UNIVERSITY of SAN FRANCISCO
Educating Minds and Hearts to Change the World

A publication of the
University of San Francisco Center for the Pacific Rim

Asia Pacific: PERSPECTIVES

an electronic journal

Volume VIII · Number 1 June · 2008

Asia Pacific: Perspectives
Center for the Pacific Rim
2130 Fulton St
San Francisco, CA
94117-1080

Tel: (415) 422-6357
Fax: (415) 422-5933
perspectives@usfca.edu

Asia Pacific: Perspectives is a peer-reviewed journal published at least once a year, usually in April/May. It welcomes submissions from all fields of the social sciences and the humanities with relevance to the Asia Pacific region.* In keeping with the Jesuit traditions of the University of San Francisco, *Asia Pacific: Perspectives* commits itself to the highest standards of learning and scholarship.

Our task is to inform public opinion by a broad hospitality to divergent views and ideas that promote cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, and the dissemination of knowledge unreservedly. Papers adopting a comparative, interdisciplinary approach will be especially welcome. **Graduate students are strongly encouraged to submit their work for consideration**.

* 'Asia Pacific region' as used here includes East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Oceania, and the Russian Far East.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO): An Asian NATO?

by Loro Horta

Abstract

On August 17th 2007, China and Russia conducted their largest ever joint military exercise. The exercise, held under the umbrella of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), led many observers to conclude that the exercises may mark the beginning of an alliance between Beijing and Moscow to balance American and NATO influence in their respective spheres of influence and the world at large. However, expectations of such an alliance may be misplaced and based on a superficial assessment of the interests of the parties involved. While China and Russia may seem to share a wide range of common interests, closer analysis reveals many areas of possible contention that are likely to undermine the prospects for a solid and durable alliance.

Introduction

A strong convergence of interests is essential for the creation and sustaining of any alliance between states. In recent years China and Russia have come to share various interests and concerns towards the current international order and in particular the U.S. role in it. Both Beijing and Moscow are concerned about the growing American influence in their traditional spheres of influence, such as Eastern Europe and Central Asia.[1] Both governments deeply resent American military deployments in Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and the growing U.S. engagement with Mongolia. Washington's decision to expand its missile defense system into Eastern Europe and the absorption of former Soviet satellites into NATO is another source of major concern for Moscow.[2] Perceived U.S. support for various democratic revolutions throughout Eastern Europe that led to the removal of pro Russian governments, as in Georgia, further aggravated Moscow's security anxieties.

China is equally concerned with American missile plans and its growing presence in Central Asia and Mongolia in particular. Chinese officials believe it to be a fact that the United States is engaged in a strategy of containing China.[3] The reinvigoration of the U.S.-Japan alliance and the permanent deployment of an air carrier battle group to Japan are likely to heighten these perceptions. Closer ties between Washington and New Delhi have also raised alarm bells in Beijing. American plans to deploy its missile defense system to Japan and Taiwan are seen by the PRC as a blatant attempt to undermine China's security which in turn has led the PLA to step up its anti-satellite weapons program and dramatically increase the number and lethality of its missiles.

An alliance with Moscow will allow the PRC to use Russia as a balance for American influence in Central Asia and against a more assertive Japan in the Pacific. In turn China will assist Moscow in countering the American presence in Central Asia while alleviating pressure in Eastern Europe by forcing Washington to be more attentive to Chinese moves in the Asia Pacific region.[4] By cooperating, China and Russia will force the U.S. and its allies to concentrate on various areas and concerns at the same time, therefore mitigating its overall power. While Russia and China accept that at the global level the United States is clearly the dominant power, both countries believe that closer cooperation between them will put significant pressure on America at the regional level where the two countries may maximize such advantages as geographical proximity.

A Sino-Russo alliance allows for a certain reduction in the power asymmetry between the U.S. on the one hand and China and Russia on the other. Economic interests, in particularly weapons sales and energy resources, are other highly profitable factors driving Sino-Russo relations.

