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14. ABSTRACT The US ability to project power is a major factor ensuring freedom of movement and security into the Western Pacific region. In the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US capability to project power has been effectively unchallenged. This period of operating with relative impunity is rapidly coming to an end with the rise of a modern Chinese military power that will soon become a "peer competitor." China has become more aggressive in its claims of "indisputable sovereignty" over territories in the SCS and appears intent on trying to exercise control over the zone by denying the US access. Freedom of movement through the South China Sea is vital to facilitating the US global posture. China's renewed assertiveness and rapid military transformation have increased the potential for those interests to be undermined. If the US allows these claims, of "indisputable sovereignty" over the entire South China Sea, to go unchecked or unchallenged the US could lose its ability to project power into the region. USCDRPACOM finds itself at a cross-road, either take a more proactive approach to deter China's aggressive actions and to reassure our allies and partners of our commitment to the region or risk the loss of military access to areas vital to its security.					
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Effects of China's Sovereignty Claims in the South China Sea

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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04 May 2011

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Abstract

The US ability to project power is a major factor ensuring freedom of movement and security into the Western Pacific region. In the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US capability to project power has been effectively unchallenged. This period of operating with relative impunity is rapidly coming to an end with the rise of a modern Chinese military power that will soon become a “peer competitor.” China has become more aggressive in its claims of “indisputable sovereignty” over territories in the SCS and appears intent on trying to exercise control over the zone by denying the US access. Freedom of movement through the South China Sea is vital to facilitating the US global posture. China’s renewed assertiveness and rapid military transformation have increased the potential for those interests to be undermined. If the US allows these claims, of “indisputable sovereignty” over the entire South China Sea, to go unchecked or unchallenged the US could lose its ability to project power into the region. USCDRPACOM finds itself at a cross-road, either take a more proactive approach to deter China’s aggressive actions and to reassure our allies and partners of our commitment to the region or risk the loss of military access to areas vital to its security.

Introduction

When considering the military-modernization programs of countries like China, we should be concerned less with their potential ability to challenge the U.S. symmetrically—fighter to fighter or ship to ship—and more with their ability to disrupt our freedom of movement and narrow our strategic options. Their investments in cyber and anti-satellite warfare, anti-air and anti-ship weaponry, and ballistic missiles could threaten America’s primary way to project power and help allies in the Pacific—in particular our forward air bases and carrier strike groups.¹

-Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates

The US ability to project power has been a major factor in ensuring freedom of movement and security into the Western Pacific region. In the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US capability to project power has been effectively unchallenged. This period of operating with relative impunity is rapidly coming to an end with the rise of a modern Chinese military power that will soon become a “peer competitor.” Once dismissed as a “junkyard army,” the Chinese military is now impressing outside observers—and alarming China’s neighbors—with its growing air, naval, missile, space, and information warfare capabilities.²

With these new capabilities, China has reverted to a more assertive posture in consolidating its jurisdictional claims, expanding its military reach and seeking to undermine the claims of other states through coercive diplomacy.³ China has become more aggressive in its claims of “indisputable sovereignty” over territories in the South

¹ Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Speech to the Air Force Association Convention, National Harbor, MD, Wednesday, September 16, 2009, <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1379>, (accessed 23 Apr 2011)

² Michael Chase, Chinese Military Modernization: Challenges and Opportunities for the United States, The Moderate Voice, Jan 26, 2011, <http://themoderatevoice.com/99332/chinese-military-modernization-challenges-and-opportunities-for-the-united-states/>, (accessed 26 March 2011)

³ Clive Schofield and Ian Storey, The South China Sea Dispute: Increasing Stakes and Rising Tensions, Jamestown Foundation, November 2009

China Sea (SCS) and appears intent on trying to exercise control over the zone by denying the US access to the region while ousting rival claimants, including Taiwan, Japan, Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia.⁴ As noted by Admiral Robert Willard, the head of Pacific Command, "Elements of China's military modernization appear designed to challenge our freedom of action in the region."⁵ China's recent official statements and actions in what Beijing calls its near seas, represent a direct challenge to accepted interpretations of international law and established international norms.⁶

