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## **The Evolution of a New Triple Entente**

*By  
Vice Admiral (retd.) Vijay Shankar*

*“The only check on the abuse of political predominance has always consisted in the opposition of an equally formidable rival, or of a combination of several countries forming leagues of defence. The equilibrium established by such grouping of forces is technically known as the balance of forces.”<sup>1</sup>*

### **The Alliance System**

The history of armed conflicts in the twentieth century may not have brought about any deep seated changes to contemporary understanding of the true nature or rationality of power and its application. But, there is an instinctive grasp amongst nations that a conflict between an assemblages of States can only lead to immeasurable catastrophe which could and would serve to repudiate the purpose of military action. This discernment was central to the theory of balance of power. Up to the turn of the twentieth century it was this system of alliances that sought stability within the power equations of the era. The existence of an international order whose stability was predicated on a system of grouping of States not only influenced the nature and intensity of wars that were fought but made transparent the conditions under which these may occur and also, ironically, presented a template for resolution. Seen in this perspective, the same circumstances that held the promise of stability additionally carried with it the calamitous prospects of horizontal and vertical expansion of the intensity of war. The two World Wars exemplified the limits of intensity and its expansion. At the heart of the arrangement lay four dominating impulses; politics, imperialism, territory and economics. If one or even two of these stimuli were to be detached, it would be interesting to see what nature of balance would emerge and whether it would find relevance in the contemporary milieu that obtains in the East Indian Ocean and the West Pacific region.

In the run up to the First World War, two treaties of alignment were central to order. These were the ‘Triple Alliance’ between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy on the one hand; while the ‘Triple Entente’ between France, Britain and Russia sought equilibrium in a world that was threatened by subjugation unless an equally imposing opposition coalition could challenge and maintain the status quo. This context not only laid down the broad contours for strategic planning by both Unions but also had the potential to set into motion a significant chain of irrevocable military actions if one or the other perceived a threat of war. Consequently a crisis invariably tested the politician’s ability to restrain the military. Underscoring the dilemma that confronted the dual alliance was; “how effectively could an alliance designed to cope with the contingency of war serve interests in the day to day diplomacy of peace.”<sup>2</sup>

### **The Fear of Nations and the Death of an Enlightened World Order**

Some of the symptoms of the anarchic nature of things are a vicious securing of spheres of power and economic influence as exemplified by China in Africa; the competition between autocracy and liberalism; an older religious struggle between radical Islam and secular cultures; and the inability to regulate the chaotic flow of technologies and information. As these struggles are played out the first casualty in the post Cold War era is the still born hope of a benign and enlightened world order. The endemic instability world wide is characterized by the number of armed conflicts that erupted between the periods 1989 to 2010, which total 49.<sup>3</sup> The nature of these wars, more than anything else, reflected what I term the 'Uncertainty Paradigm' for they ranged from wars of liberation and freedom to insurgencies, civil wars, racial-ethnic-religious wars, proxy wars, interventions and wars motivated by the urge to corner economic resources. In all cases it was either the perpetuation of a dispensation, political ambitions, or the fear of economic deprivation that was at work below the surface.

In this era the fears and anxieties of nations are driven by four vital traumas. At the head of these is the perpetuation of the State and its dispensation. In second place is the fear and understanding that impedance to the nation's ambitions of growth and development may come about due to internal or external stresses or a combination of the two. The third trauma is that the remaining interests that the State considers critical must be recognized and accepted by the International system; this distress places the system in a quandary, particularly so when interests overlap at which time there is a real potential for friction and conflict. Lastly, is a conundrum faced by all major powers that is, does military power prevail?

It will not fail anybody's notice that both India and China fall into this very same cast ensnared by the 'four traumas', with one very critical difference, and that is the cooperative stimulus along with an egalitarian tradition is strong in India's case, while China has not displayed respect for either. Against this backdrop, when the politics of competitive resource access is put into the same pot as survival and development of State, to which is added the blunt character of military power, we have before us the recipe for friction and conflict. It is against this canvas that the development and structuring of Indian engagement with like minded powers must be contextualised.

