



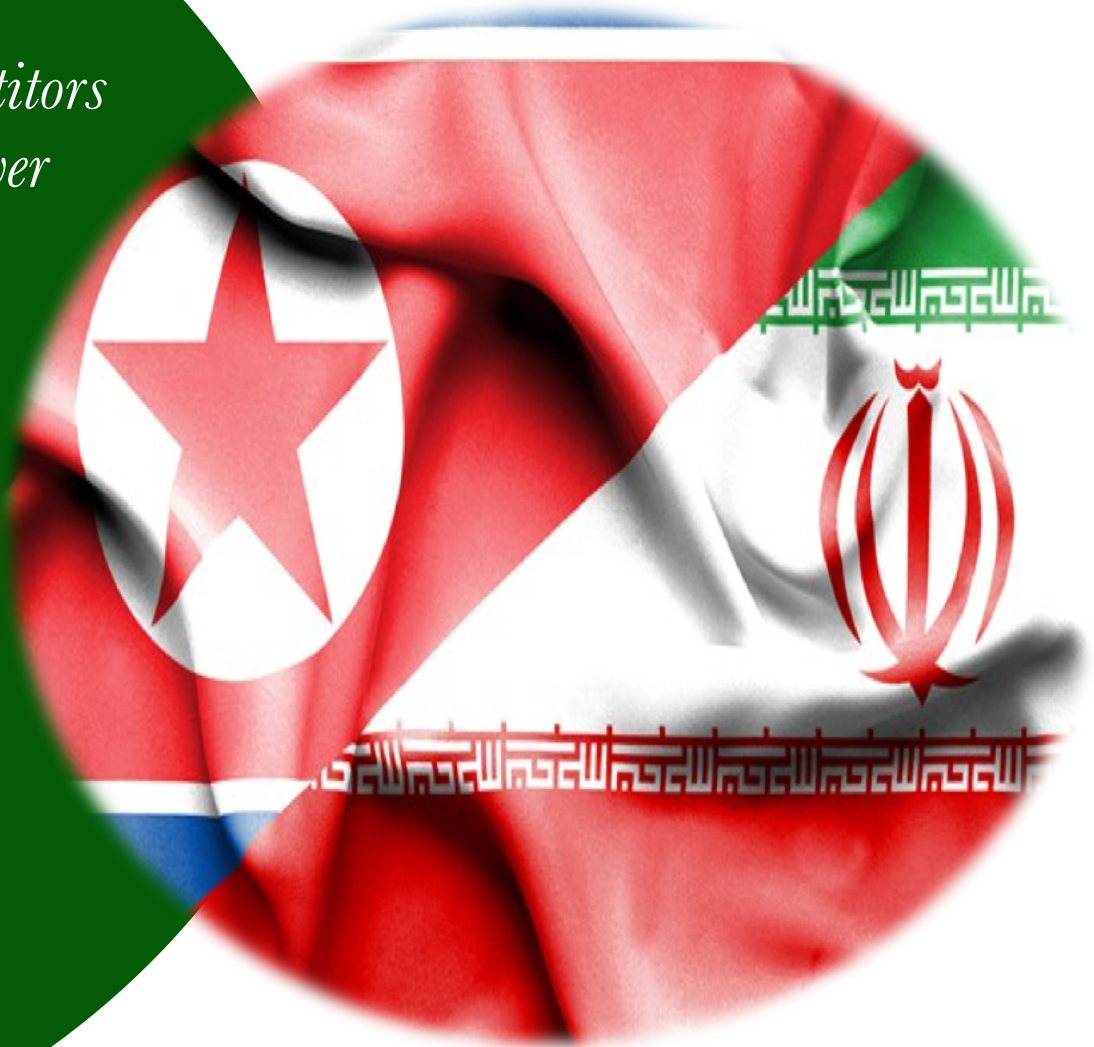
A Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa®) Report

September 2019

Regional Competitors in the Great Power Context

Deeper Analyses
Clarifying Insights
Better Decisions

NSIteam.com



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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 the Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) Future of Global Competition and Conflict project, ViTTa was used to address 12 key questions provided by the project's Joint Staff sponsors. The ViTTa team received written response submissions from 65 subject matter experts from academia, government, military, and industry. This report consists of:

1. A summary overview of the expert contributor response to the ViTTa question of focus.
2. The full corpus of expert contributor responses received for the ViTTa question of focus.
3. Biographies of expert contributors.