Contentions and Tensions

While China and Russia share some common interests and concerns, there are many issues in their relationship that have the potential to derail future cooperation. Ironically, the issues that have brought them together are the ones that may in the long run break them apart. While Moscow is apprehensive about the American presence in Central Asia it fears that the Chinese challenge to the region may prove even greater in the future. Due to its massive population and proximity to Central Asia, China looks far more threatening to Russian eyes than a distant America. The Chinese economy is three times larger than the Russian economy and is fast expanding. This has led to fears in Moscow concerning the long term consequences of sharing thousands of miles of border with such a powerful neighbor.

Russia is also concerned over the massive influx of thousands of Chinese immigrants into its resource rich, but sparsely populated Far East.[5] According to some Russian media reports, over a million Chinese have settled in the Russian Far East in the past five years. "Yellow peril" type commentaries have until recently been quite common in the Russian media, with outlandish claims that by the year 2050 half of Russia's population will be Chinese. While such claims are outright ludicrous the fact that they are commonly made is a reflection of how widespread Russian fears of Chinese encroachment are. Even the Russian and Chinese governments have not been able to agree on the numbers of Chinese citizens living in the region, saying in 2004 that the number is anywhere between 100,000-200,000.[6] While such figures may not be the most accurate, the fact that the Russian Far East, with a population of just 7 million, is next door to China's heavily populated northern provinces makes such an issue no trivial matter for Moscow.

A common fear of a more assertive Japan is often cited as another point of convergence of interest between the two powers. Moscow still has an ongoing dispute with Tokyo over the ownership of the Kuril Islands seized by Stalin at the end of the Second World War. The dispute has prevented both nations from signing a peace treaty that would put an official end to World War II hostilities.[7] Therefore, Russia and Japan are still at war, at least legally speaking.

Chinese fears and outright hatred towards Japan, brought about by Japan's military occupation of China from

1931-1945, need not be elaborated. While at first glance the Japan factor may seem to be reinforcing the Russia-China alliance, a closer analysis reveals otherwise. Moscow does have concerns over a Japanese challenge in the north Pacific, however, unlike China, Russia does not see Japan as an immanent treat. Japan has no nuclear weapons, no long range missiles, its population is about the same size as Russia's, it has serious domestic restrictions concerning the use of military force, and it is separated from Russia by the Sea of Japan.[8]

Even Japan's close security ties with the United States are of little concern to Moscow for they serve as a restraint on possible adventurism by Tokyo. Moscow is certainly concerned over the American build up in the Pacific, but not with Japan in particular. China, on the other hand, shares a long border with Russia, has nuclear weapons, and is fast modernizing its military and fought a border war with Soviet Russia in 1969. Its population is seven times that of Russia and its heavily populated northern provinces border the sparsely populated and resource rich Russian Far East. These factors make China a far greater source of concern to Russia than an hypothetically assertive Japan. In other words, many in Moscow see China as a much greater threat in the medium to long term than an aging and economically stagnant Japan with all its domestic political constraints. As noted by a military attaché from a NATO country based in Moscow between 2003-2005, "They (the Russians) are not afraid of the Japanese—they are so few and so far. They give those Toyotas and Sony after all".[9]

Russian fears of future Chinese power are seen in various policy decisions made in recent years. For instance, despite all the talk of friendship and solidarity, Moscow has firmly resisted Beijing's requests for the passage of a gas pipeline through China on its way to the Chinese Pacific coast, choosing instead to build it in Russian soil rather than have the pipeline hostage to Chinese interests. The award of the Siberian project pipeline to Japan instead of China—in contradiction to an agreement signed in 2001 under which the pipeline was to be build from Nakhodka in Russia to the Chinese town of Danqing—was a clear indication of Moscow's intentions to balance Chinese influence in the region.[10]

Russia has also restricted Chinese investment in its energy sector, particularly in its vulnerable Far East, while awarding major contracts to Japanese and European companies. This is a clear sign to avoid Chinese encroachment in this strategic region.

However, in the past two years President Vladimir Putin has adopted an increasingly nationalist economic policy with the state taking control over all major oil companies and aggressively limiting foreign investment in the energy sector. While this rise in anti Western sentiment may help Sino-Russian ties its unlikely that Putin will be more receptive to Chinese investment in the oil and gas sector.

