

July | 2018



Key Actor Interests in the Asia Pacific

**A Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa)[®]
Report**

Produced in support of the
Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Office
(Joint Staff, J39)

Deeper Analyses
Clarifying Insights
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What is ViTTa®?

NSI's **Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa)** provides rapid response to critical information needs by pulsing a global network of subject matter experts (SMEs) to generate a wide range of expert insight. For this Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Strategic Outcomes on the Korean Peninsula project, ViTTa was used to address eight key questions provided by the Joint Staff project sponsors. The ViTTa team received written response submissions from 50 subject matter experts from academia, government, military, and industry. Each Korea Strategic Outcomes ViTTa report presents 1) a summary overview of the expert contributor response to the ViTTa question of focus and 2) the full corpus of expert contributor responses received for the ViTTa question of focus. Biographies for all expert contributors are also included in each report.

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ViTTa Question

[Q8] How do key actors in the Asia Pacific (Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, North Korea, Philippines, Russia, South Korea, and the United States) define their key national interests / regional objectives in Northeast Asia and the Western Pacific? What are seen by each actor to be the major threats to each interest? Are there any redlines associated with these interests?

Subject Matter Expert Contributors

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Summary Response

This summary explores the national interests and regional objectives of seven key actors (Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, North Korea, Philippines, Russia, South Korea, and the United States) in the Asia Pacific region. The interest tables below outline these key national interests and regional objectives for each actor, first identifying the actor's specific regional interests, then providing a more detailed description of each interest, and finally coding each interest by interest type (national security, economic, international prestige, domestic political, and/or identity). An individual, stand-alone interest table is presented for each actor.

The interest tables were developed using two primary sources of information: 1) insightful written responses from eight Korea Strategic Outcomes Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa) subject matter expert contributors, each of which are presented in full in the *Subject Matter Expert Response Submission* section of this report and are well worth reading in their entirety, and 2) supplemental open source research conducted by the authors. In-text citations are used within the interest tables and expanded reference lists are provided immediately following each interest table.

Australia

Author: Dr. Belinda Bragg

INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
<p>Defend against threats to territory (including offshore and EEZ) posed by Chinese and other regional military modernization</p>	<p>In combination with competing claims for territory and natural resources among South East Asian states, military modernization is considered to have the potential to undermine regional stability. Defense spending in Asia has already outstripped Europe and is increasing at a faster rate. Although regional military modernization is not perceived to be directed against Australia, the Australian Department of Defense has stated that “it will mean the defense capability edge [Australia has] enjoyed in the wider region will significantly diminish” (Australian Department of Defense, 2016). The Australian Department of Defense also anticipates that, by 2035, more regional states will have access to and may have acquired ballistic missile technology, thus increasing Australia’s need to “develop capabilities which can protect [its] forces when they are deployed across large geographic areas, particularly in air and missile defense and anti-submarine warfare, and better link the ADF’s individual capabilities to each other” (Australian Department of Defense, 2016).</p> <p>Regional military modernization has also led some defense specialists and two former prime ministers to call for the government to consider developing a missile defense shield, and a recent Australian Department of Defense white paper identifies air and missile defense and anti-submarine warfare as areas where its capabilities need to be developed (Australian Department of Defense, 2016). Australia is within range of North Korea’s ICBMs, and recent comments from Australia’s Foreign Minister that suggested support of US policy toward North Korea prompted a spokesman from the North Korean Foreign Ministry to warn that “if Australia persists in following the US’s moves to isolate and stifle North Korea ... this will be a suicidal act of coming within the range of the nuclear strike of the strategic force of North Korea.”</p> <p>Beyond its land borders, Australia considers protection of its maritime approaches and offshore territories as essential for national security, and expects threats to marine resources to grow over the next 20 years as Australian fisheries, particularly in the Southern Ocean, remain abundant. It also regards the potential militarization of the Antarctic as a threat to its sovereignty (Australian Antarctic Territory) and sovereign rights over offshore waters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Economic
<p>Avoid regional instability and protect openness of maritime trade routes</p>	<p>Regional stability is a high priority for Australia as its prosperity and security are closely tied to the future of the Asia Pacific region. Competition or conflict between regional states and/or major powers increases uncertainty and tension, raising the risk of military confrontation and threatening free and open trade. Conflict on the Korean Peninsula would severely affect Australia’s trade interests, especially if it were to spread to Japan. It could also exacerbate tensions between major regional actors (China, Japan, South Korea), adversely affecting their recent moves toward closer economic relations. Economic slowdowns or setbacks in these states would adversely affect Australia’s key export markets in the medium-term.</p> <p>Even closer to home, Australia has stated a desire to continue in its role as “the principal security partner for Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, and Pacific Island Countries in the South Pacific” (Australian Department of Defense, 2016). Australia is seen as the Pacific Island region’s leading power, thus instability or underdevelopment in the region reflects on Australia’s global reputation. Australia is the only regional state, other than New Zealand, with the resources and capability to address regional issues such as transnational crime and illegal fishing, or to provide at short notice collective security to the region if required.</p> <p>Slow economic growth, social or governance challenges, population growth, and climate change are identified as factors that could lead to internal instability within regional states. Such internal instability could result in increased refugee flows and humanitarian crises, creating a direct pressure on Australia to respond as well as presenting opportunities for external actors with “interests inimical” to Australia’s to gain regional influence (Australian Department of Defense, 2016).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Economic • Domestic • Prestige

Trade accounts for a higher proportion of GDP for Australia than it does for larger states such as the US and Japan; around one-fifth of all its goods and services (by value) produced are traded internationally. In 2017, China was Australia's top two-way trade partner, while Japan was third, and South Korea fourth. Combined, trade with these three countries accounted for 41.1% of Australia's total two-way trade. Australia has bilateral free trade agreements with all three states and is a member of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Trade with all regional partners, with the exception of Singapore, has also shown growth over this period, and Australia favors increasing the interconnectedness of South East Asian states through ASEAN.

Balance need for economic ties to China against growing Chinese soft power and domestic influence

Like many states in the Asia Pacific region, Australia finds itself in the position of dual major power dependency. As one commentator stated, "for Australia, the issue of North Korea is important as a microcosm of tensions between the US and China. This is something of a litmus test for understanding US commitment to the Asia Pacific region, and its capacity to shape outcomes" (Strating, 2018).

Cost of living issues, driven by a combination of increasing energy prices and flat wage growth, have made economic issues even more salient than ever for the current Australian government, which faces an election no later than May 2019 (Massola, 2018). A 2018 national public opinion poll found that Australians regard economic issues as the major problems facing Australia, with financial problems and cost of living being the dominant economic themes (SMS Morgan Poll, 2018). China is Australia's top trading partner, and the dominant economic power regionally, so Australia stands to benefit from China's continued growth. In 2014, China and Australia elevated their bilateral relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, reflecting the government's perception that China's military modernization offers the potential for greater Chinese participation in regional peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and anti-piracy efforts. However, Australia has long-standing concerns regarding the impact of China's development activities in the Pacific, and recognizes that its "strategic interests may differ in relation to some regional and global security issues" (Australian Department of Defense, 2016).

The director of the Australian Security and Intelligence Organization (ASIO) has stated that "espionage and foreign interference continue to occur on an unprecedented scale and this has the potential to cause serious harm to the nation's sovereignty, the integrity of our political system, our national security capabilities, our economy and other interests" (McKenzie et al., 2017). The Prime Minister and head of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade have also voiced concerns about Chinese influence on Australia's domestic politics, and, as such, new espionage and foreign interference legislation was announced in December 2017. In particular, concerns have been raised over Chinese donations to political parties and universities which, it is argued, are motivated by the desire to build support for the Chinese government and support of China's foreign policies. A former Australian Ambassador to China has written that Beijing also seeks to exert influence over ethnic Chinese communities in Australia, thereby bringing "Australian and Chinese national interests, and values, into direct contention, challenging fundamentals of our system like freedom of speech and the media and enquiry, and the very validity of our political system ... It also demands loyalty to China of Australian citizens of Chinese descent, a direct challenge to Australian sovereignty" (Uhlmann, 2016b). By manipulating Australian politics and political debate, China hopes to make Australia more pro-China and less pro-US, ultimately ending the US-Australia alliance. The shorter-term goal of these activities is believed to be generating support for China's territorial claims in the South China Sea.

- Security
- Economic

Maintain strategic partnership with US but strengthen regional and multilateral partnerships

According to the Australian Department of Defense, "North Korea's actions underline the importance of the United States' extended deterrence to Australia's security and the security of the Republic of Korea and Japan" (Australian Department of Defense, 2016). Australia's moves to strengthen ties with China, particularly in defense, reflects a growing concern, shared by other states in the region, that US commitment to the Asia Pacific is waning. The decision by the Trump Administration to abandon the TPP increases these concerns, as does the appearance of US strategy in the region becoming more military-focused. Despite this, Australia still views the US as its most important strategic partner, and the Australian government seeks to strengthen its alliance with the US. Furthermore, it has been argued that the joint US-Australia Pine Gap satellite control and intelligence gathering facility would be crucial to the US in such a conflict, and thus "it is difficult to envisage how any Australian government could impose meaningful limits on its complicity in a US first-strike against North Korea without damaging the broader alliance relationship" (O'Neil et al., 2018a). While Australia's "interests in peace and security in North Asia are vital, [its] capacity to influence events acting

- Security
- Prestige
- Economic

alone is limited” (Australian Department of Defense, 2016). Partnerships—economic and security—are considered critical to its ability to safeguard its interests. However, it should also be noted that Australia’s current ANZUS alliance commitments (and status as signatory of the 1953 Korean Armistice Agreement) also provide a strong, though debated, rationale for involvement in any conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

Consistent with its interest in regional stability, major power balancing, and concern regarding regional military build-up, Australia regards a rules-based international system as essential to its security. A strong US presence—strategic and economic—as well as active engagement by regional states, are identified as essential for such a rules-based system to be effective. This position reflects the country’s recognition that it lacks the capacity to unilaterally protect and further its security interests, and that without strong international rule of law it risks losing its independence of action.

Consistent with its emphasis on the importance of rule of law, Australia has expressed opposition to the assertion of territorial and maritime claims in the South China Sea that are not in accordance with international law and any coercive and unilateral actions to change the status quo in the East China Sea. A rules-based international system is also considered a critical underpinning to free and open trade, secure trade routes and communications, and access to the global commons. All of these are identified as essential conditions for Australia’s economic security and prosperity.

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China

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INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
<p>Relationship of equality with the US and increased international prestige and influence</p>	<p>There is an inconsistency between China’s relative power (particularly economic) and its international status. This situation may increase the likelihood that China will be motivated to change the existing status quo and challenge the regional influence of the US. China perceives US dominance in the region as a barrier to its own security and development and frames its own actions as responses to a provocative international environment that seeks to prevent China’s rise. It considers a genuinely multipolar balance of power to be best for the region, and presents itself as a non-aggressive cooperative power willing to settle differences peacefully through either bilateral negotiations or the authority of multilateral or international institutions (Bragg, 2015).</p> <p>Stalemate over nuclear talks will keep North Korea and the US from improving relations and avoid the issue of reunification. Concern over continued and increasing US influence makes China wary of unification, which may increase Seoul’s ability to balance against China (Denmark, 2018). The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) would like to maintain a buffer zone on its border and limit US influence in Asia by keeping Korea divided. However, instability on the Korean Peninsula, in particular any use of force by the US, which could destabilize the Kim regime, is not in China’s interests. Use of force by the US does, however, support China’s narrative of the US as the aggressive power in the region that does not respect the rule of law (Bragg, 2015; Kluver et al., 2015).</p> <p>China shares the goal of denuclearization, which may be seen by Beijing as an opportunity to diminish US forces on the peninsula; seen as a symbol of American power and influence in East Asia, and a threat to China (Lyon, 2018; Korda, 2018; Cronin, 2018; Jiang, 2018; McEachern, 2018). China’s long-term goal of increasing its regional power and influence is best served by continued division of the Korean Peninsula, and the US withdrawing from the peninsula and disengaging from Seoul (Cheng, 2018; Cronin, 2018; Korda, 2018; Panda, 2018; Tow, 2018). However, some in China see any American success in Korea—either denuclearization or bilateral talks—as a threat to China’s interests (Denmark, 2018), shutting out China from exercising its influence. Furthermore, a deal that included US trade engagement with the DPRK would reduce the DPRK’s reliance on China (Jiang, 2018).</p> <p>On the other hand, any form of talks would undermine the resumption of the maximum pressure approach, enabling China to maintain its economic and political relations with North Korea without international censure (Mehta, 2018). Additionally, being seen as a positive contributor to finding a diplomatic solution through multilateral talks is consistent with China’s narrative of itself as a peaceful and cooperative power (Bragg, 2015; Kluver et al., 2015), and offers an opportunity to show China in a global leadership role (Tow, 2018). China is also suspicious of the ROK government, which it sees as consistently trying to marginalize Chinese regional influence (Tow, 2018). Involvement in any diplomatic solution to the crisis also increases the likelihood that China will retain its long-term strategic and economic partnership with the DPRK, and put up barriers to reunification. Both are key factors in whether an outcome to the current crisis will be seen as meeting China’s interests (Lyon, 2018). Involvement in DPRK talks may also provide China the opportunity to press for a reduction in US conventional and missile defense forces on the peninsula, weakening confidence in US commitment to the region among US allies (Plumb, 2018). However, given the history of international efforts toward denuclearization in the DPRK, China may prefer to let the US take the lead in bilateral talks. This would allow them to avoid the embarrassment of failure and benefit from US ineffectiveness. Bilateral talks also enable China to exclude its regional rivals—Japan and the ROK—from influence in the negotiation process (McEachern, 2018).</p> <p>If the US were to accept a limited nuclear program in North Korea, however, the DPRK’s nuclear capability may serve the US strategic interest in containing China (Jiang, 2018), as well as requiring continued Chinese caution over exerting pressure on the Kim regime (Kwon, 2018).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Prestige • Economic • Domestic • Identity

Additionally, this outcome raises the possibility that either or both Japan or the ROK will respond by developing their own nuclear weapons capability, significantly challenging China's relative power in the region in the longer-term. However, there is less likelihood that this outcome would lead to progress on reunification, which could potentially place a US ally on China's border. Proliferation may also be less of a threat to China than it is an opportunity to weaken the US (Spalding, 2018).

Protection of China's sovereign rights

China is party to numerous maritime and territorial disputes with other regional actors. Disputed territory and exclusive economic zones (EEZs) are key parts of China's security and economic interests in the region. China's narratives argue that these disputes are not a sign of expansionist foreign policy goals, rather, the effort to return China to its rightful place on the world stage. This creates a powerful internal justification for pushing China's claims in maritime and territorial disputes. Their framing of current disputes in light of historical experience heightens nationalist sentiment in populations on both sides, increasing the salience of the disputes, decreasing the room for negotiated settlements, and increasing the domestic political costs of backing down (Bragg, 2015).

Denuclearization could enable the US to turn its regional focus to regional territorial issues, including those involving Chinese expansion in the East and South China Seas (Jiang, 2018). However, if the US Administration achieves its stated goals with regard to the DPRK, success may lead it to turn attention from the region, leaving China to deal with disputes over territory and resources under less scrutiny. Stalemate benefits China by keeping the US's regional focus on the DPRK, rather than on China's recent actions in the East and South China Seas (Spalding, 2018; Hastings, 2018). China values a separate DPRK as a buffer zone against US power in Northeast Asia, more than it does the denuclearization of the DPRK (Tow, 2018). Acceptance puts a potentially unpredictable nuclear power on China's border, but it does support the notion of sovereign non-interference more than any other outcome. More concretely, however, acceptance of the DPRK as a nuclear state does raise the possibility that the ROK and/or Japan may decide to develop their own nuclear capability as a more direct deterrent measure. This would significantly alter the balance of power between China and two of the states with which it has ongoing territorial disputes.

- Security
- Prestige
- Economic
- Domestic
- Identity

Domestic stability and continued economic growth

The political legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is intrinsically linked to its ability to effect economic growth and development. Slowing economic growth, therefore, could lead the CCP to look to aggressive nationalism to bolster its domestic legitimacy, feeding nationalist fervor and decreasing its own room to maneuver crisis situations. It may also lead to an increase in defense spending and a more aggressive foreign policy in the South China Sea (SCS) and East China Sea (ECS), as China seeks to ensure its energy security by securing natural resource reserves (Bragg, 2015).

The China Dream emphasizes the dependence of domestic economic prosperity on China's security and military capability. In effect, for China, economic and security interests are inextricably linked, creating both risk and opportunity. Peaceful development is an integral component of both China's regional strategy and the China Dream, to which the CCP has linked its governing legitimacy (Kluver et al., 2015). Any settlement of the North Korean nuclear question that sees the lifting of sanctions offers significant economic opportunities to China. Russia and China are both keen to expand trade with North Korea, and pursuing partnerships with the Kim regime could also open up trading routes to South Korea, such as the railway modernization project from Seoul to the Chinese border via Pyongyang proposed by President Moon during the Inter-Korean Summit (Korda, 2018; Park, 2018). As China becomes more dependent on imported energy, and global concerns over energy security grow, the salience of disputed maritime territories in the SCS and ECS will increase.

China would prefer to see the continuation of a separate North Korean state, rather than reunification of the peninsula, and the presence of a strong US ally on its border (Yun, 2018). Domestic unrest or state collapse in North Korea could result in destabilizing regional consequence and significant refugee flows into China that could cause domestic unrest within China. A more stable DPRK would help reduce the flow of refugees into China's border provinces, improving civil governance in the region and curtailing some of the separatist concern the CCP has with regard to China's ethnic Korean minority. This suggests that there may be some domestic political advantages to China from successful US-DPRK cooperation (Jiang, 2018). China's interests are best served by the Kim regime refraining from provocative behavior in the future, as this makes it possible for China to resume its economic development and management cooperation with North Korea.

- Security
- Economic
- Domestic
- Identity

Denuclearization raises the possibility that US regional focus will turn to territorial issues, including those involving Chinese expansion in the East and South China Seas (Spalding, 2018; Jiang, 2018), which may increase the risk of escalation or limit China's ability to exploit the area's resources. However, if the US Administration achieves its stated goals with regard to the DPRK, success may lead it to turn attention from the region, leaving China to deal with disputes over territory and resources under less scrutiny. If denuclearization also moves the DPRK closer to the US/ROK economic sphere, this could cut China out of the potential economic benefits of a more open North Korea (Petrovics, 2018).

Any form of talks would undermine the resumption of the maximum pressure approach, enabling China to maintain its economic and political relations with North Korea without international censure (Mehta, 2018). Multilateral talks offer China the potential to exert influence to project its leadership role, and retain its long-term strategic and economic partnership with North Korea; a key factor in whether an outcome to the current crisis is seen as meeting China's interests (Lyon, 2018). It also raises the possibility of being able to secure concessions from the US on other matters, such as trade, in return for cooperation over the Korea situation (Tow, 2018).

Stalemate, and the intensification of sanctions, on the other hand, may see China face international pressure to reduce its trade with the DPRK (Lyon, 2018). This would have negative effects on businesses in northeastern Chinese provinces (particularly Liaoning and Jilin) that are oriented toward North Korea, potentially undermining CCP support and perceived legitimacy. Furthermore, if US frustration with North Korea leads to the intensification of efforts to enforce sanctions and a subsequent increase in US naval presence in the region, the possibility of confrontation between US and Chinese vessels increases. On the other hand, stalemate benefits China by keeping the US's regional focus on the DPRK, rather than on China's recent actions in the East and South China Seas (Spalding, 2018; Hastings, 2018) to increase its access to and control over resources critical to maintaining economic growth and through this domestic legitimacy.

Acceptance of continued DPRK nuclear capability would ensure that the Kim regime remains strong. It would also enable China to build its economic relationship with North Korea, helping the CCP's domestic legitimacy by supporting economic growth in China and preventing border insecurity (Petrovics, 2018). It also has the advantage of not leading to the economic integration of the DPRK into the US/ROK sphere of influence (Petrovics, 2018), and the resolution of the current crisis would allow China to pursue its economic partnership with the DPRK (Lyon, 2018). If this outcome leads to either or both Japan and the ROK pursuing nuclear weapons capability, the longer-term economic implications may not be so positive. Increases in regional tensions and instability may well have implications for regional cooperation on trade and freedom of navigation, adversely affecting China's access to resources and markets. A downturn in the already slowing Chinese economy would undermine public support for and legitimacy of the CCP. Similarly, a limited strike would reinforce domestically the narrative of the US as an aggressive power with no respect for international law. If it weakens the Kim regime, however, China may face increasing border insecurity (Petrovics, 2018), and significant refugee flows that would undermine domestic security.