### **China: Power as a Preferred Currency of Politics**

China published its sixth Defence White Paper in January 2008. Its contours were that of a self-confident China recognizing its own growing economic and military prowess. The paramountcy of containment of the various social fissures that development had precipitated was top of their agenda. Their appreciation of the security situation underscored the belief that the risk of world wide all-out war was relatively low, yet, the absence of such risk did not automatically imply a conviction that stability and peace pervades international relations. The paper critically points out that struggles for cornering strategic resources, dominating geographically vital areas and tenancing strategic locations have, in fact, intensified. Power as a natural currency of politics remained the preferred instrument. Under these circumstances the portents for friction are ever present and would therefore demand preparedness, modernization and strategic orientation of a nature that would serve to neutralize the fall out of such friction.<sup>4</sup>

One of the clauses that is central to the White Paper is that "the influence of military-security factors on international relations is mounting." Typical of their nuanced approach to such issues, China

highlights the fact that they are in the process of implementing a military strategy of ‘active defence’, in which, material as well as doctrinal tenets would combine offensive operations with defensive manoeuvres. This would demand that the Peoples Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) develop advanced assault capabilities. Of significance is the enhancement of mobility and strike capabilities in all three dimensions. Doctrines to back such capabilities involving sea-air-land integrated operations would be central to military strategy. Long range assault, regional reach and the development of ‘Access Denial’ and control strategies are at the core of Chinese military thought.<sup>5</sup>

### **Absence of a Security Oriented Cooperative Impulse**

To China, two events of the 1990s have had a seminal impact on the shaping of their military strategy. The first of these is the Gulf War of 1991. China took home not lessons or answers but, a reason for strategic pre-emption. In the words of General Liu Jingsong “allowing a modern military opponent unfettered access to land, sea and air territories in which to build up and employ forces, as well as regional bases and logistic hubs to sustain them, was a recipe for defeat. He pointed out that the very assembly and positioning of coalition forces constitute the “first salvo” and justified action to counter or even deter actual war.<sup>6</sup> The second event was the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1995-1996, which to the Chinese was a humiliating experience of their sovereignty being violated when the US deployed two carrier groups in the Strait with impunity. These events were the primary cause to formulate and enable their ‘Access Denial’ strategy. The development of ‘Access Denial’ capabilities has shown impressive growth over the last decade and a half, not just in terms of material progress but also in terms of doctrinal foundations and operational precepts. China’s three modernizations, along with their investments in cyber warfare, anti-air, anti-ship weaponry and anti-carrier hardware in addition to the thrust on nuclear submarine, both strategic and nuclear powered attack submarines, a carrier group centred on the Liaoning (ex Varyag) aircraft carrier with its suite of J-15s all make for a force that is increasingly lethal in effectiveness and enhanced in reach. Operating from infrastructure that they have cultivated from Sittwe and Aungmye in Myanmar to Hambantotta in Sri Lanka, Maroof in the Maldives and Gwadar in Pakistan (collectively the so called ‘string of pearls’) gives teeth to the long range access denial. In the absence of a security oriented cooperative impulse, the problem with such sweeping strategies is its blindness to recognize that, as historically never before, we are in fact dealing with a sea space that, in Mahan’s words, is the busiest of all the “vast commons.” The reluctance for collaboration makes the potential for friction high.

During President Hu Jintao’s review of the South China Fleet at Shanya in April 2008, he declared that the central problem arising from China’s security goals was how to maintain the robust level of resource access and to put in place control features needed to sustain and nurture national development. To this end, the importance of protecting and securing maritime interests present a major challenge. He specifically focused on the PLAN’s rapid reaction capability in its territorial seas, sea control capabilities in blue waters and power projection in waters of interest. In relation to extra regional naval forces, the PLAN’s strategy would centre on an effective denial capability. To achieve these objectives, the development and implementation of Access Denial strategy and the ‘Assassin’s Mace’<sup>7</sup> were key. The rapid expansion of the nuclear submarine fleet is all a part of this venture. The new dispensation which took over the reigns of office in March 2013 under chairman Xi Jinping has

promised continuity with power being central to their policies,<sup>8</sup> and furtherance of the ‘Insistent Posture.’<sup>9</sup>

### **Oceans and Economic Power**

The realization that maritime power is at the heart of making effective use of the world’s oceans as an inexhaustible source of energy, raw materials, food and most critically as a medium for the movement of trade, materials, petroleum products and indeed of personnel while also providing the portents for discord, has driven China from a closed centrally planned system to a more market oriented security sensitive nation. Today it is the world’s largest exporter, its economy at \$9.8 trillion is only second to the USA and with energy consumption of 8.2 million bbl/day she is the third largest consumer in the world. When we look at the growth pattern of India since liberalization, we note a similar trend with respect to consumption patterns, energy demands, exports and trade. Indeed with one third of this growth being powered by trade to the East (in 2012, trade with ASEAN nations was pegged at \$80 billion), the requirement to secure these interests becomes all the more vital. Already, the 2011 figures make China our largest trading partner (\$ 70 billion). Security of this trend will be a key to development of India. At the same instant, in the race to garner limited resources for the development of two very large economies the scope for friction looms large.

