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CALIBRATING THE DESIGN OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

"From Security Architecture to Security Order: Prospects for Cooperative Security 2.0"

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“From Security Architecture to Security Order: Prospects for Cooperative Security 2.0”[1]

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> “If we don’t know where we’re going we’ll end up someplace else.”Yogi Berra

At a moment of strategic transition, opinions differ widely on the likelihood or inevitability of a downward spiral in political security relations in the wider Asia Pacific region that could lead to armed conflict or a Cold War-like strategic rivalry.No one doubts that the region faces significant geo-political uncertainties and a host of traditional and non-traditional security issues that remain unresolved and menacing.

There isbroad consensus on four points. First, the region is increasingly integrated economically through trade, finance, production, and movements of people, money and technology. This has benefited the region enormously and been an engine of global growth and shared prosperity.

Second, the region is undergoing a major power shift that reflects the economic dynamism, growing capabilities, and assertiveness of several Asian countries. In particular, China’s multi-dimensional rise is having major impact. This is partly because of the gravitational pull of the Chinese economy and also because of its growing diplomatic and military capabilities. It is not now a peer competitor to the United States in many of the dimensions of national power and regional influence. But in the Xi Jinping era it presents a palpable challenge to uncontested American primacy in the Western Pacific and Asia.

Third, the region employs a variety of mechanisms for maintaining peace and security. These include unilateral preparedness, bilateral alliances and more recently a myriad of multilateral institutions and processes. The proliferation of multilateral institutions in the past 25 years has been significant. Diverse in purpose, membership, geographical scope, conception of the region, and leadership, they operate at formal governmental, second track, and civil society levels. ASEAN has been central to many but not all of them.

Fourth, as valuable as these new multilateral security institutions may be for purposes of dialogue, consultation, confidence building and dealing with some issues related to humanitarian and disaster relief, they have made very limited progress in areas including preventive diplomacy or conflict resolution. They have not supplanted self-help, ad hoc coalitions, and alliancesas the foundations of defence and security policies.

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[1] Prepared for the panel on “Calibrating the Design of the Asia-Pacific Security Architecture,” 29th Asia-Pacific Roundtable, Kuala Lumpur, 1-3 June of 2015.

Because ASEAN has continued to press its role as the central force in promoting multilateral cooperation on a broader region-wide basis and because the Asia-Pacific Roundtable has served historically as a meeting place for those committed to expanding multilateralism, this is the proper venue for exploring the kinds of adjustments that will strengthen the regional institutional architecture. The Roundtable is also a place for something more.

From Architecture to Order

Regional security architecture in its narrow sense refers to the design, functions and structures of more than a dozen different institutions now in operation including the ARF, ADMM Plus, and EAS processes and some of non-ASEAN centred activities including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building in Asia. Of important questions there is no shortage. What can be done to strengthen their organizational capabilities, improve their efficiency, advance specific issues on their agendas, and move from talking about regional issues to introducing effective measures to resolve them? How can they avoid duplication and outright competition? Can and shouldASEAN remain in the driver's seat?

The region also needs to turn its attention to a broader strategic matter: what kind of security order does it need and want? Security order involves institutional architecture but is a larger concept that includes the values, norms and organizing principles that regulate state-to-state interactions. It is not simply a codification of the balance of power and material capabilities; it is, as Henry Kissinger recently observed, about the nature of just arrangements--goals, limits and methods that can only be cultivated, not imposed. It is not the by-product of interactions but a matter of conscious design.

The problem is not just building a better institutional architecture or addressing crises and points of tension one-by-one, important and difficult as both might be. It is coming to an agreed definition of what kind of security order is appropriate to the economic, social, and political reality of a diverse region at a time of major rebalancing between rising and established powers.

As the era of multilateral dialogue began in Asia Pacific at the end of the Cold War there was a brief but intensive discussion about the complex nature of the security environment and about what kind of security order fit with regional conditions. The Japanese diplomat Yukio Satoh summarized it best as a multi-tiered or multiplex system that included an untidy mix of national self-help, American-girded alliances, organizations like ASEAN, and a new brand of multilateral dialogue processes like the ARF that he and others were envisioning. The role they saw for the ARF was not to alter the multiplex order but to build confidence and trust within it. The implicit premises were continuing American primacy and that there would be no fundamental contraction between the nascent multilateral processes and the alliance system that Japan and other saw as fundamental to their own security and a stabilizing force region-wide.[2]

