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Asia's Naval Arms Race: Myth or Reality?

Negative Aspects on Naval Enhancement of North East Asian Region : Emerged Regional Concerns with China and Russia

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Concurrent Session 2

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**Negative Aspects on Naval Enhancement of North East Asian Region
... Emerged Regional Concerns with China and Russia...**

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1. Security Environment in the Asia-Pacific Region

The Asia-Pacific region has been getting more global attention, due to the rapid development of economics such as China and India, resulting in enhanced coordination among countries, mainly the economic affairs. On the other hand, this region is considerably rich in political, economic, ethnic, and religious diversity, and conflicts between countries/regions remain even after the end of the Cold War, unlike Europe. Because of these reasons in the security environment have yet to emerge and long-standing issues of territorial rights and reunification continue to plague the region.

On the Korean Peninsula, the Korean people have been divided for more than half a century, and the face-off countries between the military forces of North Korea and the Republic of Korea. Concerns over North Korea's nuclear weapon and ballistic missiles have grown more serious. North Korea launched a ballistic missile in April and July 2009, while announced the implementation of a second nuclear test in May 2009 and the successful conclusion of a uranium concentration experience in September 2009. In March 2010, the ROK Navy corvette Cheonan sank in the vicinity of NLL in the Yellow Sea. A Joint Military-Civilian Investigation Group, including Korean and international experts, announced in May 2010 that it was due to a torpedo attack by North Korea. The US and ROK conducted joint exercises in the Sea of Japan and Yellow Sea.

There are issues concerning Taiwan and the overlapping territorial claims on the South China Sea including the Spratly Islands with some ASEAN countries. Japan also confronts unresolved territorial disputes over the Northern Territories and Takeshima, both of which are integral parts of Japanese territory, as well as unresolved maritime rights over East China Sea.

Many countries in this region have taken advantage of economic growth to expand and modernize their military forces by increasing their defense budgets and introducing new weapons systems.

In particular China, a major political and economic power with important clout is gaining confidence in the international community and demonstrating a more proactive stance. It also continues to promote the further modernization of its military capabilities against the backdrop of the continuing rapid growth of the defense budget. China has not clarified the current status of or future vision of the modernization of its military capabilities, and since transparency is not sufficiently ensured regarding its decision-making process for security and military matters, it has been pointed out that there is the possibility that this could lead to a sense of distrust or misunderstandings in other countries. Furthermore, China is increasing its illegal activities in waters close to Japan. In September 2010, a Chinese boat illegally fishing in Japanese territory near Senkaku Islands intentionally collided with two patrol ships of Japanese Coast Guard. The lack of transparency of its national defense policies, and the military activities are the matters of concern for the region and the international community, including Japan, and need to be carefully analyzed. Based on this situation, there is a need for further improvements to transparency regarding China's military, and promoting dialogues and exchanges with China and further strengthening mutual understandings and relations of trust are important issue. Recently, noteworthy events have occurred such as the announcement of the missile interception technologies.

Under President Medvedev, Russia is pursuing its national interests as a "strong state," and it is developing a military posture in line with its resources against the backdrop of its economic development to date. Currently, it is moving forward with downsizing its troops, reforming its organizational aspects, rebuilding its readiness postures, modernizing its military, including the development and introduction of new equipments and so forth. Recently, there has been global deployment, navy and air force in particular, including joint training accompanying long-term voyages, anti-piracy activities, and patrol activities by strategic bombers. In the Far East, too, Russia continues to revitalize activities of its vessels and aircraft, in an attempt to recover its operational proficiency level.

In the North East Asian region, where elements of uncertainty and a lack of transparency still exist as described above, the presence of the US military remains extremely important in order to achieve regional stability. Japan and other countries have established bilateral alliances and friendly relations with the US and, accordingly,

they allow the stationing or presence of US forces in their territories.