The reasons many countries view China with trepidation today are similar on the surface to their reaction to the rise of Japan in the 1970s and 80s and yet rooted in very different forces. China, too, uses a competing economic model, albeit with a difference (the very phrase used is an oxymoron) – “State Capitalism” – that challenges established economic ideology. In many ways, China also behaves in a mercantilist fashion. It keeps its currency controlled so its exports can out-compete those from other countries, and it corners natural resources by methods that are reminiscent of colonial dealings. But the real alarm is that China openly seeks to influence and eventually dominate international political and security institutions without bringing about a change within her own biological morphology.

### **China and her Case for Lebensraum**

China’s claims on the South China Sea as a territorial sea; her handling of dissent within in Tibet and Tiananmen; her proliferatory carousing with rogue states such as North Korea and Pakistan are cases, amongst others, that do not inspire confidence in change occurring within without turbulence. We also note with some foreboding, the emergence of China from out of its, largely, defensive maritime perimeters as defined by the first and second island chain strategies into the Indian Ocean region. To this end, it has through diplomacy and economic inducements established the so called string of pearls which was never meant to imply just naval bases. It is a far more nuanced concept. It encompasses a commercial, political, strategic and military proposition, the constituent elements and the strategic impact of which cannot be disaggregated from the idea of Comprehensive National Power where sea power in both its civilian and military dimensions carry equal weight, where access denial can be as relevant as the ability to control oceanic spaces and where the manoeuvre of warships is as vital for engagements at sea as for its benign role.

In articulating its strategic objectives China has unambiguously identified three canons, the first of which is internal and external stability to its own gauge; the second is to sustain the current

levels of economic growth and lastly to achieve regional pre-eminence. Gone is the ‘power bashfulness’ that marked the Deng era, in its place is a assuredness that is discernible by the contemporary conviction that “the-world-needs-China-more-than-China-the-world.” Lt Gen Qi Jiangua, the Asst. Chief of General Staff’s comments on the building of an aircraft carrier is revealing, he stated “It would have been better for us if we had acted sooner in understanding the ocean and mapping out our blue water capability earlier. We are now facing heavy pressure in the oceans whether the South China Sea, the East China Sea or the Taiwan Straits.”<sup>10</sup> At the heart of the matter lie three vulnerabilities:<sup>11</sup> vulnerability of the economic powerhouses located along the east coast and the SLOCs that feed it; vulnerability of Taiwan; and vulnerability of the sea spaces dramatically demonstrated by the crisis of 1995-1996.

Seen in this frame of reference General Liu Jinsong’s words carry new meaning, for if the first salvo is the build up, then it is not from the precincts of pre-emption that a strike emerges but as a reactive and a defensive strategy. This rationale gives form to the ‘Access Denial Strategy’ and when projected in consonance with the ‘Third Island Chain’, one notes the enlarged space of conflict.

### **Strategic Space and Cooperative Security**

In the development of a strategy the first imperative is to bring about coherence between security dynamics, strategic space and growth. It begins by defining the geographical contours within which the strategy to ‘deny maritime access,’ to China’s military power or other inimical extra regional powers (should such an eventuality arise), will operate. The broad parameters in this definition must factor in the areas from where the mechanics of trade originate, the energy lines run, the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) pass, the narrows contained therein which China would endeavour to secure and the geographic location of potential alliance partners. In this context the sea space between the 30 degree East Meridian and the 130 degree East Meridian extending to the Antarctic continent provides the theatre within which the ‘Anti-Access Denial’ strategy will function. We may call it the Indian Ocean and Eastern Ocean region (IOEO).