Moscow has also clamped down heavily on Chinese illegal migrants, with thousands being deported in a major operation in April 2007. The massive deportations led to accusations in Beijing that Russia was specifically targeting Chinese. These accusations led Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Alexeyev to categorically deny that Moscow was targeting Chinese citizens. He stated, "They (the deportations) were not targeted at Chinese citizens, but aimed at combating illegal immigration".[11]

Another area in which Russian apprehensions towards China is noticeable is arms sales and technology transfers. While Russia has been the PRC's main arms supplier since the mid 1990s, sales have taken place out of dire necessity and in a selective manner. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the vast Russian military industry was left scrambling for customers in a bid to survive. In such circumstances, Russia had no other choice but to sell to China. Russia needed the money from its arms sales to China to keep its military research facilities open so as to continue to develop new technologies and not fall irreversibly behind the West. According to the Federation of American Scientists, Russia used the money from the sale of the SU-27 license production to China to develop its most advance fighter to date, the SU-37 of which four prototypes were built.[12] While the Russian air force itself cannot afford the SU-37 for the time being, at least the country has the technological know how to produce it once better times arrive.

Despite the dire condition in which the Russian military industry finds itself Moscow has been very cautious and selective over which type of weapons systems it sells to the Chinese military. Moscow has so far resisted Chinese requests for the sale of intercontinental bombers, high altitude missile air defense systems, nuclear submarines, and more advanced fighters such as the MIG-31 and Su-37. Since 2004 Beijing has shown considerable interest in acquiring three to five TU 160 Blackjack strategic intercontinental bombers in order to increase its nuclear deterrence and power projection.[13] Moscow has been unwilling to supply such platforms for fear that they may be used in the future in situations not favorable to Russia. With an operational range of 14,000 kilometers the TU160 can reach any target in Russia. With a ceiling of 16,000m and speeds of 2,000km/h, it's not hard to understand Moscow's reluctance.

Moscow's concerns over weapons transfers to the PRC are also reflected in its dealings with India. Russia has been India's main weapons supplier since the days of the Cold War, providing New Delhi with fighter jets, tanks, submarines, warships, missiles and an array of other advanced weapons. While Russia's main motivation in the post Cold War era to supply weapons to India is simple economics and profit, there is a certain strategic dimension to it that is closely connected to its reservations towards China. While Moscow has provided the Chinese air force with advance fighters such as the SU-27 and the SU-30, the Russians have delivered to the Indian air force its most advance version of the SU series allowed for export, the SU-30K.[14] The SU-30K has several improvements over the versions in use by the Chinese air force. Its superb capabilities were clearly demonstrated in 2005 when, during an exercise between the Indian and the U.S. air forces, the aircraft perform remarkably well, closely matching the most advance American aircraft the F-16.[15]

It seems clear that Russia is far less reluctant to supply India with technologies it denies to China. Moscow is very well aware of the growing rivalry between India and China, and sees a strong India as useful balance against China. Russia's preference for India is due also to the fact that both countries have never had any history of conflict and have indeed enjoyed good relations for decades. Russia and India also do not have overlapping spheres of influence (as in the case of Moscow and Beijing) particularly in Central Asia, Mongolia, the Russian Far East, and the North Pacific. However, the establishment of an Indian air base in Tajikistan and its closer ties with the U.S. may change Russian attitudes towards India in the future.[16]

Apart from political and strategic considerations there are also some very practical reasons for Russia's reluctance to sell certain weapon systems to the PRC. Russia is reluctant to transfer certain technologies to China due to the Chinese tendency to break its legal commitments and transfer these technologies to third parties. Just to cite one example, China is currently producing for the Pakistani air force the Russian jet engine RD 93, to be incorporated into the joint Sino-Pakistani fighter, the JF17. This move led to protests from the Russian Defense Ministry which claimed that China had no right to sell or transfer to third countries technology that was exclusively transferred for its own use.[17] China Harbin Aircraft Manufacturing Company is currently embroiled in a similar dispute with France's Eurocopter over its intentions to sell 40 Z-9 helicopters to the Argentine Army. The Z-9 is a licensed production copy of the Eurocopter AS 365N Dauphin II, sold to the Chinese in the 1980s by the French.[18]