Regional countries have become to pay attention to either the rapidly emerged Chinese forces or strongly revived Russian forces, specifically their maritime related powers, such as sea (including marines), air, space and cyber powers. From now on, I will focus on both Chinese and Russian military enhancement, specifically maritime related powers, which may disrupt existing maritime power balance in this region.

2. China

On the military front, China has been modernizing its military forces, backed by the high and constant increase in defense budget. In its military modernization, China appears to give particular priority to the Taiwan issue as an issue of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and for the time being, it will probably aim for the improvement of military capabilities to prevent Taiwan's independence and others. But in recent years, China has been to work on acquiring capabilities for missions beyond the Taiwan issue. The military trends of China draw attention from countries in the region, as it has been steadily growing as a major political and economic power in the region.

(1) National Defense Policy

China states that it prioritized the defense of national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity, safeguarding of the interests of national development, and the interests of Chinese people above all else. China proclaims that it endeavors to build a fortified national defense and strong military forces compatible with national security and development interests and enrich the country and strengthen the military while building a so called "moderately prosperous society" in all aspects.

China has a policy of the active promotion of the "Revolution in Military Affairs with Chinese Characteristics," which mainly consists of the mechanization and informatization of its military power, based on its military strategy to win a local war under informatized conditions, according to global trends in military developments observed in the Gulf War, the Kosovo conflict, the Iraq War and others. Moreover, China appears to emphasize not only physical means but also non-physical means with respect to military affairs and warfare, incorporating the concept of "Three Warfare" — "Psychological Warfare", "Media Warfare" and "Legal Warfare" — into the tasks of the political work by military, and declaring the policy of "close coordination between military struggle and political, diplomatic, economic, cultural and legal endeavors."

In China's military modernization, backed by the stable relations with Russia

and other neighboring states that share land borders with China, it is believed that China is giving the top priority to handling of the Taiwan issue, more specifically to improving the capability to hinder the independence of Taiwan and foreign military support for Taiwan.

The US DOD states in its QDR issued in February 2010 that it will be necessary to retain to protect the US and its allies in an environment wherein states with wide range of sophisticated weapons exercise anti-access capability to impede the deployment of the US forces. It points out that “China is developing and fielding large number of advanced medium-range ballistic and cruise missiles, new attack submarine equipped with advanced weapons, increasingly capable long-range air defense system, electric warfare and computer network attack capabilities, advance fighter aircrafts and counter space system.”

Furthermore, in recent years, China has begun to work on acquiring capabilities for missions beyond the Taiwan issue. As regards a long-term plan for China’s military modernization, China proclaims that “according to the requirements of national security and the level of economic and social developments, ... it will lay a solid foundation by 2010, basically accomplish mechanization and make major progress in informatization by 2020, and by and large reach the goal of modernization of national defense and armed forces by the mid-21st century.”

China has reduced the number of its military personnel, mainly in the army, and has been modernizing of equipments of its entire armed forces, especially its naval and air forces, and nuclear and missile capabilities. In addition, China is working to improve joint operational capabilities among services and branches, to conduct practical exercises, to cultivate and acquire highly-capable human resources for administering operations of an informatized force, and to improve the foundation of the domestic industry. Much of the equipment used in the PLA is still outdated, and the current military modernization efforts are believed to be undertakings that intend wholly to improve the military’s capabilities. Nevertheless, China dose not disclose a clear, specific future vision of its military modernization. China has been rather intensifying its activities in waters near Japan. The lack of transparency of its national defense policies and military activities are the matter of concern for the region and international community, including Japan, which should require prudent analysis.

(2) National Defense Expenditure

China announced a national defense budget for FY2010 of approximately 519.1 billion Yuan, about 10(9.8) % up from the previous year. Thus China’s official defense

budget still maintains high growth rate, and the nominal size of China's announced national defense budget has more than doubled in size over the past five years, and has grown 18 fold over the past 20 years. As regards the relationship between defense and economy, China positions the build-up of defense capabilities as an important task as economic development, expanding that it "sticks to the principle of coordinated development of economy and national defense" in China's National Defense 2008. Accordingly, it is believed that China will continue to input resources for the improvement of its defense capabilities within the range of not hampering its economic development.