The project resonated with the ideas of comprehensive security enshrined in ASEAN processes and thenew ideas of cooperative security developed in Europe in the late 1980s and then being

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[2]Yukio Satoh, "Asian Pacific Process for Stability and Security," paper presented at the "Conference on ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific Region: Prospects for Security Cooperation in the 1990s," Manila, 5-7 June 1991; and "Emerging Trends in Asia-Pacific Security: The role of Japan," *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1995.

imported into Asia-Pacific discussions at events like ASEAN ISIS meetings and a series of intergovernmental meetings in 1993. Both comprehensive and cooperative security thinking were hardwired into the ARF's founding documents. The fusion had three important ingredients: a security philosophy based on building security with neighbours rather than against them; a commitment to building inclusive multilateral processes that included both the like-minded and the non-like-minded; and attention to a range of what were described as new or non-traditional security issues ranging from climate change and infectious diseases through to terrorism, illegal migration, piracy, and disaster relief.[3]

Viewed today, many of the aspirations of what we might call Cooperative Security 1.0 are alive, and flourishing. But they are no longer sufficient in a changed world. In the early 1990s America was dominant in both the economic and military domains. The rise of Asian economies in the past twenty year has changed this dominance through a process that Joseph Nye has labelled a natural and inevitable diffusion of power. In 1990 China's economy was less than one third the size of the American. Now they are roughly comparable in GDP. In the early 1990s the aim was to bring a reluctant and suspicious China to the regional multilateral table. Within five years Beijing moved from passive and defensive to active. Now it is proactive, engaged and underwriting major initiatives. These are mainly in the areas of infrastructure finance but include security as well through institutions like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building in Asia. China is constructing an Asian-centred set of parallel institutions. Whether these will complement or supplant the Asia Pacific architecture built since the 1990s is not yet clear. But they certainly put it in a new light.

When Chinese policy makers talk about a New Security Concept and a security order based on common, comprehensive and cooperative security, they are using phrases that are genuinely regional ones, commonly used if not widely understood.[4]They supplement them with ideas about a New Model of Major Country Relations and root them in the language of UN principles and specific agreements including the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Nevertheless, they are received with suspicion and skepticism by many, in part because Chinese leaders are simultaneously criticizing an American and Japanese Cold War mentality, the alliance system, and discuss an Asia for Asians without a full American presence. American "rebalancing" and "new Chinese thinking" have a common interest in deepening multilateral institutions but they do so from different starting points. For the US they are an adjunct to its alliance system; for the Chinese they are potential successors, at least in the long run.

Ideas in Play

In light of what Kevin Rudd calls this new "asymmetry" of power in Asia and in the face of palpable strategic competition between the US and China that poses new risks of inadvertent incidents, and the possibility of a downward spiral of Cold War-like strategic rivalry and zero

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[3]The usage and etymology of these terms is chronicle in David Capie and Paul Evans, *The Asia-Pacific Security Lexicon*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2nd edition, 2007.

[4] See particularly Xi Jinping's "New Asian Security Concept for New Progress in Security Cooperation," remarks presented at the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, Shanghai, 21 May 2014, at http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1159951.shtml.

sum competition, it is not surprising that a number of ideas have been floated about the necessity of devising principles and institutions appropriate to a new set of circumstances.

Rudd has sometimes framed the challenge as the unsustainability of Pax Americana and the unacceptability of PaxSinica, instead favoring what he has calleda Pax Pacifica built on the basis of an Asia Pacific Community. In a recent report on the US-China relationship he makes the case that the institution best suited to usher in a new order is the East Asia Summit, though does not present and details about what the new order would look like.[5]

Hugh White, echoing an earlier call by Susan Shirk, has made the case for a Concert of Power system, "an agreement among a group of great powers not to try to dominate one another, but to accept one another as great powers and seek to resolve differences by negotiation…Competition among them must not threaten their status as an independent and equal member of the concern. Within this limit, they can compete fiercely." At the centre he sees US-China collaboration that accommodates the core strategic interests of both.[6]

Peter Hayes has outlined four different possibilities: (1) continuation of the present order that mixes rule-based cooperation and quiet competition within a regional framework structured around existing alignments sustained by US leadership; (2) a balance-of-power order of unconstrained great power competition fueled by dynamic shifts in relative power and a reduced US role; (3) a consolidated regional order in which an East Asian community develops like the lines of Europe's democratic peace, with China's political liberalization a precondition for such a regional evolution; and (4) a Sino-centric order centred on Beijing that sustains a different kind of East Asian community on the basis of China's extension of a sphere of influence across the region.[7]