As stated by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the US "has a national interest in freedom of navigation, open access to Asia's maritime commons, and respect for international law in the South China Sea."⁷ Freedom of navigation through the SCS allows the US Navy to transit between the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans, greatly facilitating the US global posture. China's renewed assertiveness and rapid military transformation have increased the potential for those interests to be undermined. If the US allows these claims, of "indisputable sovereignty" over the entire South China Sea, to go unchecked or unchallenged, the US could lose its ability to project power into the region. USCDRPACOM finds itself at a cross-road, either take a more proactive approach to deter China's aggressive actions and to reassure our allies and partners of

⁴ Michael Richardson, China Targeting US Deterrence, *The Japan Times*, 5 January 2011, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/eo20110105mr.html>, (accessed 15 April 2011)

⁵ ADM Robert Willard, prepared statement before the House Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, 23 March 2010.

⁶ ADM Robert Willard, prepared statement before the House Armed Service Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, 06 April 2011,

⁷ Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Press Availability, 23 July 2010, National Convention Center, Hanoi, Vietnam, <http://www.america.gov/st/texttransenglish/2010/July/20100723164658su0.4912989.html#ixzz1C6lp9vZe>, (accessed 17 April 2011)

our commitment to the region or risk the loss of military access to areas vital to its security.

Significance of the South China Sea: Factor Space

The South China Sea is a large semi-enclosed ocean space surrounded by the countries of China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam, with Cambodia and Thailand. Located between mainland Asia and the archipelagic island groups of the Philippines, Borneo and Indonesia, the South China Sea covers an area of approximately 1.2 million square miles. The South China Sea is characterized by complex coastal geography, with hundreds of small islands, islets, rocks and coral reef features, the vast majority of which are subject to competing claims to sovereignty. Furthermore, and largely as a result of the territorial disputes over islands, significant areas of the South China Sea are subject to overlapping claims to maritime jurisdiction.

The South China Sea is one of the world's busiest international sea-lanes, providing the key maritime link between the Indian and Pacific. Over half of the world's merchant fleet (by tonnage) sails through the South China Sea every year. More than half of the world's oil tanker traffic passes through the region's waters and over half of the top ten container shipping ports in the world are located in or around the South China Sea.⁸

⁸ David Rosenberg, *Governing the South China Sea: From Freedom of the Seas to Ocean Enclosure Movements*, *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, 26 December 2010, <http://asiaquarterly.com/2010/12/26/governing-the-south-china-sea-from-freedom-of-the-seas-to-ocean-enclosure-movements/> (accessed 10 April 2011)

For major naval powers, like the United States, freedom of navigation through the sea lanes of the South China Sea is of paramount importance. Countries with major shipping and naval interests, such as the US, want to maintain freedom of navigation through the straits and sea lanes of the South China Sea for their oil tankers, container ships, and naval vessels.⁹ Without access to the South China Sea, the US ability to deploy forces rapidly in reaction to a crisis would be severely hindered.

Freedom of navigation is not the only matter of importance in the South China Sea. In terms of strategic significance, the South China Sea could become a “second Persian Gulf”.¹⁰ The South China Sea is believed to be the repository of large deposits of oil and gas, thus making jurisdiction an economic interest of all the coastal states and a security interest to China’s energy and resource hungry industrial sector.¹¹

South China Sea Dispute: Through the China Lens

Don't debate. . . Once debate begins, things become complicated.

-Deng Xiaoping

Have no illusions, the South China Sea issue is real. In China’s eyes, the issue of the South China Sea dispute is fairly straightforward; it belongs to China. It has long held that the 9-dashed line, which encompasses almost all of the South China Sea, is a region of geostrategic interest and part of a great defensive perimeter established to

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ China's Global Times on April 19 published a special report on the South China Sea, which it dubbed the "second Persian Gulf." The paper said that the South China Sea contained over 50 billion tons of crude oil and more than 20 trillion cubic meters of gas. This is about 25 times China's proven reserves of oil and eight times its gas reserves. No source was cited by the Global Times for its estimate of the amount of oil and gas beneath the seabed of the South China Sea., BEIJING’S TROUBLING SOUTH CHINA SEA POLICY, Michael Richardson, *The Japan Times*, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/eo20110428mr.html>, 28 April 2011

¹¹ Caitlyn Antrim and Captain George Galdorisi (retired), *Creeping Jurisdiction Must Stop, Proceedings*, April 2011, Vol.137, pg66

protect China's major population and economic centers along the coast.¹² However, there is no clear basis for this claim. Among Chinese scholars, there are four schools of thought as to what the 9-dashed line means. The line denotes sovereignty interests, historical rights, jurisdictional rights, or security interests.¹³ This has led to ambiguity and contradictions about what China's true intentions are, much of it calculated. It serves China's purpose to remain ambiguous. By not clarifying their position, China has been able to increase its military capability while still claiming a "peaceful rise". Evidence to what the 9-dash line actually means may lie in the fact that Taiwan falls within that perimeter; China has certainly been clear about its intentions there.