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Question of Focus

[Q7] How can the US defend its interests against regional competitors (e.g., Iran, North Korea) in ways complementary to US strategy vis-à-vis China and Russia, while not undercutting other US interests?

Subject Matter Expert Contributors

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat (National Defense University), Dean Cheng (Heritage Foundation), Dr. John Delury (Yonsei University), Abraham M. Denmark (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars), Ken Gause (CNA), Dr. Mark N. Katz (George Mason University), Dr. Peter Layton (Griffith University), Anthony Rinna (Sino-NK), Ali Wyne (RAND Corporation)

Summary Overview

This summary overview reflects on the insightful responses of nine Future of Global Competition and Conflict Virtual Think Tank (ViTTa) expert contributors. While this summary presents an overview of the key expert contributor insights, the summary alone cannot fully convey the fine detail of the expert contributor responses provided, each of which is worth reading in its entirety. For this report, the expert contributors consider how the United States can defend its interests against regional competitors in ways complementary to United States strategy vis-à-vis China and Russia.

Regional Competitors in the Great Power Context

In today's environment of global competition, the United States is faced with a choice to either contain the threat from great powers or seek grand bargains with them. Each of these choices presents its own complications.¹ As the United States engages in global competition with two great powers (China and Russia), its interactions and relations with smaller regional states can help inform and reinforce its global strategy. These interactions range from serving as a patron to a much weaker state, being a viable and attractive economic partner, or being a declared adversary of a regional power.

The Goldilocks Problem of Responding to Regional Competitors

Both global and regional competitors rely on asymmetric capabilities to challenge the United States, although the gap between the United States and regional competitors is typically much larger. Dr. Mark Katz of George Mason University explains that the misalignment of size and scale between these actors can motivate the larger actor to act more aggressively against the smaller adversary than if that opponent were a peer. Regional powers do not share the same cost calculus as global powers. The challenge, therefore, is to find the right balance in countering regional adversaries. For example, Abraham Denmark of the Woodrow Wilson International Center

¹ See contribution from Katz in particular.

for Scholars notes the choice that the United States faces in Asia: to pursue an ally-centric policy, or one that is China-centric. The former relies on strengthening regional alliances, with an understanding that those alliances project power in the region. The latter relies on a premise that the United States needs to prioritize “solving” its issues with China directly. This reflects a choice that the United States has to make beyond just in Asia (i.e., how to deal with regional powers). Just as a heavy hand towards regional rivals might push those rivals deeper into the sphere of a global competitor, simply leaving regional powers alone also presents challenges. Abdication of responsibilities towards allied regional powers can leave those states vulnerable to competitors, and wary of sustained commitment from the United States.

Accordingly, contributors offer several different approaches that they believe will best position the United States to defend its interests against regional competitors in ways complementary to United States strategy vis-à-vis China and Russia. First, Denmark highlights the Chinese strategy of linking issues (e.g., China has sought to gain US acquiescence on an issue, like Taiwan, in exchange for support on an issue of high priority to the US, like North Korea) and cautions the United States to avoid falling victim to such a tactic. By linking issues, Denmark explains, China seeks to use United States priorities as leverage in issue areas where China’s interests are more significant. Second, Dr. Peter Layton of Griffith University and Ken Gause of CNA align in suggesting that the United States use its relationships with smaller powers to help achieve its objectives with respect to China. Third, Layton also advocates for the United States implementing a risk-management strategy that seeks to limit the damage associated with an adversary rather than a gradual and inconsistent strategy centered on advancing the relationship with that adversary. Finally, Anthony Rinna of Sino-NK proposes that the United States designate an ally in the region as an equal partner, and then run its regional policy through that ally. In the Asia Pacific, for example, Japan may be well suited for such a strategy, given its recent noticeable steps to increase its control over its national security (including increasing its defense spending). Rinna does note, however, that such a strategy is susceptible to the risk of misalignments on national priorities and objectives. Despite a general consensus on North Korea, Japan does not have the same depth of issues with China and Russia as the United States.

Regional Competitors: Iran

Several contributors reflect on United States interests and strategy in relation to ongoing regional competition between the United States and Iran in the Middle East. This regional competition has been informed by several factors, including the projection of threats originating from Iran from several of the United States’ longest-standing regional partners, namely Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.² Indeed, these divergences in threat perception are emblematic of the larger challenges of managing regional and global competition.