In addition, it must be noted that the amount of the defense budget announced by China is considered to be only part of its actual military expenditures. For example, it is believed that the announced defense budget does not include all the equipment procurement costs and research and development expense.

(3) Military Posture

China's military forces are composed of the PLA, the People's Armed Police Force and the militia. It is provided that these bodies be instructed and led by the Central Military Commission. The PLA is defined as a people's army created and led by the Chinese Communist Party, comprising the Army, Navy, the Air Force, and the Second Artillery Force.

a. Nuclear & Ballistic Missile Forces

China possesses various types and ranges of ballistic missiles: ICBM, SLBM, IRBM, MRBM and SRBM. The survivability and readiness of China's ballistic missile forces are under improvement by updating liquid propellant type to a solid propellant one. Moreover, it is also believed that China is working to increase performance by extending range, improving precision, introducing MIRV and other means.

China has developed the DF-31, which is a new mobile-type ICBM with a solid fuel propellant system mounted onto a transporter erector launcher (TEL) and the DF-31A, an extended model of the DF-31, which appears to have already begun to be deployed. Regarding SLBMs, China currently appears to be developing the JL-2, a new SLBM with a range of approximately 8,000km, and constructing Jin-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) to carry this missiles. Now that the DF-31 and the DF-31A have been deployed, once the JL-2 reaches a level of practical use, it is believed that China's strategic nuclear capabilities will improve by a great margin.

As for the IRBM/MRBM covering the Asia-Pacific region including Japan, China has deployed liquid-fuel-propellant DF-3 and DF-4 missiles, however, China also deploys the DF-21, which can be transported and operated on a TEL. These missiles are capable of carrying nuclear warheads. It is believed that China possesses conventional ballistic missiles with high targeting accuracy based on the DF-21, and is developing conventional anti-ship missiles (ASBM), which could be used to attack ships at sea including aircraft carriers. China also possesses the DH-10, a cruise missile with a range of 1,500km or longer. These missiles might complement ballistic missile forces, covering the Asia-Pacific region including Japan. In addition to these missiles, China also possesses a 100 plus dozens of H-6 (Tu-16) medium-range bombers that are capable of carrying nuclear warheads and cruising missiles.

Concerning SRBM, China possesses a large number of DF-15 and DF-11, and they are likely to have been deployed against Taiwan (and possible to Okinawa, Japan).

China announced that it had conducted tests on midcourse missile interception technology in January 2010, and attention will be paid to China's future trends in ballistic missile defense.

b. Ground Forces

The size of the Chinese ground forces is the largest in the world with approximately 1.6 million personnel. Since 1985, China has continuously sought to modernize its armed forces by curtailing the number of personnel and streamlining organizations and systems in order to improve efficiency. China aims to develop highly capable military forces, while reducing units inferior in equipments and technologies. Specifically, China is improving mobility by such measures as switching from its past regional defense model to a nationwide mobile model, working to motorize and mechanize its infantry. In addition, China is believed to be strengthening its airborne troops (belonging to the air force) and special operations force.

China is making its military units smaller, modular and multi-functional and also working on reforms to improve its logistical support capabilities. In 2009, China carried out "Stride 2009" exercises which traversed across military regions and were deemed its largest ever exercises of this type. These exercises are believed to have been designed to verify and improve capabilities necessary for deploying army units to distance areas, such as the army's long range maneuvering capabilities and logistical support capabilities, including the mobilization of militia and public transportation.

c. Naval Forces

The naval forces consist of three fleets—the North Sea, East Sea and South Sea Fleets. The Chinese Navy has approximately 950 ships (including approximately 60 submarines), with a total of approximately 1.34 million tons. The Navy is in charge of the maritime national defense and protecting the sovereignty of territorial waters and maritime rights and interests. The Navy introduced modern Kilo-class submarines from Russia and is actively constructing new types of domestic submarines to enhance its submarine force. Additionally, the Navy is increasing surface combatant ships with improved air defense and anti-ship missile capabilities, and is increasing the improved landing ships and supply ships. Also, a large hospital ship was commissioned in October 2008. In view of these developments in the modernization of the Chinese Navy, it is believed that China is trying to build capabilities to perform operations in areas more distant from China's shore.