Regional stability

China considers regional stability to be a necessary condition for its economic growth, and sees regional security cooperation as essential to stability. The view that uninterrupted trade is a necessary condition for regional stability is shared by both Japan and South Korea (Tatsumi, 2018). China frames its economic development as an opportunity for cooperation with, and mutual benefit for, other states, not as a threat. North Korea's continuation of its ballistic missile and WMD programs presents a continued risk of igniting regional conflict (Rinna, 2018). It is important to recognize that China's concept of regional order and stability is very different from that of the US and its regional allies. Rather, China sees regional stability as a reduction of US influence and the acceptance by other regional players of China as the dominant regional power (Bennett, 2018; Sun, 2018). Despite historical animosities and current territorial disputes, Japan, China, South Korea, and Taiwan remain committed to, and dependent on, the East Asian miracle; the rapid economic rise of the region that has come to represent almost a quarter of global GDP (Goto, 2018). While the recent increase in tensions over North Korea have not yet led to a flight of capital from these principle Asian economies, an actual strike on Japan or South Korea is expected to precipitate a sell-off of Asian assets in favor of offshoring to the US (Goto, 2018). With regard to North Korea, regional stability would depend on either the preservation of the status quo, or at least predictable change. Collapse of the Kim regime, or extension of relations (some form of reunification), would be the most destabilizing economically for South Korea, which would shoulder the immediate financial burden, but the Trump Administration is expecting Japan, South Korea, and China to take

- Security
- Economic
- Domestic

responsibility of economic aid to the DPRK (Goto, 2018).

China sees a diplomatic approach to the North Korea issue as important for maintaining regional stability (Town, 2018). At the same time, they want to protect their own interests, which are fundamentally at odds with those of the US, which it sees as a destabilizing influence in the region. This suggests multilateral talks may be preferred to unilateral talks. China is also suspicious of the ROK government, which it sees as consistently trying to marginalize Chinese regional influence (Town, 2018). Multilateral talks decrease the risk of outcomes that may be unacceptable to other regional players and lead to increased regional militarization or nuclear proliferation. The creation of a regional security dialogue in concert with negotiations over the future of North Korea's nuclear program is essential to the creation of a regional non-proliferation regime. For China to support such an approach, however, relations with the ROK will need to improve. One of the conditions for reducing political tensions between the ROK and China will be the removal of THAAD and reciprocal removal of Chinese sanctions on the ROK related to THAAD (Vestergaard, 2018).

Denuclearization is the stated preferred outcome for most regional states, and can be expected to reduce the overall level of threat in the region, and remove one of the drivers of increased militarization. However, the economic effects of any outcome that leads to the collapse of the DPRK would have significant economic costs for South Korea, and to a lesser extent China and Japan. This could make it even harder for China to reach its own domestic economic growth and development targets, adversely affecting domestic support for and legitimacy of the CCP.

A limited strike by the US raises the overall perception of threat in the region and possibility of retaliatory action by North Korea, which would be difficult to counter without the risk of runaway escalation, and also sets precedent for the US to increase its regional military presence and potentially move troops into North Korea (Cronin, 2018).¹ If acceptance leads to either or both Japan and the ROK pursuing nuclear weapons capability, the resulting increase in regional tensions may well have negative implications for regional stability. If the Trump Administration settles for the DPRK committing to rolling back its ICBM program, and not its broader nuclear program, the credibility of the US's strategic commitment to the region among US allies will be weakened. Combined with recent US trade policy decisions and the Administrations rejection of the TPP, this outcome could generate greater regional instability and motivate regional states to further increase their already growing military spending (O'Neil, 2018).

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¹ Cronin (2018) suggests that "the US would likely need China's cooperation to disengage in a conflict and restore peace as soon as possible." He contends that, "much as the invasion of Iraq worked to Iran's strategic benefit, a US military strike on North Korea would put China in the driver's seat."

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Indonesia

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INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
Maintain middle power status	<p>Indonesia is the world’s largest Muslim-majority nation, the fourth largest country in the world in terms of population, and the largest country in Southeast Asia in terms of area and the size of its economy. Indonesia also boasts sizable populations that adhere to Christianity and other faiths. Indonesia has been unwilling to project power internationally because it has seen no reason to make any fundamental change to the status quo. Since its confrontation with Malaysia in the 1960s, Indonesia has faced no existential external threat that warranted international attention or support. Its geographic location, together with its low profile and pragmatic foreign policy, has minimized frictions with both its neighbors and its major trading partners. The country’s geography makes land invasion unlikely, and Indonesia’s few disputes over maritime borders have been settled peacefully.</p> <p>In the regional system, Indonesia is a “middle power,” and practices “middle power politics” (Karim, 2018). Middle powers are those countries that are neither super powers, which possess the military capability to project force far beyond their borders, nor major regional powers, which possess both some coercive unilateral decision-making power within the region and the capability to project force within the region (Nolte, 2010). Middle powers are also not minor powers in so far as middle powers have relevant regional influence to shape regional international events as either key brokers or spoilers. To maximize their influence, in the context of lesser relative capability, middle powers pursue limited foreign policy objectives often related to ensuring their domestic stability and prosperity, and engage in “niche diplomacy” to exercise multilateral leadership on issues that do not directly involve the vital interests of the great powers (Lim et al., 2015). In such international problems, middle powers are able to set and influence international agendas, build successful coalitions, and challenge great power hegemony in those issues.</p> <p>Indonesia’s search for middle power status is performed through its role as a promoter of free trade, and as an advocate of multilateral diplomacy, and a bridge builder.</p> <p>Economic cooperation and free trade agreements have made it possible to train more Indonesian immigrants in Japan in professional and health care services, a critically important goal to Indonesia. China signed currency swap and free trade agreements, as well as several memoranda of understanding on infrastructure assistance, particularly with the Suromadu Bridge, which is the longest in Indonesia and the first bridge to cross the Madura Strait (Stevenson et al., 2014).</p> <p>In the Group of Twenty (G20), Indonesia always acts as a representative of the ASEAN countries. In 2009, it proposed the establishment of the ASEAN G20 contact group in order to consolidate the ASEAN member countries’ interests, which Indonesia then brought to the discussion in the G20 forum. During Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s presidency (2004–2014), Indonesia sought to strengthen its international status through greater involvement in global governance and multilateral forums. Under his leadership, Indonesia hosted several high-profile international summits, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Thirteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties in 2007 and the Ninth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in 2013, in which Indonesia was, to some extent, able to set the agenda and influence the outcome. In the same period, Indonesia also hosted the Asian-African Conference Commemoration in 2005 and 2015, where it sought to play a leading role among developing countries by reviving the Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership (Karim, 2018).</p> <p>Indonesia has historically leveraged its diplomatic ties to all countries in the region, including North Korea, to build bridges and push for more diplomacy. When there was still a chance that the Six Party Talks would resume, Indonesia offered to act as an intermediary between North Korea and the United States, China, Russia, Japan, and South Korea, since it had positive relations with each of the countries (Xinhua, 2014).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic • Economic • Identity • Security

Accommodate (selectively) major regional powers

On matters that do involve the vital interests of great powers, middle powers generally find themselves engaging in “hedging” and accommodative behavior to maintain ambiguity over the extent of a middle power’s shared security interests with super and major powers (Roy, 2005), except when existing treaty alliances or major territorial conflicts create balancing/bandwagoning path dependent relationships (Lim et al., 2015). The question of North Korea, which creates different negative externalities for each of the major powers—China, Russia, and the United States—and several of the middle powers, such as Japan and South Korea, is an example of an interest in which the major powers of the region are limiting the ability of the less impacted middle powers to maintain ambiguity.

- Security
- Economic

Middle powers practice niche diplomacy through issue-linkage: The middle powers will reduce ambiguity concerning overlapping security interests in exchange for the advancement of one or more of the middle power’s limited foreign policy objectives. For Indonesia, there are several notable examples of this:

- Despite a limited relationship, Indonesia and Japan have increased security cooperation in the face of North Korean missile launches, and in the coordination of aid to the PLO/Palestinian state (Stevenson et al., 2014).
- Indonesia increased its exports of sea cucumber to China and began purchasing C-802 and C-705 missiles from China (Stevenson et al., 2014).
- Military cooperation between the United States and Indonesia is extensive, including the sharing of intelligence with USPACOM. Cooperation between Indonesia and the United States has netted it several dividends, including formal cooperation over nuclear power development for peaceful use and reduction in Indonesia’s debt payment in exchange for forest preservation (Stevenson et al., 2014).

Defend maritime borders

The new Indonesian government under President Joko Widodo introduced a new goal of establishing Indonesia as the world’s maritime axis. Indonesia’s territorial sea border is still a problem because there is still no agreement between neighboring countries. Currently, Indonesia still has several sea border disputes with:

- Singapore (the Strait of Malacca/the Phillips Channel),
- Vietnam (northern part of Natuna Islands), and
- Timor-Leste post-separation from Indonesia (sea border problems around Timor islands).

- Security
- Prestige
- Domestic

China and Indonesia are in an ongoing dispute over fishing rights and Chinese smuggling. In particular, Indonesia seized several fishing boats in “traditional” Chinese fishing grounds, which the Chinese government and consulate made clear was unacceptable from China’s point of view (Stevenson et al., 2014). Additionally, while China has not openly pressed its claim thus far, its ‘9-dash line’ cuts significantly into Indonesia’s offshore Natuna oil and gas fields (Cronin, 2018).

Defend Islam globally

After the contentious collapse of the authoritarian New Order regime, which lasted from 1966 to 1998, scholars classify Indonesia as democratizing and liberalizing, yet post-authoritarian (Poczter et al., 2016). What this means in practice is that while forms of gaining political power have shifted toward free and fair electoral practices, and that the private sector’s influence has increased relative to the military and state sectors, many extant operation informal mechanisms of agenda-setting and institutional enforcement have their origins in the New Order regime (Poczter, 2017; Dettman et al., 2017).

- Domestic
- Economic

Therefore, while many of the regimes in the Asia Pacific region are founded on promoting specific racial or ethnic domination (e.g., Malaysia, Australia, Philippines, China, etc.), or expansionist nationalisms (e.g., South Korea, Japan, etc.), the relative newness of Indonesia’s current regime has collapsed the usual interest in regime maintenance and durability into a secular Islamism. In the pursuit of electoral success, dueling populisms rooted in secular nationalist and Islamic-oriented ideologies have become entangled within elite conflicts concerning systemic injustices unaddressed by two decades of democratization after the three decades of centralized authoritarian rule (Hadiz et al., 2017).

Mass mobilizations in support of protecting Islamic communities abroad, such as the Palestinians, is one of the ways in which the current regime

channels this populism into political support. In Indonesia in December 2017, more than 80,000 people, many clad in white to denote Islamic purity, marched in Jakarta, chanting, “Free Palestine,” continuing a long tradition of Indonesian governments leveraging popular support domestically by defending Palestinians internationally (Beech, 2017). Indonesian’s firm attitude toward the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was reflected in a series of foreign policies not only in relation to those on both sides of the conflict, but also in international forums. During the era of President Sukarno, Indonesia refused to recognize the sovereignty of Israel over the Palestinians and joined much of the world in refusing to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. In the era of President Suharto, foreign policy support for the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation continued: After the PLO’s government in exile proclaimed the independence of Palestine in Algeria in 1988, Suharto and a representative of the PLO signed an agreement for the commencement of diplomatic relations. In the era of President Joko Widodo, the implementation of Indonesia’s support for Palestine has been reflected in Indonesian multilateral diplomacy in support of Palestine becoming a UN observer state in 2012 and through the opening of the Honorary Consulate of Indonesia in Ramallah, in the Palestinian Territories. During the Arab Spring phenomenon, Indonesia adopted a cautious attitude in order to maintain good relations with both the Middle East and the West.

Indonesia’s constitution is very important to its domestic stability and identity. It is the citizenry’s belief in their constitution that makes foreign affairs an important trigger of mass mobilization, and, as such, an important barometer of domestic sentiment. The 1945 constitution of the Republic of Indonesia summarized the obligation that must be borne by Indonesia to “participate in the establishment of world order based on freedom, lasting peace, and social justice,” as well as the elimination of colonialism and independence being the right of every country.

The orientation of Indonesian foreign policy is built on the basic principles of independence and activity. Mohammad Hatta noted that “independent” meant that Indonesia’s position was not to align itself to either of the two dominant global power blocs but to adopt its own approach to solving international problems. Being “active” meant attempting to work harder in order to maintain peace and ease tensions between the two blocs. Indonesia’s experience of rejecting colonialism through physical struggle has also played a significant role in making the spirit of anti-colonialism an integral part of Indonesia’s foreign policy objectives.

This historical role has consistently been translated into Indonesia’s stance in many international forums, such as the United Nations and G20. While, in the region, it seems that Indonesia has supported the Western liberal order by emulating Western liberal norms through its role as an advocate of democracy, Indonesia’s attitude towards the Western global order is still ambivalent. Indeed, although it is still highly supportive of the liberal order, rhetorically it hopes for a rearrangement of the global order, just like other BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) countries (Karim, 2018).

Indonesia has maintained close ties with both Koreas. Indonesia, although not a major North Korean partner by any means, enjoys close ties with Pyongyang, being one of the very few countries that still maintain cordial relations with North Korea, despite the international sanctions and isolation applied upon North Korea concerning its human rights abuses and nuclear missile program. The two countries have had diplomatic relations since 1961 and maintain embassies in each other’s capitals. Both countries were a part of the non-alignment movement and the first leader of Indonesia, Sukarno, even named a flower—Kimilsungia—after the North Korean founding father during a visit in 1965. A 2013 BBC World Service Poll reported that 42% of Indonesians view North Korea’s influence positively, with 29% expressing a negative view. This is the second most favorable opinion of a foreign country in Indonesia after Ghana’s (BBC, 2013). Indonesia’s support made it possible for North Korea to participate in the ASEAN Regional Forum (one of the few international meetings to which North Korea regularly sends a delegation). Sentiments between the two countries have worsened in recent years, however, due to the assassination of Kim Jong Nam, half-brother of the North Korean leader, in Malaysia (Straits Times, 2017). As South Korea has expanded its investment portfolio in Indonesia, Indonesia has found its ties to the Republic of Korea warming relative to the those it enjoys with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. In 2017, Indonesia and the Republic of Korea upgraded their bilateral partnership to “special strategic” status (Straits Times, 2017).

In general, however, Indonesia promotes inter-Korean dialogue as the foundation of any lasting peace. In March 2018, Indonesia praised the warming ties between the Koreas, saying that it brings “hope for peace on the peninsula” (Nathalia, 2018). A past Indonesian Foreign Affairs Minister, Marty Natalegawa, believed that the most essential question is how to make North Korea and South Korea capable of establishing

Promote anti-
imperialism

- Identity
- Domestic

communication with good intention, without having to leave their positive principles. He stated that “North and South Korea, just like any other countries in East Asia, need peace, not conflicts,” expressing the sentiment of the Indonesian foreign policy establishment (Xinhua, 2014).

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Japan

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For Japan, “[t]he North Korea nuclear and missile issue constitutes an unprecedented, grave, and imminent threat” (Shinzo Abe, 2017). This is not the only outstanding issue Japan has with North Korea, however. It is also prioritizing the unresolved issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea in the 1970s and 1980s, which it regards as a critical issue of Japanese sovereignty. Japan believes it “is necessary to change North Korea's course of actions by using all means available, including the full implementation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, in order to maximize pressure on North Korea” (Shinzo Abe, 2017). Japan will not accept a nuclear-armed North Korea (Foreign Minister Kono, 2018). The Japanese government is opposed to any approach to North Korea that eases pressure on the regime or offers rewards. It does not believe that “dialogue without pressure” will move North Korea toward denuclearization, and “will never engage in dialogue that would accept North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons in exchange for a temporary easing of the tension” (Foreign Minister Kono, 2018). Public opinion in Japan suggests there is an expectation that tensions will increase over the next decade due to North Korea’s actions.

Japan has voiced skepticism regarding the motivations behind North Korea’s recent willingness to open dialogue. Foreign Minister Kono has warned against naivety regarding the intent behind the regime’s recent “charm offensive”. He has suggested it is hoping to get sanctions relief or foreign assistance, or cancellation of military exercises by the US and ROK. Additionally, he cautions that North Korea may be acting for strategic reasons; hoping to weaken international pressure by dividing states between “those tough countries and those that are not so tough”, while presenting itself as a reasonable and willing negotiator. He warns “if the inter-Korean dialogue does not advance as North Korea wishes, North Korea may blame others and use it as a pretext to conduct further provocative and dangerous actions.”

Japan is strongly advocating that the international community needs to “continue to maximize pressure on North Korea and corner North Korea in order to change its policy toward denuclearization” (Foreign Minister Kono, 2018). It considers North Korea’s recent discontinuation of nuclear tests and ICBM test-fire, and its dismantlement of northern nuclear test ground to be a direct result of such an approach, and thus evidence of its success. The Government of Japan consistently warns that past experience has shown that relieving pressure on the North Korean regime has never been effective. They suggest that, as well as rigorously implementing relevant UN Security Council resolutions, individual states could use unilateral measure such as cutting off diplomatic ties or repatriating North Korean workers to further increase pressure on the regime.

INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
<p>Increase capacity to respond to an increasingly challenging regional security environment, including relative maritime capabilities and security</p>	<p>Like many regional actors, Japan perceives its national security to be intrinsically linked to regional stability, which in turn is heavily influenced by shifts in the balance of power between the US and China. For Japan, the changing regional environment has motivated a new strategic policy of “Proactive Contribution to Peace” (The Government of Japan, 2013), signaling Japanese desires to take more of a leadership role in regional and international affairs. Japan recognizes that it “cannot secure its own peace and security by itself, and the international community expects Japan to play a more proactive role for peace and stability in the world, in a way commensurate with its national capabilities” (The Government of Japan, 2013). The Abe government has passed legislation and reinterpreted Japan’s constitution to permit Japan to exercise the right of collective self-defense and remove barriers to security cooperation with partner states. It sees development of its own capabilities—economic, technological, diplomatic, and military—as critical to deterring threats, or ensuring that “if any threat were to reach Japan, it would be defeated and damage would be minimized” (The Government of Japan, 2013).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Prestige • Economic • Identity

China’s growing maritime power, in particular its development of anti-access/area denial capabilities, is challenging US-Japan maritime supremacy in the Asian littoral. In response, Japan seeks to play a leading role in strengthening maritime domain awareness and enhancing the frequency and quality of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, such as joint exercises and strengthening cooperation with partners.

Japan’s economic growth is also tightly linked to its maritime trade and development of maritime resources, and it considers a free and open maritime order based on rule of law, and the development of maritime law enforcement capabilities, as critical to regional (and global) stability, prosperity, and security.

Strengthen security relationships with the US and regional states

Japan regards expanding and deepening cooperative relationships with regional states as critical to its national security and for reducing threats, and sees the US-Japan alliance as the cornerstone of such efforts. Japan also has a network of strategic alliances with regional states, including Australia and South Korea, and seeks to deepen and develop cooperative relations in all sectors with ASEAN states. Japan and Australia’s bilateral and trilateral defense relationships with the US are seen by both as a hedge against growing strategic uncertainty brought about by changes in the regional balance of power. Public opinion polls suggest this is a view shared by a large majority of the Japanese population.

Although the US remains the most important security relationship for Japan and Australia, both states share a belief that they need to increase their regional engagement independent of the US, and see joint efforts as increasing their ability to influence US thinking. Japan also regards strengthening ASEAN as a means to shape and direct the region independent of the US. Some Japanese policymakers are beginning to question the reliability of the US-Japan alliance given the unpredictable, unilateral actions of the current US Administration and their apparent willingness to consider military solutions to the North Korea issue, without consideration of the wider security implications for regional partners.

The rise of China presents opportunities as well as challenges for Japan, and it considers building a stable relationship with China to be extremely important. However, close economic ties and interests are offset by territorial and maritime disputes between the two states, and Japanese concern regarding China’s recent military build-up and activities. Japan seeks to limit the destabilizing effect of the latter by encouraging China to “play a responsible and constructive role for regional peace, stability, and prosperity” and “[p]romote measures such as establishing a framework to avert or prevent unexpected situations (The Government of Japan, 2013).

- Security
- Prestige
- Economic

Increase regional influence by supporting international law and a regional “rules-based community”

Consistent with its policy of “Proactive Contribution to Peace,” and ASEAN’s current political vision, Japan identifies “the maintenance and protection of international order based on rules and universal values, such as freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law” (The Government of Japan, 2013) as in its national interest. In this area, as in security, Japan sees a need to take greater responsibilities and a leadership role in areas such as free trade, security, dispute resolution, and environmental protection. It is endeavoring to raise Japan’s profile and influence in international organizations, especially the UN, by participating in peacekeeping efforts and taking leadership in international discussions, and it also seeks permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

Nonproliferation is one area in which Japan has focused its efforts to provide international leadership, and has expressed a belief that it has a responsibility to lead efforts toward the elimination of nuclear weapons. Strengthening the NPT is the core of Japan’s work in this area, in particular developing an effective verification mechanism, which it identifies as an essential precursor to confidence building and eventual weapons elimination.