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The August 17th exercises have also raised speculation over the possible emergence of a military block centered on the SCO and headed by China and Russia to balance the U.S. and NATO.[19] Expectations of an Asian NATO are rather premature and greatly underestimate the diversity and tensions among the various members of the organization. Apart from the issues limiting Sino-Russo relations discussed above, there are many other contentious issues between the smaller members of the SCO and in their relations with Russia and China.[20] The smaller members of the organization also have suspicions towards each other and do not necessarily share the same interests. To this day Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have not been able to agree on the demarcation of large sections of their common border, while disputes with Kirgizstan continue over sections of Tajik territory in the Isfara Valley. In addition to border dispute conflicts over water resources have been a major obstacle to closer ties between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and Kirgizstan and Tajikistan.[21]

While Russia and China are eager to use the SCO to restrict American influence in Central Asia, most Central Asian nations are not as concerned with the U.S. presence. The autocratic governments of the region, while resenting U.S. criticism of their human rights record, actually do see the U.S. as a positive force in the region. Central Asian nations have traditionally seen Russia and China as the main challenges to their security and independence. After all, it was Russia, not the United States, that brutally occupied the region for over a century.[22] To this very day large numbers of ethnic Russians, purposely moved to Central Asia during Soviet times, make up a large portion of the population of the newly independent states of Central Asia. In Kazakhstan, ethnic Russians make up 30 percent of the population, while Ukrainians account for 3 percent. In Kirgizstan they account for 13 percent, 12 percent in Tajikistan, and 6 percent in Uzbekistan.

China is seen in a rather less threatening light than Russia by the Central Asian states. This as to due in large part with the fact that unlike Russia China has never occupied and colonized Central Asia, even at the height of Chinese imperial power in the 16th century. China's influence in the region was based on the tributary system of nominal allegiance of local tribes to the Chinese emperor. However, China's growing economic presence in Tajikistan and Kirgizstan is leading to fears that China will one day want to restore the Sino-centric tributary system in Central Asia. [23] The fact that until 2002 China was still claming that it had historical rights over one third of Tajik territory tended to reinforces such fears.

Despite all the talk of Western imperialism and American meddling in their internal affairs, Central Asian leaders see Russia, and to a lesser extent China, as far greater threats. This has been so for centuries and there seems to be no reason to believe it will not remain the case now and into the foreseeable future. Central Asian states are far more interested in balancing the various powers now engaged in the region rather than bandwagoning with any of them. While being far more apprehensive towards Russia, Central Asian leaders realize that open confrontation with Moscow may have severe consequences. Therefore, local elites have adopted a delicate balancing strategy towards the great powers, trying to please everyone to the largest extent possible, reaping as many benefits from all sides while at the same time preserving their interests as defined by the local authoritarian governments.

Despite their occasional outbursts against the United States, local governments have discreetly encouraged an American presence in their respective countries. Leaders are quite eager to attract American and Western investments, particularly in the oil and gas sector.[24] American energy companies are seen as far more reliable and offering better deals than their Russian counterparts, which have a rather dubious reputation in the region due to corruption and their failure to honor their commitments. Central Asian leaders hope that giving the U.S. a significant economic stake in the region will temper Washington's enthusiasm for those pesky issues such as human rights, while at the same time minimizing Russian and Chinese encroachment into the local economies.