With regard to the possession of aircraft carriers, at the Japan-China Defense Ministers meetings held in March and November 2009, Chinese Defense Minister General Liang Guanglie remarked that China cannot remain “without an aircraft carrier indefinitely” and that “the possession of aircraft carriers should be determined in comprehensive consideration of various factors including economic development, the level of shipbuilding and security factors. Furthermore, a number of senior military officials have also made positive remarks about possessing an aircraft carrier. China also purchased Varyag, a Kuznetsov-class aircraft carrier, from Ukraine, and carried out renovations, and has also constructed a structure replicating an aircraft carrier on land. Based on these facts, it is believed that China is currently advancing research and development on technology necessary for the possession of aircraft carriers.

d. Air Forces

The Chinese Air Force and Navy have approximately 1,950 combat aircraft in total. The number of fourth-generation modern fighters is rising steadily. China is domestically mass producing J-10 fighters and carried out import and licensed production of Su-27 fighters as well as importing SU-30 fighters equipped with anti-surface and anti-ship attack capabilities from Russia. Moreover, China is believed to be developing its next generation fighter domestically. China is importing highly sophisticated long-range surface-to-air missiles from Russia in order to improve air defense capabilities. China is making continuous efforts to improve its in-flight refueling capabilities and early warning and control system, which are essential for the operation of modern air force. Furthermore, it is reported that China has a plan to import a number of large cargo aircraft from Russia.

China has also begun enhance the electronic warfare and intelligence gathering capabilities of its aircraft in addition to increased efforts in actual reconnaissance flights against surrounding countries. In recent years in particular, Chinese air activities that appear to be some form of information gathering against Japan have been observed. Also, in September 2007, H-7 medium-range bombers flew into the Japanese air defense identification zone over the East China Sea to advance near to the Japan-China median line. In March 2010, a Y-8 early warning aircraft similarly flew to advance near to the Japan-China median line. What is more, it has also been reported that Air Force fighters and other aircraft are engaged in training that involves in-flight refueling over the South China Sea.

Judging from this modernization of air forces and the activities by aircraft, it is believed that China is improving its air defense capabilities for its national territory, aiming to build up capabilities for air superiority and anti-surface and anti-ship attacks in the anterior area, and improving long range transportation capabilities. Further attention needs to be paid to these activities conducted by Chinese air forces in the area surrounding Japan.

e. Military Use of Space and Cyber Warfare

China continues to put forth efforts for space development. China has launched various satellites into space using indigenous produced rockets, successfully conducted manned space flights and launched a lunar orbiter. In September 2008, China launched the Shenzhou-7 manned spaceship and its astronaut successfully performed China's first extravehicular activities. As it appears that in China's space development military and non-military sectors are related, there is the possibility that China utilizes space for such military purposes as information gathering, communications, and navigation. Recently, several high ranking officials in China's Air Force expressed the Air Force's policy of actively working on utilization of space.

China is developing anti-satellite weapons, and tested the destruction of its own satellite in January 2007, applying ballistic missile technology. It is also pointed out that China is developing a system that uses laser beams to hamper satellite functions.

China is thought to have interested in cyber warfare and they are believed to have organized and be currently training a cyber warfare-specialized unit.

China's interest in anti-satellite weapons and cyber warfare can be attributed to the increasing reliance of information gathering and command and communication in the military sector, which are vital for swift and efficient exercise of military strength,

on satellite and computer networks.

(4) Maritime Activities

Taking into general consideration relevant factors including China's geographical location and economic globalization as well as the fact that China explicitly states in its laws and other means that its navy assumes the role of safeguarding maritime rights and interests and protecting maritime safety, maritime activities by the Chinese navy and other organizations are considered to have the following objectives.