- Security
- Prestige
- Domestic
- Economic
- Identity

Defense of contested territorial claims through international law

Japan’s desire to increase its regional leadership role is complicated by its involvement in ongoing territorial disputes with regional states. In addition to more general concerns regarding China’s increasing military capabilities, Japan has voiced particular concern over China’s attempts to change the status quo in aerial and maritime domains in the East and South China Seas.

Japanese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hamachi, has stated that Japan “absolutely cannot accept violent or coercive actions, which deviate from international law,” and Foreign Minister Kono has stated that “any unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea can never be accepted.”

- Security
- Prestige
- Economic
- Identity

Japan has voiced an expectation that China will play a more active role in global and regional issues by sharing and complying with international law and norms. It backs ASEAN's efforts toward resolving the South China Sea issue, and the Code of Conduct negotiations ASEAN has opened with China. It has stated an intent to respond in a firm but calm manner to China's attempts to change the status quo by coercion in the East China Sea and South China Sea (The Government of Japan, 2013).

Japan also has an ongoing territorial dispute with South Korea over the sovereignty of Takeshima (Liancourt Rocks), which it regards as an inherent part of the territory of Japan. It has expressed disappointment that South Korea has, in Japan's view, "turned its back on a solution based on international law" but has indicated that it will continue to attempt to resolve the dispute "peacefully and calmly in accordance with international law" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016).

Japan's relations with Russia are also complicated by an ongoing dispute over sovereignty of the Northern Territories, which Japan regards as the outstanding issue of concern between the two states. Again, Japan states an intention to resolve this dispute through negotiation and the conclusion of a peace treaty.

**Revitalization of
the Japanese
economy, including
regional economic
growth through the
promotion of free
trade**

Current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was elected in 2012 on a platform that promised to reverse Japan's two decade long economic stagnation with a three-pronged approach—Abenomics—that aimed to improve the economy by increasing competition, reforming labor markets, and expanding trade partnerships. This fundamental change in economic policy was partly a response to China replacing Japan as the world's second largest economy in 2010, and its increasingly aggressive actions in the East and South China Sea, and with Japan directly over the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. To explain Abe's policies, his people invoke the Meiji slogan of *fukoku kyohei*, meaning "enrich the country, strengthen the army." To stand up to China, and avoid becoming a vassal to the US, Japan needs to be able to defend itself, and to be able to do that it needs wealth.

So far, it appears that Abenomics has improved conditions and engendered structural reforms; however, the IMF warns that recent growth is rooted primarily in favorable external conditions and fiscal support and could be temporary. There is general consensus that without greater structural changes or a major demographic shift, the Japanese economy will continue to struggle. Japan's shrinking workforce (down 6% in past decade) is burdened by the cost of a growing number of elderly; however, there has been only a slight increase the number of women in the workforce, and the idea of making it easier for immigrant workers to enter the market remains unpopular among the public.

Securing and diversifying energy supplies and opening new markets in essential to Abe's economic recovery program. "Japan remains unwavering in its belief that what assures the prosperity of the international community, including Japan, is the free and open international economic system" (Foreign Minister Kono, 2018). Consistent with its security policy, Japan regards the advancement of "a free and open international order based on rule of law" (Shinzo Abe, 2017) as the most effective approach to regional and global economic growth and development.

Building regional economic partnerships is an intrinsic component of Japan's economic strategy. The Trump Administration's rejection of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and criticism of Japan's trade practices and currency reforms has therefore both complicated Abe's economic reform efforts and potentially unsettled the US-Japan alliance.

Again, as with its security policy, Abe's economic strategy is also an effort to bring attention to China's challenges to the liberal rule-based order. His hawkish reputation combined with recent changes to Japan's laws and constitutional interpretations of self-defense have led to suggestions that his eagerness to push forward the TPP was also motivated by a desire to contain China.

- Security
- Prestige
- Domestic
- Economic
- Identity

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Malaysia

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INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
<p>Maintain authoritarian durability of a regime premised on ethnic Muslim and ethnic Malay domination</p>	<p>Consisting of two regions separated by about 640 miles of the South China Sea, Malaysia is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious federation of 13 states and three federal territories. The majority Muslim ethnic Malay are politically dominant and benefit from positive discrimination in business, education, and civil service, but a large ethnic Chinese minority holds economic power. As a result of this entrenched ethnic domination, and the restriction on minority civil liberties it engenders, scholars classify Malaysia as an “electoral authoritarian” regime (Morse, 2012). What this means in practice is that the Malaysian state restricts the liberties of minorities and contains their power, redistributing resources in favor of the ethnic majority (Harding et al., 2012). According to another popular measure of regime constitution, the Economist Intelligence Unit’s (EIU) Democracy Index continues to classify Malaysia as a “flawed democracy,” which means that Malaysia has “free and fair elections and, even if there are problems (such as infringements on media freedom), basic civil liberties are respected ... However, there are significant weaknesses in other aspects of democracy, including problems in governance, an underdeveloped political culture, and low levels of political participation” (Kekic, 2007).</p> <p>The origins of Malaysia's concern with stable authoritarian rule lay in the stateless chaos that engulfed Malaysia in the wake of Japan's defeat. Ethnic Chinese and communist-led insurgents organized as the dominant force to defeat post-Japan Malaysia (British Malay), encouraging sustained, violent, radical leftist mobilization and urban riots through the 1950s. Because many Malay collaborated with the Japanese, the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) spent most of its initial post-victory days “settling old scores against Japanese informers and collaborators ... creating a mood of fear [and] a reign of terror” (Cheah, 1983). In addition to a generalized climate of fear, the Chinese-dominated MCP engaged in targeted Islamic practices. For example, the MCP prevented “the Malays from congregating and attending Friday prayers, for fear that the Malays were gathering to attack the Chinese” (Cheah, 1983).</p> <p>Elites coalesced into an authoritarian regime founded on Malay and Muslim dominance to defeat the ethnic Chinese movements and protect Islamic practice and community. This regime has endured longer than many authoritarian governments in a country with abundant natural resources, few existential external threats, and substantial capitalist development without a landlord class. (These factors would predict liberalization or a resource-cursed regime.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic • Economic • Identity
<p>Maintain Malaysian sovereignty as a territorial state</p>	<p>The Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) divides Malaysia’s territorial security into five areas of responsibility: Strait of Singapore, Strait of Malacca, Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah, and Sarawak. MAF articulates that it “needs to defend and enhance its ability to defend its sovereignty over its terrestrial and maritime realms, including the EEZ, continental shelf, and all strategic sea lines of communication and airspace” (Malaysian National Defense Policy). The geography of Malaysia—with two large swaths separated by 640 miles of sea—increases the salience of this national interest for Malaysia, as maritime capability and security impacts terrestrial capability and security, and vice versa. The South China Sea connects the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and is one of the busiest sea lanes on the globe, with over US\$1.3 trillion (RM5.5 trillion) in crude oil and other goods shipped annually since 2013 (Stevenson et al., 2014).</p> <p>Malaysia lacks the military, industrial, and support infrastructure to produce the weapon systems and platforms it deems necessary for its terrestrial and maritime security operations. Therefore, it relies on external transfers to add or upgrade its weapon systems (Stevenson et al., 2014). The importance of these foreign weapons sales to achieving Malaysia’s security goals has made it sensitive to avoiding becoming a client state of any of the foreign powers from whom it procures weapons systems and foreign direct investment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Economic • Identity

Malaysia's borders are in contention, as it participates in several overlapping disputes with its neighbors.

- Malaysia is in a territorial dispute with China and several other countries, including the Philippines and Indonesia, in a multi-faceted Spratly Islands dispute—with eight islands under the control of China, five under Malaysian control, and one under Taiwanese control (Martina, 2011).
- Malaysia and Indonesia are in a long-running territorial dispute over the maritime portion of their border along the length of the Straits of Malacca, in the South China Sea and in the Celebes Sea (Haller-Trost, 1995). The Celebes Sea (Indonesian: Laut Sulawesi, Filipino: Dagat Selebes) of the western Pacific Ocean is bordered on the north by the Sulu Archipelago and Sulu Sea and Mindanao Island of the Philippines, on the east by the Sangihe Islands chain, on the south by Sulawesi's Minahassa Peninsula, and on the west by Kalimantan in Indonesia.
- Malaysia's land boundary (with the associated oil rights) with Brunei around Limbang was, and might still be, in dispute. The Malaysian press has reported that Brunei dropped all claims to Limbang, which Brunei denied (Othman, 2009).
- Malaysia's and Vietnam's overlapping claims over the seabed in the Gulf of Thailand has resulted in no current boundary agreement between the two countries (Gent, 2013). In addition, Malaysia and Vietnam both have overlapping claims in the South China Sea involving the continental shelf (Kindgon, 2015).
- The Malaysia-Singapore border once evinced two territorial disputes—Pedra Branca and a Singaporean water reclamation project—which has now been solved through international arbitration.

Malaysia's foreign policy has been focused largely on firmly, but flexibly, making friends and making peace (Hwan, 2018). For example, Malaysia participates in ASEAN-based forums and other multilateral institutions to mitigate the risks of China's rise, such as playing host to the 27th ASEAN summit in 2015, partly in response to China's increasing encroachment into its waters since 2013.

Malaysia's positive orientation toward flexible partnerships stems in part from its mismatch between the capabilities it desires and the capabilities it can produce domestically. Malaysia lacks the military, industrial, and support infrastructure to increase its security and economic capabilities mostly through domestic sources. As such, Malaysia relies on the economic and security partnerships afforded by the Asia Pacific regional system to expand its opportunities. This interest in developing international partnerships to operate as an indirect element of national power sustains four foreign policy goals:

1. Upgrading of weapons capability, with an emphasis on naval modernization
2. Regional partnerships with the two largest powers in the region, China and the United States
3. Participation in counter-piracy and counter-terrorism operations in exchange for enhanced capabilities
4. Regional organizational memberships to increase the number of trading partners and soft balance against Chinese assertiveness

External weapons transfers are the foundation of Malaysia's naval modernization efforts. Malaysia's naval capabilities lag those of its neighbors (Singapore, Indonesia, and Thailand). Malaysia's limited naval capability stems from its ageing fleet: so many of its vessels are sufficiently old that they have aged out of usefulness; without vessels to replace them, Malaysia has kept its older vessels in commission long past their suggested use-by date. Most of its fleet possesses more than thirty-year old hulls, making these vessels generally unreliable assets in a naval conflict. Over the last decade, the Malaysian Navy pursued an extensive modernization program to upgrade their blue water capability; this capability is important for joint operations with international partners concerning disaster relief, counter-piracy, and maritime security, and for Malaysian ability to control access to their maritime trade routes (Stevenson et al., 2014).

Malaysia likewise pursues enduring partnerships with both of the largest powers in the region, the United States and China. Malaysia cooperates with the United States mostly in security affairs. For example, the Royal Police exchanges intelligence and works with US officials to clamp down on cyber-crime and cyber-theft (Stevenson et al., 2014). Malaysia and the United States have collaborated to counter the Islamic State, and Malaysia has allowed the US Navy to fly its spy planes from Malaysian airstrips and dock its vessels at Malaysian ports (Kulk, 2015). Malaysia even allows the

Expand Malaysian capabilities by leveraging international resources

- Security
- Prestige
- Domestic
- Economic

US to launch surveillance flights from its territory and receives occasional port calls from the US Navy (Geopolitical Futures, 2017). However, some of Malaysia's economic practices have concerned the United States (e.g., the US government has serious concerns about the financial links between North Korea and Malaysian banks, and Malaysia's links to Thai sex trafficking) (Stevenson et al., 2014).

China's economic and security partnerships with Malaysia have been to the benefit of both countries. Economically, China surpassed Singapore as Malaysia's largest trading partner in 2014. Flourishing business activity increased the space of cooperation between Malaysia and China, leading to formal agreements on bilateral trade and investment, the establishment of a Confucius Institute, and the formulation of an agreement between the central banks on currency swap agreements (Stevenson et al., 2014). Chinese investment deepens the well of patronage the central government needs to keep the country together, maintains the political stability that foreign investors prefer, and builds out the infrastructure networks needed to diversify its economy away from oil and natural gas (energy's share of government revenues has dropped from around 41 percent to 22 percent since the collapse of oil prices) (Geopolitical Futures, 2017). Concerning security cooperation, in October 2013, China and Malaysia upgraded their relations to a "comprehensive strategic partnership," shortly after which they conducted their first bilateral live-troop exercises in the Strait of Malacca. This was the largest ever military drill between China and an ASEAN country. Malaysia is working with China to implement preliminary agreements to joint force operations to combat transnational crime (Stevenson et al., 2014). Deftly hedging between China and the United States, in September 2014, Malaysia allowed Chinese ships to stop in Kota Kinabalu, a port near the South China Sea—the same port the USS Lassen used in August 2014 for a freedom-of-navigation operation near the artificial islands China has been building in the area (Kulk, 2015).

Malaysia is one ASEAN's five founding members. Participating in regional organizations such as ASEAN, nonetheless, allows Malaysia to benefit from the economic regional order, specifically on free trade agreements, without possessing a strong relationship with any of the chief anchors of the agreement, such as Japan (Stevenson, 2014). Similarly, when the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) was an American-sponsored foreign policy initiative, Prime Minister Najib Razak made sure that Malaysia participated (Kulk, 2015). This participation in the TPP has continued even after US policy changed, with Malaysia joining Australia, Brunei, Chile, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, Japan, Malaysia, Canada, and Mexico to continue the deal without the United States (Gillespie, 2018).

To resolve its ongoing territorial disputes and protect its exclusive economic zones (EEZs) from encroachment, Malaysia leverages the conflict resolution methods available within a rules-based international order (Davis et al., 2016). Malaysia's arbitration record for its territorial disputes are as follows:

- In the Spratly's, Malaysia has openly and consistently preferred arbitration to force as way of resolving conflicts.
- In the case of Indonesia, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has helped resolve some of the dispute (Simmons, 2002). The ICJ settled a dispute over Pulau Sipadan and Pulau Ligitan in 2002, but Malaysia and Indonesia have competing claims in the Ambalat Sea and over their maritime border (Weigand and Powell, 2011). In February 2015, the governments announced the appointment of special envoys to hold exploratory negotiations over the outstanding disputes (Davis et al., 2016).
- Malaysia avoided arbitration or adjudication to resolve a disputed claim with Brunei over the rights to offshore oil (Gent, 2013).
- Malaysia's and Vietnam's overlapping claims over the seabed in the Gulf of Thailand has resulted in no current boundary agreement between the two countries (Gent, 2013). In addition, Malaysia and Vietnam both have overlapping claims in the South China Sea involving the continental shelf (Kindgon, 2015).

- Domestic
- Economic

Use international arbitration and rules to settle disputes

Malaysia's relationship with the DPRK soured from North Korea's violations of diplomatic immunity. Two women killed Kim Jong Nam, half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport using the lethal VX nerve agent on him. Malaysia severed all trade and business with North Korea. This turn of events seemed unlikely a year before. Relations between both countries had improved and, in 2009, Malaysia became the first country whose citizens were able to travel to North Korea without a visa, and through a visa-free program allowed North Koreans to come to Malaysia as itinerant sources of cheap immigrant labor (Hemmings, 2017). Malaysia's tougher stance towards North Korea reflects the overall growing international pressure on North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions (Hwan, 2018). However, following the April

2018 inter-Korean summit, Malaysia indicated that it welcomed the move and would re-open its embassy in North Korea to end the diplomatic row over the assassination incident (Hwan, 2018).

Defend Islamic communities

Malaysia's domestic regime relies on Muslims for support, and often increases domestic support for the government by acting as a global defender of Islamic communities. Malaysia is respected by the international community as an Islamic country. Malaysia focuses its advocacy of the interests of the Muslim world through the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (Hwan, 2018). Malaysian leaders have encountered lots of domestic pressure to condemn US actions. Criticism of American foreign policy is one of the ways the Malaysian government responds to the massive Malaysian protests concerning the fates of Muslims coupled with United States support for Israel during its military actions in Lebanon and the occupied territories (Stevenson et al., 2014).

- Identity
- Prestige
- Domestic

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North Korea

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INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
<p>Preservation of Kim dynasty; popular allegiance; personal enrichment</p>	<p>There is little argument among North Korea experts that Kim Jong Un’s principal motivation is the preservation of his regime (Rinna, 2018; Blank, 2018; Wadsworth, 2018). Like his father and grandfather before him, Kim relies on two forms of patronage to secure the regime from internal threat: the promise of privilege on the one hand, and the totalitarian controls on the general population concluding with the threat of torture and death on the other. Despite what some have seen as its recent charm offensive, the regime remains wary of losing absolute control of the population (Kang, 2018). Any conditions or sanctions that would appear to limit Kim’s ability to fund and exercise these tools would be seen as a direct threat to this critical interest.</p> <p>Privilege. Kim relies on both legitimate and illicit hard currency earnings (i.e., those flowing into North Korea through Central Committee Bureau 39 of the Korean Workers Party (KWP)) to purchase political loyalty, family luxuries, patronage of military and political elites, and to fund personal prestige generating programs such as North Korea’s nuclear and missile development. It engages in illicit and semi-licit activities to generate these funds (Lintner, 2003) including sanction-restricted arms sales, drug and sex trafficking, support to international terror groups,² counterfeiting, and most recently has turned to cybercrime including theft of cryptocurrency to supplement old school activities. Together these activities are estimated to generate between \$500 million and \$1 billion per year (Moriuchi, 2018).</p> <p>The collapse of the regime’s ability to provide food and other basic needs to the population during the devastating famine of the mid-to-late 1990s led the regime to allow the population to engage in small-scale private entrepreneurship to avert starvation as best they could. While this move was certainly originally intended as a limited-time pressure release for the population, it was not overturned once the economy began to grow and in fact the portion of the economy not under absolute government control has continued to grow in scope and value. To date the regime has been able to maintain some control over marketization and benefit from it by “taxing” semi-licit economic activities not strictly under its control by way of rampant corruption and extortion (Hastings, 2017). However, the recent spate of missile and nuclear tests has reportedly decimated what has been called Kim’s “personal slush fund.” Unless Kim is able to regain hard currency, this could endanger his capacity to maintain his and his family’s elevated standard of living while funding the elite patronage networks that have guaranteed support for the regime (Robinson, 2018).</p> <p>Popular Coercion. Finally, maintaining the allegiance of the military is the lynchpin of the regime’s ability to sustain terrorizing authoritarian controls of the population (abductions, torture, murder, etc.). Kim’s “Military First” policy by which members of the military are favored in apportionment of scant state resources can be seen as consistent with this. Moreover, military organizations also have begun developing their own economic activities opening up an additional means for senior military elite to enrich themselves. In addition, the regime retains tight control on information flows in the country.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic
<p>Enhance global respect and perceived legitimacy of the regime</p>	<p>International prestige has to do with a state’s influence and ability to impact the outcomes of events it deems important. International recognition of the DPRK as an important and legitimate state offers many benefits. To the extent that Kim appears as the head of state of a substantial country, he benefits both in terms of domestic and international influence. Normalized relations with the US would be a major</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic • Prestige

² According to Bechtol (2010), North Korea’s support to international terrorist groups began during the Cold War as ideologically-based and Soviet financed. However, today it is “designed to put money into the coffers of the elite in Pyongyang.”

achievement in this area (Koh, 2004; Wadsworth, 2018). The recent summits with South Korea and the US, and especially the appearance that Kim influenced the strongest country in the world to cancel a long-planned military exercise at his behest, reinforces Kim's image with the domestic audience and leverage over the US, PRC, and ROK. Of course, possession of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles also serve this interest quite well (Morillott et al., 2018). Finally, prioritizing recognition from others of his power and importance is very much in line with analyses of Kim's psyche (see Kuznar et al., 2018).

Maintain freedom of action, reinforce self-reliance; avoid subjugation, particularly by PRC

Self-reliance has served as an important domestic and foreign policy principle from the very beginning of the state (Blank, 2018). North Korea's founder, Kim Il-sung, envisioned a Korean society completely non-dependent on others' society in terms of security, economy, and ideology (Cumings, 1983; Oh et al., 2000). The distinctive Juche (self-reliance) philosophy³ is the foundational belief system upon which the regime rests its governing legitimacy and historical pedigree and serves to reinforce North Korea's identity, historical isolation, and as a policy for avoiding becoming a Chinese vassal state (Bechtol, 2010). As a result, it has both regime security and national security implications which motivate the DPRK to eschew reliance on others for its own security, an issue that the various Kim regimes have defined as maintaining a strong and capable modern military and powerful defensive measures like a nuclear deterrent.