This hydrospace, bound by landmasses on all sides except the 130 East Meridian, has some unique features. Its weather is dominated by the monsoons and tropical systems; the hydrology of this Ocean makes it difficult for underwater surveillance operations between the 30 degrees north south parallels. Widespread clouding impairs domain transparency. Small ship operations, other than in the littoral seas, are particularly inhibited during the 6 month monsoon period. Density of traffic through the narrow passages and straits makes surveillance without identification incoherent. This Oceanic body is dominated by ten important choke points. From west to east these may be identified as follows:

- The Cape of Good Hope: is a way point across which transoceanic shipping traffic plies to and from the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean. Four million containers transit the Cape annually.
- The Strait of Babel Mandeb: is a strategically important strait that separates the Arabian Peninsula from Eastern Africa and links the Mediterranean Sea. Through this strait passes 3.3 million barrels of oil/day.

- The Strait of Hormuz: is a key energy corridor shipping 40% of seaborne oil traded globally. Through these narrows 16.5-17mbl/day of oil ply.
- Dondra Head: provides the passage which connects the sea lines of communication from the 9 degree channel to East Asia; provides a deep water route for a third of global traffic.
- Six Degree Channel: is the primary route that feeds into the Strait of Malacca. Between 200 and 220 ships transit this Channel everyday of which more than 15 % are oil tankers, 10 % of which are bound for China.
- The Malacca Straits: At the heart of the Eastern Ocean lie the Malacca Straits which links the Indian Ocean with the Pacific Ocean. It offers the most cost efficient SLOC, connecting the energy and mineral rich African continent and the oil rich regions of the Persian Gulf and the Middle East with the Eastern Ocean.
- The Sunda Strait: is a deepwater channel that can accommodate very large crude carriers and container carriers. It is not easy to navigate due to strong tidal flow and the presence of obstacles; an alternate route to the Malacca Strait.
- Lombok Straits: is an alternate passage to the Malacca and Sunda Straits. While it provides stealth, the strong cross currents inhibit passage of commercial traffic; it also involves a diversion of close to 1500 nautical miles. It's virtue lies in the discretion it provide for the transit of nuclear powered submarines.
- Makassar Straits: is a natural route for ships transiting the Sunda or the Lombok to and from ports in the Celebes Sea, Sulu Sea and the South China Sea.
- The Luzon Strait: provides the Pacific passage into the South China Sea.

In essence this ocean space of interest with its ten narrows provides the strategic context within which maritime strategy must operate and the SLOC that power the regions growth, must course. In order to seek strategic, economic, political and security leverage in today's international arena, an oceanic vision is the first essential and the idea must be backed by the development of a strategic posture that characterizes resolve to fulfil the quest.

Inspiration may take the form of a policy declaration to develop an alliance to stabilize the region which provides form for purposes of force planning. Littorals may well develop denial capabilities with their focus on individual interests in these waters, but their effectiveness can only be assured through cooperative engagements with like minded nations whose combined presence in the region would serve individual as well as collective interest. Within such a co operative group it is reasonable to assume that individual friction would be subsumed to the larger denial objectives. Expansion of the ASEAN and the creation of the ASEAN Regional Forum are suggestive of aspirations to counter balance the looming presence of China in their grouping. USA's presence will dominate activities in the region in the immediate and mid term future. Flash points such as territorial claims both in the maritime and continental domain will remain a source of friction that would necessarily demand military capabilities and a strategic orientation that serves to assure restraint. The eventuality of a waning US influence in-region remains a contingency that will hasten friction between China on the one side and India, the USA and Japan on the other.

On the trade front the picture is somewhat strategically paradoxical. India and China along with ASEAN<sup>12</sup> are set to become the world's largest economic bloc. The grouping is expected to account for

about 27 per cent of Global GDP and will very quickly overtake the EU and US economies. The buoyancy of the Indo-ASEAN relationship is backed by surging trade figures which in 2007 was USD 15.06 Billion, and is slated to hit USD 80 Billion in the current year. With such burgeoning stakes in the region, the reason to establish strong and stable security alliances now becomes a core issue.

### **Contemporary Challenges**

Notwithstanding the above, contemporary challenges in the region are dominated by three currents. While there are several regional and sub regional issues whose influence on the region cannot be denied it is these three that will have the greatest impact on the success or otherwise of a balancing policy.