Katz details a noticeable shift in United States policy toward Iran, which he attributes in part to important United States allies in the region (i.e., Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia) steadily pushing the United States to consider Iran as a major adversary. Dr. Gawdat Bahgat of the National Defense University cautions that war with Iran and/or a failed Iranian state would be a “disaster for the region, the United States, and the world,” and instead advocates for a strategy of United States engagement with Iran. Layton highlights the global

² See contribution from Layton.

implications of competition between the United States and Iran. Such a conflict has a bearing on China, which, as Layton remarks, has important ties to Iran, specifically in trade, energy, infrastructure, military cooperation, and weapons trade.³ Layton, notably, points out that the United States sanctions on Iran that have emerged as a result of increasing regional tensions and competition have impacted China, including in unexpected areas such as the Chinese high-tech industry and firms such as Huawei, thus demonstrating the influence of US-Iran competition on the US-China relationship.

Regional Competitors: Saudi Arabia

Just one contributor considers the role of Saudi Arabia within the context of great power competition. Dean Cheng of the Heritage Foundation suggests that the United States could enlist Saudi Arabia in some of its activities against China, but warns of the attractiveness of the Chinese market to Saudi Arabia. Indeed, as Cheng remarks, the Chinese market represents a destination so alluring that Saudi Arabia has been willing to overlook Chinese human rights abuses against its (Muslim) Uighur population.

Regional Competitors: North Korea

Contributors highlight North Korea as a particularly relevant regional competitor for the United States, particularly because of North Korea's continuing support from China and Russia.⁴ Layton describes North Korea as “effectively a Chinese client state,” explaining that “North Korea is useful to China in being able to put carefully moderated pressure when appropriate on South Korea, Japan, and the United States that does not ostensibly involve China.” Gause suggests, however, that North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-Un has a keen sense of his country's agency in the great power competition between the US and China, arguing that Kim sees the United States as a counterweight to China. Nonetheless, strategically, the three great powers have different desired pathways to achieving North Korea's normalization into the international community: the United States is committed to complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of North Korea's nuclear program; while China and Russia each seek the end of hostilities, and eventual denuclearization.⁵

Contributors offer concerns with the sequencing of current negotiations between the United States and North Korea.⁶ Gause highlights a key complication with CVID as the United States' starting point for negotiations with North Korea: the centrality of the nuclear program to North Korea's national identity. Insisting on CVID from the start has turned United States' negotiations with North Korea into a zero-sum game where there can only be one winner and one loser. A better approach, Gause believes, would be for the United States to make the North Korean nuclear issue part of a larger peace process that would bring North Korea back into the international fold.

³ Layton notes that China is Iran's largest trading partner, largest export customer for oil, a significant provider of loans for infrastructure projects, a useful source of military hardware, and more recently a partner in joint military exercises. On the other hand, Iran is China's fourth-largest oil supplier—supplying some 7% of China's total crude oil imports—and Chinese state-owned enterprises have invested in Iranian oilfields.

⁴ See contribution from Cheng in particular.

⁵ See contribution from Delury in particular.

⁶ See contributions from Delury and Gause in particular.

Conclusion: How the United States Should Prioritize Trade-Offs in Responses to Different Kinds of Challengers

The United States' policy options in considering regional powers are complex. They are vulnerable to the changing dynamics of its global competition with China and Russia, who each have their own separate relationships and interests with these regional powers. Risks of policy miscalculation from great powers to regional powers are abound, and they can be informed by great powers' allies and their own threat perceptions, economic interests, and separate historical and political dynamics. For the United States specifically, China's burgeoning economic cooperation with Teheran will certainly linger in the background of any choices it makes with respect to its Iran policy. Similarly, the attractiveness of the Chinese market makes the possibility of the United States using Saudi Arabia against China unlikely. On the issue of North Korea specifically, and the Asia Pacific more generally, the United States is faced with a set of complicated dynamics. Each of the United States' great power competitors maintains its own leverage on North Korea, and managing each of those different interests against the backdrop of an Asia Pacific that is more dependent on China will indeed represent a major policy challenge for the United States.

Subject Matter Expert Contributions

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat

Professor, National Security Affairs, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies
(National Defense University)
17 February 2019

The United States needs to find a way to avoid war with Iran. A failed state in Iran would be disaster to the region, to the United States and to the entire world. Instead of severe economic sanctions, the United States needs to engage Iran. Tehran is a major regional power.