Not only do nuclear weapons serve as the ultimate source of self-provided security against a threat from the US and South Korea, they also reflect the North's long-term resistance to Chinese efforts to dominate North Korea. The KJU era has been characterized by relatively tense relations with Beijing, including the violent purging of North Korea leadership elements perceived by Kim to be conduits of Chinese influence within the government, and its nuclear weapons, according to Blank (2018), "allow it to declare its independence from Chinese tutelage and blackmail Beijing and, to a lesser extent, Moscow."

More recently, Kim Jong Un has also emphasized the need to develop North Korea's economic self-reliance by developing North Korea's science and technology, domestic manufacture of consumer goods, and its energy sector in order to sustain itself (Kuznar, 2018). Unfortunately, the reality of North Korea's topography and natural resources is that until now it has had to rely on outside sources for food and energy sufficient to feed its people and fuel the economy.

- Security
- Domestic
- Identity

Secure DPRK against the US/ROK military threat, militarized Japan

North Korea's most significant declared military threat is aggression initiated by the US and/or ROK—often explained as the result of the US desire to overthrow the regime and reunify the peninsula under control of the government in the South.⁴ The DPRK military leadership is clearly aware that it is at a disadvantage against the ROK force supported by the US (Blank, 2018) and determined that asymmetric military capabilities such as nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, and cyber warfare are critical to national survival (Albert, 2018).⁵ The second significant military threat is the prospect of a re-militarized Japan and/or a nuclear-armed South Korea.

- Security

The mid-1990s economic collapse also forced the regime to adapt the centrally planned economy (Hastings, 2015; Bechtel, 2010). Most notably, it forced the regime to allow limited private entrepreneurship among a population in which the government-controlled formal economy could no longer support. During the economic collapse, state institutions were told to find profit-making opportunities. Today, for example, party and

³ See Bechtol (2010). The key elements include absolute obedience to the Kim family rulers, the goal of North Korean self-reliance as a nation, adherence to a North Korean form of socialism, placing the military first in all social aspects, carrying on a never-ending revolution, and unquestioning loyalty to the state (Kuznar, 2018). Juche is also bound up with identity since, according to the regime's narrative, to be truly Korean is to adhere to this philosophy. North Koreans are continuously indoctrinated in Juche philosophy. Every adult worker is required to be a member of an ideological organization that holds regular training sessions in Juche philosophy; these organizations include the Worker's Party of Korea (WPK), the Union of Agricultural Workers of Korea (UAWK), the Korean Democratic Women's League, or the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea (GFTUK). Additionally, workers allowed to work in foreign countries are overseen by foremen who require regular training.

⁴ See Kim Jung Un's 2018 New Year Address; also Rinna (2018); Bechtol (2010).

⁵ According to Kuznar (2018), there is an ideological element to the emphasis on military capability to counter the US threat. A key element of DPRK political philosophy is the Songun principle, which is the idea that the DPRK is a military-first society, the military is first to be supported and it will be the vanguard of all objectives, political and social or foreign and domestic.

Maintain flow of hard currency, economic stability, including lifting sanctions

military organizations have their own trading companies, leaving them with a dual identity: public institutions funded by the state, and private corporations liable for paying a percentage of proceeds to the state.

As the famine receded, however, the regime attempted to institute a series of economic reforms intended to squelch the private trading that it had abided during the collapse by revaluing the won among other efforts (Sang-Hun, 2017). The result of its seemingly feckless efforts was that in 2009 it succeeded in wiping out the savings of many North Koreans, caused hyperinflation, and prompted the growth of the black market and destabilized, rather than stabilized, the economy (C4ADS, 2017). While restricted, the economy is no longer fully centrally planned. The informal economy has not disappeared. It represents a substantial sector of the total economy and has fostered a new stratum of wealthy North Koreans, unattached to the military or traditional elite (Hastings, 2017).

As a result, there are multiple parallel economies in North Korea. The regime's survival depends on wealth generated by 1) the state-controlled criminal and illicit activities that generate foreign exchange used for patronage and to fund the extravagances of the Kim family, and 2) enterprises controlled by the military or party officials who have used their positions to operate private businesses and who have "more substantial" relationships with the state, including paying bribes to allow operations and/or buying themselves into the status of state licensed businesses. On the other hand, the survival of the population depends on the remnants of the command economy, and, increasingly, on the "informal, marketized economy" in which smaller enterprises may encounter the government in the form of bribes paid to lower level officials, and larger ones in the form of bribes to middle level officials (Hastings, 2015; see also Habib, 2011; Hastings, 2017).

Access to foreign exchange is a critical piece of North Korea's economic well-being, which is dependent on positive flows of foreign currency in order to shore up the economy and to purchase goods from the international market, like those used to support its WMD and missile programs (C4ADS, 2017). Access to foreign exchange and trade is problematic, however, and differs from Western institutions (see section on Evading Sanctions and Illicit earnings below). The flow of overseas currency also generates the foreign exchange that generates the wealth of the Kim family and other political elites. Since the loss of Soviet aid as that country collapsed, and following the collapse of North Korea's formal economy in the mid-1990s, North Korea's economic survival has depended on several types of external support.

Licit Foreign Trade and Aid from China. Despite sanctions, North Korea's economy grew by nearly 4% in 2016 and has averaged about 1% growth over the past five years. Nevertheless, it remains weak and vulnerable. Its most critical economic necessity in the short- to mid-term is maintaining foreign trade and sufficient economic and political relations with China, its largest trading partner (China purchases 90.8% of North Korea's exports) (Workman, 2018) and provider of food and energy subsidies. In addition to being its most critical trading relationship, North Korea also benefits from China's diplomatic efforts to minimize the severity of the international sanctions. The government has also tightly controlled and confiscated the earnings of North Koreans sent to work abroad.

Evading Sanctions and Illicit Earnings. The various economies of North Korea depend on a whole host of illicit economic activities including drug and human trafficking, counterfeiting, and cybertheft that have allowed the regime to illicitly transact billions of dollars. This is done through extensive overseas illicit networks of front companies, laundering efforts, and movement of much of North Korea's foreign exchange banking out of the country (C4ADS, 2017).

It should be noted that there is a basic tension between economic reform and marketization on the one hand, and maintenance of Kim family control on the other. Economic transformation and opening will inevitably bring with it increased information flow, especially about conditions outside the DPRK, and start to force political reforms to develop the legal infrastructure needed to support increasing non-government trade. This is expected to directly challenge much of the legitimacy of the Kim regime and could increase the regime's incentives to portray external actors like the US and PRC as threatening to the North Korean people. On the other hand, failing to adapt to marketizing forces already unleashed also challenges the legitimacy of the regime unless the DPRK can find ways to replace the enormous aid received in the past from China, the USSR, and South Korea.

- Security
- Prestige
- Economic
- Domestic

**Stabilized relations
with ROK, preserving
possibility of
reunification**

The reunification of the Korean peninsula is a nationalistic interest with roots in the original struggle during and after WWII to establish an independent Korea and has always been a cornerstone of North Korean political ideology, and indeed is referenced by Kim Jong Un frequently (Kuznar, 2018). However, experts are divided on the importance or even reliability of the regime's interest in reunification with the South. While most agree that it is certainly an aspiration with historical and emotional appeal, the question is whether it is a goal for which the North Korean leadership would trade value on satisfaction of other interests like national or regime security. Those who feel that it is (e.g., Friedman, 2018), tend to agree with Hodge (2003) that reunification of the two Koreas on North Korea's terms remains Pyongyang's "foremost goal" nearly to the exclusion of other interests. Others (e.g., Blank, 2018) suggest that the current regime's interest in economic transformation may have relegated issues of unification to less critical concerns at least for the short- to mid-term.

• Identity

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North Korea (As Presented in Kim Jong Un's Public Discourse)

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North Korean society presents a challenge to the Western social scientific practice of sub-dividing a society into its constituent parts, as in Spencer's notion of the organic analogy (1972) and Durkheim's notion of organic solidarity (1964). Instead, in North Korea, ideology, governance, security, economy, and daily life are tightly intermeshed, and the government works hard to enforce a seamless integration of what Western analysts often regard as more or less separate domains. Such integration is more akin to Durkheim's notion of mechanical solidarity, which he attributed to more traditional and tribal societies. Another relevant comparison would be the distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. Authoritarian regimes seek to control political power, whereas totalitarian regimes seek to control all aspects of life and use ideology as a key tool for doing so (Arendt, 1951; Hoffer, 1951). The tight integration of security, military, economic, social, and ideological domains means that there will be much overlap between these interest types with regard to any single interest, which will be evident in the descriptions below. To facilitate the presentation of security interests, where this overlap is perhaps most thorough, they will be subdivided into how military, economic, and ideological aspects serve this common, integrated, and overarching interest.

The unifying political philosophy used by North Korean leaders, referred to by most experts as a religion, is **Juche**. No understanding of North Korea's interests is possible without a thorough understanding of this philosophy, and the linkages are described briefly below. The reader is encouraged to read further into this philosophy in order to provide the context for the descriptions in this matrix (see Armstrong, 2005; Cumings, 1983; David-West, 2011; Gabbrousenko, 2008, 2009; Lee, 2013; Oh et al., 2000).

INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
Promote the Juche ideology	<p>North Korea's founder, Kim Il-sung, developed a distinctive political philosophy in the late 1940s and early 1950s called Juche. Most North Korea experts agree that this political philosophy has transcendent qualities that qualify it as a religion as well as a political philosophy. The key elements of this philosophy include absolute obedience to the Kim family rulers, the goal of North Korean national self-reliance, adherence to a North Korean form of socialism, placing the military first in all social aspects, carrying on a never-ending revolution, and unquestioning loyalty to the state (Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights, n.d.). Approximately one-third of all topics uttered by Kim Jong-un (KJU) since he has come to power directly relate to the promotion of Juche, and religious language such as "sacred," "immortal," and "eternal" is commonly associated with the philosophy.⁶</p> <p>Juche is mentioned far more than any other topic or interest in KJU's speeches. Promoting Juche is clearly a key interest expressed. Juche is bound up with identity since, to be truly Korean is to adhere to this philosophy that KJU argues is rooted in a 5,000 year tradition.⁷ By extension, the South Korean government allied with the US is seen as a weak puppet at best if not outright apostates.⁸ A key aspect for promoting Juche is constant indoctrination, and every adult worker is required to be a member of an ideological organization that holds regular training sessions in Juche philosophy; these organizations include the Worker's Party of Korea (WPK), the Union of Agricultural Workers of Korea (UAWK), the Korean Democratic Women's League, and the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea (GFTUK). Additionally, workers allowed to work in foreign countries are overseen by foremen, who require regular training (Kim, 2016).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Identity
Secure the DPRK against the US and Western threat	<p>The US is the most often mentioned polity and is always cast as presenting an existential threat to DPRK. This threat is primarily military and particularly nuclear, but the US is also seen as trying to undermine the DPRK economy and its self-reliance. Therefore, KJU advocates a number of military, economic, and ideological measures to counter this perceived existential threat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Economic • Domestic • Prestige
Secure the DPRK against the US and Western threat (Military aspects)	<p>Militarily, KJU often invokes the need to build military capacity and to develop its nuclear capability and missile delivery systems. North Korean nuclear capability is seen as much as a necessary deterrent⁹ to perceived US aggression as it is a source of national pride and prestige.¹⁰ KJU urges education and science and technology development to support military capabilities.¹¹ There is an ideological element to the emphasis on military capability to counter the US threat. A key element of DPRK political philosophy is the Songun principle, which is the idea that DPRK is a military-first society; the military is first to be supported, and it will be the vanguard of all objectives, political and social, foreign and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Economic • Domestic • Prestige

⁶ "Continue to make shine the sacred revolutionary history and the immortal achievements of the great leader" (Kim Jong-un, 1 May 2013).

⁷ "The successful launch of artificial earth satellite Kwangmyongsong 3-2, an ensemble of cutting-edge science and technology, is a mega event in the 5000-year history of the nation, which resulted from the General's wise leadership and our Party's policy of attaching importance to science and technology" (Kim Jong-un, 29 December 2012).

⁸ "The United States, together with its vassal forces as well as its puppet army of South Korea" (Kim Jong-un, 25 August 2012).

⁹ "The United States is now most fearful of our miniaturized, reduced-weight, and diversified nuclear deterrent" (Kim Jong-un, 31 March 2013).

¹⁰ "Associated with this day is the strength of our People's Army, which takes pride in being a powerful revolutionary Paektusan army, and the image of our country, which has emerged as a world-class military giant and dignified nuclear state" (Kim Jong-un, 25 August 2012).

¹¹ "A forceful drive was waged to make the defence industry Juche-oriented, modern and informatized, enabling us to produce any sophisticated military equipment as we wish by relying on our own effort and technology" (Kim Jong-un, 25 August 2013).

domestic.¹² Domestically, frequent praise is given to service personnel and reference is made to past military victories.¹³

Secure the DPRK against the US and Western threat (Economic aspects)

Economic issues are the next most often mentioned after Juche and the military. Economic development is seen as a necessary support to the overall ability of the DPRK to resist the US threat. Therefore, KJU mentions the need for continued science and technology,¹⁴ agricultural and forestry,¹⁵ and energy sector¹⁶ developments as well as an overall boost in productivity to keep DPRK strong.¹⁷

- Security
- Domestic
- Identity

Secure the DPRK against the US and Western threat (Ideological aspects)

Finally, the Western threat led by the US must be countered through constant ideological training of the populace as mentioned above in the 'Promote Juche ideology' interest.

- Security
- Identity
- Domestic

Promote a self-reliant DPRK

North Korea's founder, Kim Il-sung, envisioned a Korean society completely non-dependent on any other society in terms of security, economy, and ideology, which is why some scholars equate Juche with self-reliance (Cumings, 1983; Oh et al., 2000). This self-reliance transcends any particular security or policy interest and stands as a meta-interest on its own. Militarily, DPRK is not supposed to rely on any allies for its own security. Consequently, Songun mandates that DPRK have a strong, capable, modern military and that defensive measures, such as a credible nuclear deterrent, be developed. Economically, North Korea must develop its science and technology, its agriculture and forestry, its light industry, and its energy sector in order to be able to sustain itself. There are also frequent admonitions to managers and workers to boost production and increase living standards of its people. An unstated corollary is that North Korea should not rely on international markets for its sustenance; interestingly, there are only two references to foreign trade in KJUs six years of public speeches.

- Domestic

Reunification

The reunification of the Korean peninsula is a nationalistic interest expressed by KJU.¹⁸ This interest has roots in the original struggle during and after WWII to establish an independent Korea, and it has always been an ideological cornerstone of North Korean political ideology. This interest also probably plays well domestically, since many Korean families were divided by the Japanese invasion of WWII and the subsequent Korean War. It is interesting that half of KJU's references to Japan call out to Korean ex-patriots (Chongryon), who he regards as Korean

- Domestic
- Identity

¹² "The might of Songun represents the might of the People's Army and what is essential in strengthening the military might is to strengthen the People's Army. The People's Army should become standard-bearers and a shock brigade not only in defending the country but in carrying out the party's plan for building a thriving nation as the driving force of the revolution. It should also become pace-setters in creating and disseminating Songun culture in the new century. The traits of attaching importance to military affairs should be established throughout society and an all-people, nationwide defence system should be consolidated to turn the whole country into an impregnable fortress" (Kim Jong-un, 6 April 2012).

¹³ "The anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters and the heroes in the days of the Fatherland Liberation War and in the present Mallima era are models of a true revolutionary from whom our KCU members should take their cue. By following the ennobling examples set by these revolutionary forerunners and heroes, KCU members should all become fervent revolutionaries and heroes" (Kim Jong-un, 7 June 2017).

¹⁴ "A drive should be waged to push back the frontiers of the latest science and technology to put the country's overall technological equipment on the level of world standard and improve the economic structure to meet the requirements of the era of the knowledge-based economy" (Kim Jong-un, 6 April 2012).

¹⁵ "We have to increase state investments in agriculture, do the farming in a scientific and technological manner as required by the chuch'e-oriented farming methods, thereby unconditionally fulfilling the grain production goals set by the party" (Kim Jong-un, 31 March 2013).

¹⁶ "It is important to produce more electricity with priority given to hydraulic resources and by using wind, geothermal, solar and other kinds of natural energy. We should proactively increase production in coal mines..." (Kim Jong-un, 1 January 2014).

¹⁷ "The genuine features and essential characteristics of a socialist economic giant are not just that the country is highly developed in terms of productivity and national income; it must also be a people's paradise which provides its people with an affluent and cultured life" (Kim Jong-un, 9 May 2016).

¹⁸ "My New Year greetings go also to the compatriots in the south and abroad who are fighting for the reunification of the country and to the progressive peoples and other friends across the world who opposed war of aggression and gave firm solidarity to our cause of justice" (Kim Jong-un, 1 January 2018).

brothers and vanguard in the spread of revolution and Juche philosophy.¹⁹

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¹⁹ “Chongryon has rendered an active contribution to the sacred cause of achieving the prosperity of the socialist DPRK and the reunification of the nation. Its officials and other compatriots in Japan have rendered distinctive services to the prosperity of their motherland out of ardent patriotism, breathing the same air and keeping step with the people in their homeland” (Kim Jong-un, 25 March 2015).

Philippines

Author: Weston Aviles

INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
Mitigate the North Korean threat	<p>The Philippines has denounced the DPRK and the Kim dynasty through both ASEAN and official diplomatic organs on many occasions and during many administrations. The turn of the millennium Manila-Pyongyang rapprochement during the “Sunshine Policy” began through ASEAN and with the support of the US and the ROK, all of which deteriorated with the advancement of the DPRK’s nuclear weapon program (Jarasa, 2017). The Philippines is not shy to comply with international and US policies of sanctions, isolation, and public criticism of the regime; however, Manila ultimately seeks a purely diplomatic resolution to any crisis and has often struck a balance between American, Chinese, and Japanese policies towards North Korea (Ramani, 2018). The threats of nuclear and conventional war pose a significant risk to a regionally-dependent Philippine economy, the 650,000 Filipinos residing in the ROK,²⁰ and the hazard of nuclear fallout to the Filipino Islands (Ramani, 2018).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Economic
Maintain (US) and garner (Chinese) support but execute an independent foreign policy	<p>The Philippines and the US have been strategic allies for much of the 20th and 21st centuries but a popular sentiment of the Duterte Administration, diplomatically speaking, has been to execute an “independent foreign policy” (Francisco, 2016). Any deviation from ASEAN to this end will be undesirable but not undesirable enough to preclude the Duterte Administration from advancing its interests. The most obvious case of this departure from ASEAN norms is Duterte’s diplomatic engagement with China beyond the channels of ASEAN regarding the South China Sea disputes. Hedging a potential alignment with Beijing on this and other trade-related issues reveals a strategic partnership with Tokyo outside the scope of ASEAN over security and economic cooperation issues (Galang, 2017). Perceived influence of the US and China in matters beyond trade and territory also play a role in Manila’s bilateral relationships. After a decay in the US-Philippine relationship,²¹ engagement between Manila and Beijing increased significantly, contrary to the longstanding tradition of military aid and security provided by the US. Pro-Chinese rhetoric and action by the Duterte Administration is also balanced by public opinion that favors retaining heavy US military presence and is slow to accept detente with China on economic and territorial issues (Poushter et al., 2017),²² as well as the domestic military bloc that is anti-China and pro-US (Heydarian, 2017).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Domestic • Economic
Maintain ASEAN cohesion to prevent regional conflict and advance economic interests	<p>The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs has declared that “foreign policy decisions have to be made in the context of ASEAN,” and the Philippines has been a historical founder and leader of this organization (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2017). The Duterte Administration has seen a significant departure from the previous ASEAN stance with regards to the South China Sea dispute that the prior Aquino presidency favored; this shift coincides with the rotating chairmanship of ASEAN falling to Manila. ASEAN does not provide a single foreign policy for all its members, but it is a leading forum for the formulation of policy and strategy between and within members (Shead, 2017). Despite any real or potential conflict over foreign policy, Manila has significant interests in the free trade environment and unitary power that the ASEAN bloc provides to the Philippines and the region as a whole. The agreements and policies enacted by ASEAN play a vital role to the pursuits of a host of security and political concerns, in addition to providing Manila with regional legitimacy and a platform to mitigate such concerns collectively with ASEAN member states (Albert, 2017).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Economic • Prestige

²⁰ There are also significant Filipino populations in Guam and Japan (Ramani, 2018).

²¹ In one particular incident, the Obama administration criticized the Duterte administration for its heavy-handed approach to the Philippine’s domestic drug crisis, President Duterte responded with harsh words causing a diplomatic fracas prior to a planned meeting between the two heads of state that was subsequently canceled (Gayle, 2016).