The case of Tajikistan is a clear example of such a balancing act. The local government has so far been able to maintain good relations with Moscow, Washington, and Beijing. Tajikistan has allowed both Russia and the U.S. to have military bases in its territory in very close proximity to each other—a clear indication of its desire not to take sides and pay for the consequences of such a move. Tajikistan's flexibility in accommodating great powers was further demonstrated when in 2004 it allowed the Indian air force to establish a military base in its territory. New Delhi is reported to have deployed MIG-29 fighters and helicopter gunships to its air base in Ayni, showing its intentions to play a major role in the region.[25]

India is currently an observer member of the SCO and, despite China's objections, has expressed its eagerness to join as a full member. In order to counter India's possible influence within the group Beijing has been encouraging its close ally and India's long time enemy Pakistan to join. India's admission into the SCO is likely to make attempts on the part of Beijing and Moscow to use the grouping against American interests rather difficult.[26] New Delhi's ever closer ties with Washington and its rivalry with China for regional influence is likely to lead to different policy choices on the part of India and create friction with Beijing and, to a lesser extent, Moscow. The possible admission of Iran is likely to complicate matters even further due to the fact that China, Russia, and India have a great amount of influence and interests in that country.[27]

Until 2005, the United States was leasing an air base in Uzbekistan for major air lift operations and also had a smaller presence in Kirgizstan. These military facilities have been crucial in supporting U.S. operations in Afghanistan.[28] Kirgizstan's case, like that of Tajikistan, is also quite illustrative of Central Asian states' balancing act and their discrete willingness to use the U.S. as a counter balance to Moscow and Beijing. Not only has Kirgizstan allowed a U.S. military presence in its territory, it is also hosting a small French military contingent and has resisted both domestic and external pressures for the closure of American facilities in the country. In July 2005, when asked to comment on the issue of closing America military facilities, the Kirgiz Deputy Prime Minister Adakhan Madumarov said: "Any decision concerning the future of U.S. military bases in our territory is an internal matter of our sovereign state and does not concern any one else".[29]

This is by no means to suggest that American economic interests and its military presence in the region are free of challenges and should be taken for granted. There have been a few instances of friction between Washington and local governments, such as the fatal shooting of a Kirgiz civilian by American military personal at Manas Air port in 2006. The incident led to demands for the lifting of immunity for the American soldier allegedly involved in the killing.[30] Demands for a U.S. withdrawal have also been voiced from time to time in Tajikistan.

However, these protests need to be put in a broader context. While there has been some hostility towards American deployments in the region, they pale in comparison with local fears and resentment towards Russia's military presence. Another issue worth noting is that on many occasions these disputes with the United States tend to be over financial and material issues, with the local governments attempting to obtain better leasing terms and other economic aid in return for their bases.[31] For instance, after the shooting incident, the Kirgiz government still deployed a small contingent to Iraq to support the coalition effort, one of the few Muslim countries to do so.

So far the U.S. has only been forced to close its military facilities in Uzbekistan after the bloody suppression of pro-democracy protests in 2005 leading to the death of an estimated 500 civilians. The decision to withdraw was forced upon the Bush administration due to public outrage in the U.S. and was not the result of the Uzbek government's hostility towards the United States. Indeed, President Islam Karimov was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the growing American presence in central Asia. After 9/11, Karimov was the first Central Asian leader to offer military bases to the United States to support its operations in Afghanistan against Al Queda and the Taliban terrorists. Before the 2005 crackdown, Karimov was probably one of the most hostile leaders towards Moscow. He was a strong supporter of the Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC) a grouping consisting of Uzbekistan and the other three central Asian nations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan that excluded Russia from its membership.

Although the justification to exclude Russia from the CAEC was that the organization was aimed at addressing issues peculiar to the five small central Asia states, Moscow seems to believe that its exclusion was aimed at countering Russian influence, while at the same time paving the way for stronger political and economic involvement on the part of the United States.[32] Various reports in the Russian media suggested that CAEC was more of an American creation, aiming at undermining Russian interests in central Asia rather than a genuine initiative for economic cooperation emanating from the region. The fact that in 2002 alone the United States had granted nearly $1 billion in aid to CAEC members further reinforced Russian suspicions.[33] However, the 2005 incident brought an end to the growing cooperation between Washington and Karimov.[34]

Washington's main challenge in maintaining its presence in Central Asia will be to find the right balance between its commitment to democracy and human rights and its strategic interests. In a free and plural society like the United States, with its many interests groups and lobbies, this is easier said than done. While in the past the United States has sacrificed its concerns over human rights in order to secure its strategic interests, the post cold war era, characterized by an increased availability of information, makes such compromises more controversial. The power of the mass media and the so called "CNN effect" force a reluctant Bush administration to terminate its links with the Karimov regime despite significant U.S. strategic interests in the region.

