

The Military Build-up in the Asia Pacific Region: Trends, Risks and Responses

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It is banal to assert that the Asia-Pacific is a region of great geo-strategic diversity and that some parts of the region are, periodically at least, areas of tension while others are relatively benign. However, the possibility of conflict in the areas of tension is always present and policymakers and analysts alike look to a range of indicators to determine whether or not conflict is likely and, if likely, how severe it could be. One of the indicators habitually used (not necessarily the most important) is the trend in the level of military capabilities. Take some recent analyses and media stories and headlines. For example: '[Japan's] normalization is synonymous with militarization or military build-up';¹ or: 'The prospect of a new North Asian arms race is now emerging rapidly';² or: 'The military has embarked on a program to buy modern weapons...';³ or: '[the] armed forces must be better equipped to deal with new security threats associated with Asia's booming economies and expanding militaries';⁴ and a recent official statement:

The modernisation of military forces in Asia in the recent past has been characterised by significant capital acquisition programs, which are introducing more sophisticated capabilities into the region, such as advanced air combat aircraft and submarines.⁵

None of this says objectively that an arms race or military build-up is occurring, but there is certainly a perception that something is happening.

Trends may show whether there is an arms race or merely a more gradual arms build-up, or something less than that and they show us where the main effort of a country's military capabilities is being focused.⁶ There is some doubt in scholarly circles whether

or not there is any objective correlation between an arms race and conflict and if there is, which causes which.⁷ This doubt does not matter if policymakers, rather than academics, believe an arms build-up by another country to be threatening and react to it by building their own capabilities. Whether or not conflict actually occurs is then moot, there will have been most likely a heightened tension and if conflict does occur it will potentially be more lethal because of the arms build-up.

In 1995 Ball analysed regional arms acquisitions and drew an important conclusion. His analysis showed that there was an arms build-up (not an arms race) in the region and also that the weapons being purchased and the capabilities being upgraded were occurring primarily in areas away from land power capabilities.⁸ This conclusion has been mirrored by several other studies, most recently perhaps in the 2009 conclusion that: 'another major finding of a non-event was that there's no incipient East Asian arms race, at least not yet. There was no regional rush to expand military budgets or force structures in reaction to PLA modernization'.⁹ This conclusion is not however shared by all analysts of the region. Feffer, for example, argues that the 'arms race in Northeast Asia and the Asia Pacific threatens to overwhelm all talk of peace in the region'.¹⁰

In this paper I revisit the assessments. In particular I have been invited to address the following questions:

- What is the current military expenditure and acquisitions trend in the Asia-Pacific? How is this foreseen for the future?
- What is the relationship between military strategy and the change in military expenditure? Has military strategy changed to result in an increase in military expenditure?
- How will increasing military capabilities secure peace and stability in the region? Is this the answer? What other effective measures can be employed?

I do not consider the region's nuclear capabilities. They are a special case and do not directly address the question of capability, expenditure and stability, although the presence of nuclear weapons seems intuitively more likely to be destabilising than it is stabilising.

Defence Spending

Levels of military spending and the associated trends may be analysed in several ways. The most obvious is to examine what different countries have spent on their armed

forces over time. Table 1 (at the end of the paper) shows this for a range of Asia-Pacific regional states. Table 1 takes four spending snapshots in local currency and not controlled for inflation from 1991 to 2006 in five year increments, using Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) data throughout.¹¹ The picture is mixed. At one end of the scale, over the 15 year period Taiwan increased its spending only 3.4 percent in total. At the other end of the scale Indonesia increased spending by some 880 percent. The first represents a minuscule annual rate of spending increase whereas the latter is something like a 16.5 percent per year increase. Most countries increased their military spending over the period by a figure of something less than 100 percent to around 200 percent, or between about four and eight percent per annum. Of course, there are explanations for these figures and they have less to do with perceptions of threat or the lack of it and more to do with the state of the national economy and with exchange rate fluctuations.

