experts answer these questions in two monographs recently issued by the Voennaya nauka (Military Science) Publishing House, *Contemporary World Military Affairs and the Defense of China and 2000-2001: Strategic Assessments*. It is obvious that the writing staff, in the run-up to the 16th CPC Congress, also aimed to explain, in popular, everyday language, the lines of the military policy, to delineate clearly the main tasks of the military establishment, and to reveal and substantiate the leading role of the Party in this important matter.

In noting the points along the periphery of China's borders where armed conflicts are possible (the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan, India, and a number of islands in the South China and Yellow seas), the Chinese military theoreticians attempt to justify the need to devote greater attention to maritime concerns and, correspondingly, to the country's naval and air forces.

For the first time, the internal political, social, ethnic, and economic problems and conflicts that threaten China's security are openly named. The challenges associated with attempts by reactionaries remaining in the country, supported by external forces, to disrupt Chinese society, provoke disorder and riots, and encourage ethnic separatism are pointed out. Major fears are aroused by the plans of the Taiwanese authorities to split China by declaring Taiwan's national independence. Listed among China's domestic difficulties are the growing gap between the incomes of rich and poor, the prosperity of the coastal regions and poverty of the distant regions in the country's interior, the

migration of the surplus peasant population to the cities and the unemployment that accompanies it, and bureaucratic corruption.

Stressed in the assessments of China's international position is Beijing's satisfaction with the state of Chinese-Russian relations and the good prospects for developing a mutually beneficial strategic partnership between Beijing and Moscow in various areas. Meanwhile, the Chinese experts express serious concern over the military presence of the United States and its NATO allies in Afghanistan and the countries of Central Asia, which occupy an extraordinarily key strategic position and – most important – are located in China's deep rear.

Special attention is given to the rise in importance of the rich natural resources of the maritime waters as their reserves on dry land are becoming exhausted, and to the need in the current geoeconomic, geopolitical, and geostrategic circumstances to fundamentally alter the views on preparing effective measures to ensure China's sovereignty in its coastal regions and to do everything possible to strengthen its naval forces – a prerequisite for ensuring the nation's security and its development as a whole.

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As is well known, Chinese military experts base their views on the precept that the role of any state in the international arena is determined by its geopolitical and geostrategic position; its economic and military might; the level of its scientific, technical, and technological development; its natural resource base; the quantitative and qualitative indicators of its population; the aims of its domestic, foreign, and military policy; its ability to influence other nations; and certain other factors. In the views of the Chinese, all of the above constitute the complex of national might (CNM). The CNM reflects “a state's capability for the comprehensive mobilization of all forces for social development, exercising international influence, and taking part in world conflicts.”¹

In speaking of the military-strategic factor and its influence on China's military and political role both in the Asia-Pacific Region (APR) and in the world, one must consider that this is only one element of the CNM, albeit a substantial one. It is only as a part of a complex containing other elements (so the Chinese believe) that it can determine the role and place of a state in the international arena. The PRC has the necessary potential to become “one of the poles” in a multipolar world and to hold a leading position in the region. The process of realizing this potential is proceeding well; however, the problems that stand in its way are considerable.

China is a large continental and maritime power and holds an advantageous position in the APR. In the military-strategic aspect, it has acted throughout its history basically as a land power; this was especially apparent in the era of Soviet-Chinese confrontation. The definite reorientation of the country's military organization and the thrust of its military strategy began after this confrontation ended and the problems of strengthening China economically moved to the fore. In the process of accomplishing this, it is proposed that China be transformed by the year 2050 into a new superpower of the modern world, capable not only of asserting its rights as one of the global centers of power but of upholding them as well. Testifying to this are the Beijing authorities' intentions to double by the year 2010 the volume of GDP relative to 2000, to emerge by 2020 as the second power in the world (after the United States) in terms of level of

technical and technological development, and to entirely complete its program of “the four modernizations” (in industry, agriculture, and the scientific and technical and military spheres) by 2050.

The military establishment of the PRC is also subordinated to solving the above problems. In Article 4, Part 1 (Main Provisions) of the Law on National Defense, it states: “The state, in concentrating its efforts on the task of economic growth, must simultaneously step up its efforts to build a national defense and to achieve the balanced development of national defense and the economy.”