- **The Challenge of a Rising China:** Towards the end of 2003 and early 2004 senior leaders of the Communist Party of China studied the rise of great powers in history noting the destructive inventory of conflicts that proved to be the engines of supremacy from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards. This brought them to the central theme of their examination: could China dominate without recourse to arms? Unfortunately, in its relationship with India it has shown no propensity to establish cooperative stabilizing arrangements. Its collusion with reprobate states such as Pakistan further pushes Sino-Indian relations downhill. The failure to issue a condemnation when North Korea sank a South Korean warship, nor reign in the former's nuclear programme is symptomatic of a larger aim to disrupt the existing status quo in East Asia much to the chagrin of the USA. Its disputes with Japan and its forceful reassertion of claims to sovereignty over virtually the entire South China Sea are very serious ulcers in current relationships in the Eastern Ocean. As, no doubt, the history lesson would have told Chinese leadership, the relationship that determines regional conflict or otherwise is the stability of relationship between powers that have the greatest impact on the region.
- **The Lone Super Power:** The overwhelming ascendancy of the single super power against the backdrop of the intricate economic relations that the US and China currently enjoy poses an ironic dilemma. To China, is the American posture in the Pacific and Indian Oceans intrinsically antagonistic and would it break out into a hot conflict given the strategic links that USA enjoys with Japan, India South Korea, Taiwan and the other littorals of this region? The present would seem to suggest that the war of words is just a few turns away from a conflictual situation as the current situation in the East and South China Sea will imply. The impact of an Alliance in this region will be to positively affect economic and developmental aspirations.
- **The Rise of Nationalism, the Source of China's Strategic Confidence:** Nationalism and Ideology which was the underlying force that sparked off the major wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has today become the source of China's confidence, to an extent, that the words of Chairman Deng who started the reforms in the early 80's and advocated a strategy marked by restraint, patience, poise and guile<sup>13</sup> now have a hollow ring about it. According to Yuan Peng of the

China Institute of Contemporary International Relations “many Chinese scholars suggest that the Government give up the illusion of US partnership and face squarely the profound and inevitable strategic competition.”<sup>14</sup> It is also apparent that the surge of nationalism that sweeps China has led it to formulate an affordable military strategy of asymmetric weapons (the ‘Access Denial’ and ‘Assassin’s Mace’ strategies are part of such a concept). These unorthodox strategies have set into motion three areas of rapid modernization in the military establishment; firstly the most active land based ballistic and cruise missile program in the world, secondly an enlarged nuclear attack and nuclear ballistic missile submarine fleet, and lastly concentration on what China calls “informatisation,” an active and passive method of waging information warfare.

### **The New Triple Entente and Concept of Anti-Access Denial**

As the curtains fell on the twentieth century the character of strategic alliances had transformed in two of its earlier facets. Gone were the imperialist motives that readily recognized and accepted the risk of war and the urge to territorial conquest and expansion. In its place was a fresh premise; one that was governed by political compatibility, economic mutuality and collective security. The emerging convergence of interests in both the political and economic arena between India, Japan and the USA makes the prospects of a new ‘Triple Entente’ strategically of the essence.

Having also brought about a modicum of coherence to the need to contend with and normalize China’s aspirations (which it has so clearly spelt out), it would now be appropriate to define and derive objectives of the concept of Anti-Access Denial as applicable to the larger regional Maritime Military Strategy. Anti-Access Denial by the Alliance will seek to contest and deny China’s ability to unilaterally project military power to secure her interests either through aggression or through other destabilizing activities. The instrument to achieve denial is by convincingly raising the cost of military intervention through the use or threat of use of methods that are predominant in form and irresistible in substance. The strategy’s first impulse is to avoid a hot conflict.

To ‘contest and deny’ would suggest a clear understanding of where the centre of gravity of power projection forces lie. In China’s case it is the triumvirate of the Aircraft Carrier; security of the narrows and of the ‘string of pearls’ that would be needed to assure sustenance of forces (on which is founded the integrity of the Third Island Chain). Use of aggressive means is clear enough, but prying open faults that could destabilize and therefore distract the main exertions, are not at all patent. The Alliance will have noted that in China’s case both internal as well as external stresses obtain that could be leveraged in order to undermine their primary thrust to contest, deny and to project power; more importantly the envisaged Alliance too has fissures that China not only has the resolve and capability to exploit but also has a willing ally in Pakistan and North Korea to queer any pitch.