Showing national military spending in national currencies allows year by year national comparisons, but makes international comparisons more problematic. Table 2 (at the end of the paper) standardises the spending figures so that they are all expressed in 1995 US dollars over the same period. Now the gap between the highest increase in spending over the period (China with an increase of 279 percent) and the lowest (Taiwan with a decrease of 20.5 percent) is dramatically narrowed. The annual rates at the extremes are of about 9.3 percent at the high end and about a one and one half percent annual decrease at the low end. Two other countries decreased their spending in real terms over the period (Thailand and New Zealand) while most increased their spending at significantly less than 100 percent over the period, or less than five percent per annum.

Within the region's 'traditional' tension areas there were significant differences in rates of expenditure. The differences between China and Taiwan have been noted. China's annual increases of about 9.3 percent are slightly less than the approximately 10 percent economic growth it has experienced over the years in question, and perhaps Taiwan was free-riding on a presumed American guarantee, or perhaps it didn't feel sufficiently threatened to spend more. India and Pakistan increased their spending at significantly different levels also, India by 110 percent over the period and Pakistan by 37 percent.

Clearly a mismatch in perceived need or in the desire or ability to spend. Within Northeast Asia Japan increased its defence spending by only eight percent in real terms over the period and South Korea by 59 percent. Although each is protected by the US security umbrella, South Korea faces a much clearer and closer danger. Southeast Asian states (all cooperating within ASEAN) varied between a decrease of nearly 19 percent in Thailand's case to an increase of 136 per cent in Singapore's.

It's difficult from these figures to draw any conclusion that military spending is derived from an objective assessment of threat and it's also difficult to draw any conclusion that spending is out of control in any sense given that the military spending conforms more or less to economic growth rates.

Table 3 (at the end of the paper) confirms the thought that military spending has a close correlation with economics. Table 3 examines regional defence spending relative to GDP. The data here are revealing. Every country examined either kept its spending steady as a percentage of GDP or lowered it. The highest percentage of GDP spent on defence purposes in 2006 is by Singapore at 4.7 percent per annum while Philippines spends at 0.9 percent. These figures tend to indicate that defence spending is related to the level of the economy and to national (non-threat) priorities rather than to any attempt to build forces at a disproportionate level when compared to neighbouring states.

Personnel levels

Personnel levels may act as a proxy for wider capabilities or intentions. By increasing over time, personnel levels may show an expectation that they will be used in the near term. Conversely, a decrease in numbers may be because there is no immediate expectation of war or because technology is being substituted for numbers – quality for quantity. Table 4 (at the end of the paper) shows the trends, using the same countries as in Tables 1- 3 with the inclusion of North Korea and over a similar time period, this time between 1991 and 2009.

The data show that most countries decreased the size of their armed forces over the period, or had relatively minor increases in size, with the standout being Singapore with a 30 percent increase in the numbers in its armed forces; perhaps a function of its national service programme as Singapore's birth-rate climbed in the 1980s giving more

young men for national service from around 2000. Many, if not most, countries did increase the size of the armed forces slightly between 2001 and 2009. Perhaps a concomitant of the international war on terror from 2001, perhaps a recognition that post-Cold War cuts had gone beyond the comfort levels of state leaders.

Weapons Levels

A third useful area for examination when discussing capabilities is in the quantities of weapons held by regional states.

Data for weapons holdings given here are indicative only, but they are internally consistent. Table 5 (at the end of the paper) shows holdings of a range of military equipment for two years, 1999 and 2009, for several of the states examined in earlier entries.

The countries selected are not completely random. The table shows a range of states (and Taiwan) variously without obvious enemies, within conflict areas, and surrounded by regional partners from whom one must assume there is a lower level of threat than there would be from non-partners. Table 5 shows that for most items of military equipment there has been no across the board increase in quantities held by the states selected. This finding is consistent with the conclusions derived from our examination of military expenditure and of personnel numbers.

If Not Quantity then Quality?

Of course, the data presented only shows like against like. There is no doubt that throughout the region there has been significant upgrading of capabilities in certain areas. Technology has advanced considerably in this time and the increases in quality brought about by technology have no doubt led to increases in capability. Electronic systems on older platforms have been upgraded and electronic command and control and surveillance systems are becoming widespread.