In Asia, echoing the earlier thinking of Yukio Satoh, MartyNatalagewa as Indonesian's Minister of Foreign Affairs called for something less adversarial than a balance of power: a "dynamic equilibrium" that seeks to involve all the major relevant powers within a more cooperative framework as a basis for the development of an inclusive regional architecture and "a new kind of international relations with an emphasis on common security, common prosperity and common stability."[8]

Shin Kak-Soo, the former Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs in South Korea, has addressed the need for a "new strategic vision" for East Asia based upon a continuing role for the United States as balancer, appropriate accommodation of the rise of China, strengthening the regional economic and security architecture, and the build-up of strategic trust. "Self-interest dictates,"

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[5]Kevin Rudd, *U.S.-China 21, The Future of U.S.-China Relations Under Xi Jinping, Toward a Framework of Constructive Realism for a Common Purpose*, Harvard Kennedy School, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2015, p. 2, available athttp://asiasociety.org/files/USChina21_English.pdf.

[6] Hugh White, *The China Choice: Why We Should Share Power*, Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 136.

[7] Peter Hayes, "Building a New Security Architecture in Northeast Asia," *Nautilus Peace and Security Policy Forum*, 29 May 2014. Available at http://us4.campaign-archive1.com/?u=0de7e0e84dc3aff619f936a70&id=a310872784&e=9890554749.

[8] See for example his Statement at the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 26 September 2011, available at http://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/66/ID_en.pdf.

he argues, "that all stakeholders in East Asia work together to achieve strategic stability founded on a rules-based, equitable, open and peaceful regional order."[9]

BilahariKausikan, a Singapore diplomat of impeccable realist credentials, makes the case that the EAS in particular has the goal of promoting a new kind of balance; "not balance in the Cold War sense of being directed against one power or another, but balance conceived of us an omnidirectional state of equilibrium in which the ASEAN countries can enjoy good relations with all the major powers without choosing between them and thus preserve autonomy." Like Shin, he argues that the US role remains a vital condition for stability but must be supplemented by some new architecture to preserve stability for continued growth.He adds that:

> At its centre must be a new modus vivendi between the US and China. This is a complex relationship, characterized by profound interdependence coexisting with no less profound strategic distrust. The US and China know they must work together. Neither wants conflict. Both nevertheless find it difficult to reach a new accommodation. The US now needs help to maintain order, but is uncertain how much help to ask for and what price to pay. China regards the current order as heir to the system that led to what it calls 'a hundred years of humiliation', but has also benefited from it, at least over the past four decades. So Beijing is uncertain how much help to offer and what price to ask. From these uncertainties stem all the ambiguities and complexities of our time."[10]

Cooperative Security 2.0

We have been examining some ideas in a Canada-China project on regional security order looking at the ingredients of what for lack of a better title might be called "Cooperative Security 2.0." These include a close look at several concepts that might be supportive of it including self-restraint, reassurance, trust, trust-building measures, and empathy building measures, and some of the recent Chinese ideas including "Community of Human Destiny," "National Core Interests," "New Model of Major Country Relations," and "Opportunity Engineering."

In addition we have been looking at alternative models of core principles and instruments of a regional order, among them hegemony, concert, and security community. Drawing on some of the work of Amitav Acharya we also have been examining the idea of a "Consociational Security Order." Adapting the concept used to explain domestic political systems, he makes the case for building a distinctive "political-security order of a culturally diverse region that rests on economic interconnectedness, balances of power, cooperative action by elites and leaders to avoid and manage conflicts for the sake of their common survival and well-being. In this order, highly interdependent states ensure systemic stability with the help of both balance of power mechanisms and cooperative institutions."[11]

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[9]Shin Kak-Soo, "East Asia's Murky Strategic Situation Needs Stabilizing," *Straits Times*, 25 February 2015.
[10]BilahariKausikan, "ASEAN Centrality and Regional Security," presentation at the Conference of Regional Integration in the Indo-Pacific: Prospects and Challenges, New Delhi, 24-25 December 2014.
[11]Amitav Acharya, "Power Shift or Paradigm Shift?China's Rise and Asia's Emerging Security Order," *International Studies Quarterly*, 2013.