Some experts interpret the provision on the balanced development of defense and the economy as a clear desire to keep military spending under control. Is this true?

Let us turn once again to the Law on National Defense. Article 35, Part 6 (Expenditures in the Area of National Defense) establishes that costs for work in the field of national defense are determined not simply by the national economy’s level of development but by “the actual defensive need” as well. Thus, the connection between the economy, politics, and military strategy is obvious here.

Let us examine by what factors this defensive need is determined, and what the guiding principles are for the PRC’s military strategy as a whole, and for its naval strategy in particular.

1. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the improvement in relations with Russia, the thesis of the “military threat from the North” lost its relevance for China. Meanwhile, the rates of the country’s economic growth started to skyrocket, thanks mainly to the maritime provinces, where the high-technology industrial centers that are now playing the role of the “locomotive” of PRC economic growth were created. This process has been accompanied by a rise in the country’s consumption of raw materials and energy resources, and its dependence on them being delivered by sea routes. According to some data, the demand in the PRC for imported oil will by 2020 be around 200 million tons a year, and China will assume first place in the world in terms of its level of consumption.² At present, this figure is around 60 million tons.

2. The experience of Hong Kong and Macao – former colonial possessions of Great Britain and Portugal that have now been returned to the PRC – has played an important role in employing advanced methods of economic operation, science, management, and cutting-edge technology. Definite hopes of a similar nature are also being placed in Taiwan. It is thought that economic interests are playing a leading role in China’s desire also to subordinate to its jurisdiction the disputed territories in the seas that wash its shores.

3. Beijing’s increased interest in the above areas is not accidental: there are signs that considerable natural resources are concentrated in the waters of these seas. In 1968, information came to light on the discovery of oil reserves on the shelf of the Senkaku Islands* (Chinese name: Diaoyudao), which Japan considers to be part of its national territory. According to reports in the Japanese press in 1999, Chinese vessels had embarked on exploratory geological work on the shelf of these islands.³ Confirmed reserves of shelf oil and gas in the South China Sea total more than 1.5 billion tons and

320 billion cubic meters, respectively.⁴ This is a matter of great importance, given China's dependence on imports of fossil fuels.

4. There are other reasons why the PRC is going to cultivate its military presence in the region. One of these (in our opinion) is that Beijing is striving to strengthen its naval potential in order to provide guarantees for its freedom of passage in the Malacca Strait, through which more than half of China's imported oil is shipped.⁵ Along with merchant vessels, the warships of the United States, Japan, and other nations cross here from the Indian Ocean into the Pacific and vice versa. Thus, the potential of China's naval and air forces could also be used to blockade the straits from the Indian Ocean into the Pacific, if China needs to establish control over the passage of warships, or over deliveries of energy resources to Taiwan or Japan, in order to solve its military and strategic problems. As early as the middle of the past decade, Satoshi Morimoto, a leading specialist at Japan's Nomura Research Institute, emphasized that there was a unanimous opinion among the observers and military experts who dealt with China that Chinese air and naval forces might be able to exert a decisive effect on Japan's merchant shipping if the program for the modernization of its armed forces were carried out at rates that were sufficiently fast and higher than those of the current economic growth.⁶

Also typical in this regard are the relations between the PRC and Japan over the Spratly Archipelago, located in the center of South China Sea and numbering around 100 small islands. Alongside the potential presence of energy resources, the archipelago is quite rich in the strategic aspect, since all of the major sea-lanes pass through the area of the islands. Japan makes no official claims regarding the Spratlys, as it was forced to renounce them under the terms of the Treaty of San Francisco. It is, however, keenly interested in guaranteeing the maritime right of passage in the area. China has set up military bases on several of the islands, which allows it to control the marine traffic passing through the area.

The above economic, political, and military and strategic factors largely determine Beijing's desire to strengthen its military and political role and military and strategic position in the APR, especially in its oceanic waters. What methods might the Chinese military and political leadership use in order to achieve these goals?