Significant new weapons and support systems in the region generally, or new to particular countries, include aircraft carriers, submarines and other new classes of naval vessels, ballistic missile defence systems, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, air-to-air refuelling, amphibious capabilities, and strategic air transport. Military hardware has

been upgraded and older types gradually withdrawn from service.¹² Japan, as a case in point, 'has continued to develop more mobile rapid-reaction type capabilities; the ASDF is acquiring new fighters, tankers, transports and munitions...the MSDF is concentrating on destroyers, light carriers, amphibious craft and patrol aircraft to project its presence in the Asia-Pacific and well beyond'.¹³

Nonetheless, when set against the levels of expenditure seen and the quantities of weapons held by regional armed forces, the dominant theme within military capabilities is of continuity and incremental rather than revolutionary increases in capability.

Equipment purchases are normally to replace yesterday's equipment with today's equivalent; not surprisingly today's is an upgrade in quality, sometimes at the expense of quantity.

Intentions

If the picture painted so far is of something less than a dramatic build-up that might be because we have been examining the past rather than future intentions. Certainly at the level of intention and supposition, there are significant upgrade plans by some countries.

As a snapshot of intentions, we see Australia intending to acquire air-warfare destroyers, a fleet of 12 new submarines (to replace the six it has), Joint Strike Fighters and an enhanced amphibious capability over the next decade or so.¹⁴ China, for its part, is reported to be starting an ambitious ship-building programme at the rate of some 12 or 13 major ships (aircraft carriers, air defence destroyers, amphibious vessels, submarines) a year for some years and is attempting to develop an anti-ship ballistic missile which 'could alter the rules in the Pacific'.¹⁵ Korea also has announced intentions of increasing expenditure with annual expenditure increases of up to 9.9 percent until 2010 and 7.7 percent until 2015.¹⁶ Acquisition projects will generally upgrade and increase quantities rather than introduce new completely capabilities however (with the obvious exception of China's plans for a fleet of aircraft carriers). At the lower end of the scale, Thailand has announced intentions to modernise to make up for a decade of stagnant budgets, with the eventual aim of lifting defence expenditure ultimately to around 2.0 percent of GDP,¹⁷ and Philippines is likewise pursuing an 'ambitious' Capability Upgrade Program.¹⁸ One completely new area in which states are beginning

to take an interest is in space. China has developed a military space capability and a number of regional states have similar intentions.

If these intentions are translated into reality over the next 10 to 15 years, it is possible that the ability of regional countries to wage war will be considerably enhanced, although given the relatively widespread modernisation, both actual and intended, relative strengths might not change significantly.

There are three issues to these intentions. The first is, of course, that intentions have a tendency to be derailed by fiscal reality. Few commentators, for example, believe that the Australian intentions are financially sustainable: 'Like others, I don't believe this aspiration can be achieved within these budgetary resources'.¹⁹ The United States also faces spending cuts: 'the spigot is about to close'.²⁰ The same kind of comment has been made about the intentions of a number of states, and the 2007-08 global recession will not have helped military spending plans. The second issue is that for much of this expenditure, all countries are doing is running fast to stay still. Rates of military inflation are such that ever increasing amounts have to be spent to maintain the same relative capabilities. That is, if a state wants to maintain its armed forces at a current level of technology, it has to spend ever increasing amounts to do so. If all states do the same, there is no relative military build-up, but all end up spending more. The third is related to the second. Most, not all, of the increased expenditure is either to allow the armed forces to stay still in relative terms or to make up for years of neglect and bring the armed forces to something approaching a 21st century capability.

Strategy and Expenditure

Contrary to the assertions with which this paper began, there is little evidence to show any general military build-up in the Asia-Pacific region. Instead, there has been a steadiness or even a general decline in most indicators over the last 15 years. Even where there have been specific increases by some countries, these do not seem to be the result of any strategy other than one of buying capability 'because we can'. (Australia might be an exception to this in that its recent Defence White Paper announcing significant military expenditure over the next decades is widely assumed to be aimed at

the possibility that China will not only become militarily strong, but will also attempt to use that strength to achieve political goals).