‘To raise the cost of military intervention’ is a matter that resides in the mind of political leadership, yet there will always be a threshold, the verge of which is marked by diminishing benefits of intervention or power projection. It will be noted that it was a similar calculus that must have come to play in the 1995 Taiwan Strait crisis that inhibited and forced China to reconcile to humiliation in the face of a possible debilitating confrontation. Also the logic of weakening out-of-region motivation sets in, diluting the efforts of the intervener. Lastly the threat of ‘use of force’ must not only be credible

but also the ‘value exchange’ in terms of losses must weigh against the power projecting force. The objectives of an ‘Anti-access Denial’ Strategy may therefore be summarized as follows:

- To devise operational and material Alliance doctrines and strategies to deter, threaten, (and should the need arise) strike and neutralize Chinese aircraft carriers that may menace Alliance interests in the IOEO.
- To deploy denial and control forces that effectively exclude the ‘string of pearls’ ports. Platforms of choice would be conventional submarines, maritime strike aircrafts supported by long range surveillance efforts.
- To disable operational networks through ASAT and active cyber action.
- To surveil and seed the straits with seabed sensors, surface and air scouts.
- To disable energy and resources traffic through non lethal methods and to ensure that own escorts keep open Alliance right of passage on the sea.
- To raise the cost of military intervention will suggest a strategic posture that by disposition, demonstration, marking and resolve, declare our orientation, will and intent that the cost of intervention will far outweigh its benefits.

Leaving aside, for the moment, material aspects of generating capabilities, the most critical issue is one of timing, that is, what would be the enabling circumstances that would trigger an Anti-Access Denial Strategy. While the short answer may be “when Alliance interests are threatened” this does not in any way assist the planner in resolving the quandary. Two factors must, however, lead; the first is that initial moves must be so calibrated that the intervener is made aware that a threshold is being approached and that the next rung in the escalatory ladder is a ‘hot’ exchange. This may take the form of ‘marking’ or through hotline communications. The second is by initiating demonstrative action which may serve to disable operational networks or even measures instituted in some other theatre.

A maritime Anti-Access Denial strategy unlike a continental standpoint, abhors ‘*Lakshman Rekhas*’ for there are no readily definable geographic ‘redlines’, what is of greater import is context, circumstances and events, which brings us back to the original dilemma of characterizing the conditions that would bring the strategy into play. In any event, we have in an earlier section noted China’s security narrative and the challenge that a rising China poses. Both advocate the centrality and compelling force of an aggressive drive to corner resources. Under this order of things, the Triple Entente may define ‘red lines’ as follows:

- Any large scale military attempt to change the status quo in territorial configuration.
- Large scale military build up either at Hambantota, Gwadar or at Sittwe.
- Aggressive deployments that disrupt energy and resource traffic or dislocate networks.
- Any attempt to provide large scale military support, covert or otherwise, to promote an insurgency.

In execution, Alliance Anti-Access Denial Strategy will be implemented in three distinct phases. The First will involve selective Anti-Access Denial deployment, surveillance and marking in the IOEO; the second will entail demonstration through cyber action and possible ASAT intervention; the third and last is hot action including sea control, enabling Exclusion Zones and SLOC severance.

## Conclusion

The ultimate reality of the international system is the place that power enjoys in the scheme of assuring stability in relations between nations. Uncertainty in international relations queers the pitch, in view of the expanded space of possibles. China has unambiguously articulated three canons that make for its strategic objectives; stability, growth and regional pre eminence. In the absence of a security oriented cooperative impulse, the problem with such sweeping strategies specifically the coming 'Third Island Chain' superimposed on a long range power projection and access denial is its blindness to recognize that, we are in fact dealing with a sea space that is the busiest of all the "vast commons." The reluctance for collaboration makes the potential for friction high.

Contemporary challenges in the IOEO are dominated by what direction China's rise will take, of significance is that the potential for a collision is a reality and the only consideration that could deter it, is the ability to attain a strategic posture in the IOEO that serves to stabilize. India's relationship with the USA and Japan provides the opening to establish a 'Triple Entente' that realizes political compatibility, economic mutuality and collective security in the region in order to counterpoise China.