It is no accident that the terms "strategic borders" and "living space" have appeared in the Chinese military and political lexicon. Needed in order to increase its role in the APR (or so Beijing believes) are not just an appropriate material base, domestic stability, the unity of society, and a peaceful international environment: under the conditions of globalization, it is also important to have a definite sphere of one's own influence ("living space," in Chinese terminology) that can be used for economic, scientific and technical development, and ensuring the nation's security. As interpreted by Chinese military theoreticians, it is important for this zone that its so-called strategic borders (in contrast to state borders) be determined, within which the state at a given period can, with the help of the armed forces, realistically defend its interests. For example, General Cui Yugen, in his book *The Battle for the Flexibility of Borders* (Chendu Research Center, Xiechuan Province, 1992), in paying special attention to the problem of guaranteeing China energy and other resources, justifies its need to "uphold its vital interests in every way possible, especially on the expanse of the ocean."

The promoting by the Chinese authorities of such task as “completing the reunification of the nation” testifies to the desire to expand its “living space.” In the CPC CC General Secretary’s report to the 16th CPC Congress, this mission was defined as one of three “great historical tasks,” alongside “moving modernization forward” and “defending peace around the world.”

In practice, the thesis of completing the reunification of the nation assumes the joining of Taiwan to the PRC under the conditions advanced by Beijing and establishing control over the disputed island territories in the South China (the Paracel Islands and Spratly Archipelago) and East China (the Senkaku Islands) seas. Confirmation of the existence of such plans can be found in a declaration in the youth-oriented Chinese newspaper *Zhongguo jinnian bao*: “The Chinese people can no longer be satisfied with 9.6 million square kilometers ... the epoch is calling us ... direct our gaze to the vast expanse of the ocean.... Only the Chinese who do not neglect the conquest of the ocean waves are worthy of future generations.”⁷ The nation’s “expanse of the ocean” is more than 3 million sq. km. It is reserves of natural gas, oil, and phosphorous on islands. However, other nations in the region also lay claim to these vast waters. It would, of course, be easy not to attach too much importance to this statement from a less than authoritative newspaper. Under the circumstances of the PRC’s de facto monopoly on the mass media, however, any Chinese newspaper reflects the “official line” of the Chinese leadership. It therefore becomes clear why, in a majority (six out of eleven) of the regional conflict zones in this region, the PRC is one of the parties to the conflict.

The wishes of the Chinese leadership to ensure control over the waters of the seas that wash the PRC and, correspondingly, the natural resources found there, have been confirmed repeatedly by PRC Minister of Defense Chi Haotian as well. He has stated that China will with all its might “defend the sovereignty of its national territory, airspace, and territorial waters, and its maritime interests.”⁸ The minister also made it clear that Taiwan and the other islands that earlier belonged to China were always taken into account when drawing up the nation’s maritime interests.

It will undoubtedly make it easier for Beijing to increase its influence in the area if it also uses the enormous potential of the ethnic Chinese living in the countries of the region. It has not been forgotten in the PRC that the common stock of the 500 leading companies belonging to the Chinese diaspora in Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and a number of other countries in Southeast Asia today totals around \$540 billion. These financial resources and the position of the *huajiao* in the economies of the nations of the region reinforce Beijing’s efforts to strengthen its role in this part of the APR, with the ultimate aim of declaring it a zone of its own vital interests.

What might stand in the way of China’s military and political efforts? On the basis of the above, the PRC primarily identifies as sources of the threat to its interests those countries that could interfere with the carrying out of the tasks set by the Chinese leadership. It is clear that the United States, which is helping Taiwan strengthen its military potential and is prepared to render military support in the event of any attempt by Beijing to “reunite the nation” by use of force, is always the first among these countries; others are Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and the Republic of Korea, which also lay claim to the waters and islands in the seas of East Asia.

In addition, Beijing views as real threats to its national interests the increasingly stronger possibility (following the United States’ victory over Iraq) of a worsening in the

military and political situation on the Korean Peninsula; the separatist movements in the Xinjiang-Uigur and Tibet autonomous regions and the outside assistance being offered them; and the extremist religious movements of national minorities, inspired by the Islamic fundamentalists of Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia.