A strategy based on level or decreasing expenditures is not based on any fear of attack. It is instead more likely a strategy based on the political calculation that threats from neighbouring states are low and likely to remain so for some time. That being the case then, military expenditure is being set by most states at a level that maintains basic capabilities, increases them in some areas and decreases them in others, and demonstrates that the country has armed forces that have to be factored in to any (however remote) potential aggressor's calculations. This is a strategy of minimal deterrence.²¹ As well, there might well be the thought that although assessments are that the region is not generally threatening in any inter-state sense, that conclusion could be incorrect and therefore it makes sense to maintain a 'just in case' capability. A hedging strategy.²² For some states there might be an element of free-riding in the sense that a clear threat is secured against by a strong and committed ally: 'for weaker states highly dependent on a common ally, the great-power ally's promises are considered more important than the external threat'.²³ Finally, in many states there is undoubtedly the sense that armed forces might not be immediately necessary for national self-defence, but that they are 'nice to have', or they are symbolic of statehood. A reassurance strategy.²⁴

None of this is to say that states have renounced the use of their armed forces to protect their interests when the need might arise. It is to say, though, that the need is seen as less likely to arise today than it was 20 or 30 years ago. For this we should probably look to the increasing reliance on regional mechanisms (especially within Southeast Asia) to resolve political differences and to establish norms of non-use of armed force to resolve political differences. These have not been perfect and are not foolproof. They are however considerably better than the alternative of no mechanisms at all. States will, no doubt, continue to maintain their armed forces, and modernise them, but they will be doing so less in the sense that they will have to use them and more for deterrence, hedging and reassurance reasons. This will continue unless and until the regional strategic environment changes considerably.

Regional stability

The third area this paper was to examine was that of regional stability, the roles that regional armed forces might play in assuring this and what other approaches there might be to achieving regional security. The first point to make is that the region is stable.

When compared with 40, 30, 20 or even 10 years ago, the Asia-Pacific today is an oasis of tranquillity. Not everything is perfect. There are still areas of tension and there are still disputes. But the areas of tension are probably less tense today than they were in the past, and the mechanisms for addressing disputes are considerably more robust today than they were in the past. None of this is to argue that this state will always remain, or that there is no role for the armed forces in ensuring stability.

The most obvious way that armed forces play a stabilising role is in the sense of security they give states. If a state is confident that its armed forces are capable of acting as a backstop, to be used when needed, then they are less likely to be used pre-emptively on the grounds that if they are not used early they might be destroyed later. The second stabilising role lies in the way that competent armed forces do act as a deterrent against bad actors. If a potentially malicious state sees that its possible targets are quite capable of defending themselves, it is less likely to provoke a military confrontation. The third stabilising role is becoming more common today. That is, the role within fragile states that require assistance to recover from internal conflict. Armed forces (assuming they are present by consent) provide security within which reconstruction, both political and material, can occur.

Stability is, of course, achieved by more than the presence or actions of the armed forces. The stability of force is likely to be less sustainable than the stability of rules. The region is stable not because the armed forces have made it so, but because a rule and norm-based regional society based on distinct sub-regions has developed. More and stronger regionalisation, subject to democratic constraints, seems the most likely counter to instability. Regionalisation brings its own issues. These are not the subject of this paper, but they will need to be addressed.

Stability is also achieved by considering security both comprehensively and cooperatively. This means not only that there is a wide range of issues to be addressed using the comprehensive security agenda, but also that there are many means available

to address the issues and that shared approaches rather than self-help are most likely to be successful. A (comprehensive) security issue does not have to be resolved by military means because it has the concept of 'security' attached to it. The full palette of actions, ranging from diplomacy (both preventive and reactive, bilateral and multilateral), through the use of good offices, mediators and strategic withdrawals to give some breathing space all have a role to play.

Conclusions

This brief analysis does not show any significant increase in the quantum of military capabilities within the region. Significant is an important qualifier of increase here. There are increases in quality – most countries are upgrading their capabilities in a measured and programmed way, but they are not beyond what might be expected given the time period over which these are occurring. Therefore, something else is happening. That would seem to be that a state of equilibrium has been reached. The conclusion has to be that there is no obvious military build-up in progress.