Dean Cheng

Senior Research Fellow, Asian Studies Center, Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy
(Heritage Foundation)
13 March 2019

We should accept that Russia and China support North Korea. Therefore, sanctions regimes must include both Russian and Chinese entities (state-owned enterprises, banks). China appears intent on expanding relations with Saudi Arabia (KSA). In this regard, we may be able to use KSA to counter the Chinese, but we must recognize KSA's first concern is China's market. That KSA is willing to sell out the Uighurs (fellow Muslims) tells us how powerful the draw is of the Chinese market.

Dr. John Delury

Associate Professor, Chinese Studies (Yonsei University)
21 March 2019

All three nations (China, Russia, and the US) share an interest in normalizing the political and economic conditions of North Korea and integrating it peaceably into the region. All three further share a hope that normalization and integration could entail complete denuclearization and reinvigoration of the NPT regime with DPRK's return to it. The United States traditionally fixates on the preferred end-state of CVID, whereas China and Russia focus on the process of ending hostility and opening up relations, as conditions of possibility of complete denuclearization. North Korea places an exceptionally high value on autonomy, and therefore can be expected to maintain balanced relations with all three nations, in a way that all three can basically accept.

Abraham M. Denmark⁷

Director, Asia Program (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars)
11 March 2019

A crucial aspect of any U.S. strategy toward the Indo-Pacific is to integrate initiatives toward specific countries or issues into a strategic whole. Traditionally, theories about the formulation of strategies toward Asia have converged around two approaches: ally-centric and China-centric. The ally-centric approach argues that the U.S. should focus its approach on strengthening its regional alliances and partnerships, arguing that these relationships are the foundation of American power in the region. The China-centric approach argues

⁷ The views expressed in this submission are those of Mr. Denmark alone.

that China is the most critical country in Asia, and that the U.S. approach to the region should be first based on getting relations with Beijing “right.”

Either way, the most critical task for U.S. strategy in the Indo-Pacific is to demonstrate reliability and predictability in the face of domestic and international turbulence. Initiatives that suggest a diminishing U.S. commitment anywhere intensifies insecurity everywhere. Likewise, a scattershot approach to international relations that undermines efforts by the United States to convey commitment. A good example of this is the decision by the United States and the ROK to deploy the THAAD missile defense system to the ROK. Despite strong opposition from Beijing, Seoul and Washington made the decision to deploy THAAD in the face of the intensified North Korean missile threat – a decision that demonstrated to allies and partners around the world that the United States will do what it takes to defend its allies – even if that means criticism and turbulence from Beijing.

When it comes to China strategy, Washington should not allow Beijing to link issues – an approach some in the U.S. would refer to as “horizontal escalation.” For example, China at times has sought to gain U.S. acquiescence on other issues – like Taiwan – in exchange for support on issues of a top priority for the United States, like North Korea or climate change. The message from Beijing is often something along the lines of “How can we help the United States deal with North Korea if the United States insists on conducting policies counter to China’s interests?” With this approach, China seeks to use U.S. priorities as leverage in issue areas where China’s interests are more significant.

The key for the U.S. therefore is to be clear about its goals, consistent in its priorities, and unyielding to pressure from Beijing. Moreover, Washington should be clear that cooperation on issues of mutual interest – like climate change or North Korea – would be based on those shared interests, not as a favor from Beijing.

Ken Gause⁸

Director, International Affairs Group, Center for Strategic Studies (CNA)
15 February 2019

The fundamental question is whether North Korea is prepared to give up its nuclear program and does the United States and its allies have the right plan in place to make this happen.

Critics point to the well-worn narrative about North Korea. It is a regime that cannot be trusted, will never give up its nuclear program, and is only playing the international community in order to buy time. Pyongyang, they claim, adheres to a long-held strategy of driving a wedge between the United States and South Korea that eventually drives the former from the peninsula and lays the groundwork for eventual Korean reunification under Pyongyang’s control. The nuclear program is critical to this strategy since it deters the United States from conducting regime change. This narrative is not helpful in solving the challenge posed by North Korea since it lays out a future where diplomacy is not really possible.⁹

I would argue that this narrative that dominates western analysis is too black and white and lacks a real understanding of the other side of the equation. In order to understand the art of the possible when it comes to denuclearization, one must begin with the North Korean calculus. What is the role of the nuclear program? How does it fit with North Korea’s military doctrine? How is it related to the legitimacy of the leader and the basic goals of the regime? The foundations of the nuclear program go back to the early 1950s and over