An Asian NATO

Central Asian states are engaged in a delicate balancing strategy and are unlikely to embark on any initiatives that may jeopardize this delicate equilibrium. Despite the anti-American rhetoric, the U.S. presence in Central Asia is not just tolerated, but actually welcomed by the local elites who perceived it as a fairly manageable risk while at the same time being a source of great economic opportunities and indirect protection. Russia and China have for centuries been seen as threats to the existence of these states and it's therefore unlikely that these nations will ever become allies of either Russia or China in any way similar to how NATO'S members are allied with the U.S. America, with its prosperity and its free society, has far greater appeal to local elites than an increasingly autocratic Russia with its long history of oppression of Central Asia. As noted by a Tajik army Colonel: "We don't worry much about the Americans because they come and go, but the Russians and Chinese are always here—they never leave. He is always here," says the Colonel discreetly pointing to an ethic Russian Colonel serving in the Tajik army.[35]

NATO is more than a military alliance. Its success and longevity is not just based on strategic considerations and military imperatives. With very few exceptions its members share a common history and culture that has been forged through decades of interaction. Nearly all of its members are part of the Western "Christian" civilization and share such values as democracy and liberty, even though they differ significantly on how these values are practiced as policy. Above all, NATO was founded on a clear and commonly shared threat perception of communism, which stood against the core values of Western civilization.

The SCO on the other hand share no such common values or perceptions. Russia is primarily a white slavic Christian Orthodox nation while China is mongoloid and supposedly atheist. The central Asian nations, however, share Islam and a common Turkic ethnic origin. The only thing SCO members seem to have in common is a form of authoritarian government of some sort. It is rather improbable that such authoritarian links will be able to supplant deep seated historical and political animosities.

China, Russia and the other SCO states share hardly any civilizational and cultural affinities, but above all, neither do they share a common threat perception. On the contrary, as I have asserted, the two most important members of the alliance are actually regarded by the smaller members as greater threats than the one the alliance is suppose to confront. In his pioneering study on alliance formation, Harvard professor Stephen Walt argued that a common threat perception was the main element in determining the formation and sustenance of alliances.[36] Therefore, the conflicting threat perceptions among the SCO countries do not augur well for the future of an Asian NATO.

American leadership is another crucial factor for the success of NATO. It allowed the conditions for trust and understanding while at the same time provided the crucial material and financial resources needed for such an endeavor. Above all, American leadership was accepted and respected by NATO members rather than imposed upon them, thus reducing the potential for conflict and misunderstandings between the various members. In the case of the SCO, who shall be the leader? Who shall play the unifying role of the United States? These questions are likely to create serious tensions between Beijing and Moscow. Further, neither Russia nor China enjoys the political legitimacy for leadership enjoyed by the United States among NATO members. How can an alliance be sustained when its main players are at odds with each other and are both seen by their smaller partners as greater threats than the enemies they are suppose to align against?

Conclusion

On the surface, China and Russia seem to share enough common interests to sustain a durable and cohesive alliance. Closer scrutiny, however, reveals many points of contention and tension between the two giants. In the medium to long term, Russia seems to be far more concerned with the consequences of China's rise than it is with America. While Moscow's immediate concern may currently be American and NATO expansion into Eastern Europe and the deployment of missile defense in Eastern Europe, Russia is equally if not more concerned over China's rise. Moscow fears that Chinese power may become so overwhelming so as to seriously undermine Russian interests, particularly in its vulnerable Asian territories. Therefore, Russia's overtures to China seem to be a temporary expedient aimed at addressing the current challenge of perceived American encroachment into its sphere of influence, rather than a long term commitment in the lines of the U.S-NATO alliance.