A working hypothesis could be that a relative equilibrium in strength will be maintained once states are satisfied with their strategy, and subject to no external shocks happening in the strategic environment. If that is so, most states today would seem to be satisfied with their position. The armed forces generally remain in a state of relative equilibrium. This probably means that the countries considered have no intentions of using their forces unless required to in self-defence.

The measured way that forces throughout the region are developing their capabilities, generally reducing numbers and modernizing at a reasonable rate means that the region is no less safe now than it has been for some years and probably more safe. To extend Ball's analysis, noted at the beginning of the paper, there is neither an arms race nor an arms build up in terms of conventional capabilities in the region. This is, so far, neither a quantity nor quality issue, it is about maintaining the status quo.

Trends and past events say nothing necessary about the future. There are indications that some states intend to develop their military capabilities in coming years. That might have strategic significance or it might not. So long as military spending does not outstrip economic growth and so long as the norms and rules of international behaviour

developed in the region over the last several decades hold, there is little to concern us when states choose guns over butter. Bitizinger sounds a cautionary note however when he concludes that: '... without necessarily leading to arms races, these new arms acquisitions can lead to very expensive, and ultimately imprudent, arms competitions'.²⁵ Arms competitions, unless managed, may turn into races and the races may end in conflict unless the regional environment is carefully managed.

Table 1: Military Expenditure in Local Currency

[] = SIPRI estimate

Country/Year	1991	1996	2001	2006	% change 1991-2006	Annual change %
United States (US\$m)	280292	271417	312743	527660	88.3	4.31
China (b yuan)	[54.1]	[126]	[216]	[431]	697	14.84
Taiwan (\$b)	233	288	248	241	3.4	0.23
Japan (b yen)	4329	4815	4950	4824	11.3	0.72
South Korea (b won)	7476	12243	15497	21500	188	7.3
Indonesia (b rupiah)	[4251]	[8400]	16416	41735	882	16.45
Malaysia (m ringgit)	4323	6091	7351	11981	177	7.03
Philippines (m pesos)	15778	30978	35977	51527	227	8.21
Singapore (S\$m)	3495	5782	7721	9848	182	7.15
Thailand (m baht)	62090	100220	75413	[86706]	39.6	2.25
India (b rupees)	196	351	689	1102	462	12.2
Pakistan (b rupees)	70	124	170	287	310	9.86
Australia (A\$m)	8607	10005	12995	18826	119	5.36
New Zealand (NZ\$m)	[1292]	1356	1428	1728	33.7	1.96

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) database
http://www.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_database1.html accessed 9 May 2009

Table 2: Military Expenditure in Constant 2005 US\$m

[] = SIPRI estimate, () = negative number

Country/Year	1991	1996	2001	2006	% change 1991-2006	Annual change %
United States	401949	337946	344932	511187	27.1	1.62
China	[13698]	[16614]	[28010]	[51864]	279	9.28
Taiwan	9337	9650	7961	7427	(20.5)	(1.51)
Japan	40410	43328	44275	43666	8.0	0.52
South Korea	12915	16311	17133	20533	59.0	3.14
Indonesia	[2173]	[2840]	2367	[3802]	75.0	3.8
Malaysia	1690	1976	2087	3054	54.5	4.02
Philippines	682	927	794	880	29.0	1.71
Singapore	2488	3701	4745	5862	136	5.88
Thailand	2541	3240	2063	[2060]	(18.9)	(1.39)
India	11238	12778	18313	23615	110	5.08
Pakistan	3270	3430	3553	4465	36.5	2.1
Australia	9200	9508	11038	13885	51.0	2.78
New Zealand	[1202]	1133	1107	1177	(2.1)	(0.14)

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) database
http://www.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_database1.html accessed 9 May 2009