⁸ Mr. Gause addressed a tailored version of this question, focusing on North Korea and China (i.e., *How can the US defend its interests against North Korea in ways complementary to US strategy vis-à-vis China, while not undercutting other US interests?*)

⁹ The real question for many Pyongyang watchers and Asia experts concerns the United States. The policy toward North Korea remains the same (denuclearization), but the way to get there has changed radically under President Trump. In the year and a half since coming to office, the Trump administration has shifted rhetoric from “Fire and Fury” to “Falling in Love.” Some analysts believe that this is in keeping with President Trump’s traditional strategy of going hard at a challenge and then backing off to see what gains have been made. Others believe that his strategy is purely transactional, when pressure and threats did not work, the United States shifted to engagement. Still others believe the current administration has no strategy only the traditional and sole U.S. objective of achieving denuclearization. The vaunted Maximum Pressure Strategy resonates with many, but is based on assumptions of international support that have never really materialized.

the decades have grown in importance as North Korea's conventional forces have atrophied. At the same time, the legitimacy of the Kim family has become intertwined with the nuclear program. To simply give away the program or even trade it up front for some promise of economic and security guarantees risks not only undermining North Korea's self-perceived need for a deterrent against U.S. aggression, but rips at the very legitimacy of the Kim family. In other words, the nuclear program is tied to the regime's two fundamental goals: regime survival and perpetuation of Kim family rule.

If this is the case, it is little wonder that three U.S. administrations have failed to make much headway in getting rid of North Korea's nuclear program. At most, the program has slowed down from time to time, but never come close to meeting the U.S.-professed requirements of complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID). The reason for the failure of U.S. North Korea policy is largely tied to the fact that it is based on the idea of removing the nuclear program, while leaving the rationale for the program in place. This is both a sequencing problem and an optics problem. In terms of sequencing, the United States has chosen to focus almost exclusively on denuclearization and has placed it at the front end of the negotiating process. As the weaker power in this asymmetric relationship, North Korea cannot be the first to make concessions—to do so would only make it weaker.

From an optics perspective, by focusing exclusively on denuclearization, the United States has turned its negotiations with North Korea into a zero sum game where there can only be one winner and one loser. Unless, Kim Jong-un can find another source of legitimacy to replace the nuclear program, he cannot afford to part with the program as the United States currently demands. This is the reason why North Korea has called for a phased approach to “denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” Such ambiguous language creates the space the regime needs to draw out the process without really giving up very much. It also holds out the possibility for North Korea to receive security and economic incentives before it takes any major steps with regard to its nuclear program.

So what is to be done? In the simplest terms, the United States should design a strategy that removes the rationale from the nuclear program in such a way as not to undermine Kim Jong-un's two primary objectives of regime survival and perpetuation of Kim family rule. This strategy is based on five key steps.

- First, the United States needs to come to terms with the idea of denuclearization being an end goal rather than the opening move into negotiations. In other words, open the aperture for negotiation.
- Second, the Trump administration should adopt a phased process whereby denuclearization is part of a confidence building process of reciprocity.
- Third, denuclearization should be nested in a larger peace regime process thereby mitigating the fallout from any concessions North Korea makes on its nuclear program.
- Fourth, the United States should consider security guarantees that both guarantee the survival of the regime (declaration of the end of the Korean conflict) and the Kim family. In other words, redefine the U.S.-North Korean relationship from one of adversaries to one of ordinary nations.
- Fifth, the Trump administration should consider easing sanctions in return for concessions on the nuclear program in order to lay the foundation for economic improvement to replace the nuclear program as the source of legitimacy for the Supreme Leader. Begin with U.S./ROK unilateral sanctions and move to UN sanctions.¹⁰

This will not be a quick process; it may take years if not decades to achieve. There could be backsliding as both sides learn to trust each other. But it is a strategy that can do several things. It can be calibrated depending on North Korea's actions. It can be dialed up if Pyongyang is making good on its agreements and can be dialed back if it is obfuscating or not following through on its promises. It is a strategy that can help the United States and its allies build up leverage in the relationship with North Korea, something that currently does not exist. It is also a strategy that will test certain assumptions about the art of the possible when it comes North Korea and denuclearization. Up to this point, North Korea's lack of support for denuclearization can be blamed in part on its internal equities. By addressing those equities, we can see how far North Korea is willing to go. In the end, we may have to live with a nascent nuclear program. But we are not going to know unless we first remove the rationale for the program.