The first is to intercept naval operations by enemies in waters as far as possible from the country in order to defend Chinese territory and territorial waters. Behind this is increase in effectiveness of long-range attacks due to recent progress in science and technology.

The second is to develop military capabilities to deter and prevent Taiwan's independence. China maintains not to allow any foreign intervention in solving the Taiwan issue and realizing unification of China. If China aims to hold back by forces foreign intervention into Taiwan, which is surrounded by the sea, it needs to enhance its military operational capabilities at sea.

The third is to acquire, maintain, and protect proclaimed maritime rights and interests. China is engaged in exploring and drilling oil and gas fields as well as building facilities and surveying for such facilities in the East China Sea and South China Sea. It is believed that the aims of the naval vessels operating near the drilling facilities of the Kashi oil and gas fields in September 2005 included the demonstration of their naval capabilities of acquiring, maintaining, and protecting maritime rights and interests.

The fourth is to defend the sea lines of communications for China. The background of this is the fact that the sea lines of communications, including crude oil transportation routes from the Middle East, are extremely important life lines for the increasingly globalizing Chinese economy. It depends on future international situations at the time as to how far the Chinese Navy should defend the sea lines of communications by itself, but given recent modernization of the Chinese Navy and Air Force, the scope of their capabilities is believed to be expanding beyond waters near China.

Attention needs to be paid to Chinese maritime activities with the objectives described above, including the operation of naval vessels and oceanographic research activities near Japan and development of facilities that serve as bases for their activities.

(5) Military Balance across the Taiwan Strait

With regard to Taiwan's military power at present, ground forces include 41 Army brigades and these Navy Marine Corps brigades with a total of approximately 215,000 personnel. In addition, it is believed that the total of 1.65 million reserve personnel of air, naval and ground forces would be available in case of war. Regarding naval capabilities, in addition to Kidd-class destroyers imported from the US, Taiwan possesses relatively modern frigates and other vessels. Regarding air capabilities, Taiwan possesses F-16A/B fighters, Mirage 2000 fighters, Jing Guo fighters etc.

In view of the fact that China is enhancing its missile, naval and air forces, the Taiwanese military believes it still needs to modernize the equipment. In October 2008, the US DOD notified Congress of the possible sale of Patriot PAC-3 surface-to-air missiles and AH-64D attack helicopters, and others to Taiwan. In January 2010, the US DOD notified Congress of the possible sales of PAC-3 missiles, UH-60 helicopters, Osprey-class mine hunters, and others. Taiwan also wishes to purchase F-16C/D fighters and other arms from the US and the issue is to be observed.

Taiwan is also promoting the independent development of military equipment. Tien Kung II surface-to-air missiles and Hsiung Feng II anti-ship missiles are deployed and it is believed that Hsiung Feng II E cruise missiles are being developed in order to acquire long-range attack capabilities. The military capabilities of China and Taiwan are generary characterized as follows;

- 1) Regarding ground forces, China possesses an overwhelming number of troops, however, their capability of landing on and invading the island of Taiwan is limited. Nevertheless, China is making efforts to improve its landing and invasion capabilities in recent years, such as building large landing ships.
- 2) Regarding naval and air forces, China, as well as overwhelming Taiwan in terms of quantity, has been steadily modernizing its naval and air forces in recent years in the qualitative sphere, where Taiwan had superiority over China.
- 3) Regarding missile attack capabilities, China possesses numerous SRBM with a range that covers Taiwan, and Taiwan seems to have few effective countermeasures.

In addition to sizes of forces and performance and quantity of equipment, a comparison of military capabilities should take into account various factors such as objectives and characteristics of envisioned military operations, operational posture, proficiency of military personnel, and logistics. Nevertheless, as China is rapidly modernizing its military power, the overall military balance between China and Taiwan is shifting in favor of China. Attention should be paid to the modernization of both the

Chinese and Taiwanese military capabilities and the US weapon sales to Taiwan.