Its central argument is that states cooperate not from altruism but because, first, cooperation is in their interest and, second, because of the high costs of non-cooperation. Conflict is avoided initially not because group members are bound by deeply-shared values and a collective identity, but because actors see conflict avoidance as a necessary precondition for material growth and development. Institutions play a critical role in engaging all actors and inducing restraint as the vehicles for conflict resolution. But these institutions operate through mutual restraint and accommodation, not through integration or supranational bureaucracies, European style.

A CSO does not assume the presence of a deep social bond, similar basic values or a collective identity nor like a security community does it make war unthinkable. Unlike a hegemonic system it does not seek to exclude other great powers by establishing and enforcing a sphere of influence, as was the case with the US Monroe Doctrine in the Western hemisphere. Unlike Concert systems which work to ensure a degree of self-restraint among great powers, it does not marginalize weaker ones.

Three key mechanisms of a CSO generate stability. The first in a multipolar structure is equilibrium in the balance of power. Unlike in a security community, security competition among actors does not disappear in a consociation. Moreover, because consociations are comprised of strong and weak actors, to be stable a consociation must create a "balanced disparity" in which different groups engage in coalitional politics that denies hegemony or dominance to any particular group.

The second mechanism is institutions that facilitate problem solving and engender cooperation. Under a consociational framework, actors cooperate not because they share a collective identity, but because they consider the price of non-cooperation to be too high under prevailing conditions of high security and economic interdependence.

The third mechanism is elite restraint. While the distribution of power in a consociation is asymmetrical, and hierarchy exists as an objective fact, more powerful actors do not marginalise less powerful ones, but respect the rights and interests of the weaker segments. Decisions are not made unilaterallynor imposed by the powerful actors on the weak, but are made and implemented through consultations and consensus. A system of mutual or minority veto prevails, meaning the less powerful actors retain a say over collective decisions.

Framed in this way, a CSO has obvious resonance with material conditions including multipolarityand many of the existing arrangements in contemporary East Asia. In addressing US-China strategic competition, the relationship is consistent with defensive realism, rather than an offensive realism that implies aggressive expansionism and power maximization by China and pre-emptive containment by the US. The principles of *consensus* decision-making have been an established and unexceptional feature of Asian regional institutions and key to their tradition of shared leadership. The politics of accommodation developed by ASEAN has diffused to form new and wider regional institutions in Asia. ASEAN's continued leadership survives by default because no great power – US, China, Japan or India -- is in a position to develop a multilateral security institution under its own imprint.

From Here

The discussion about the principles and instruments of a new regional security order under whatever banner is at an embryonic stage as the disparate but overlapping views quoted above suggest. The ideas are fresh even as the vocabulary is daunting and the thinking heavily conceptual. Few of these ideas have been widely circulated or debated. No one has yet produced a road map or even a carefully developed picture of the destination. Yet few doubt that the issues just beneath the surface are real, threatening, and demand a strategic not just tactical or incremental responses.

It is time for further discussion in bilateral meetings, especially involving Chinese and Americans, as well as more inclusive regional meetings that include perspectives from other countries. As with cooperative security in the early 1990s, Middle Powers such as Canada, Australia and South Korea plus ASEAN are likely to be incubators of some of the new thinking. They may again have the capacity to find a bridge between a multiplex order that is cracking and a successor that has not yet been articulated much less fully realized.

It raises the kind of issues that will be useful in reenergizing the ARF and helping set in place an agenda and a vision for the EAS.

It will require creative thinking at governmental, track two and academic levels and need to address key questions head on.

- How and in what areas must a new security order go beyond the concepts of cooperative and comprehensive security that have been the sign posts for regional cooperation and multilateral institution building for the past two decades?
- In addition to confidence building and transparency measures, what can be done to build empathy and trust? What additional measures for self-restraint, reassurance, and cooperation are needed? Does the ARF road map need to be redrawn?
- What is the most constructive way to connect the evolving system of bilateral alliances to the emerging system of multilateral and plurilateral institutions? Can they be harmonized? How can an institution like the East Asia Summit address them?
- What elements of regional norms and international law need to be revisited or developed? For example, is the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation a sufficient basis or does it need revision? What does freedom of navigation mean in the 21st century?
- What should be expected of the United States and China in particular? What kinds of mutual adjustmentand partnership are needed? What would shared primacy look like in conceptual and operational terms?
- What is the role for middle powers and non-state actors including second track and civil society actors?

The questions are easier to pose than answer. We do not lack instruments and informal networks to facilitate discussion. What is missing so far is the will and imagination to think about possibilities and what the regional institutional architecture is intended to achieve. /END