In terms of military doctrine, the Chinese leadership does not exclude the possibility of using either threats or military force to achieve its political goals and defend the national interests, both inside the country (an example being the decisive prevention of anti-government demonstrations in Tibet and Beijing) and abroad. Instructive in this regard is Beijing's declaration that it is prepared to adopt a military solution to the issue of Taiwan if its leadership should dare to declare the island territory an independent nation. For example, on November 8, 2002, it was stated directly in a report to the 16th CPC Congress: "We cannot promise in any way to renounce the use of force." This was directed not only against the Taiwanese authorities, but against any thoughts of "foreign forces" interfering in the matter of China's reunification and the conspiracy of the "schismatic forces of Taiwan" to declare the island's independence. The task of reunifying the nation, as the then CPC CC General Secretary, Jiang Zemin, stressed, "affects the vital interests of the Chinese nation, and the Chinese people will without any hesitation defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation." The resolve of the Chinese authorities in this regard is clearly illustrated by the fact that control over the Spratly Archipelago was established by force (during an armed clash between Chinese and Vietnamese vessels in March 1988). Meanwhile, of the available methods of using military force, demonstrating China's armed might in one form or another is preferred, as was done, for example, in the Taiwan Strait in 1996 and 2001.

Any version featuring the large-scale commencement of military operations, under which all of the military and economic potential of the state would have to be employed (thereby subjugating the above programs for the modernization of the country), is considered undesirable. Nevertheless, the high command of the People's Liberation Army, having made the most of the declarations by the political leadership on the need to prepare for a violent version of solving the problem of "unifying the country," could have come to an agreement with it on accelerating the process of modernizing the PLA. Since 2000, the government has been earmarking additional funds for the development of the nation's military-industrial complex and conducting comprehensive military-oriented research and development work. If China's military expenditures tripled between 1990 and 2000 (according to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute), there has been an even more significant increase in the last two years. The further expansion is planned of purchases abroad of state-of-the-art armaments, "dual purpose" hardware, and the technologies for their production.

On the whole, China's military policy is oriented toward giving its armed forces the capability of successfully ensuring the fulfillment of the political and economic aims and tasks on a regional scale, using methods with which they are already familiar for phased modernization and the gradual cultivation of their military potential. To accomplish this, the PLA's capability of reacting swiftly to a sudden change in the military and political circumstances anywhere along the PRC's borders, and its preparedness for conducting local wars using "high-tech" means of armed combat, must be improved. Special attention is being given to the creation and training of mobile forces

that incorporate units of the nation's ground forces (paratroops in particular), air force, and navy.

It is planned to carry out the process of modernizing the armed forces in three stages.

Up to 2010, the main efforts of the Chinese high command will be concentrated on perfecting the armed forces' organizational and command structure, reducing the number of their personnel and raising the proportion of state-of-the-art types of weapons and hardware among the troops. As a result, China's backwardness in the military sphere relative to the world's leading powers should be curtailed, giving it the possibility of deterring potential adversaries and successfully fighting local wars.

During the second stage (up to 2020), its main efforts will be concentrated on equipping its ground and naval forces with the most up-to-date, "high-tech" means of armed combat. As a result, China should (in the military aspect) become one of the region's leading powers, and have the capability to effectively uphold its interests by coercive (military) means on a regional scale.

In the third stage (the 2050s), the full modernization of the PLA is to be completed. It is planned by this time to transform China into one of the world's leading powers with the appropriate military potential.

The rise in interest of the Chinese military and political leadership in the maritime zone and the shifting to the east and south of the main part of the threat to China's interests are also fully reflected in the content of the program for the modernization of the nation's armed forces. As early as the 1990s, the strategic concept of an "active coastal defense" was adopted by the Chinese navy.⁹ In it, the task was posed of acquiring within the next 15 years the capability of "effectively controlling the maritime zone within the limits of the first chain of islands," i.e., the waters of the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea. At the beginning of 1996, on the eve of presidential elections in Taiwan, China held its first large-scale demonstration of military might in the area of Taiwan.

China's policy toward intensifying its maritime strategy is confirmed by the modernization of its naval forces, which have been considerably strengthened with new destroyers and submarines (both of Chinese construction and purchased abroad, mainly from Russia). According to data from the Russian Center for Defense Information, in the ten years from 1992 to 2002 alone, China purchased from Russia ten submarines, four destroyers, two ship-based S-300F anti-aircraft rocket systems, and 24 Mosquito anti-ship rockets (most likely for its destroyers), along with 12 ship-based Ka-28 helicopters and 28 Su-30MKK multi-role naval fighter planes.¹⁰

As a result of implementing the first stage of its long-term plan of modernization, China's navy is now acquiring the capability to "project force" across the waters of the Yellow, East China, and South China seas, within the area bound by the Philippine Islands and Japan's Ryukyu Islands (the so-called "first line of islands").¹¹ This makes it easier to solve the problem of controlling both the disputed islands rich in oil and gas deposits and the area's sea-lanes.