¹⁰ According to Joseph Yun, former U.S. special representative for North Korea policy, easing sanctions is not an easy process. For United Nations sanctions, it would require the UNSC voting to remove the sanctions. That would be difficult because a lot of sanctions have very clear language that sanctions are to remain in place until there is complete denuclearization. Unilateral U.S. sanctions would require legislation from Congress. That said, sanctions could be tempered through such measures as giving the North sanctions waivers.

Finally, there is the issue of China. Since the end of the Cold War, Beijing has been North Korea's sole benefactor and primary source of economic aid. As such, the United States and its allies have looked to China as a key interlocutor to solve the challenge posed by North Korea. But this strategy has given China a wedge issue which it can use to its own advantage in its larger regional competition with the United States. In many regards, the idea of removing the United States from the Korean Peninsula is Beijing's goal, since to do so would remove a key anchor for the U.S. posture in Asia. Kim Jong-un has pointed out that this issue no longer needs to be on the negotiating table. Why? Because he sees the United States as a counterweight to his powerful neighbor to the north. As such, an effective U.S. strategy should not focus just on North Korea, but fold denuclearization into a larger Asia strategy designed to manage the rise of China. A peace regime that builds confidence with North Korea could at the same time drive a wedge between Beijing and Pyongyang. By giving North Korea an alternative to China in terms of economic and security guarantees, Washington can begin to woo Kim Jong-un away from China's orbit and complicate Beijing's strategy for keeping the United States off balance.

In summary, what is needed is a fundamental reworking of U.S. North Korea policy in an effort to find traction where in the past it has been lacking. This will entail challenging our assumptions and holding a conversation with the American people who have come to see North Korea in cartoonish terms and as a member of the Axis of Evil. There is no silver bullet that will allow the United States to dictate to North Korea the terms of surrender of its nuclear program. Seventy years of mistrust and arms buildup have left engagement as the only viable way forward. It remains to be seen whether the second summit between President Trump and Chairman Kim in Vietnam will be the first step down the path of transformation.

Dr. Mark N. Katz

Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government (George Mason University)
28 February 2019

Prioritizing Among Larger and Smaller Adversaries

Russia and China are the US's principal great power adversaries. The US, though, has other, smaller adversaries. The most serious of these are Iran, North Korea, and Sunni jihadist groups such as Al Qaeda, ISIL, and their affiliates. Some in the US also regard anti-American governments in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua as adversaries, though at this point they may pose more of a threat to their own populations than to either the US or their neighbors.

Since Russia and China are far stronger and more threatening adversaries, US decision-makers clearly need to pay much more attention and devote much greater resources to countering them. These smaller adversaries, though, cannot be ignored. The challenge is to find the right balance between countering the larger and the smaller adversaries.

One challenge is that while Russia and China pose greater threats to US interests than the smaller adversaries do, there are numerous forces at work pushing the US to focus on the smaller threats. One is that while Russia and China seek to avoid direct confrontation with the US, the smaller adversaries have sometimes pursued more combative policies that have resulted in the US focusing so much attention on them that it has lost focus on the buildup of the greater Russian and Chinese threats. The best example of this is how the 9/11 attack on the US mounted by Al Qaeda resulted in the US focusing so much attention and resources on combating this group and its allies that the US did not respond adequately to the growing Russian and Chinese threats.

Another challenge is that while the smaller adversaries may pose less of a threat to the US itself and most of its allies than either Russia or China, some US allies as well as powerful political groups supporting them inside the US regard these smaller adversaries as the greatest threat to them, and so lobby Washington to prioritize them. An example of this is that while Iran poses much less of a threat to the US and its Western allies than either Russia or China, some of the US's closest Middle Eastern allies—Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—see Iran as the greatest threat to them, and so have worked hard (in conjunction with their many allies inside the US) to push the US Government to also prioritize the Iranian threat.

Yet another challenge still is the tendency to regard greater and lesser threats differently. As undesirable as it may be from the American perspective, it is not surprising that aspiring great powers such as Russia and China seek to challenge the US. Furthermore, their very size and strength inspires US policymakers to respond deliberately and prudently to the threats that they pose. By contrast,

threats or just defiant acts by smaller actors can lead to a more emotional response based on a sense of outrage over such a small state or group daring to threaten the US. In addition, the smaller size of the challenger can give rise to the sometimes mistaken belief that the US can contain, defeat, or even eliminate it relatively easily.