3. Russia

President Medvedev approved the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation through to 2020 in May 2009. The National Security Strategy sets out national and international objectives and strategic priorities for national security and for solid national development to replace the National Security Concept of the Russian Federation modified in January 2000.

In February 2010, the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation was formulated as a document substantiating the principles of the National Security Strategy in the military sphere. This document demonstrates the recognition that, while the probability of a large-scale war breaking out is on the decline, the military dangers facing Russia are increasing, which is evidenced by the approach of NATO's military infrastructure to the Russian border, including the expansion of NATO, as well as the construction and deployment of a strategic missile defense system. Furthermore, it also states that Russia will maintain permanent combat-readiness to deter and prevent conflict, and that in the event of war it will repel aggression and forcibly put a stop to military actions.

The doctrine regards nuclear weapons as an essential component for preventing the out break of nuclear wars and wars that use conventional weapons. It also claims that in addition to maintaining a sufficient level of nuclear deterrent capacity. Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in response to an event where nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction were to be used against it or its allies or under circumstances wherein conventional weapons have been used against it and where the survival of the country itself is imperiled.

(1) Military Reform

Having gone through the chaos after the collapse of the Soviet Union and faced with the difficulty in maintaining its military posture of the same level as during the Cold War era because of the severe economic situation and the decline in population in the 1990s, Russia began a full-scale process for military reform in 1997 by heeding the three pillars of reform: down-sizing, modernization and professionalization.

Currently, Russia is showing progress in the modernization of military forces, including the reducing of the number of soldiers, structural reforms, and the development and introduction of new types of equipment, and in the improvement of combat readiness. Russia's troop reduction goal, set in order to maintain an adequate

troop level of one million personnel, is scheduled to be achieved by 2016.

In addition, Russia has been improving the military unit command system, and it is thought that Russia will continue these measures to improve conventional armed forces along with its efforts to maintain its strategic nuclear deterrent capability against the backdrop of the national defense budget that has been increasing in recent years.

(2) Military Posture

a. Nuclear Forces

The Russian military emphasizes nuclear forces in order to supplement its conventional forces. In addition, it allots focus to nuclear forces to secure a global position in the context of an increasingly multipolar world, and as a balance with the nuclear forces of the US. It is believed that Russia is working to maintain a state of immediate readiness for its nuclear force unit.

Russia is gradually reducing the number of its strategic nuclear missiles due to issues such as aging. However, it still possesses ICBM following the US in scale, SLBM and long-range bombers (Tu-95MS Bears and TU-160 Blackjacks).

Regarding the update of nuclear missiles, Russia began to accelerate the development and introduction of new weapons, beginning with the deployment of new Topol-M ICBM (SS-27) units in 2005. In addition, flight trials for the RS-24, which appears to be a multi-headed version of the Topol-M, started in 2007.

In April 2007, Russia launched a Borey-class ballistic missile submarine (nuclear powered SSBN), however, it is believed that construction of the new SSBN is behind its initial schedule. Russia also started a flight test in September 2005 for the new-type SLBM Bulava, which appears to mount Borey-class SSBNs. However, it has been pointed out that all flight tests as of 2008 have been unsuccessful, and they have not yet reached the stage of deployment.

In addition, the US and Russia agreed in April 2009 to begin bilateral intergovernmental negotiations to work out a new, legally binding treaty on reducing and limiting strategic offensive arms to replace the START I before it expired on December 5 of that year. In April 2010 the US and Russian Presidents signed a new START which stipulates reducing both side deployed strategic warheads to 1,550 and their deployed delivery platforms to 700 within seven years after entry into force of the treaty.