Of special importance in evaluating the further plans of the military leadership and the thrust of the PRC's naval strategy is the information on the purchase in Russia of the highly effective S-300F anti-aircraft rocket systems. In essence, this testifies to the start of the qualitatively new second stage in the development of the Chinese navy, planned to last until 2020. It is obvious that the Chinese navy is taking the first steps

toward moving into the mid-ocean zone; this would be impossible without creating a powerful, modern, sea-going air defense force. According to foreign assessments, this means the start of construction on the first elements of a “blue-ocean” fleet. Confirmation of such prognoses may be found in the case of aircraft carriers and their specialized planes entering service with the Chinese navy, as well as AWACS-type (Airborne Early Warning and Control System) aircraft.

According to press reports, plans for the modernization of China’s navy assume the construction of three aircraft carriers with displacements of up to 40 thousand tons and having on board as many as 40 planes of the Russian Su-27 class.¹² The keel for the first such ship was laid down in 1999 (although it is worth noting that certain Chinese experts deny this fact). A carrier group could comprise as many as six to eight surface ships, two to three nuclear missile submarines, and one to two supply ships.

The prototype of a new LST (Landing Ship, Tank), of which around ten are to be produced, could enter service with the Chinese navy at the start of 2007. With a provisional displacement of 5,000 to 6,000 tons, it will be able to take on board up to a company of tanks and a battalion of marines. The Chinese navy currently has more than 50 landing craft that are capable of landing in one wave up to a brigade of marine infantry. The start of construction on the new series of landing craft with enhanced characteristics will almost double the capacity of China’s navy to put troops and vehicles ashore – up to a division of marine infantry.

The intentions of the Chinese military and political leadership to create, upon completion of the second stage of the long-term plan for the modernization of the navy, the opportunity to expand their active operations into the waters of the Japan and Philippine seas – i.e., within the zone bounded by the so-called “second chain of islands” (the Kurile and Japanese islands, Nampo, and New Guinea).

It may be assumed that the PRC is planning to create in the third stage (up to 2050) an ocean-going navy whose zone of operations will extend all the way to Guam – the so-called “third chain of islands.” This would allow the PRC to place in doubt the possibility of successfully carrying out against China the strategic naval concept accepted in the United States of “operating from the sea against the land,” which will for the “indefinite” future be an insurance factor in Chinese military strategy. It is undoubtedly well understood in China that units of the U.S. Navy, deployed up to 600 miles from shore, are capable of conducting military operations more than 200 miles inland.¹³

Having considered the growing role of aircraft in modern warfare, the high command of the PLA is striving to increase the potential of its air force as well. While the combat air fleet is being reduced overall by 20%-25% as a result of retiring second-generation aircraft from active service, the air force’s strike capabilities should increase by a factor of 1.5-1.7, due mainly to more modern aircraft (the Russian Su-27, Su-30, and planes of Chinese construction) entering service. At the same time, a significant increase is planned in the effectiveness and mobility of the air defense forces, due to the introduction of the S-300, BUK, and TOR weapons systems. By 2010, the PLA air force could have a modernized fleet of around 3,000 combat aircraft, with the fourth-generation aircraft and strike aviation making up about 30%. On the whole, the construction program for the air force is aimed at giving this branch of the armed forces an offensive as well as a defensive capability.

It is planned to raise the capabilities of the air transport fleet to a level that allows the dropping of an entire parachute regiment or the airlifting of a division of ground troops armed with light weapons. This will allow offensive airborne operations to be conducted in a local conflict, and tactical airlifts will become possible as well. At the current stage of the PRC's strategy, this is an extremely important factor – and, one must assume, is at the same time part of the strategic concept of deterrence with regard to the rivals for control over maritime waters and disputed islands.

The planned formation of space forces and the independent development (without assistance from Russia as planned before) of a space-based navigational system is intended to ensure the success of the armed forces' modern operations. The Chinese space program is obviously not driven solely by political motives. The program will undoubtedly facilitate the creation in the midterm of better space systems, and will allow reconnaissance to be done with the help of piloted spacecraft.