One of the main problems that the US faces in attempting to contain, defeat, or eliminate a smaller adversary at a time when there are larger ones is that US policy directed against them may drive smaller adversaries into the arms of one or more of its larger ones. The Trump Administration's harsher policy toward Iran compared to the Obama Administration's, for example, has resulted in Iran increasing its security cooperation with Russia and its economic cooperation with China.

Another strategy that the US has employed in dealing with a smaller threat at a time when there are larger ones is through pursuing rapprochements of various sorts—as the Trump Administration has attempted to do with North Korea. Just the existence of America's larger adversaries, though, allows the smaller adversary to either insist that rapprochement occur on its terms or to string out the negotiations indefinitely as it understands that one of America's larger adversaries is likely to continue supporting it even if an agreement is not reached. Chinese willingness to continue supporting North Korea even if (indeed, perhaps especially if) Washington and Pyongyang cannot come to an agreement, for example, may have encouraged North Korea to resist US demands at the February 2019 Hanoi summit more easily than it could have otherwise.

The existence of the Russian and Chinese great power threats thus makes it more difficult for the US to deal with smaller threats either by military or by diplomatic means. What this suggests, then, is that one way to weaken at least some of these smaller adversaries is not through trying to tackle them head on, but through containing the Russian and Chinese threats and/or seeking great power bargains with them. If pursued successfully, this could result in Russia and/or China being less willing and/or able to support the US's smaller adversaries, and so make it far more costly for the latter to threaten US interests.

Further, the US needs to be aware that the priority of threats that it sees is not always shared by its allies. As noted earlier, while the US now sees Russia and China as the most important threats that it faces, some of its allies see one or more of America's smaller adversaries as being the greatest threats to them instead. The US, then, must be careful to focus on dealing with what Washington regards as the most important threats to the US, and not what its allies regard as the most important threats to them. Even more important, the US must dissuade its allies from the practice of improving their cooperation with America's main adversaries as part of their strategy for dealing with what they consider their most important threat to them—as Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE have all sought to do with Russia vis-à-vis Iran. The US needs to persuade its allies that not only is Russia highly unlikely to help them against Iran, but that if they want the US and its Western allies to work with them effectively against Iran, then they must work with the US and its Western allies against Russia. In other words, for the US to deal successfully with its larger and smaller adversaries simultaneously may require more effective management of its many allies which have priorities that differ from those of the US and many of its other allies.

Finally, the US must be alive to the possibility that there may be differences among its larger and smaller adversaries that can be exploited. The US cannot manufacture such differences, as the fledgling Trump Administration's attempts to persuade Russia to ally with it against Iran demonstrated in early 2017. But as the Sino-Soviet, Soviet-Yugoslav, Vietnamese-Cambodian, and Sino-Vietnamese rifts during the Cold War and conflict between Sunni jihadists on the one hand and Iran and its Shi'a allies on the other more recently have all shown, such differences can and do occur. The bad news is that these rifts among US adversaries are more likely to occur when the perception that US power is in decline is increasing. The good news is that past experience has shown that when these rifts arise, they often become so acrimonious that one or both parties to them becomes so fearful of its adversary that cooperation with the previously hated US suddenly becomes palatable. The US should be prepared to respond to such opportunities when they arise, as Nixon and Kissinger did in response to the Sino-Soviet rift in the early 1970's. The US, though, can only exploit rifts among its adversaries if it is willing and able to recognize them as opportunities when they arise.

In sum: the fact that the US faces Russia and China as great power adversaries at the same time that it also faces several smaller adversaries complicates how it responds to both. Dealing with this complicated situation will require a clear sense of what US priorities are with regard to its adversaries, an accurate sense of how US policy with regard to its smaller adversaries will actually serve to help or hinder the ambitions of its larger ones, a recognition of the necessity of making clear to some US allies that their policy of cooperating with America's larger adversaries as a means of countering America's smaller ones whom they fear more is

counterproductive, and an ability both to recognize that the US cannot create rifts among its adversaries but that there may be opportunities to exploit if and when they arise.

Dr. Peter Layton

Visiting Fellow, Griffith Asia Institute (Griffith University)

22 February 2019

Iran and North Korea are distractions from the main game. The primary US strategic interest is the US-China relationship with Russia secondary. From this perspective there seem two main options.

Firstly, the US relationship with both could be managed in manner that supports achieving the China grand strategic objectives. Iran and North Korea would be important only with regard to how they could help or hinder advancing US-China relations. Both Iran and North Korea have complicated relationships with China.