It is unlikely that Moscow would maintain its enthusiasm for such an alliance if Washington was to find some way of accommodating Russian interests. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's visit to Moscow in October 2007 to try to address Moscow's concerns, while not successful, seems to suggest that such a scenario is not impossible. Russia's interest in its supposed alliance with China are clearly aimed at countering current actions on the part of the United States, making it more of a temporary arrangement of convenience rather than a true alliance.

As we have seen, alliances tend to be based on a common threat perception shared by the various parties involved. While China and Russia see the United States as a threat, they also see one another as even greater threats. Proximity and a long history of conflict further reinforce such negative perceptions. To complicate matters even further, the smaller SCO members have very different threat perceptions concerning the two great powers and are unlikely to allow themselves to be manipulated for the benefit of their powerful neighbors. Most central Asian states see Russia and China as far greater threats than the United States and are therefore much more interested in using Washington as a balance rather than overtly opposing it. Ironically, the elements that are now bringing the dragon and the bear together have the potential to move them apart in the future.

ENDNOTES

1. Ariel Cohen, "Facing the Russian rhetoric in Eurasia", Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, February 25, 2004.
2. Ariel Cohen, "The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A Strategic Shift in Eurasia?" Backgrounder # 1459, July 18, 2001: Arthur Bright, "Russia-US tensions rise over anti satellite bases", *Christian Science Monitor*, February 12, 2007.
3. These views have been regularly expressed by Chinese officials, particularly from the military. When the author attended the defense and strategy course at National Defense University of the Peoples Liberation Army (PLANDU) between August 2006 and July 2007 the view was expressed regularly in lectures and seminars by PLA officers with the ranking as high as Major General.
4. See Matthew Oresman, "Central Asia as the New Arena in Sino-U.S. Relations", *China Brief*, Volume 4 Issue 9, April 29, 2004, www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=395&issue_id=2939&article_id=236641 (Accessed 27 March 2008). Also of interest is Oresman's *Beyond the Battle of Talas: China's Re-emergence in Central Asia*, National Defense University Press, August 2004: RIA.
5. Two articles are of interest on this topic. The first is by Michail A. Alexseev, "Socioeconomic and Security Implications of Chinese Migration in the Russian Far East", *Post Soviet Geography and Economics*. Vol 42, No. 2, 2001. See also Robert Bedeski, "The Chinese