Until July 2010, when a Ministry of Defense spokesman declared that China had "indisputable sovereignty" ¹⁴ over the South China Sea, Chinese officials had been very careful to avoid the word "sovereignty". Because China lacked the military capacity to enforce this assertion, it made strategic sense to disguise rather than clarify intentions.¹⁵ Deng Xiaoping often reminded his countrymen of a traditional Chinese aphorism: "Bide your time and conceal your capabilities until you are ready to act."¹⁶

Why did the Chinese change from the charm offensive strategy and become more assertive? Why now? There is a lot of swagger in Beijing. China is fascinated with power, and they now believe they have it. China's leaders describe the beginning of the

¹² (Dutton 2010) pg4

¹³ (Dutton 2010)pg4

¹⁴ John Pomfret, Beijing claims 'indisputable sovereignty' over South China Sea, *Washington Post*, 31 July 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/30/AR2010073005664.html>, (accessed 29 March 2011)

¹⁵ Martin Ott, Southeast Asia's nerves over China, *Asia Sentinel*, 28 September 2010, http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2723&Itemid=367 (accessed 10 April 2011)

¹⁶ Ibid

21st century as a “strategic window of opportunity”, meaning that regional and international conditions will generally be conducive to China’s rise to regional preeminence and global influence.¹⁷ Perhaps the rhetoric of US decline has signaled China that it could be assertive diplomatically, politically and militarily.¹⁸ From China’s vantage point, the US went into a deep recession in 2008 and has still not fully recovered. Whereas China has recovered and has been able to help other nations recover. Therefore, China’s perception is that perhaps the US is the declining power.

A second factor could be that the US spends a lot of time talking about the rise of China. If you spend that much time talking about it, eventually people are going to start believing it.

Another is growing nationalism. Recent, significant achievements such as sending indigenously produced submersible to the floor of the South China Sea, manned space mission, super computer faster than Japan’s have all added to China’s confidence in its standing on the world stage. So why should China take a secondary role and walk softly, if its capabilities are so obvious?

Military Modernization/Anti-Access and Area Denial

China has been steadily building up its strategic and conventional capabilities following the deployment of two US aircraft carriers and their escorts off the coast of

¹⁷ Annual Report to Congress, Military and Security Developments Involving the Peoples Republic of China 2010,pg15

¹⁸ Heritage Foundation, Defending Defense: China’s Military Build-up: Implications for U.S. Defense Spending, *Foreign Policy Initiative*, 07 March 2011, <http://www.foreignpolicy.org/content/defending-defense-chinas-military-build-implications-us-defense-spending>, (accessed 15 April 2011)

Taiwan during the election in 1996. It was a display of US power projection and striking power that China could not counter. Since then, China has given top priority to developing a strategy of “active defense” or what US analysts term anti-access/area denial (A2/AD).

At the heart of China’s “active defense” strategy lays Sun Tzu’s idiom, “To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.” China is investing in capabilities to “raise precipitously over time-and perhaps prohibitively-the cost to the US of projecting power into the Western Pacific.”¹⁹ By adopting anti-access/area-denial capabilities, China seeks to deny U.S forces the sanctuary of forward bases, hold aircraft carriers and their air wings at risk, and cripple US battle networks. In other words, strike at the weak point of US power-projection capability.²⁰ China seeks to capitalize on US vulnerabilities, specifically the vast distances the US needs to travel to engage China militarily as well as US reliance on unimpeded access to and use of ports, airfields, air and sea bases, and littoral waters.