Table 3: Military Expenditure as a Percentage of GDP

[] = SIPRI estimate

Country/Year	1991	1996	2001	2006
United States	4.7	3.5	3.1	4.0
China	[2.4]	[1.7]	[2.0]	[2.1]
Taiwan	4.7	3.6	2.5	2.0
Japan	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0
South Korea	3.5	2.7	2.5	2.5
Indonesia	[1.7]	[1.6]	1.0	[1.3]
Malaysia	3.2	2.4	2.1	2.2
Philippines	1.3	1.4	1.0	0.9
Singapore	4.7	4.4	5.0	4.7
Thailand	2.5	2.2	1.5	[1.1]
India	3.0	2.6	3.0	2.7
Pakistan	5.8	5.1	3.9	3.2
Australia	2.1	1.9	1.8	1.9
New Zealand	[1.8]	1.4	1.2	1.1

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) database

<http://www.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_database1.html> accessed 9 May 2009

Table 4: Military personnel numbers (000)

Country/Year	1991	1996	2000	2009	% change 1991-2009
United States	1914	1484	1366	1540	(19.5)
China	3030	2935	2810	2185	(27.9)
Taiwan	360	376	370	290	(19.4)
Japan	246	236	237	230	(6.5)
South Korea	633	660	683	687	8.5
North Korea	1132	1054	1055	1106	(2.3)
Indonesia	283	299	297	302	(6.7)
Malaysia	128	115	96	109	(14.8)
Philippines	107	108	106	106	(0.9)
Singapore	56	54	61	73	30.4
Thailand	283	254	301	307	8.5
India	1265	1145	1303	1281	1.3
Pakistan	580	587	612	617	6.4
Australia	68	58	51	55	(19.1)
New Zealand	11	10	9	9	(18.1)

Source: IISS, *The Military Balance*, various years.

Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand

Table 5: Military Equipment – Selected Countries

Country/Equipment	1999	2009
Australia		
MBT	71	59
Artillery, towed	385	270
Submarines	4	6
Principal surface combatants	11	12
Fighter/Attack	88	70
Attack helicopters	-	14
China		
MBT	8300	7660+
Artillery towed/SP/MRL	14,500/?/?	14,000/1200/2400+
Submarines	71	65
Principal surface combatants	53	78
Amphibious vessels	210	243
Bomber/ Fighter and Attack	320+/3000	82/1400+
Aerial Tanker	-	18
Japan		
MBT	1080	1200
Artillery, towed/SP/MRL	460/310/110	420/210/100
Attack helicopters	90	80
Submarines	16	16
Principal Surface Combatants	55	52

Fighter/attack	270	260
Early warning	14	14
South Korea		
MBT	2130	2330
Artillery, towed/SP/MRL	3500/1040/156	3500+/1089+/ 185
Attack helicopters	143	60
Submarines	19	12
Principal surface combatants	39	47
Fighter/attack aircraft	488	468
India		
MBT	3414	4065
Artillery, towed/SP/MRL	4175/180/150	4500+/20+/180
Aircraft carrier	-	1
Submarines	16	16
Principal Surface Combatants	26	46
Amphibious	9	17
Fighter/attack	730	603
Attack helicopters	32	20
Airborne early warning	4	1
Pakistan		
MBT	2320+	2461+
Artillery, towed/SP/MRL	1590/240/45	1629/260/52
Attack helicopters	20	26
Submarines	10	8

Principal surface combatants	10	6
Fighter/attack	389	383
Singapore		
MBT	60	196
Artillery, towed/SP	229/-	107/36
Submarines	3	4
Principal surface combatants	6	9
Fighter/attack	110	97
Attack helicopter	20	12
Airborne early warning	-	4
Taiwan		
MBT	719	926+
Artillery, towed/SP/MRL	1060/315/?	1060+/405/300+
Attack helicopter	53	101
Submarines	4	4
Principal surface combatants	37	26
Fighter/attack	560	442
Airborne early warning	4	6

Source: Derived from IISS, *The Military Balance*, 2000, 2009

Notes:

¹ Hiro Katsumata and Mingjiang Li, 'China wary of a 'normal' Japan', *Asia Times*, 7 August 2008.

² Ronan Thomas, 'Arms races past haunt Asia's present', *Asia Times*, 12 October 2006.

³ Thom Shanker, '*Russia Is Striving to Modernize Its Military*', *New York Times*, 19 October 2008.

⁴ Adam Gartrell, 'Rudd Warns of Asian Arms Race', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 September 2008.