As for non-strategic nuclear forces, Russia scrapped surface-launched SRBM, IRBM/MRBM with a range of 500-5,500km by 1991 in accordance with the INF Treaty,

and had removed tactical nuclear weapons deployed aboard naval vessels and stored them in onshore missile silos in the following year. Russia, however, still possesses a broad array of nuclear forces.

b. Conventional Forces and Other Issues

Russia recognizes the need to outfit the conventional forces with new equipment, and it is assumed that Russia implements the development and procurement of such equipment based on its state policy on military equipment for the period of 2007 to 2015. In January 2010 Russia carried out its first test flights for its so-called fifth generation fighters, and continued attention needs to be paid to trends in their future development.

Furthermore, the Russian armed forces have been striving to maintain their combat readiness by promoting the reorganization of all of their combat forces to permanent readiness units and have been carrying out large-scale exercises using its conventional forces in Europe. Russia's military operations are beginning to be active, as has been seen in its participation in counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and the visits of TU-160 long-range bombers and naval ships to Central and South American countries for the first time since the end of the Cold War.

However, as there are issues such as difficulties in securing personnel and lax military discipline due to the decrease in the population of young men as well as poor living conditions for military personnel, the modernization of conventional forces is not necessary sufficient.

As for the future Russian armed forces, since there are opaque elements which may influence Russia's future economic and social development, it is necessary to continue to observe their future trends.

(3) Russian Forces in the Far East Region

The current presence of the Russian military forces in the Far East region comparatively much smaller than it was at the peak. However, a considerable scale of military forces including nuclear forces still remains in the region. The declining trend of exercise activities has ceased, and in recent years activities have revitalized association with efforts for the recovery of its operational proficiency level. Since 2003, Russia has conducted military exercises in the Far East region, including "Vostok", which is a biennial large-scale anti-terrorism exercise, and "Mobility 2004", which was an exercise for the country's permanent combat-ready troops to deploy from the western part of Russia to the Far East region. A large-scale exercise, "Vostok 2010" was held in 2010 with many units from other than Far East region, with the aim of verifying the

achievement of military reform through the reorganization of command structure, etc.

With regards to activities done throughout Russia and with the involvement of the entire Russian military, “Stability 2008”, a major joint strategic military exercise involving a launch of ICBM, was conducted in 2008, and in “Zapad 2009”, major joint strategic military exercise conducted with Belarus in 2009, Russia is thought to have verified the new command organization indicated in the Future of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation..

Given that the overall Russian armed forces set their basis of operation on maintaining the combat readiness of their strategic nuclear unit as well as dealing with conflicts with the inter-theater mobility of units permanent readiness units, it is necessary to continue paying attention to the positioning and trends of the Russian armed forces in the Far East region with the movement of units in other region also in mind.

a. Nuclear Forces

As for strategic nuclear forces in the Far East region, ICBMs, such as SS-25s, and about 30 Tu-95MS Bear strategic bombers are mainly deployed along the Trans Siberian Railway. In addition, SSBNs, such as the Delta III nuclear submarine carrying SLBMs, and others are deployed in and around the Sea of Okhotsk. The readiness of these strategic nuclear forces appears to have been generally maintained.

As for non-strategic nuclear capabilities, Russian forces in the Far East region possesses a variety of weapons, including medium-range bombers such as TU-22M Backfires and sea, undersea and air-launched cruise missiles. A total of approximately 80 Backfires are deployed in the west of Lake Baikal and coastal areas, including the area across from Sakhalin.

b. Ground Forces

Ground forces in the Far East region have continuously shrunk in scale since 1990 and currently consist of 15 divisions of approximately 90,000 personnel. Also the Pacific Fleet of the Russian Navy has naval infantry division with an amphibious capability.

c. Naval Forces

The Pacific Fleet is stationed and deployed from its main bases in Vladivostok and Petropavlovsk. The fleet comprises approximately 240 ships with a total of about 550,000 tons, including about 20 major surface combatants and about 20 submarines

(about 15 of which are nuclear-powered submarines) with a total displacement of approximately 280,000 tons. The forces have been scaled down since 1990.

d. Air Forces

Russia deploys approximately 570 combat aircraft from its Air Force and Navy in this region. This represents a drastic decrease compared with numbers at peak times, but existing models are being modified to improve their capabilities.