As the 2010 QDR notes, “China is developing and fielding large numbers of advanced medium range ballistic and cruise missiles, new attack submarines equipped with advanced weapons increasingly capable long range air defense systems, electronic warfare and computer network attack capabilities, advanced fighter aircraft and counter space systems.”²¹ The continued development of these A2/AD capabilities

¹⁹ Andrew Krepinevich, *Why AirSea Battle?*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 19 February 2010, <http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2010/02/why-airsea-battle/>, (accessed 10 April 2011)p. 7.

²⁰ Jose Carreno, Thomas Culora, Captain George Galdorisi, What's New About the AirSea Battle Concept? | *U.S. Naval Institute*, August 2010, <http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2010-08/whats-new-about-airsea-battle-concept> (accessed May 3, 2011).

²¹ Quadrennial Defense Review 2010, pg31

could create a sea denial network stretching from the East China Sea to the South China Sea. The steady expansion of China's maritime reconnaissance-strike complex is creating "no-go zones" in the Western Pacific, gradually eroding US ability to project military power into a region of longstanding vital interest.²² China wants to deny US access to Asian airspace and waters. But in doing so the Chinese military will itself gain the maneuver space to control the sea and air closer to the mainland and begin to project power farther from its shores.²³

There are a number of areas where the PLA has adopted approaches to operational requirements that differ significantly from US approaches to the same requirement. An example includes the heavy reliance on ballistic and cruise missiles, rather than stealth aircraft, to attack ground targets inside heavily defended airspace.²⁴ China has the most active land-based ballistic and cruise missile program in the world.²⁵ As part of China's A2/AD strategy, these missiles are used to target critical naval and air bases in Japan and possibly Guam. Without the use of these facilities, the closest major base would be Hawaii, thus making it very difficult to conduct sustained operations in the South China Sea due to the distance and time involved getting into theater.

China understands the strategic and operational importance of US aircraft carriers, therefore has developed an extensive maritime attack capability. The objective

²² Jim Thomas, China's Active Defense Strategy and Its Regional Implications, Testimony Before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 27 January 2011

²³ Dan Blumenthal, A One-Sided Arms Race; China's military ambitions are boundless. *The Weekly Standard*, 24 January 2011, Vol 16, No18 http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/one-sided-arms-race_533699.html

²⁴ ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2010,pg27

²⁵ Ibid

is to attack and disable US carriers before they deploy close enough to the scene of the crisis to get their aircraft into effective strike range. These include long range ASCM from submarines, advanced surface ship and air platforms. The most notable is the DF-21 ASBM with a nominal range of 1,100 nm. Reports indicate that China is developing warheads that would allow the PRC to “mission-kill” a carrier, demonstrating an understanding of the escalatory potential of destroying an aircraft carrier.²⁶

China’s submarine force is another key component to their A2/AD strategy. Chinese submarines are armed with advanced wake homing torpedoes and long range ASCM s specifically designed to defeat the US Aegis anti-air warfare system, penetrate a task force’s defenses, and strike high-value surface warships, to include carriers.²⁷ Deploying from bases on Hainan Island in the South China Sea, these submarines pose a threat to US freedom of maneuver in the Western Pacific. Additional speculation that China will want to mount patrols in the SCS with their ballistic submarines represents a secure second strike element with nuclear deterrence.

By developing these A2/AD capabilities, China has effectively manipulated factors space, time and force to its advantage. This will force US commanders to confront the choice of proceeding rapidly to pierce the A2/AD defenses, perhaps at a terrible cost in both man and material, or defaulting to a protracted campaign.²⁸ Either of which would allow China to exploit less physical vulnerabilities, such as perceived lack of US resolve or casualty aversion.

²⁶ Andrew Krepinevich, *Why AirSea Battle?*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 19 February 2010, <http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2010/02/why-airsea-battle/>, (accessed 10 April 2011)p. 20.

²⁷ Ibid.pg23

²⁸ Andrew Krepinevich, *Why AirSea Battle?*, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 19 February 2010, <http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2010/02/why-airsea-battle/>, (accessed 10 April 2011)p. 4.

These capabilities and China's assertiveness towards the SCS are also essential to China's concept of deterrence. For China, deterrence is not only a matter of dissuading opponents from certain actions, which is how the US thinks of it, but also coercing opponents into certain actions. So by creating a defensive network of A2/AD capabilities, China first hopes to dissuade potential opponents from attacking Chinese vulnerabilities or holding them at risk and by keeping them far out at sea. But at the same time Chinese efforts to secure the first island chain including the South China Sea also allows China to engage in coercion against its neighbors particularly those whose sea lanes also transit this region. Both of these aspects are particularly relevant in the SCS context.