²² Pew polling data suggests that this gap is widening as of 2017.

Execute an independent but balanced resolution to South China Sea disputes

Manila has recently stated that “South China Sea disputes will no longer block the development of bilateral ties” but rather “will be turned into a source of friendship and cooperation between our two countries” (Albert, 2017). The economic potential of developing the “resource-rich area,” however jointly, with Beijing is very attractive to both the Philippine economy and the economic agenda of the Duterte Administration. Such a resolution will likely tend towards a zero-sum situation between the US and China where Manila will balance the risk of damaging US ties through closer cooperation with Beijing.

- Security
- Domestic
- Economic

President Duterte’s engagement with China is friendlier than previous administrations, but Manila still maintains sovereignty over disputed areas of the South China Sea. Diplomatic outreach to Beijing stems from the recognition of Chinese military superiority, Duterte’s disenchantment of American condemnation of his domestic policies, and the boon of potential Chinese investment and loans. This is counterbalanced by the domestic military bloc that strongly opposes Beijing’s claims and public perception,²³ the PCA (Hague based Permanent Court of Arbitration) adjudication rejecting China’s claims (and other legal obstacles), and the dependency of Philippine security on American support (spanning trade security, counterterrorism, and disaster relief).

Protect Filipinos and their interests abroad

One of the three pillars of Philippine foreign policy is the “protection of the rights and promotion of the welfare and interests of Filipinos overseas” (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2017). Over 10 million Filipinos live abroad (Comission on Filipinos Overseas, 2013). A portion of that population provided over \$33 billion in remittances in 2017, approximately 10% of the Philippines’ GDP (O. de Vera, 2017). The vast majority of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) live and work in Asia, with other significant populations in North America and Arab Gulf States (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2017). Many Filipino households depend on these remittances for survival, and OFWs and non-working/permanent emigres have significant influence on domestic Philippine politics. The continued success of Filipino immigrants overseas and their contribution to the homeland influence both Philippine foreign policy in ASEAN and the pursuit of diplomatic and economic policies that will facilitate OFW practices.

- Security
- Economic

Combat domestic drug problems and the prevalence corruption

President Duterte’s “war on drugs” has incurred widespread allegations of human rights violations and condemnation from the US, the EU, Australia, several IGO’s (the UN, HRW, ICC, and the Catholic Church), and from elements of the domestic opposition. Critics of these efforts have expressed concern over President Duterte’s rhetoric and accuse him of extrajudicial killings, targeted violence against journalists, and other human rights concerns (Gershman, 2016). China and Russia have publicly praised President Duterte’s crackdown, while Japan remained noticeably silent on the issue. These reactions have coincided with the increased diplomatic and political engagement between Manila and these respective regional powers (Bouckaert et al., 2017). Conversely, the EU, US, and UN’s criticisms led to disputes between President Duterte and President Obama (Gayle, 2016). Western criticism over these drug policies have contributed to President Duterte’s “realignment”²⁴ towards China rather than the US (Heydarian, 2017) and the policy’s embodiment of the Duterte Administration’s independent, populist agenda.

- Domestic
- Identity

Transparency International ranked the Philippines 111th (out of 180) in their Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) in 2017 despite consistent and robust economic growth.²⁵ Anti-corruption rhetoric was a key part of Duterte’s presidential campaign, and public satisfaction on this front is vital to maintaining legitimacy. The Duterte Administration has engaged in several high-profile pursuits to combat corruption, including arrests and dismissals of ranking public officials (Anti-Corruption Digest, n.d.; Antiporda, 2017).

The Philippines is a nation consisting of over 7,000 islands with a rich ethnolinguistic diversity. The largest Tagalog ethnic group accounts for (approximately) only 25% of the Filipino population (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2015). This ethnic diversity and geographical complexity in

²³ There have been over a dozen coup attempts (mostly military) with two successful overthrows of elected presidents (however unlawfully) in the past thirty years (Reuters Staff, 2007).

²⁴ This “realignment” speaks more to diplomatic engagement with China and Russia, coupled with an increased pursuit of economic cooperation. The security relationship between the US and the Philippines, however, is beyond reproach, and the Filipino military and the Trump administration have softened this realignment significantly.

²⁵ See Steinbock (2017) for criticism of Transparency International’s assessment of the Philippines.

Halt and prevent further Islamic terrorism and separatism in the Philippines while maintaining good relations with the global Islamic community

and of itself has incurred significant socio-political challenges to the successful governance of the Philippines, historically. In modern times, the largest issue facing socio-political cohesion has manifested along ethno-religious lines in separatism and terrorism. The Philippines was ranked 12th in the Institute for Economic and Peace's (IEP) 2017 Global Terrorism Index and this turmoil poses a significant threat to domestic Philippine security and to Manila's relationship with the Islamic world. Despite the dominant majority of Catholicism in the Philippines (80%), Islam is the nation's second largest religion (5.5%), and most of this population resides predominantly in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2015). Armed conflict between Islamist separatist groups and Filipino forces persisted for over three decades, and since the advent of ISIL, several affiliate groups in the Philippines have emerged and engaged in several hundred incidents of terrorism and separatist violence in the past three years (START Consortium, 2017). The threat of Islamic terrorism and separatism in the ARMM has historically been a source of cooperation between US and the Philippines; however, this has changed since the Duterte Administration. Beijing has contributed military aid to Manila primarily on the ground of combatting Islamic terrorism and separatism in the Philippines,²⁶ a role that had traditionally been Washington's. Balancing the degree of security cooperation between the US and China is one of the Duterte Administration's interests, primarily through counterterrorism and the war on drugs, but it is also part of the strategic calculus of Manila's maritime security.

- Security
- Domestic

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²⁶ This aid consisted of assault rifles and munitions totaling \$3.3 million (Reuters Staff, 2017b) and was followed 5 months later by President Duterte's proposition to send troops to China for training as part of talks focused on increased cooperation on counterterrorism (a move that is opposed by the military bloc in Manila) (Wong, 2018).

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Russia

Author: George Popp

INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
Maintain security and legitimacy of Putin regime	Ensuring the security, stability, and legitimacy of his governing regime within Russia is of fundamental interest to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and is a driving force behind each of the interests below. Progression towards or achievement of any of the interests below is likely to increase the security and legitimacy of the Putin regime, and thus advance Putin's fundamental interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic • Prestige
Expand Russian sphere of influence and power, including ensuring Russian involvement in any DPRK resolution	Russia aspires to be a great power, and wants to be viewed as such among the international community. In pursuit of this interest, the Kremlin strives to create bilateral and multilateral relationships with Asian governments and other international organizations to promote its "long-standing contention of being an indispensable pole of a multipolar world that must be consulted on all major issues in world politics" (Blank, 2017). In the case of the Korean Peninsula, therefore, Russia is interested in being involved in any negotiations on a long-term security solution (Blank, 2017; Blank, 2018; Rinna, 2018b; Westermann, 2018). While solving the "North Korea issue" might not be Russia's top priority overall, ensuring Russian involvement in negotiating the outcome is of critical interest to Putin, and is part of his "greater strategy to expand Russia's engagement in the world and manifest a global presence" (Westermann, 2018). Moreover, any attempts to marginalize or leave Russia out of the discussions, negotiations, and/or resolutions to the dispute on the Korean peninsula may be a "redline" for Putin and Russia (Blank, 2018).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prestige • Domestic
Maintain stability of border regions and minimize instability in backyard	Russia does not want instability or conflict from the Korean Peninsula to spread into Russian territory. Nor does it want potential instability in its surrounding areas to threaten its larger economic and political interests. Some even argue that Russia "regards war in Korea as a geopolitical nightmare that must be avoided by all available means" (Blank, 2018). As such, the Kremlin has expressed its preference for a stable Korean Peninsula and its opposition to a nuclear North Korea, and has criticized the United States' presence and involvement in the region (Blank, 2018; Rinna, 2018b; Westermann, 2018).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Domestic
Contain US influence in region	Russia is interested in limiting the spread of US influence and power abroad. Russia strives to be viewed as a great power with great influence in its surrounding region. Growing US power and influence in the region is a threat to this objective. As such, the spread of US influence and power in the Asia Pacific region, and the potential for growing US influence on the Korean Peninsula, is of high concern to the Kremlin and something in which Putin has great interest in containing (Rinna, 2018b; Westermann, 2018).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prestige • Domestic • Security
Ensure economic prosperity by forging lasting economic and political relationships with Asian states and integrating its Siberian and Far East territories into broader Asia Pacific region	<p>Russia is interested in promoting economic growth and development within its borders and in its surrounding region. The Asian Pacific is a rapidly developing economic hub, rife with multilateral economic agreements and projects. It is not surprising, therefore, that Putin is interested in capitalizing on this economic potential and broadening Russia's presence in the surrounding region. Putin details this interest, stating that "as a major Eurasian power with vast Far Eastern territories that boast significant potential, Russia has a stake in the successful future of the Asia Pacific region, and in promoting sustainable and comprehensive growth throughout its territory. We believe that effective economic integration based on the principles of openness, mutual benefit, and the universal rules of the World Trade Organization is the primary means of achieving this goal" (Putin, 2017).</p> <p>Free trade is a central component of Russia's economic and political objectives. Promoting free and open trade throughout the Asia Pacific is of great interest to Russia as it not only helps to ensure the transport and trade of Russian resources, particularly Russian energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic • Prestige • Domestic

resources, but it also presents an avenue for expanding Russia's economic and political influence in the region. Putin explains this interest clearly, stating: "We support the idea of forming an Asia Pacific free trade area. We believe this is in our practical interest and represents an opportunity to strengthen our positions in the region's rapidly growing markets ... Of course, in creating the APEC free trade area, we can draw on the experience of other key integration agreements in the Asia Pacific free trade area, we can draw on the experience of other key integration agreements in the Asia Pacific region and Eurasia, including the Eurasian Economic Union ... Our union has been developing dynamically, and we are eager to build relations with all countries and associations that are interested in doing so" (Putin, 2017). Putin has also expressed interest in working with the Asia Pacific region in support of economic innovation and infrastructure development, particularly advancing and integrating transportation, telecommunications, and energy infrastructure (Putin, 2017).

Encompassed in Russia's economic and political objectives in this region is its desire to more broadly integrate its Siberian and Far East territories into Asian Pacific markets. This assimilation into the Asian Pacific economy is a central Russian interest, and one that appears to be of particular relevance to Putin, who has stated: "We are particularly focused on integrating Russia's Siberian and Far Eastern territories into this broader network. This includes a range of measures to enhance the investment appeal of our regions and to integrate Russian enterprises into international production chains ... For Russia, the development of our Far East is a national priority for the 21st century. We are talking about creating territories of advanced economic growth in that region, pursuing large-scale development of natural resources and supporting advanced high-tech industries, as well as investing in human capital, education and health care, and forming competitive research centers ... We hope that our foreign partners, primarily from APEC economies, will play an active role in these projects" (Putin, 2017).

Russia views the Korean Peninsula as an area in which there is great opportunity to advance these economic and political interests, particularly its interests in further developing and integrating its Siberian and Far East territories (Rinna, 2018a, 2018b). Russia's pursuit of this interest on the Korean Peninsula is evident through its continued push to expand the Trans-Siberian Railway into South Korea and desire to develop a Trans-Korean Gas Pipeline. Both initiatives illustrate Russia's interest in being a major energy provider to both North and South Korea, but also suggest an interest in "gain[ing] influence over the economics and politics of both states and becom[ing] a real and vital contributor to peace and stability across the peninsula" (Blank, 2017). To Russia, not only do the Trans-Siberian Railway and Trans-Korean Gas Pipeline initiatives offer a pathway to improved relations, and therefore increased stability and economic opportunity, on the Korean Peninsula, but the implementation of these initiatives could cement Russia's involvement and influence in any future proceedings in the region (Blank, 2017; Blank, 2018; Yu, 2018).

Overall, Russia has been persistent in its efforts to generate interest in and investment for its desired economic initiatives in the Asia Pacific, particularly those relating to capitalizing on Russian energy resources, expanding trade routes, and broadening regional economic integration. To Russia, ultimately, developing new economic agreements and projects in this region is a step towards establishing the kinds of lasting economic and political relationships that will help solidify Russia's influence and power in the Asia Pacific (Blank, 2017; Blank, 2018; Rinna, 2018b; Yu, 2018; Zakharov, 2018).

Minimize domestic impact of international sanctions

Russia's economic objectives have been constrained by international sanctions stemming from its activities relating to the annexation of Crimea. The Kremlin has a vital interest in minimizing the impact of these sanctions, both to preserve economic stability within Russia and to validate its standing as a global power that is able to overcome challenges presented by other international actors. In the interest of overcoming these sanctions, the Kremlin has overlooked violations by Russian businesses that have continued trading with North Korea to the benefit of the Russian economy (Ramani, 2018). More broadly, if Russia were able to fully overcome the intended impact of international sanctions, and potentially demonstrate that it is not susceptible to these types of international deterrents and constraints, the political benefit for the Kremlin could be significant, and could further reinforce Russia's standing on the global stage (Ramani, 2018; Westermann, 2018; Yu, 2018).

- Economic
- Domestic
- Prestige

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South Korea

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INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
<p>Maintain existing regional balance of power</p>	<p>The balance of power in the Asian Pacific contains both elements of stability and dynamism. The elements of stability flow from the US-led “hub and spoke” security order interweaving Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK), and Taiwan into an alliance system capable of containing China’s development peacefully (Ikenberry, 2004). The chief source of regional dynamism stems primarily from the economic and naval development of the People’s Republic of China in the face of long-term Japanese economic stagnation (Park, 2011). On the Korean Peninsula, an additional dynamic element is the nuclearization and security policy of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK).</p> <p>The ROK has long-stated security and domestic interests in leveraging the stabilizing elements of regional order to limit the negative externalities of the dynamic elements of potential instability, in the region in general as well as on the Korean Peninsula. These interests arise from the ROK’s perception that its security interests are best met through stable deterrence, which in turn is rooted in a stable regional order (Bisley, 2012). Specifically, there are three ROK foreign policy goals anchored by this interest in maintaining the existing regional balance of power:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct deterrence of DPRK conventional aggression. 2. Maintain US extended deterrence of DPRK unconventional aggression. 3. Denuclearization of the DPRK. <p>One, the ROK and DPRK possess numerous territorial flashpoints in their relationship related to maritime boundaries and fisheries (Stevenson, 2014). The most enduring maritime dispute between the two Koreas takes place at the Northern Limit Line (NLL) in the Yellow Sea. The NLL, drawn up after the Armistice of 1953, has never been recognized by the DPRK. Because the NLL crosses an area of fishing grounds that are important to the ailing Northern economy and are close to busy Southern ports, the NLL is a kinetic flashpoint, with the sinking of the ROK vessel Ch’ŏnan in March 2010 and the shelling of Yŏnp’yŏng Island in November 2010 being two recent examples. Direct deterrence, from the ROK’s perspective, of the DPRK’s aggression is one of the few routes by which to stabilize this situation, because the NLL is not considered an international maritime boundary because both Koreas regard this dispute as domestic (International Crisis Group, 2010).</p> <p>Two, the ROK’s superior economic advantage over the DPRK likely grants the ROK all the capabilities it needs for stable inter-Korean conventional deterrence. However, the ROK’s commitment to remaining a non-nuclear state has reduced its direct deterrence stability for chemical and nuclear threats from the DPRK (Ho-sub, 2012). Extended deterrence from the United States helps stabilize this situation (Blank, 2018). US-based capabilities help reduce the threat to the ROK from DPRK ballistic missiles, for instance (Rinehart et al., 2013). In addition, external transfers from the United States to the ROK aim to improve its naval capabilities and increase the alliance interoperability of the United States-led ballistic missile defense system (Stevenson, 2014). The ROK’s commitment to an effective DPRK sanctions regime, while tempered by humanitarian concerns, seeks to advance this strategy of direct deterrence: The ROK has preference for linking increased economic assistance to denuclearization and improved DPRK relations with the United States (Green, 2018).</p> <p>Three, in addition to the instability created by the DPRK’s nuclearization shifting the regional balance of power, the ROK’s foreign policy goal of denuclearization is connected to its preference for continued extended US deterrence. There is “South Korean anxiety that—should the US come within North Korean striking range—the extended deterrence Seoul enjoys as part of its alliance with the US would crumble” (Green, 2018).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic • Economic

Prevent major peninsular crisis

In addition to the ROK's regional interests in stability, it has a separate, stronger interest in preventing a major crisis on the Korean Peninsula. At a December 2017 summit, Presidents Xi and Moon announced four common principles for dealing with North Korea: (1) no war on the Korean Peninsula; (2) denuclearization of the peninsula; (3) peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue; and (4) improvement in inter-Korean relations. The alternative—some kind of regime change—is an outcome that the ROK (along with Russia and the PRC) seek to avoid because of the potential instability arising from this change (Rinna, 2018). Specifically, there are three ROK foreign policy goals anchored by this interest of preventing a peninsular crisis:

1. Forestalling a collapse of the DPRK.
2. Limiting and managing refugee flows from the DPRK.
3. Avoiding kinetic conflict at all costs on the peninsula.

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- Identity

One, the ROK wants to prevent a sudden collapse of the DPRK regime for any reason. For the administration of Moon Jae-in, harsh sanctions ought to calibrate to keep the DPRK at the negotiating table, in good faith, rather than to cause regime change or collapse (Green, 2018). Complementing the sanctions strategy is diplomatic engagement of actively pursuing inter-Korean dialogue, terminating military hostilities, connecting the two Koreas by road and rail, and actively expanding joint economic projects, as long as progress is being made on denuclearization (Green, 2018). Some of these efforts recently bore fruit: The two Koreas participated together at the Winter Olympics, an event for which the Kim regime dispatched a large delegation including a cheering squad. The two Koreas also exchanged musical delegations. North Korea's Samjiyon Orchestra performed in the South during the games, and a variety of South Korean artists, including a famous K-pop band, performed in Pyongyang in April. These latter types of engagements follow public opinion in the ROK perfectly; "public opinion in the South favors engagement in the humanitarian and cultural spheres and disfavors major economic assistance" (Green, 2018). Forestalling a collapse, rather than enabling a peaceful transition, is designed to accomplish two foreign policy goals: limiting the likelihood of a humanitarian crisis, if North Koreans choose to flee south; and limiting the need for the involvement of Chinese armed forces in the fallout of a North Korean regime collapse (Noland, 1997). In trying to avoid the humanitarian and security problems posed by sudden collapse, the ROK finds significant concord with the PRC.

Two, since the late 1990s, from observing the reunification of Germany and experiencing larger flows of refugees from the lower classes of the DPRK, political elite in the ROK have come to believe that Korean unification would be expensive and a threat to the ROK's political identity (Bleiker, 2003). One late 1990s estimate of the cost of unification was that it would cost \$1 trillion over 10-25 years in addition to a debilitating mass southward exodus (Noland, 1997). Refugees from the DPRK are often fleeing material deprivation and political persecution, which means that under South Korean law they must be accepted and helped. Yet, the socio-economic differences between the two Koreas means that most of the southern-bound refugees are more poorly educated, less healthy, and less likely to have useful skills, finding social integration into the credentialist, corporatist southern Korean economy difficult (Lankov, 2006). In addition, refugees from the DPRK report rampant discrimination against them, as they are stereotyped as heavy drinkers, prone to crime, and wards of the state, further decreasing their social integration (Kelleher et al., 2005). As South Korean society possesses one of the highest suicide rates of wealthy countries and one of the poorest systems for providing mental health care, ROK elites have come to fear fulfilling their humanitarian duties under their own laws, causing an informal change in the official attitudes toward defectors from a policy explicitly aimed at encouraging defection to a policy of quietly discouraging it (Lankov, 2006).

Three, along with the PRC, the ROK explicitly avoids any kinetic maneuver on the peninsula, fearing it will result in a larger war. Kinetic crises can easily spiral out of control as the United States and the ROK have a mutual defense treaty that would almost immediately involve the 28,500 US military personnel deployed in South Korea (Park, 2011). North Korea and China likewise have a bilateral treaty that includes a security clause whereby both parties pledge to assist in case the other is attacked.

The ROK is a presidential republic which rules the southern half of the Korean Peninsula below the 38th parallel. During the Korean War, under the banner of the United Nations, the United States assisted the ROK in repelling an invasion from North Korea sponsored by the USSR. South

Maintain political identity and stability; prevent encroachment on Korean sovereignty

Korea's presidential elections have steadily become freer and fairer. South Korea held its first free presidential election under a revised democratic constitution in 1987, with former ROK Army general Roh Tae-woo winning a close race (Kim, 2007).

Specifically, there are three ROK foreign policy goals anchored by this interest of maintaining its political identity and stability:

1. Work toward reunification on terms and a timeline favorable to the ROK.
2. Limit "Korea passing."
3. Resolve ongoing territorial disputes in the ROK's favor.