Diaspora, Mongolia and the Sino-Russian Frontier", JPRI Working Paper No. 62: November 1999.
6. *Peoples Daily,* "Survey on Chinese in Russia's Far East" Friday January 2, 2004, english.peopledaily.com.cn/200401/01/eng20040101_131677.shtml. Accessed 29 March 2008.
7. Thomas E. Rotenan, "Line in the Water: The Southern Kuriles and the Russian-Japanese Relationship" *Japan Studies Review*, Volume 11, 2007.
8. This information is drawn from three sources. The first is by Gilbert Rozman, "Japanese-Russian Relations under Gorbachev and Yeltsin", *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 2003. Next is by Anna Politkovskaya, *Putin's Russia: Life in a Failing Democracy*, Metropolitan/Owl Book, 2004. Finally, reporter David Pilling's "Japan-Russia territorial dispute escalates", *Financial Times*, August 16, 2006. www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b6033d24-2d03-11db-851d-0000779e2340.html. Accessed 3 November 2007.
9. Interview with a former Scandinavian army officer posted to Moscow as a military attaché between 2003 and 2005.
10. Niklas Norlin 2005, "China and Russia: Partners with Tensions", Central Asia Caucasus Institute Publication, *Policy Perspectives* 4,1 (2007).
11. *China Daily*, "China-Russia arms trade to continue", October 12, 2007. www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-10/12/content_6167704.htm. Accessed 23 April 2008.
12. *FAS Military Analysis Network* "SU-37" October 13, 2007. www.fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/ac/row/su-37.htm. Accessed 29 October 2007.
13. See Carlo Kopp and Peter A. Goon, "China's rise as a regional super power", *Air Power Australia*, May 19, 2005; Jacqueline A. Newmyer "China's Air-Power Puzzle", *Policy Review*, June-July 2003, Hoover Institution.
14. *Indian Defence News*, "Russia to sell 40 Sukhoi Su 30 MK fighter jets to India", September 25, 2007.
15. Scott Baldauf, "Indian Air Force, in war games, give U.S. a run", *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 November 2005. www.csmonitor.com/2005/1128/p01s04-wosc.html. Accessed on 24 October 2007
16. *Indian Defence News*, "India facing eviction from Tajikistan military base", September 20, 2007.
17. Sha Mihir, "Imported Thunder", *Pragati: The Indian National Interest*, July 4, 2007.
18. *La Nacion*, "Argentina evalua plantas para producir equipos militares chinos", August 22, 2007. See also Ministerio de Defensa, "Argentina y China firmaron acuerdo de cooperacion militar", May 16, 2007, (Argentine Defense Ministry press release). www.mindef.gov.ar/info.asp?Id=1155&bus=3. Accessed 26 October 2007.
19. Ariel Cohen, "The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A Strategic Shift in Eurasia?" Backgrounder # 1459, July 18 2001. See also Arthur Bright, "Russia-US tensions rise over anti satellite bases", *Christian Science Monitor*, February 12, 2007.
20. Matthew Oresman, *Beyond the Battle of Talas: China's Re-emergence in Central Asia,* National Defense University Press, August 2004.
21. *International Crisis Group*, "Central Asia: Water and Conflict", Asia Report 34, 30. May 2002. Brussels. See also Arman Kambiz, "Border issues ruffle relations among central Asian states", *Eurasia Insight*, February 25, 2004. www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav022504.shtml. Accessed 22 April 2008.
22. Vinod Amand, "Political-Military Developments in Central Asia: Asia and Emerging Strategic Equations", *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 2006.
23. Sean L. Yom, "Power Politics in Central Asia" *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Vol. VI, No. 4, autumn, 2002. www.asiaquarterly.com/content/view/129/40. Accessed on 20 March 2008
24. Edward, A. Allworth, (1994) *Central Asia: One Hundred Thirty Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, 3rd edition, Duke University Press.
25. *The Times of India*, "IAF to station MIG 29s in Tajikistan", April 20, 2006. timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1498063.cms. Accessed 5 November 2007.
26. Mathew Oresman, "Fear Not Fear Not the Russia-China-India Strategic Triangle" *The National Interest,* December 25, 2002—January 1, 2003.
27. Robin Wright, "Iran's new alliance with China could cost US leverage", *The Washington Post*, 17 November 2004. See also Victor Mizin, "The Russia Iran nuclear connection and US policy options", *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Volume 8, No. 1, March 2004.
28. Yom, op. cit.
29. Ariel Cohen, "US Interests in Central Asia", Testimony before the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific / House International Relations Committee—United States House of Representatives, March 17, 1999. See also Cohen's article, "The Russia-China Friendship and Cooperation Treaty: A Strategic Shift in Eurasia?" Backgrounder # 1459, July 18 2001. Also relevant is Arthur Bright, "Russia-US tensions rise over anti satellite bases", *Christian Science Monitor*, February 12, 2007.
30. John C. K Daly, "U.S. Air Base at Manas at Risk over Shooting Suspect", *Eurasia Daily Monitor,* May 4 2007.
31. Radio Free Europe transcript, Thursday, December 7, 2006.
32. Vladimir Socor, "U.S. Military Presence at Risk in Central Asia," *Eurasia Daily Monitor,* Friday, 8 July 2005. www.jamestown.org/edm/article.php?article_id=2369991. Accessed 29 October 2007.
33. Yom, op. cit.
34. Vladimir Radyuhin, "A central Asian setback", *Frontline*, Vol. 22, No. 17, 1, August 2005, 13-21.
35. Informal conversation with a Tajik army Colonel, Beijing, 6 May 2007.
36. Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, Cornell University Press, 1987.

Loro Horta is a research associate fellow and Ph.D. candidate at the S Rajartnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technology University, Singapore. He is a graduate of the National Defense University of the Peoples Liberation Army (PLANDU) and attended various specialized courses at American military schools.