⁵ Australian Government, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper, Canberra: 2009, 38.

⁶ I follow Ball in my differentiation between an arms race and an arms build-up. An arms race has certain characteristics such as speed and an action-reaction dynamic not present in an arms build-up. See Desmond Ball, 'Arms acquisitions in the Asia Pacific: Scale, positive and negative impacts on security and managing the problem', Thangam Ramnath, ed., *The Emerging Regional Security Architecture in the Asia Pacific*, Papers presented at the Ninth Asia Pacific Roundtable, Kuala Lumpur, June 5-8 1995, Kuala Lumpur: ISIS Malaysia, 1996.

⁷ See Paul F. Diehl and Mark J. C. Crescenzi, 'Reconfiguring the Arms Race', *Journal of Peace Research*, 35 (1) 1998, 111-118.

⁸ Ball, 214-217. For a more technical econometric analysis of regional military expenditure in the 1980s and 1990s and coming to the same general conclusion see Stefan Markowski and Massimiliano Tani, 'Defense Expenditure, Spill-ins and Threats in Asia-Pacific 1985-2001', *Defense and Security Analysis*, 21 (3), September 2005, 243-265.

⁹ Evan Medieros, 'Asia's Response to China's Rise', transcript of a talk at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 29 January 2009, 5.

¹⁰ John Feffer, 'Hidden Asia-Pacific Arms Race: Six Countries Talk Peace While Preparing for War'. *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, 19 March 2008. http://www.japanfocus.org/-John_Feffer/2704, accessed 16 May 2009.

¹¹ I do not consider the issues associated with attempting to make sense of national defence expenditure statistics or of attempting to compare defence spending between countries. SIPRI has extensive notes relating to these issues at their databases.

¹² On the naval buildup see for example, Richard A. Bitzinger, 'A New Arms Race: the political economy of maritime military modernization in the Asia-Pacific', *The Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, 4 (2), 2009, 24-29.

¹³ Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Remilitarisation*, Abingdon: IISS, 2009, 140.

¹⁴ Australian Government, *Defending Australia in the Asia-Pacific Century: Force 2030*, Defence White Paper, Canberra: 2009.

¹⁵ China Defense mashup, 'A Greatly Powerful Chinese Navy is on Horizon', <http://www.china-defense-mashup.com/?p=3565>, accessed 20 May 2009; Andrew S Erickson and David D Yang, 'On the Verge of a Game Changer', *Proceedings Naval Review*, May 2009, 27.

¹⁶ IISS, *The Military Balance 2009*, London: Routledge, 2009, 375.

¹⁷ IISS, *The Military Balance 2009*, London: Routledge, 2009, 373.

¹⁸ IISS, *The Military Balance 2009*, London: Routledge, 2009, 374.

¹⁹ Greg Sheridan, 'Labor's Gung-ho Plan Ideal for Defence', *Australian*, 7 May 2009.

²⁰ John t. Bennett, 'The Spigot is about to close', *Defense News*, 11 May 2009, 1.

²¹ For example, Australia requires its armed forces to 'deter and defeat', *Defending Australia*, 13 and Singapore has advanced fighter aircraft as part of the SAF's 'overall deterrence strategy', Bernard F. W. Loo, 'F15SG: The Last Manned Fighter for the RSAF?', *Commentary* 47/2, Singapore: RSIS, 19 May 2009.

²² Such as the worry about uncertainty expressed in *Defending Australia*, 39: 'However, we need to remain alert to developments in military capability in the region so that we get as much warning as possible of the emergence of strategic risks, as well as developments that might pose a significant challenge to ADF activities in particular areas'.

²³ Jihwan Hwang, 'Rethinking the East Asian Balance of Power: Historical Antagonism, Internal Balancing and the Korean-Japanese Security Relationship', *World Affairs*, 166(2), Fall 2003, 96.

²⁴ For example, Indonesia asserts that: 'as an independent, sovereign and dignified nation, the strategic capability to defend ourselves must be maintained whether the threats are present or not', Government of Indonesia, *Defending The Country Entering the 21st Century*, Defence White Paper 2003, vii.

²⁵ Bitzinger, 'A New Arms Race', 27.