This goal of reunification has implications for the political identity—that is, the justifications for continued divided peninsular rule—of the ROK. Both Korean regimes claim to be the government of the whole peninsula, and claim the allegiance of all Koreans. Both are committed to a theoretical future in a singular state (Hoare, 2018). The ongoing process of reunification, as noted above, carries immense social and financial risks. Similarly, successful reunification poses a threat to the domestic power of ROK elites, no matter which sets of elites prevail in the unified state (Gray, 2016). For example, if DPRK elites maintained or increased their power post-unification, which most experts take to be objectively unlikely, those elites would face a relatively cohesive population that loathed their methods of rule in North Korea; if ROK elites maintained or increased their power post-unification, it would have to manage its suspicions that the ideological cohesion of the Koreans living in the northern part of the peninsula were not an easy to organize third-column seeking to subvert democratic rule over time (Kelleher et al., 2005).

As the elites most impacted by both the success and the failure of reunification, as well as any peninsular crises, both ROK elites and the larger population want to limit what they refer to as "Korea passing," which is when larger countries circumvent Korean political institutions to impose political settlements on Korean populations, an ugly history dating back to Japanese colonialism and, immediately thereafter, the US-Soviet division of the peninsula (Green, 2018). Of note, a plurality of South Koreans (44.5%) actively blame the United States and the Soviet Union for the original conflict, and the division of the Koreans (Sin, 2018). While many South Koreans see a relationship with the United States as crucial to the continued regime security of the ROK, the South Korean domestic population resists allowing this to translate into favorable views about the United States dominating the alliance relationship. In matters relating to the peninsula, and particularly to the fate of Koreans, both in the North and the South, South Koreans, and by extension the ROK, bristle at anything less than a relationship of equals between any of the major players who, from the Korean point of view, meddle in the sovereign affairs and violate the self-determination of Koreans (Chun, 2011). As subject matter expert Dr. Steve Sin (University of Maryland, START) phrased it: "To be successful, whatever policies are developed and implemented, from the ROK's perspective, they must look, taste, smell, and feel Korean" (Sin, 2018).

Three, the ROK seeks to resolve its territorial disputes in its favor. Part of the ROK's nationalist justifications for its continued sovereign existence and ability to claim the allegiance of all Koreans is that ROK defends South Koreans from the DPRK in the North and from Japanese aggression in the south (Shin et al., 1999). With China's rise, the ROK has extended its nationalist claims of protection to include preventing encroachment on Korean sovereignty from the PRC as well. There are three ongoing disputes:

- a) The Liancourt Rocks (ROK-Japan). The Liancourt Rocks, known as Dokdo in Korean and Takeshima in Japanese, are a group of two small main islets and 35 smaller rocks located 135 miles from Korea and 131 miles from Japan (Fern, 1998). While South Korea controls the territory, its sovereignty is contested by Japan. North Korea supports South Korea's claims (Siripala, 2018). Interestingly, the unified Korean map does not show an indisputably Korean island, Ulleung-do, bigger than Dokdo/Takeshima and closer to Korea (Van Dyke, 2007).
- b) Noktundo (ROK/DPRK-Russia). Noktundo is a peninsula in the delta of the Tumen River on the border between Primorsky Krai, Russia and North Korea. This peninsula was once an island. In 1860, the Russian Empire acquired the island from the Qing Dynasty, which was disputed by later generations of Koreans. The dispute was partially solved in 1990 with a treaty between the Soviet Union and the DPRK that drew the river border so that Noktundo fell within the Soviet Union's border. The ROK has refused to acknowledge the treaty and demands that Russia return the territory to Korea (Petrov et al., 2013).
- c) Exclusive economic zones (EEZs) in the East China Sea (ROK-PRC). The dispute between the PRC and South Korea concerns Socotra Rock,

- Domestic
- Economic
- Prestige
- Identity

a submerged reef. On this rock, South Korea constructed a scientific research station. Despite South Korea affirmatively claiming the rock, the PRC objects to Korean activities there as a breach of its EEZ rights (Stevenson, 2014).

Grow regional influence

The Republic of Korea seeks to grow its influence by acting as a responsible middle power (Rinna, 2018) and manipulating the reunification issue to increase support among current South Korean public opinion (Chun, 2011). Foreign policy wise, this means that the ROK seeks to hedge between PRC and US regional assertiveness to expand its influence as a middle power broker (Stevenson, 2014). Once China and South Korea established formal diplomatic relations in 1992, their cooperation flourished from necessity in 1994, due to the specter of the potential nuclearization of North Korea. Beijing was one of the few cities in which North and South Korean officials could regularly interact; moreover, China was one of few countries that both North and South Korea interacted with regularly. In an empirical review of event data arising from a collation of newspaper reports, South Korean officials note often how maintaining their relationship with China is a high national priority given the North Korean question (Stevenson, 2014). President Park's approval to deploy the US Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (or THAAD) on the peninsula curdled ROK-PRC relations, significantly (Green, 2018). Beijing informally sanctioned several South Korean conglomerates, ejecting them from the Chinese market, blocked access to popular South Korean music and television shows, and halted Chinese tourism to South Korea.

- Prestige
- Economic
- Security
- Domestic

Deepen economic prosperity

Between 1953 and 2018, the Republic of Korea has transformed from one of the poorest countries in the world to one of its most wealthy. In 2004, South Korea joined the trillion-dollar club of world economies (Blank, 2018). Continued economic prosperity will give the ROK the upper hand in reunification talks with the DPRK, as well as enable the ROK to perform as a "responsible middle power" in the international and regional political orders (Stevenson, 2014). A variety of potential free trade agreements to increase regional liberalization seems to be the ROK's preferred international economic strategy (Hao et al., 2013; Kawai et al., 2010).

- Security
- Prestige
- Economic
- Domestic
- Identity

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United States

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INTEREST	DESCRIPTION	INTEREST TYPE
<p>Contain China's territorial expansion</p>	<p>China's territorial expansion and acts of aggression in the Asia Pacific region contest with a variety of US security interests. One such interest is maintaining "strong, unofficial relations with Taiwan," an interest that is "in line with the US desire to further peace and stability in Asia" (Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 2017).</p> <p>The United States has a complicated relationship with Taiwan. The US does not support Taiwan's independence; however, it is committed to helping the nation maintain its defensive capability and build up its security forces. In 1979, the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) provided a legal basis for the unofficial relationship between the US and Taiwan. This act made it clear that the US would "recognize the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China, acknowledging the Chinese position that there is but one China, and Taiwan is a part of China" (Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 2017). Although the US does not acknowledge Taiwan's independence, the US is committed to maintaining strong relations with Taiwan, ensuring its safety, and protecting it from Chinese threats (Wang, 2010). One source even goes so far as to say that "any attempt to determine Taiwan's future by anything 'other than peaceful means' constitutes 'a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States'" (Lohman, 2016).</p> <p>The United States retains its interest in Taiwan primarily because it wants to combat Chinese influence and intimidation in the region. A few derivative reasons for this US interest is that it supports Taiwan's democratic government (Kastner, 2018) and maintains a significant trade relationship with Taiwan (Taiwan is ranked as the United States' 9th most important trade partner) (Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, 2017). China's naval buildup in the Taiwan Strait has increased its anti-access and area-denial capabilities (Wang, 2010), an act which presents a potential threat to Taiwan and US trade interests in the region. Therefore, the United States is interested in countering these actions.</p> <p>China's construction of artificial islands in the South China Sea has caused reason for concern in the United States. For several years, China has claimed sovereignty over various islands, territories, and economic zones within the South China Sea to maintain its influence in the area and demonstrate its strength (Kuznar et al., 2017). To the United States, as well as other nations in the Asia Pacific region, these "gray" activities are perceived as acts of aggression that threaten economic interests, and therefore must be contained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic • Identity • Prestige • Security
<p>Ensure US economic growth and prosperity</p>	<p>Like any other country, the United States is interested in ensuring its economic growth and prosperity. In order for the US to achieve this goal, it believes that it must promote "free and open trade and investment under rules favoring the US competitive advantages in finance, capital, [and] technology," and maintain its status as "an issuer of the world's predominant international currency, and as a capital-exporting country" (Cronin, 2018). In other words, the US wants to maintain its competitive economic advantages across the globe and, consequently, prevent a decline in its economic power and GDP (Cronin, 2018).</p> <p>Although China is the United States' number one trading partner, the increasing competition between the two countries over economic influence in the Asia Pacific region presents challenges to US trade interests. The US wants to maintain its economic prosperity and protect its trade relationship with China; however, it is likely also uncomfortable with the competition China presents.</p> <p>The United States is also dissatisfied with the current discrepancy between its government's and companies' economic preferences. The US government wants to maintain its economic growth and prosperity; thus, it favors exports over imports. However, retailers and companies with supply chain dependence within the US favor imports, which has led to internal divisions (Cronin, 2018). This discrepancy makes it challenging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic • Economic • Prestige • Security

for the US government to achieve its goal of economic growth and prosperity.

Guarantee US freedom of navigation and secure regional trade routes through the South China Sea

Movement throughout the Asia Pacific region is vital for successful US trade activities and military operations. Given the geostrategic importance of the South China Sea, the United States must ensure that disputes do not escalate so that any potential disruptions to its economic and military activities can be avoided. Consequently, China's construction of artificial islands in the South China Sea and its "aggressive policy of gaining effective military and resource dominance of the South China Sea" (Cronin, 2018) threaten US trade activities and navigation abilities. \$1.2T worth of US bilateral trade is conducted through the South China Sea, and half of the world's annual merchant fleet tonnage and a third of its maritime traffic passes through these waters (McKenzie et al., 2016). Moreover, Chinese intimidation of US allies and trading partners in the South China Sea and interference with US Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS) threatens these nations' naval security (Cronin, 2018). Therefore, the US prioritizes ensuring its security and freedom of navigation in the region.

Freedom of navigation also connects to the United States' desire to maintain and protect its regional security influence and prestige. If the US was prohibited from moving through select international waters, its status in the region would be undermined. Furthermore, if the United States works towards maintaining its strong trade relationship with China, it is more likely that China will not interfere with the United States' trade activities in the South China Sea in hopes of preserving this relationship as well.

China

China's growing economic presence in the Asia Pacific region is viewed as a potential threat to US economic influence and prestige. Most Asia Pacific countries currently rely on the US for military security; however, many of these countries have become increasingly dependent on China for economic security. As a result, the competition between the US and China over access to resources, foreign economic performance, and influence in the region has increased over the years and only continues to grow (Bragg, 2015).

Maintain regional trade relations and economic influence

Furthermore, the size of the US bilateral trade deficit with China has been and continues to be an important issue in bilateral trade relations (Congressional Research Service, 2018a). The size of this trade deficit is somewhere between \$275.8 billion and \$375.3 billion,²⁷ and the Trump Administration views this sizeable trade deficit as "a sign of unfair economic policies in China" (Congressional Research Service, 2018a). Consequently, one of the Trump Administration's main priorities is to rebalance the US's trade relations with China and thus, reduce this trade deficit. On the other hand, China is ranked as the US's number one trading partner (in terms of total trade) in 2018 thus far (US Census Bureau Foreign Trade Division, n.d.) and was responsible for \$115B of total US exports and \$385B of total US imports in 2016 (Observatory of Economic Complexity, 2016). In rebalancing its trade relationship with China, the United States must be careful to not disrupt any of its ongoing trade activities. Any damage to these ongoing trade activities could prove detrimental to the US, considering the amount of trade conducted between the two nations every year.

- Economic
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- Prestige

The United States' desire to contain China's territorial expansion may also negatively impact its efforts to maintain its trade relationship with China.²⁸ If relations between the US and China turn sour due to a conflict caused by China's territorial expansion in the South China Sea or its perceived aggression towards Taiwan, the two nations' trade relationship could be in jeopardy, which would negatively impact the US.

Japan, South Korea, and Other ASEAN Nations

The United States has spent many years both cultivating strong economic relationships with countries in the region, especially Japan and South Korea, and sustaining its prestige and regional influence. Japan is ranked as the US's number four trading partner (in terms of total trade) in

²⁷ "According to the United States, the 2017 bilateral merchandise trade deficit with China was \$375.3 billion. According to China, its trade surplus with the United States was \$275.8 billion—a \$99.5 billion difference" (Congressional Research Service, 2018a).

²⁸ Cronin (2018), however, suggests that, "because of the high importance the United States places on economic and trade relations with China, the reverse [might be] more likely. This, in fact, is one of the main worries of the United States' Southeast Asian allies and security partners."

2018 thus far (US Census Bureau Foreign Trade Division, n.d.) and was responsible for \$63.2B of total US exports and \$130B of total US imports in 2016 (Observatory of Economic Complexity, 2016), while South Korea is ranked number seven (US Census Bureau Foreign Trade Division, n.d.).

Despite these strong trade relationships, the US has a significant trade deficit with Japan and South Korea, as well as ASEAN as a collective entity. The Trump Administration has made it one of its top priorities to rebalance trade relations and reduce its trade deficit with these nations. The US has a \$94 billion trade deficit with ASEAN countries collectively and believes that “the United States does a lot for ASEAN in terms of market access [but they] need ASEAN to do more for [them]” (Ghosh, 2018). Furthermore, the Trump Administration has expressed concerns over its \$56 billion (2017) trade deficit with Japan. The Administration has been met with Japanese resistance in talks regarding the formation of a bilateral free trade agreement, and in March 2018, President Trump proclaimed new steel and aluminum tariffs and excluded Japan from a tariff exemption, presumably to pressure Prime Minister Abe into agreeing to bilateral trade talks (Congressional Research Service, 2018a). Lastly, President Trump signed the US-Korea Trade Agreement, or KORUS Agreement, to encourage further integration of the US and Korean economies and increase the competitiveness of US businesses in South Korea (International Trade Administration, n.d.). Overall, the US wants to ensure its economic growth and prosperity by rebalancing and maintaining some of its most valuable trade relations.

Economic influence in the Asia Pacific region is also critical for the United States because a significant portion of the world’s trade is conducted through this area. Losing this economic influence to China or any other country could prove detrimental to US economic prosperity. Thus, it is important that the United States maintain its economic influence in the region and its existing trade relationships with Japan, South Korea, and ASEAN as a whole.

Since the end of World War II, the United States has maintained a strong military presence in the Asia Pacific region. The US has also spent many years sustaining its regional security influence.

Stephen Blank of the American Foreign Policy Council describes this US interest as “preserving the substance and components of the so-called liberal international order that has kept peace in Asia,” which includes protecting the “security, independence, prosperity, and democracy” of both South Korea and Japan. The US believes that “stability and prosperity in the Asia Pacific is best ensured through an environment in which it exercises predominant maritime power as a security guarantor, and also enjoys very strong political and economic access and influence” (Bragg, 2015). Therefore, one of the US’s primary interests is to maintain its security and economic influence in the region and, consequently, to make sure that Chinese and Russian undermining of and opposition to US regional security objectives and initiatives do not impede this influence (Cronin, 2018).

Furthermore, one of the United States’ primary goals in the Asia Pacific is to “encourage [the development of] rules-based regional norms that discourage coercion or the use of force” and foster stability (Congressional Research Service, 2014b). The US hopes to work with its regional partners to create and shape these rules-based regional norms and prevent countries like North Korea and China from disobeying them. For instance, the US would like to tighten trade regulations and be certain that all countries will abide by these rules. Thus, China would ideally be discouraged from disrupting “free and fair trade” activities, pushing the limits of US trade laws and agreements, and constructing artificial islands in the South China Sea. In order for these norms to be implemented and adhered to, the United States needs to have positive relationships with its regional partners and the ability to affect their decisions. The US must also have credibility; its regional partners must be convinced that the US understands what their interests are and has their best interests at heart. Therefore, security and diplomatic influence in the region are critical for the United States.

In addition, 28,500 US troops are stationed in South Korea, and 50,000 troops are based in Japan (France-Presse, 2017), where the nations conduct joint drills and engage in frequent communications. This physical military presence is important to the United States because it wants to maintain secure relationships with its allies, retain its regional influence, and preclude Chinese security influence. The US also strives to prevent Chinese territorial expansion and intimidation of US allies and partner countries, especially in the South China Sea (Cronin, 2018). Overall, the US

**Preserve regional
security and
diplomatic
influence**

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wants to counter growing Chinese influence in the region by ensuring that its own security influence remains unwavering.

Maintain US extended deterrence guarantees

According to the 2018 National Defense Strategy, one of the United States' three primary focuses is strengthening alliances and attracting new partners. The United States maintains close political, strategic, and economic relationships with both Japan and South Korea. These are some of the United States' strongest and longest-term alliances. The US wants to work closely with these allies to achieve its strategic goals and to prevent other countries in the region, such as China and North Korea, from acting in ways that threaten US interests. Furthermore, the US's Asia Pacific allies are economically important and give the US both a forward presence and a strategic advantage. Therefore, the United States is dedicated to maintaining its extended deterrence guarantees to these allies.

Upon signing the 1954 Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement, the US pledged to protect Japan from external military threats if Japan allowed the US to establish permanent military bases on Japanese soil (Teslik, 2006). Since Japan does not have a traditional military force, it is in the United States' best interest to promote peace and stability in the area because if a conflict were to arise in the region, it would be obligated to protect Japan.

The United States is also committed to protecting South Korea, particularly from North Korean and Chinese threats. Upon signing the 1953 Mutual Defense Treaty, the United States agreed to defend South Korea from any potential dangers and to "employ nuclear weapons, if necessary, in that defense" (Congressional Research Service, 2017b). The US has also had a permanent deployment of troops in South Korea since the Korean War (France-Press, 2017), which was prompted by "the sudden attack from North Korea, which served ultimately to validate the strategy of containment: the need to act decisively to contain communist ambitions" (Kane, 2006). A formal peace agreement was never reached by North and South Korea after the fighting ceased; only an armistice was signed. Consequently, the United States has pledged to help ensure that North Korea maintains the terms of the armistice and does not act aggressively towards South Korea (Kane, 2006).

In summary, the United States has assumed the role of "protector" in Japan and South Korea. However, in order to maintain this role, it must assure Japan and South Korea that its deterrence guarantees are valid and establish its credibility. Therefore, the United States must promise these nations that it will protect them from nuclear threats, WMDs, cyberwarfare, and other threats and act in ways that demonstrate their commitment to this promise.

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Encourage nuclear non-proliferation in the region

North Korea's nuclear weapons program poses a threat to the United States' "favorable and stable power balance" in the Asia Pacific (Cronin, 2018). Thus, the United States would like nuclear non-proliferation to be the standard in the region. This interest is demonstrated through the US's attempts to get North Korea to denuclearize and agree to negotiation terms. According to the 2018 National Defense Strategy, "North Korea seeks to guarantee regime survival and increase leverage by seeking a mixture of nuclear, biological, chemical, conventional, and unconventional weapons and a growing ballistic missile capability to gain coercive influence over South Korea, Japan, and the United States." Thus, the renewal of North Korean nuclear and missile tests would threaten not only the US but its regional allies. In summary, it is the US's goal to prevent North Korea from developing nuclear capabilities that could target the US or its allies (Blank, 2018), to combat this pursuit of influence, and consequently encourage nonproliferation.

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Contain WMDs, cyberwarfare, and other threats to the US and its allies

The United States cares significantly about defending itself and its allies against conventional and informal strikes from North Korea or China (Blank, 2018). Some examples of these conventional and informal strikes include major cyber security attacks on US companies and national infrastructure (Cronin, 2018), intellectual property theft, and the development of nuclear technology that could be used to target the US or its allies (Blank, 2018). By protecting itself and its allies from potential threats, the US can achieve one of its other primary goals, which is to maintain its deterrence guarantees (to both its own population and that of its allies).

The "alleged involvement of Chinese state actors in cyber espionage and cyber theft against US targets," in combination with China's "poor record of intellectual property rights enforcement," has prompted US concern about its own cyber security and that of its regional partners (Lawrence et al., 2015). Moreover, major South Korean banks and broadcasting agencies were victim to a large-scale cyberattack launched by

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North Korea, which both demonstrated North Korea's intent to utilize cyberattacks as a tool and displayed advancement in the nation's cyber capabilities (Center for Strategic and International Studies, n.d.). These advanced cyber warfare capabilities could also "increase North Korea's asymmetrical advantage and provide alternative means of escalating a crisis," which could threaten this US interest (Center for Strategic and International Studies, n.d.).

In order to protect itself and its allies from conventional and informal missile strikes, the United States has developed its Terminal Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) program (Blank, 2018). The United States has performed fifteen THAAD tests since 2006, all of which have been successful (Reif, 2018). In 2013, a THAAD battery was deployed to Guam to "counter potential North Korea IRBM threats to the island and US military assets there," and in July 2016, the US and South Korea agreed to deploy a THAAD battery in South Korea "to counter North Korean threats, despite strong objections from China" (Reif, 2018). Furthermore, the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) is exploring the development of a THAAD extended range system, which is designed to counter ultrafast gliding weapons. China has tested such weapons in the past. Thus, these battery deployments and THAAD developments prove that the US is committed to building up its THAAD program in order to combat potential attacks from North Korea or China.