China's Peaceful Rise/Counter Argument

The first argument against increased emphasis for countering improved Chinese military forces is that it is highly unlikely that China and the US will come to blows in coming years, due to the deep economic and financial ties between China and the US and the tremendous damage such a conflict could inflict.²⁹ A similar argument was made prior to WWI. Germany went from being just another country to a world power in just a few decades. Germany, like China, was a leader in manufacturing and heavily involved in trade. This was good for peace and stability. The extensive trade ties and

²⁹ Ronald O'Rourke, China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress, Feb 3 2011, pg47

business connections reduced the likelihood of future war. Until, in 1914, the German Empire declared war on its two biggest trading partners: France and Great Britain.³⁰

The second argument is that China does not have expansionist designs, that China's rise is peaceful and that its plans are not a threat to any country. That China's defense transformation is just part of the normal process of military modernization brought on by economic and technological developments.³¹ Military leaders maintain that the Chinese Navy is purely a self-defense force. But the definition of self-defense has expanded to encompass broad maritime and economic interests.³² Therefore, China's development of a blue water navy is an effort to ensure the security of SLOCs in order to overcome what Chinese defense analysts have called the 'Malacca dilemma' – the threat to China's national security by the closure of narrow straits or choke points in Southeast Asia.³³ History has demonstrated that when China has adequate military/maritime capability to affect the facts on the ground, they will not hesitate to do so. China used military force to seize islands in the Paracels from Vietnam in the 70's and Mischief Reef from the Philippines in the 90's.

Finally, that placing a strong emphasis on countering improved Chinese military forces could induce China to increase planned investments in its own naval forces,

³⁰ James Garafano, Ignoring China's military buildup at our own peril, *Heritage Foundation*, 30 January 2011, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Commentary/2011/01/Ignoring-Chinas-Military-Buildup-at-Our-Own-Peril>, (accessed 27 April 2011)

³¹ (Thayer 2009)pg4

³² Edward Wong, Chinese Military Seeks to Extend Its Naval Power, *NY Times*, 23 April 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/24/world/asia/24navy.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print> (accessed 27 March 2011)

³³ Carlyle Thayer, Recent Developments in the South China Sea, Paper presented to International Workshop on 'The South China Sea: Cooperation for Regional Security and Development' co-organized by Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam and the Vietnam Lawyers' Association Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam November 26-28, 2009

leading to an expensive US-China naval arms race.³⁴ A decision to not emphasize programs for countering improved Chinese military forces might encourage China to continue or even increase its naval modernization out of a belief that the effort is succeeding in dissuading US leaders from taking steps to prevent a shift in the balance of military forces to China's favor.³⁵

Conclusion

The freedom of maneuver and dominant presence of US maritime and air forces in the Pacific has secured lines of communication and reinforced stability in Asia for decades.³⁶ America will expect the Navy to exert maritime dominance and influence in the face of challenges presented by China's modernization.³⁷ Recent activity suggests that China believes it can now throw its economic and military weight around. China is on its way to acquiring both the means to hold US and allied forces in the region at risk and to project its own power into the resulting vacuum.³⁸ The capabilities that China has and continues to acquire are structured not to reinforce security in the Asia-Pacific, but to destabilize the current order maintained by the US.³⁹

³⁴ Ronald O'Rourke, China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress, Feb 3 2011, pg47

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Cortez Cooper, Joint Anti-Access Operations *China's "System-of-Systems" Approach*, Testimony presented before the U.S. China Economic and Security Review Commission on January 27, 2011

³⁷ Commander Bryan Clark U.S. Navy (Retired) and Dr. Dan Whiteneck, Strategic Choices at the Tipping Point, *Proceedings*, February 2011 <http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2011-02/strategic-choices-tipping-point> (accessed 10 March 2011)

³⁸ Michael Chase, Chinese Military Modernization: Challenges and Opportunities for the United States, The Moderate Voice, Jan 26, 2011, <http://themoderatevoice.com/99332/chinese-military-modernization-challenges-and-opportunities-for-the-united-states/>, (accessed 26 March 2011)

³⁹ Ibid.