The Chinese leadership also associates the elevating of Beijing's role in the APR, and in the world as a whole, with the cultivation of the nation's nuclear potential. This is confirmed by the fact that China, while officially in favor of nuclear disarmament, in practice qualifies its participation in the process with a plethora of preconditions. The most important of these is that the other nuclear powers reduce their strategic offensive potential to the level of China's. In the opinion of the Chinese leadership, concealing the state of their own nuclear forces will help them perform the functions of “nuclear deterrence and intimidation.”

To summarize, it is worth noting that China, the traditional “land” power, has begun to acquire the features of a naval power, while confrontation on ideological grounds has given way to pragmatic strategic precepts to ensure the nation's geopolitical and geoeconomic interests.

Beijing's military and political line is, on the whole, entirely predictable and oriented toward winning time to gather strength and, in the long run, transform China into a full-fledged global center of power, comparable to the United States and the European Union in its might and influence in the world. Beijing's concrete aims lie in the unconditional recognition by the world community of China's territorial integrity, and of the PRC's special rights in the waters of the South China Sea; in attaining preferential influence in Southeast Asia in winning the support of its neighbors for China's positions in its disputes with the United States and the West as a whole; in the refusal by other countries to participate in any anti-Chinese coalitions and their renunciation of military opposition to China; and in having China's leading role in the region recognized in the form of both official and unofficial (but de facto mandatory) consultations with Beijing prior to making any major decisions that affect its interests.

It is unlikely that China will resort to military expansion to achieve these goals. Its current behavior is not aggressive. It is, however, capable of forcing its will on others by virtue of its political, economic, demographic, and military potential. Under today's conditions, geostrategic goals are not achieved in open armed conflicts that, in the event weapons of mass destruction are used, could lead to a global catastrophe. Rather, they can be reached in the labyrinthine and decades-long political combinations and operations that are characteristic of traditional Chinese political thought. The defeat of the Soviet Union in its struggle with the United States was a grand lesson for the Chinese. In the opinion of many analysts, Beijing will strive to win without entering into open

combat, and to divide potential rivals without entering into any entangling alliances. This paramount principle of Chinese political and military strategy was formulated by Sun-zi as early as the late 6th century B.C.

Meanwhile, China's vital interests have undoubted priority in the eyes of the Chinese leadership. While using its economic might as the main instrument of its foreign policy and diplomacy, Beijing, should it become necessary, is entirely capable of employing military force or the threat of force. It is for this purpose that the "complex might of the nation," which can be understood as the instrument for achieving its set tasks, is being created.

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Of course, one cannot be entirely certain in asserting that the above programs and plans of the PRC will be fulfilled on time and in an adequately effective manner. There are a great many reasons for this; these are associated with the existence of the necessary industrial capacity, cooperation between manufacturers, problems of a technical and technological nature, and the training of qualified personnel. However, knowing the persistence and consistency of the Chinese, one may suppose that they will do their best to achieve the set goals.

As is well known, there is talk in Chinese society regarding the role of China in the future. On the one hand, no one in China denies that the country is becoming the regional leader and one of the main poles of the currently forming international system. On the other hand, the role of leader formally contradicts the policy of antihegemonism proclaimed by the Chinese. Nevertheless, the soil is gradually being prepared in Beijing for an adjustment of foreign policy principles that would correspond to the world's new realities.

In speaking of China's aspirations to the role of regional leader and the practical steps taken by the country's leadership in this direction, one also cannot help but note that Beijing is interested in maintaining the peaceful environment and stability in the region. The Chinese military and political leadership cannot fail to have considered the negative consequences for the country if it should destabilize the situation in the APR. In the West, in Japan, and even in the Russian mass media, the precept of a "Chinese threat" is already being actively discussed. Ideas for "restraining China" are being floated.¹⁴ At present, in the estimation of U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, the PRC is not a nation that supports the status quo in the region; more likely, it is a power that is striving to alter in its favor the balance of power in Asia, which makes it a rival, not a partner, to the United States.¹⁵ China, it must be admitted, is conducting an extremely cautious policy. It will therefore be interested in creating a regional system of security in which it would actively participate. It is, of course, perfectly clear that China's economic and political might, so far as it continues to grow, will naturally serve to increase the country's military and political role, not only in the region, but on a global scale as well.

NOTES:

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