Vice Admiral (Retd.) Vijay Shankar PVSM, AVSM, holds an MSc in Defence Studies and is a graduate of the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, USA. He is the former Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman & Nicobar Command, Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Forces Command and Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet. His Command and operational experience are comprehensive and include Command of INS Viraat the aircraft carrier, active service during the 1971 war, Operation Pawan (the IPKF operations in Sri Lanka) and Operations to vacate the Kargil intrusion.

The Admiral retired on 30 September 2009, after nearly 45 years in uniform. He is today settled with his wife in the Nilgiris and passes down his operational and strategic experience through articles and participation in seminars that deal with his primary areas of expertise. He has contributed to various professional journals and continues to support his Alma Mater in Kochi through his writings. He has lectured at the Staff College, Higher Command College, the United Services Institute and the National Maritime Foundation. He is a member of the adjunct faculty of the National Institute of Advanced Studies and has tenanted the Admiral Katari Chair of Excellence at the United Services Institute. Internationally, his participation in the Track II Ottawa Dialogue, the Bellagio Carnegie Endowment discussions, the Indo-Sino-Pak trilateral dialogue, Chaophraya Dialogue and the papers he has presented there seek to provide a new paradigm for nuclear security on the sub-continent.

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## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> Gooch G.P. and Harold Temperley (eds). *British Documents on the Origin of War 1898-1914*, Vol III, London 1928 Appendix A, p 402-3.

<sup>2</sup> Bridge F.R. *From Sadowa to Sarajevo; The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary 1866-1914*. London 1972, p 360.

<sup>3</sup> The World at War <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/index.html>. The United Nations defines "major wars" as military conflicts inflicting 1,000 battlefield deaths per year. In 1965, there were 10 major wars under way. The new millennium began with much of the world consumed in armed conflict or cultivating an uncertain peace. As of mid-2005, there were eight Major Wars under way [down from 15 at the end of 2003], with as many as two dozen "lesser" conflicts ongoing with varying degrees of intensity.

<sup>4</sup> Ma Cheng-Kun, *PLA News Analysis*, "Significance of 2008 China's National Defense White Paper" no. 15, pp. 49-60

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Lewis John Wilson and Litai Xue, "The Quest for a Modern Air Force" in *Imagined Enemies China Prepares for Uncertain War*, Stanford University Press 2006, p237. General Liu Jingsong, a member of the 15<sup>th</sup> CPC Central Committee, he was also the PLA Commander of the Shenyang and Lanzhou military regions and to him amongst others is attributed the opening of Equatorial Guinea 1995.

<sup>7</sup> Ma Cheng-Kun PLA news analysis "China's security strategy" number 8 April 2008, Pgs 146-150. The assassin's mace program is a part of China's asymmetric war fighting strategy to develop capabilities designed to give a technologically inferior

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military advantages to overwhelm a technologically superior adversary. Their ASAT program, strategic hacking teams and cyber warfare, submarine programs are all a sub-set of the assassin's mace

<sup>8</sup> BBC E-news. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) 15 November 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Kissinger, Henry. *On China*. Chapter 18, p 508.

<sup>10</sup> BBC E-news 08 June 2011. Lt Gen Qi Jiangua speaking to the Hong Kong Commercial Daily.

<sup>11</sup> Lampton, David M. *The Three Faces of Chinese Power. Might, Money and Minds*. Berkeley, University of California Press 2008, p16, 40-41 and 50.

<sup>12</sup> Since the declaration of India's Look East Policy, the ASEAN-India relationship has grown from the limited sectoral partnership in 1992 to a full dialogue venture in 1995 and subsequently to a summit level collaboration in the first ASEAN-India summit held in 2002. This reflects a new found mutuality between the two entities. The current membership of the original ASEAN grouping plus 6 is symptomatic of the shifting centre of gravity of geopolitics to the East, and from a security angle, the inclusion of India, USA, Russia, Japan and South Korea in addition to China provides the context for security checks and balances in the Eastern Ocean.

<sup>13</sup> The 24 Character Strategy is attributed to Deng Xiao Ping in the early 90's as quoted in the Pentagon's annual China report dated 17<sup>th</sup> August 2010 "*Coolly observe, calmly deal with things, hold your position, hide your capabilities, bide your time, never try to take the lead, accomplish things where possible*".

<sup>14</sup> As quoted in *The Economist* of Dec 4-10 2010 Special report p9.