The US must remain a resident power, providing inshore defense. There is no way to project the kind of power the US has historically needed in the region from offshore. The US ability to rapidly deploy forces into the Western Pacific has allowed the US to project power onto the Asian continent in Korea, Vietnam and to intervene to quiet China's intimidation of Taiwan.

Responses over the past year to China's stance regarding South China Sea economic and sovereignty claims clearly illustrate the importance of US leadership to ease regional fears of an unconstrained China.⁴⁰ US and allied counters to anti-access strategies are important indicators of resolve regarding crisis response and escalation control in the western Pacific.⁴¹

Recommendations

There are several actions the US should consider in light of China's increasing assertiveness and demonstrated propensity to militarize territorial disputes over the South China Sea.⁴²

- Encourage Southeast Asian countries to develop their own "mini anti-access/area denial" defense postures. The aim should be to develop forces and

⁴⁰ Cortez Cooper, Joint Anti-Access Operations *China's "System-of-Systems" Approach*, Testimony presented before the U.S. China Economic and Security Review Commission on January 27, 2011

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Jim Thomas, China's Active Defense Strategy and Its Regional Implications, Testimony Before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 27 January 2011, pg4

postures that could credibly deny any hostile party's attempt to seize disputed islands by force or to control disputed maritime areas militarily.⁴³

- Undertake a long-term regional engagement plan aimed at strengthening defense ties with Southeast Asian militaries. Such engagement might take the form of; exchange programs between US and regional states' staff and war colleges; military assistance; combined training exercises. This will lead to increased access by US forces to air and naval bases, and other military facilities in the region.⁴⁴

- Continue developing and refining the AirSea Battle operational concept. Focus on preserving a stable military balance in the region and maintaining its ability to project power in defense of its allies and security partners, as well as to uphold freedom of navigation.⁴⁵ By creating credible capabilities to defeat A2/AD threats, the US can enhance stability in the Western Pacific and lower the possibility of escalation by deterring inclinations to challenge the US or coerce regional allies.⁴⁶ At the same time, the concept would benefit from a greater emphasis on the potential role of allies and security partners. A sustained, focused US effort to reach out to Southeast Asian nations, linked to similar US efforts with allies and partners in the greater Pacific region,

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴ Ibid. pg5

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Jose Carreno, Thomas Culora, Captain George Galdorisi, What's New About the AirSea Battle Concept? | *U.S. Naval Institute*, August 2010, <http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2010-08/whats-new-about-airsea-battle-concept> (accessed May 3, 2011).

could help focus their contribution to the AirSea Battle concept, and reassure them of the US continuing resolve to meet its regional security commitments.⁴⁷

- Operationally, China's anti-access strategy is heavily reliant on winning the information battle at the outset of a campaign. Demonstrating to China that the US will in no way concede this fight requires maintaining the technological edge in space, and working with allies and partners in the region to build compatible, redundant C4ISR networks.⁴⁸

- Develop flexible access and basing options for US forces. Regular presence through joint training and exercise activity, and joint initiatives in regional security forums are all important aspects of anti-access mitigation. New agreements for access, logistic support, and joint training both within and beyond the alliance structure are promising. Vietnam, the Philippines, and Indonesia are geographically critical in terms of maritime lines of communication, and seek US assurances that should be accompanied by a willingness to engage in cooperative security initiatives.⁴⁹

- Increased Information Operations. Stating publicly the US Navy's ability to counter improved Chinese maritime forces. Such public statements could help prevent Chinese overconfidence that might lead to incidents, while also reassuring regional allies, partners, and neutrals. Conversely, some observers might argue, having an

⁴⁷ Jim Thomas, China's Active Defense Strategy and Its Regional Implications, Testimony Before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 27 January 2011

⁴⁸ Cortez Cooper, Joint Anti-Access Operations *China's "System-of-Systems" Approach*, Testimony presented before the U.S. China Economic and Security Review Commission on January 27, 2011

⁴⁹ Cortez Cooper, Joint Anti-Access Operations *China's "System-of-Systems" Approach*, Testimony presented before the U.S. China Economic and Security Review Commission on January 27, 2011

ability to counter Chinese maritime military forces but not stating it publicly could invite Chinese overconfidence and thereby be destabilizing.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Ronald O'Rourke, China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress, Feb 3 2011,

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