One of the Trump Administration's primary goals is to build a strong America. According to the 2018 National Security strategy, "a strong America is in the vital interests of not only the American people, but also those around the world who want to partner with the United States in the pursuit of shared interests, values, and aspirations." The Trump Administration hopes that through economic growth and prosperity and the rebalancing of some of its most important trade relationships, it will retain its core domestic support and achieve its primary goal of building a strong America.

One of the key objectives of the Trump Administration is to rebalance its major trade relationships with Asia Pacific countries.

Successful negotiations with North Korea could also result in an increase in support for the Trump Administration. Although there may be some initial political skepticism due to the lack of successful negotiations in the past, there is a bipartisan consensus among Americans that the current US policy towards North Korea is not working (Wit, 2016). Moreover, one source states that much of the domestic skepticism "could be defused if the Trump Administration makes the case publicly that the threat posed by North Korea is imminent, that the current policy has not worked, and that dealing with the North Korean threat is a top priority" (Wit, 2016). The Trump Administration hopes that if it frames its reasoning for pursuing these negotiations correctly and succeeds in either denuclearizing or enforcing routine nuclear inspections in North Korea, it will have achieved a foreign policy "win." Containing WMDs, cyberattacks, and other threats to the US and its allies may also have a similar effect on support for the Administration.

The US domestic political polarization and the consistent gridlock between Congress and the Executive Branch have created barriers for retaining widespread domestic support (Cronin, 2018). As the Democratic and Republican parties continue to become more divided, it becomes increasingly difficult for the Administration to secure the core domestic support that it needs. Therefore, by achieving economic success, protecting the US and its allies from potential threats, and improving its economic relations with Asia Pacific nations, the Administration increases its chances of reducing the tensions between parties.

**Retain domestic
support for the
Trump
Administration**

- Domestic
- Economic
- Identity
- Prestige

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Subject Matter Expert Response Submissions

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14 May 2018

North Korea: Hitherto key national interests have been the security of the regime and then of the state against U.S./ROK pressure and threats, preserving the possibility of unifying Korea under its auspices, defense against Chinese efforts to subordinate North Korea to its designs. This may be changing as the nuclear weapons were critical to realizing all three of these objectives and there now appears to be a fourth key objective of economic transformation and development. Clearly Pyongyang sees the U.S.-ROK alliance, US power, and military presence as the major threats to its vital interests but we should not unduly depreciate the threat posed by China's overweening ambitions to North Korea's actual independence and freedom of action. Kim has made that abundantly clear. So redlines are any manifestation of the alliance that threatens his security or that of the DPRK and real threats of military action, including loose talk of preemptive strikes fire and fury, etc.

South Korea: Key national interests begin with defense of the country against all manner of DPRK attack both military and informational. Even more troubling is the possibility of an attack being launched with China in alliance with the DPRK. This is not likely now but if it were it would be a major threat. Lesser down is an exclusively Chinese military threat which is somewhat more real a possibility than alliance with the DPRK in an offensive war but also not visible on the current horizon. These threats are not only to security but also to independence and prosperity so we should also figure on Seoul's sensitivity to anything that interferes with its continued economic development and global economic presence. Redlines are the classic harbingers of North Korean attacks, tunnels, mobilization, preceding period of tension, larger deployment etc. which mandate the necessity for an extensive EW capability for both Seoul and Washington. Another key set of critical targets would be a cyber war unleashed either by Pyongyang or Beijing against civilian and military economic, infrastructure, and military targets that could have devastating effects.

US: US vital interests are to prevent North Korea from developing a nuclear capability that can target the US or its allies. This logically entails a call for CVID or something akin to it. Second, is preserving the security, independence, prosperity, and democracy of both South Korea and Japan. So this also entails defense against conventional and informational strikes from either the DPRK or China. And that also includes the THAAD missile defense program among other things. The real vital interest lies in preserving the substance and components of the so-called liberal international order that has kept peace in Asia for over forty years and sixty-five years. So that includes preserving the security, integrity, independence, and prosperity of democratic South Korea. Therefore, redlines would be military and informational threats that go beyond being mere probes to threaten those objectives and South Korea or Japan. if we can distinguish the one from the other. And certainly nuclear weapons are more than a redline in this context.

Japan: In this context Japan's vital interests are its security which is at risk from both North Korean missiles (conventional or nuclear) and Chinese support for the DPRK apart from the PRC's own military capabilities that are focused on Japan. Leaving the latter aside since this is not a discussion of the China threat we see the following red lines. Missile and naval threats to Japan from North Korea would certainly be redlines even if they remain purely conventional. And given North Korean cyber capabilities, cyber strikes on key civilian infrastructure, political, economic, and military targets would seem to be redlines as well for North Korean threats.

China: In this context China's vital interest is in preserving the North Korean state as one that is to a greater or lesser degree subservient to Chinese interests and denuclearized so that it cannot threaten the ROK and/or Japan, and thus bring back THAAD and US forces in a big way, or escape its control or at least leverage. Unification of Korea under either side would reduce its leverage and if it is under ROK auspices that would be a vital threat because it brings US influence and potentially presence back to its border. It also clearly wants to reduce U.S. influence over South Korea (I'm not so sure about Japan because Japan unchained is its *bête noire*). In addition, it is vital for China to keep Russia as a partner if not ally under its influence—for that is how this particular alliance works in Asia—so it will regard any Russo-American regional cooperation that excludes it suspiciously.

In this light redlines would be North Korea attacking the South for that invalidates the treaty with China and ensures U.S. retaliation even if it is a purely conventional attack. That US retaliation or signs that we were about to strike preemptively at the DPRK would also be redlines. Therefore A Fortiori any sign of deployment of nuclear weapons for actual use or threatened use would also probably be a redline. And China would be concerned to prevent or even thwart North Korean probes like those

in 2010 lest they spiral into an escalatory process. This assessment would also probably include major cyber-strikes against vital South Korean targets.

Russia: The primary vital interest for Russia is to be heard, seen, and acknowledged as an equal player in the six-party process. It is driven by the quest for great power status as a major Asian player and obtaining an acknowledgement of that status is a principal goal of all of its Asian policies as is securing foreign investment to help develop Asiatic Russia. Therefore, a war in Korea, on its border (remember it fought four wars in the last century over Korea) launched by North Korea over whom it has in fact little or no leverage is a catastrophe. Yet it is equally driven by anti-Americanism and therefore, though it opposes North Korean nuclearization, will not do much to stop or at least arrest it. It therefore has identified with China's approach that blames the US and seeks to mitigate North Korean behavior and find excuses for it by referring to the U.S. threat. It, like China supports and then violates covertly the UN sanctions that it supported. It also has as a vital interest going back to the 1890s! a trans-Siberian-Trans-Korean railway to become a more powerful economic-political player on the Korean peninsula as well as the more recent obsession (not too strong a word) of a similar Trans-Siberian-Trans-Korean gas pipeline to play to its strong suit, i.e. oil and gas. But somebody else will have to pay that pipeline so between those issues and North Korean intransigence little has been accomplished. Russia is therefore desperately afraid of being dragged into a war for issues where it has no leverage and by a power over whom it has little control but whose stakes are immense. Nuclearization not only drives Japan and the ROK to solicit greater US presence and missile defenses, e.g. THAAD, but also stimulates calls for those states to go nuclear. War on the peninsula terminates any hope of foreign investment in the Russian Far East and forces it to align with China even further. Thus, to use the slang term it is to some degree a marginal wannabe that craves being accepted as one of the major actors equal to the U.S. and China.

Redlines are war or any sign that it is being marginalized in the process of resolving Korean issues. But also another redline would be deployment by Pyongyang of nuclear weapons for warfighting as that implies a rapid escalatory spiral and the same holds true for DPRK probes against the South as well as US moves to preempt North Korea.

Dr. Richard Cronin

Distinguished Fellow (Stimson Center)

7 June 2018

United States Interests and Regional Objectives and Threats to Them

1) Favorable and stable power balance. Threats: by rising China, North Korea's nuclear and weapons program, different priorities of allies Japan and the ROK and historical bad blood between them, breakdown of international norms, including China's aggressive policy of gaining effective military and resources dominance of the South China Sea. Redlines: Renewal of DPRK nuclear and missile tests; active Chinese or Russian opposition to or undermining US regional security objectives and initiatives; Chinese intimidation of allies and partner countries in South China Sea or interference with US FOO and FONOPS, declaration of ADIZ; bilateral ROK-DPRK accord that opens borders and reduces war/invasion threat that reduces US role or footprint, or effectively ends the US-ROK alliance (even if not formally).

2) Free and open trade and investment under rules favoring the US comparative advantages in finance capital, technology, issuer of world's predominant international currency, and status as a capital exporting country. Threats: Comparative decline of US economic power/GDP; internal divisions within the US between interests favoring exports and those (retailers, companies with supply chain dependence, etc.) favoring imports; multiple threats to technological leadership and international capital, most of all by China. Redlines: Major loss of key leading US technology via intellectual property theft; major and damaging cyber security attack on US companies and national infrastructure; abrupt, arbitrary and damaging tariffs, investment barriers, nationalizations of US investment property and egregious non-tariff barriers. Obviously the Trump administration is ready to play tit for tat, real or imagined.

3) Regional and alliance leadership. Threats: Loss of postwar/cold war consensus on providing international public goods; current loss of confidence in multilateralism in US and cooperative burden sharing among allies and strategic partners; current fine line between America First and America alone; US domestic political polarization and gridlock in Congress and between Congress and the Executive Branch; disregard of important allied interests in dealing with China, Russia, etc.

Chinese Interests and Regional Objectives and Threats to Them

1) Unimpeded economic rise to status of "core economy" and hegemonic role in adjacent parts of East/Southeast Asia. Threats: The US is the only country that could seriously carry on a hard trade and investment war, though only at great cost to politically important US economic interests. Mainly from US measures to block China's economic rise and regional economic relations by attacking whether by initiative or retaliation China's many continuing weaknesses such as initial action against ZTE or tariffs that block key exports. Redlines: Serious US effort to bar import of successful Chinese "catch-up" or innovative technology, or export blocks on supply chain.

Note: One very interesting aspect of the current confrontation with China and other trade partners is that we are putting tariffs or seeking quotas on manufactured goods while they are banning agriculture exports and other commodities, or fashionable low tech manufactures such as Harley Davidson motorcycles, blue jeans, etc. Does that mean they are still dependent on US capital goods and other technology, or does the predominance of commodities in the US export basket underscore a growing downward imbalance in the US economy towards the dominance of services, finance and financial services, and agricultural and natural resources-based commodities, and the relative decline of manufacturing.

2) A stable and non-threatening Korea Peninsula with dominant Chinese influence. Threats: North Korean implosion or attack by US; a US-DPRK agreement that would allow the US to maintain or even increase its present security role on the Korean Peninsula in South Korea. Redlines: any effort by the US to use nuclear/missile negotiation to gain a political-economic "foothold" in Pyongyang; or movement towards de facto or formal reunification without a major Chinese role. Redlines: US strike on North Korea; decision by Japan to go nuclear.

ROK Interests and Regional Objectives and Threats to Them

The ROK has several regional objectives, most of which do not threaten its neighbors in any major way. First priority is to obtain relief from North Korean hostility and ideally open up trade and investment, family reunions, and significantly reducing the size of the US footprint while retaining the US role as a stabilizer and check on Japanese nationalism and hostility. Second priority is to expand the role of Korean companies and Korean political/diplomatic influence in Southeast Asia. Korean companies are particularly eager to compete with Chinese and Japanese in infrastructure development, commercial construction, and offshore assembly operations.

Dr. Rod Lyon

Senior Fellow – International Strategy (Australian Strategic Policy Institute)

28 May 2018

- I'll focus on Australia in my answer.
- Australia's long worried about the emergence of a hegemonic, coercive, great power in Asia.
- Those worries are at their strongest during periods of doubt over the reliability of Australia's great-power allies:
 - Historically, its principal allies—the UK and the US—have lived at some distance from the Asian theatre
 - And often their priorities haven't been Asian ones.
- Lately, that worry has typically been expressed in less realist terms—as the loss of a stable, prosperous, liberal international order at both the global and regional levels.
- But underneath that concern about 'order' lies a deeper strategic anxiety, which is a product of the shifting balances of power along the Eurasian rimlands:
 - The region seems to be sliding towards multipolarity
 - And with that comes the prospect of a growing, energised, revisionist great power—China—exerting greater influence.
- As US relative strategic weight declines, Australia has tried to strengthen its alliance with Washington
 - Canberra worries about either precipitate or gradual US disengagement from those critical Eurasian force balances that underpin much of the current order
 - And thus is concerned about developments—like the development of a thermonuclear-tipped ICBM by North Korea—which might decouple the US from its forward allies
 - It worries that if the San Francisco system starts to crack along one or two of its principal spokes—say, the spokes to Tokyo and Seoul—the broader strategic order might unravel.

- On the other hand, it places great value upon evidence of continuing US engagement in Asia
 - Whether that evidence be declaratory, like the US National Security Strategy or National Defense Strategy
 - Or participatory, in both exercises and dialogues
 - Or operational, such as the FONOPs in the South China Sea.
- Frankly, there are currently few good alternatives to the US hub-and-spokes model for managing hard security tasks in the Asia-Pacific:
 - Multilateral structures are too weak.
 - In a range of Asian countries, a sudden collapse of the hub-and-spokes system would result in a much greater emphasis on policies of national self-reliance:
 - Proliferation of offensive strike capabilities would be one likely result.
 - Among other countries, we'd see new patterns of accommodation towards rising regional powers:
 - In short, a new regional security environment.

Shihoko Goto

Senior Northeast Asia Associate, Asia Program (Wilson Center)

7 June 2018

Japan's objectives are twofold: firstly to ensure that the rules-based order that had been established by the United States remains intact in spite of the current administration's reluctance to engage multilaterally, and secondly to counterbalance the economic and security threats posed by China. The evolution of Washington's position regarding North Korea has shaken much of Japan's confidence to regard the United States as a reliable partner on both accounts. Japan remains staunchly in the camp that Washington had been in 2017, and is now the most hawkish among the countries in the region. Compared to a year ago, Prime Minister Abe's public support has waned even support for him within the ruling LDP remains steady. As such, pushing forward constitutional change which is critical to enhance Japan's defense capabilities is unlikely to become a reality any time soon. That will not only continue to limit not simply its security options, but it will also restrict Japan's regional leadership capabilities as well at a time of sweeping change in the regional order.

The constitutional constraints will invariably keep Japan dependent on the U.S. alliance for security into the foreseeable future, including dealing with North Korea. With Pyongyang keeping a distance Tokyo on the one hand, and Japan playing only an indirect role in dealing with North Korea, Japan has no option but to rely on the United States to act on its behalf regarding the single biggest immediate security threat it faces.

There is, however, growing frustration within Tokyo about this heavy dependence on Washington at a time when there is growing concern about the reliability of U.S. leadership. While friction on trade related issues between the two sides had been expected, tensions have only escalated as the administration presses for tariffs in the name of national security. Pushback against imposing 232 has intensified as the possibility of further tariffs on the auto sector grows. While Japan would be able to absorb tariffs on steel and aluminum, imposition of hefty tariffs on the auto industry would be a political as well as economic blow that Tokyo's leadership would be willing to take action against, even if it means distancing itself from the United States on the security front.

Current expectations are that Japan would be able to compartmentalize trade relations from security ties, so that increased tariffs in an effort to reduce the deficit would have no direct impact on the military alliance. The red line, however, would be the proposed hefty auto tariffs. That would trigger a groundswell of protests not just from Japan's political and corporate leadership, but also could lead to a rally to review broader US-Japan relations at the grass-root level. It may act as the spark to push through constitutional reform in a way that threats from North Korea have actually not.

Anthony Rinna

Senior Editor (Sino-NK)

28 May 2018

Japan

National Security	Economic	Domestic Political	International Influence/Prestige	Other
Defending against North Korea; maintaining positions against China and Russia's territorial claims	Strengthening Japan's economic status as a counterweight to China's growing economic prowess	Current prime minister Shinzo Abe plans to revise the US-drafted postwar constitution; particular emphasis on the section covering national defense (Article 9)	Attempting to raise profile through popular culture; though popular culture has adherents in countries such as South Korea, many countries in East Asia have bitter historic consciences regarding Japan	Internal debate occurring over the status of Japan's armed forces, both within Japanese society and its role abroad; increased military prowess risks causing tensions with China, North Korea, South Korea and Russia

South Korea

National Security	Economic	Domestic Political	International Influence/Prestige	Other
Resolving the DPRK crisis; standing against China's and Japan's territorial claims against ROK	Access to energy and natural resources for industrial purposes	Korean unification; fostering greater rule of law against the power of large conglomerate corporations	Spreading "soft power" influence; establishing a position as a "middle power" in East Asia	ROK government officially states US troop presence is vital; there is a risk, however, of a rift in the ROKUS alliance as well

North Korea

National Security	Economic	Domestic Political	International Influence/Prestige	Other
Maintaining offensive/defensive postures against the US and allies as	Lifting economic sanctions	Preserving the Kim Family Regime	The DPRK may play upon feelings of pan-Korean nationalism to gain political leverage in South Korea	Korean unification - on Pyongyang's terms

Russia

National Security	Economic	Domestic Political	International Influence/Prestige	Other
Preventing conflict in NE Asia; building up offensive/defensive capabilities in Eastern Military	Economic development of the Russian Far East; building relationships with	Keeping the Russian Far East firmly under the central authority of Moscow	Establishing itself as an Asian power, which includes having a voice in resolving the inter-	Russia is developing its partnership with China, however it runs the risk of being a subordinate

District, particularly missile defense & naval power	East Asian economies; avoiding Chinese economic dominance		Korean dispute	partner and thus losing its independent voice in Asian affairs
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China

National Security	Economic	Domestic Political	International Influence/Prestige	Other
Maintaining full territorial integrity; counterterrorism; asserting historic claims in the South China Sea	Sustaining economic growth at current levels without rupturing the economy	Maintain Communists' primacy against alternative political, religious or civic groups	Insistence on China's "peaceful rise"; assertion of historic claims as an East Asian leader	East Asia is moving toward regional bipolarity between China and the US

Australia

National Security	Economic	Domestic Political	International Influence/Prestige	Other
Focus on non-traditional security (terror, cyber security, organized crime; mitigating conflict in nearby island nations)	Improving interconnectedness with SE Asia economies in the framework of ASEAN	Attempting to foster inter-agency cooperation through a policy of "joined-up government" or "whole-of-government"	Securing a seat at the UN Security Council in 2029-2030; asserting Australia's ability to influence events in the South Pacific island nations	Australia is currently experiencing tensions with China over alleged Chinese interference in Australia's domestic politics

Philippines

National Security	Economic	Domestic Political	International Influence/Prestige	Other
Maintaining a strong relationship with the United States; developing ties to China without sacrificing vital national interests	Government plans lasting until 2040 aimed at maintaining GDP growth and reducing poverty levels	Improving local governance civil society in areas where local grievances run the risk of spawning radicalization	The Philippines recognizes the need for a cultural diplomacy strategy. This could include enlisting the help of the Filipino diaspora	The Philippines-US relationship has suffered some damage in light of Rodrigo Duterte's populism

Malaysia

National Security	Economic	Domestic Political	International Influence/Prestige	Other
Preserving the security of the Straits of Malacca	Sustaining economic growth	Maintaining vigor of its electoral system	After 2018 election, positioned to be a role model for democratic processes in SE Asia	Managing ingrained ethnic and religious divides in society

Dr. Sheila Smith

Senior Fellow for Japan Studies (Council on Foreign Relations)

28 May 2018

Japan

A) Interests:

- recovery of economic growth,
- offsets of the costs and liabilities of its aging society,
- access to open sea lanes of communication for commerce and resources,
- defense of its maritime and air space from growing number of military intrusions,
- and the continuation of a liberal international order based on the rule of law and an open trading system.

B) Major threats:

- demographic pressures on economy and society
- Chinese military pressure on islands and seas,
- DPRK ballistic missile and cyber threat,
- Russian pressure on Japan's air defenses,
- U.S. ambivalence over the future of its alliances
- Growing revisionist impulses that threaten the postwar international order

C) Redlines:

- lack of access to resources (remember the 1930s...),
- Chinese assertion of "grey zone" pressures on Senkaku Islands and other maritime boundaries
- U.S. failure to maintain capabilities required to deter aggression or defend against attack (Article Five protections)
- use of protectionism or other type of economic coercion for strategic purposes

Yun Sun

Co-Director, East Asia Program (Stimson Center)

Director, China Program (Stimson Center)

29 May 2018

I will answer the questions pertaining to China. For China, major threats include the independence of Taiwan, secession of Xinjiang and Tibet, and the challenge to the regime security of the Chinese Communist Party. Economic considerations and reputations factors are all secondary. The redlines would include: US support of Taiwan independence (tacit and implicit), US support of the movement led by Tibetans and Uyghurs and US support of democratic movement in China.

Kelly Wadsworth

PhD Student (University of Pittsburgh)

18 May 2018

JAPAN

National Security:

Interests: Japan's security interests are protecting its public and national sovereignty from perceived regional threats (i.e. China, Russia and North Korea). Tokyo is acutely aware of the changing security environment in the East Asian region, and has been adjusting its national security policy accordingly. The Japan Defense Ministry 2014 white paper calls specific attention to both the North Korean nuclear threat and the increased intrusion of China and Russia into Japan's territorial waters and airspace. In

the case that Japan suffers an attack, or an imminent attack is determined, it is in the interest of Japan's national security that the US would step in and defend Japan due to its alliance obligations. If the US does not fulfill its alliance duties in such a situation, then Tokyo would advocate for its own offensive strike capability.

Threats/Redlines: Pyongyang is the threat most commonly cited by Tokyo due to their verbal provocations, missile arsenal and growing nuclear capability.²⁹ Although North Korea poses a more immediate and urgent threat in the public's eye, the majority of Tokyo's strategic defense focuses and procurement seem to stem from an increasing regional security threat from Beijing. The Ministry of Defense's 2014 white paper goes into great detail about the changing security environment in the Asia-Pacific Region, highlighting "China's Rapid Rise and Intensified Activities in Various Areas" and "Response to attacks on remote islands."³⁰

Domestic Political:

Interests: Over the past decade, the Japanese government has been proposing revised defense guidelines and constitutional reinterpretations that have been aimed at gradually expanding the offensive capacity of the JSDF, and at the same time successfully reducing the public's aversion to it.³¹

Threats/Redlines: Both public opinion and the limited resources of the JSDF pose challenges to Japan's aim to expand its offensive capability. Even with new defense guidelines, public support is vital in lifting the 1% GDP restriction on the defense budget, which severely limits the SDF's resources.

International Influence/Prestige:

Interests: The JSDF is gaining more responsibility in regional security. They have been taking on a greater role via non-combatative or peaceful means; with refueling and supplies support to coalition forces in Afghanistan, and for humanitarian aid and disaster relief assistance during natural disasters. Collective self-defense has broad support from the United States and many Japanese leaders who hope Japan will play a more balanced role in the future of the alliance. My Japanese interviewees argued that an offensive strike capability would allow them to contribute as an even more equal player both in the alliance and on the field of international security.

Threats/Redlines: Without Collective self-defense, Japan's ability to defend both Japanese and international interests will be limited.³² Example scenarios where CSD with Japan would be vital include a Senkaku or Taiwan island invasion by China, North Korean aggression or even peacekeeping operations. "The JSDF has the platforms, weapons, communications equipment, doctrine and trained personnel to perform all the missions that I have discussed. What it does not have is the system to provide clear political direction when a crisis occurs so that it can form a task force, then join a bilateral or multilateral force as a full partner."³³

NORTH KOREA

National Security:

Interests: To protect the dictatorship from the hostile (and untrustworthy) West.

²⁹ This view was consistently reflected in my interviews with Japanese senior Cabinet and Ministry of Defense officials as well.

³⁰ Defense of Japan 2014 (Tokyo: Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2014): 66, 71.

³¹ According to the 2014 paper, a May 2014 report submitted to Abe on potential changes in the security environment stipulated that "use of force" (武力の行使) should not be a means of settling international disputes." However, "in light of the current security environment," the 2015 papers officially state one of the "three new conditions" for the "use of force" to include "When an armed attack against Japan has occurred, or when an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result threatens Japan's survival and poses clear danger to fundamentally overturn people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, and when there is no other appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure Japan's survival and protect its people, use of force to the minimum extent necessary should be interpreted to be permitted under the Constitution as measures for self-defense in accordance with the basic logic of the Government's views to day."

³² "Remarks by Incoming SPFFUSA Chairman Blair: Operational Impacts of Japan's New Security Policy and Capabilities on the U.S.-Japan Alliance." April 30, 2014. Available at: <http://www.cfr.org/japan/remarks-incoming-spfusa-chairman-blair-operational-impacts-japans-new-security-policy-capabilities-us-japan-alliance/p32915>

³³ "Remarks by Incoming SPFFUSA Chairman Blair: Operational Impacts of Japan's New Security Policy and Capabilities on the U.S.-Japan Alliance." April 30, 2014. Available at: <http://www.cfr.org/japan/remarks-incoming-spfusa-chairman-blair-operational-impacts-japans-new-security-policy-capabilities-us-japan-alliance/p32915>

Threats/Redlines: The United States' military presence in South Korea. One of the primary assumptions guiding the behavior of proliferating states is the perceived threat by opposing states to their security, and therefore the need for an adequate force of defense to either deter or defend against these threats.

Domestic Political:

Interests: To boost their economy. Since the Korean War, the DPRK has been an economically depressed country wrought with poverty and famine. Weapons trade and illicit activities are assumed to make up a large sum of the government's revenue.³⁴

Threats/Redlines: Sanctions. North Korea's proliferation of WMD materials results in harsh sanctions, as decided upon primarily by the West,³⁵ which are aimed at inflicting economic hardship as a punishment for proliferation. The economic hardship, however, builds even more resentment and distrust of the Western-dominated regimes, and North Korea increases its proliferation activity in order to generate greater revenue to combat the economic hardship brought about by the sanctions.

International Influence/Prestige:

Interests: To gain global respect and prestige as a legitimate, independent country with legitimate leadership.

Threats/Redlines: U.S. discourse unfavorably labeling North Korea a "rogue state" and part of the "Axis of Evil."

³⁴ Haggard, Stephan & Marcus Noland. "Follow the Money: North Korea's External Resources and Constraints." *2008 Korea's Economy* (Korea Economic Institute: 2008).

³⁵ Ferdinand, Peter, "The positions of Russia and China at the UN Security Council in the light of recent crises," Briefing by the European Parliament Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union (2013).

Subject Matter Expert Biographies

Dr. Stephen Blank

Senior Fellow for Russia (American Foreign Policy Council)

14 May 2018



Dr. Blank is an internationally known expert on Russia and the former Soviet Union, who comes to AFPC from the US Army War College where he spent the last 24 years, 1989-2013 as a Professor of National Security Studies at the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, PA. Dr. Blank's expertise covers the entire Russian and post-Soviet region and has also written extensively on defense strategy, arms control, information warfare, energy issues, US foreign and defense policy, European, and Asian security. He is currently writing a book on Russian policy in East Asia and is the author of over 900 publications, books, monographs, scholarly and popular articles and has appeared frequently on television and radio and at professional conferences in the US, Europe, and Asia. Prior to joining the Army, Dr. Blank taught at the University of California, Riverside, University of Texas, San Antonio, and was a Professor of National Security Studies at the US Air War College's Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research and Education. He holds a B.A. in Russian History from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Russian History from the University of Chicago.

Dr. Richard Cronin

Distinguished Fellow (Stimson Center)

7 June 2018



Richard P. Cronin is a Distinguished Fellow at Stimson. Until July 2016 Cronin directed Stimson's Southeast Asia Program and Mekong Policy Project. Cronin joined Stimson in 2005 after a long career as an Asia Specialist with the non-partisan Congressional Research Service. At Stimson, he works on transboundary and nontraditional security issues in Southeast Asia and the South China Sea from a political economy perspective. Among numerous publications he is the author of "Hydropower Dams on the Mekong: Old Dreams, New Dangers," (Asia Policy, July 2013) and the lead co-author of numerous Stimson reports, issue briefs, and presentations, including Mekong Tipping Point (2010), "After Xayaburi and Don Sahong: Time for a New Narrative on Mekong Hydropower," (March 2015), a series of four first-hand "Letters from the Mekong" issue briefs, "After Xayaburi and Don Sahong: Time for a New Narrative on Mekong Hydropower" (Oct 2016). He is a co-author of a Stimson briefing, "A Call for Strategic, Basin-wide Energy Planning in Laos" (Jan 2017). Cronin has testified at US Congressional hearings on Mekong

hydropower issues and the South China Sea. Senior US officials have credited Cronin and Stimson with awakening the US Government to the growing threat to peace and stability in the Lower Mekong because of dam development on the Mekong's mainstream. He has been a non-official member of US delegations to several regional meetings of the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) and the Friends of the Lower Mekong donor group. Cronin earned a B.S. in economics and history, and an M.A. in European history from the University of Houston. He holds a Ph.D. in modern South Asian history from Syracuse University. He served in Vietnam (1st Lt) with the US Army's 1st Infantry Division in 1965-66.

Dr. Rod Lyon

Senior Fellow – International Strategy (Australian Strategic Policy Institute)
28 May 2018



Dr. Rod Lyon is a Senior Fellow - International Strategy. Rod was most recently a Senior Analyst with ASPI. He has previously lectured in International Relations at the University of Queensland where he taught courses on conflict, international security, and civil-military relations. His research interests focus on a range of problems associated with global security, nuclear strategy and Australian security. He previously worked in the Strategic Analysis Branch of the Office of National Assessments between 1985 and 1996. As a Fulbright scholar in 2004, he was a visiting research fellow at Georgetown University in Washington DC, researching a project on the future of security partnerships in the post-September 11 environment. He was appointed to the National Consultative Committee on International Security Issues in April 2005.

Shihoko Goto

Senior Northeast Asia Associate, Asia Program (Wilson Center)
7 June 2018



Shihoko Goto is the senior Northeast Asia associate at the Woodrow Wilson Center's Asia Program, where she is responsible for research, programming, and publications on Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. She is also a contributing editor to *The Globalist*, and a fellow of the Mansfield Foundation/Japan Foundation U.S.-Japan Network for the Future for 2014 to 2016. Prior to joining the Wilson Center, she spent over ten years as a journalist writing about the international political economy with an emphasis on Asian markets. As a correspondent for Dow Jones News Service and United Press International based in Tokyo and Washington, she has reported extensively on policies impacting the global financial system as well as international trade. She currently provides analysis for a number of media organizations. She was also formerly a donor country relations officer at the World Bank. She received the Freeman Foundation's Jefferson journalism fellowship at the East-West Center and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's journalism fellowship for the Salzburg Global Seminar. She is fluent in Japanese and French. She has a BA in Modern History from the University of Oxford, and an MA in international Policy Theory from Waseda University.

Anthony Rinna

Senior Editor (Sino-NK)
28 May 2018



Anthony V. Rinna is a Senior Editor at Sino-NK, a research organization dedicated to the study of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. Rinna is a specialist in Russian defense and economic policy in Northeast Asia, and regularly publishes on those topics in academic journals and policy forums. He also frequently gives commentary to the media on Russia's North Korea policy. He has a working knowledge of Korean, Russian and Spanish. A US citizen, Rinna has lived in South Korea since 2014.

Dr. Sheila Smith

Senior Fellow for Japan Studies (Council on Foreign Relations)

28 May 2018



Sheila A. Smith, an expert on Japanese politics and foreign policy, is senior fellow for Japan studies at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). She is the author of *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China* (Columbia University Press, 2015) and *Japan's New Politics and the U.S.-Japan Alliance* (Council on Foreign Relations, June 2014). Her current research focuses on how geostrategic change in Asia is shaping Japan's strategic choices. In the fall of 2014, Smith began a project on Northeast Asian Nationalisms and Alliance Management. Smith is a regular contributor to the CFR blog *Asia Unbound*, and frequent contributor to major media outlets in the United States and Asia. She joined CFR from the East-West Center in 2007, where she directed a multinational research team in a cross-national study of the domestic politics of the U.S. military presence in Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines. She was a visiting scholar at Keio University in 2007-08, where she researched Japan's foreign policy towards China, supported by the Abe Fellowship. Smith has been a visiting researcher at two leading Japanese foreign and security policy think tanks, the Japan Institute of International Affairs and the Research Institute for Peace and Security, and at the University of Tokyo and the University of the Ryukyus. Smith is vice chair of the U.S. advisors to the U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Exchange (CULCON), a bi-national advisory panel of government officials and private sector members. She also serves on the advisory committee for the U.S.-Japan Network for the Future program of the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation. She teaches as an adjunct professor at the Asian Studies Department of Georgetown University and serves on the board of its *Journal of Asian Affairs*. She earned her MA and PhD degrees from the department of political science at Columbia University.

Yun Sun

Co-Director, East Asia Program (Stimson Center)

Director, China Program (Stimson Center)

29 May 2018



Yun Sun is co-Director of the East Asia Program and Director of the China Program at the Stimson Center. Her expertise is in Chinese foreign policy, U.S.-China relations and China's relations with neighboring countries and authoritarian regimes. From 2011 to early 2014, she was a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution, jointly appointed by the Foreign Policy Program and the Global Development Program, where she focused on Chinese national security decision-making processes and China-Africa relations. From 2008 to 2011, Yun was the China Analyst for the International Crisis Group based in Beijing, specializing on China's foreign policy towards conflict countries and the developing world. Prior to ICG, she worked on U.S.-Asia relations in Washington, DC for five years. Yun earned her master's degree in international policy and practice from George Washington University, as well as an MA in Asia Pacific studies and a BA in international relations from Foreign Affairs College in Beijing.

Kelly Wadsworth

PhD Student (University of Pittsburgh)

18 May 2018



Kelly Wadsworth is a PhD student in International Security Studies at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. Her research focus is on nonproliferation and regional stability in East Asia, highlighting the evolving situation in North Korea. Wadsworth has held multiple fellowships from the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Japan Institute for International Affairs to further her research in this area. Wadsworth earned her MBA and Masters in International Studies (Korea Studies) at the University of Washington.

Author Biographies

Dr. Allison Astorino-Courtois

Executive Vice President



Dr. Allison Astorino-Courtois is Executive Vice President at NSI, Inc. She has also served as co-chair of a National Academy of Sciences study on Strategic Deterrence Military Capabilities in the 21st Century, and as a primary author on a study of the Defense and Protection of US Space Assets. Dr. Astorino-Courtois has served as technical lead on a variety of rapid turn-around, Joint Staff-directed Strategic Multi-layer Assessment (SMA) projects in support of US forces and Combatant Commands. These include assessments of key drivers of political, economic and social instability and areas of resilience in South Asia; development of an analytic approach used to identify PACOM requirements for humanitarian support in a Megacity (case study: Dhaka, Bangladesh); development of a methodology for conducting provincial assessments for the ISAF Joint Command; production of a "rich contextual understanding" (RCU) to supplement intelligence reporting for the ISAF J2 and Commander; projects for USSTRATCOM on deterrence assessment methods; and, work for USSOCOM on operationalizing its "gray zone" concept.

Previously, Dr. Astorino-Courtois was a Senior Analyst at SAIC (2004-2007) where she served as a STRATCOM liaison to U.S. and international academic and business communities. Prior to that Dr. Astorino-Courtois was a tenured Associate Professor of International Relations at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX (1994-2003) where her research focused on the cognitive aspects of political decision making and how to "market" peaceful conflict resolution to adversarial actors. She has received a number of academic grants and awards and has published articles in multiple peer-reviewed journals. She has also taught at Creighton University and as a visiting instructor at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Dr. Astorino-Courtois earned her Ph.D. in International Relations and MA in and Research Methods from New York University. Her BA is in political science from Boston College. Finally, Dr. Astorino-Courtois also has the distinction of having been awarded both a US Navy Meritorious Service Award and a US Army Commander's Award.

Weston Aviles

Analyst



Weston Aviles is an Analyst at NSI, Inc. He studied criminology and political science at Arizona State University (BS) with minors in Middle Eastern history and economics, and certificates in political thought and leadership, international studies and religion and conflict. Weston then studied Government at the InterDisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya, Israel graduate school with a focus in counter-terrorism and security studies (MA). His graduate studies focused on Arab Spring dynamics, international security in the MENA region and radical Islam. Weston is an alumnus of the University of Virginia's Semester at Sea program and has participated in several academic programs in Israel to study terrorism and counter-terrorism. Weston continues a research focus on Middle Eastern politics and conflict studies.

Dr. Belinda Bragg

Principal Research Scientist



Dr. Belinda Bragg is a Principal Research Scientist for NSI. She has provided core support for DoD Joint Staff and STRATCOM Strategic Multi-layer Analysis (SMA) projects for the past six years. She has worked on projects dealing with nuclear deterrence, state stability, U.S.–China and U.S.-Russia relations, and VEOs. Dr. Bragg has extensive experience reviewing and building social science models and frameworks. She is one of the two designers of a stability model, (the StaM) that has been used analyze stability efforts in Afghanistan, state stability in Pakistan and Nigeria, and at the city-level to explore the drivers and buffers of instability in megacities, with a case study of Dhaka. Prior to joining NSI, Dr. Bragg was a visiting lecturer in International Relations at Texas A&M University in College Station. Her research focuses on decision- making, causes of conflict and political instability, and political uses of social media. Dr. Bragg earned her Ph.D. in political science from Texas A&M University, and her BA from the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Dr. Larry Kuznar

Chief Cultural Sciences Officer



Lawrence A. Kuznar (Professor of Anthropology, Indiana University- Purdue University-Fort Wayne and NSI, Inc.) Dr. Kuznar conducts anthropological research relevant to counterterrorism and other areas of national security. His current research focuses on discourse analysis of Daesh leadership messaging to provide leading indicators of intent and behavior and has applied this methodology to Eastern European State and non-State Actors, Iran, and politics in the Middle East and Asia. He has developed computational models of genocide in Darfur and tribal factionalism in New Guinea, mathematical models of inequality and conflict, and integrated socio-cultural databases for predicting illicit nuclear trade and bioterrorism. He has conducted discourse analysis of the expression of conflict and enmity in Arabic, Farsi and Pashto, to identify leading indicators of conflict. Dr. Kuznar's recent research has been funded by academic sources, the Office of the Secretary of Defense Strategic Multilayer Analysis, Air Force Research Lab (AFRL), the Human Social Cultural Behavior (HSCB) modeling program of the Department of Defense, and by the US Army Corps of Engineers. He has also served on the HSCB Technical Progress Evaluation panel and a National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) net assessment panel.

Nicole Peterson

Analyst



Nicole Peterson is an Analyst who assists in qualitative research and strategic analysis in support of Strategic Multi-Layer Assessment (SMA) efforts primarily focused on national security issues and Department of Defense (DoD) concerns. She has contributed to NSI's Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa®) and discourse analyses during her time at NSI. Nicole coordinates SMA's speaker series, which encompasses a broad range of topics from radicalization of populations and violent extremist organizations to artificial intelligence. She is also the publisher of SMA's weekly newsletter, which summarizes SMA speaker sessions, outlines upcoming events, and disseminates relevant publications. Nicole began her career at NSI as an undergraduate intern for its commercial sector and was subsequently promoted to an associate analyst for its government sector in 2016. She graduated with honors from the University of San Diego where she received a BA in applied mathematics and a minor in accountancy.

George Popp

Senior Analyst



Economics from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

George Popp is a Senior Analyst at NSI, Inc. where he conducts research and analysis on a broad range of multidisciplinary analysis projects that focus on understanding the political, economic, and social dynamics of emerging conflict situations and environments throughout the world. The bulk of George's work has been in support of NSI's government initiatives, particularly leading and contributing to human behavior analytics efforts completed for the Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) program on behalf of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and in support of direct requests from US Combatant Commanders to the Department of Defense. George has also supported NSI's commercial initiatives, conducting business intelligence analyses for clients in the video game industry. George started with NSI as an Intern, and has risen through the ranks since. He was honored to be promoted to Senior Analyst in 2017. George's degree is in

Dr. John A. Stevenson

Principal Research Scientist



and senior researcher in the DHS Center of Excellence, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland, College Park; and served as the elected representative of research and professional faculty to the University Senate.

John A. Stevenson is a Principal Research Scientist at NSI, Inc. He earned his Ph.D. and M.A. in Political Science at the University of Chicago, and an A.B. in Government from Dartmouth College. Dr. Stevenson's passion is to curate illuminating data narratives to best enable informed decision-making given environmental uncertainty and complexity in support of all kinds of organizational ends. His substantive areas of expertise are multi-method social science methodology, and the statistical and historical modeling of political conflict and radicalization in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. His published peer-reviewed work ranges from the effects of genocide memorials on authoritarian regime durability in Rwanda to an empirical evaluation of the varying effectiveness of differing types of counter-terrorism campaigns against Boko Haram in Nigeria. Prior to joining NSI, Inc., Dr. Stevenson was a lead investigator