For Iran, China is its largest trading partner, its largest export customer for oil, a significant provider of loans for infrastructure projects, a useful source of military hardware and more recently a partner in joint military exercises. For China, Iran is its fourth-largest oil supplier (2018 figures) supplying some 7 per cent of China's total crude oil imports. As part of this, Chinese State Owned enterprises CNPC and Sinopec have invested in Iranian oilfields. The China-Iran relationship is though not an unproblematic one.¹¹ The recently applied financial sanctions on Iran are already influencing the US-China relationship, not in oil sales where an exemption has been granted, but in unexpected areas like in the case of Chinese state information technology champion Huawei.

Considering North Korea, the country is effectively a Chinese client state.¹² North Korea is useful to China in being able to put carefully moderated pressure when appropriate on South Korea, Japan and the US that does not ostensibly involve China. The North Korean development of its worrying nuclear missile force though appears to have required at the least Chinese acquiescence and more probably approval. If China is already using North Korea in managing its relationships with South Korea, Japan and the US, it might be prudent for the US to reciprocate.

The second approach is to manage US relations with Iran and North Korea using a risk management approach i.e. not a 'strategy' approach. The intent would be to limit the costs of any damage either could do to US global interests rather than move relations with the two countries in any particular direction. Under this option, Iran and North Korea would effectively be left alone with 'insurance' taken out by the US to keep any costs suffered from any Iranian or North Korean adventures to an acceptable level. In 1970 National Security Council staff member Marshall Wright neatly described such an approach:

"We deal with them because they are there, not because we hope to get great things out of our participation. We aim at minimizing the attention and resources which must be addressed to them. What we really want from both is no trouble. Our policy is therefore directed at damage limiting, rather than at accomplishing anything in particular."¹³

This is very much an economy of force approach that recognises any resources expended on Iran and North Korea are resources unable to be used to advance US-China relations.

Importantly, the risk management approach is not a 'set and forget' option. It awaits events rather than trying to shape the future but

¹¹ Mahmoud Pargoo, 'What Does Iran Really Think of China?', *The Diplomat*, 7 November 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/11/what-does-iran-really-think-of-china/> [Accessed 22 February 2019].

¹² Yun Sun, 'The State of Play in Sino-DPRK Relations', *38 North*, 5 September 2018, <https://www.38north.org/2018/09/ysun090518/> [Accessed 22 February 2019]. Benjamin Katzeff Silberstein, *China's Sanctions Enforcement and Fuel Prices in North Korea: What the Data Tells Us*, 38 North, February 2019, <https://www.38north.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/38-North-SR-1902-BKS-China-NK-Fuel.pdf> [Accessed 22 February 2019].

¹³ Marshall Wright, 'Memorandum to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), Washington, January 10 1970', in Louis J. Smith and David H. Herschler (eds.), *Foundations of Foreign Policy, 1969–1972*, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976: Volume I; Washington: Department of State, 2003, p. 163.

when events occur it needs to react. This implies that the appropriate 'means' have been developed and are available to be applied. It further implies some thought has been given to the kind of events that will trigger a US reaction. In this, risk management does not actively seek a better future international relationship with Iran and North Korea when the identified risks will be eliminated; the two countries will then remain problems for the foreseeable future.

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4 March 2019

One potential method of advancing US concerns in this regard is by designating one specific US ally in a particular (sub-)region in question to help the US stand its ground against regional competitors. A case-in-point for how this can work in Northeast Asia is Japan.

Japan is firmly aligned with the US over North Korea. Although Tokyo has disputes with both China and Russia, the scale of Japan's tensions with Beijing and Moscow is not the same as the US's need to manage its strategy vis-à-vis the PRC and the Kremlin. The US must contend with various issues in its relations with China and Russia across a range of sub-regions, yet Japan's tensions with the Beijing and Moscow are largely, though not exclusively, centered upon geopolitical issues limited to the Northeast Asia sub-region (although greater Japanese interest in the South China Sea could extend the geographic scope of Sino-Japanese tensions). Furthermore, despite geopolitical disputes with Japan, both China and Russia have striven for cooperation in mutually-agreeable areas, including economics.

The Japanese government has, in recent years shown inclinations toward taking greater responsibility for national defense, including the highest-ever defense budget approval in 2018, as well as attempts to revise Japan's post-WWII laws governing the use of military force. Thus Tokyo can serve US interests against the DPRK in ways that, while not always fully complimentary to US strategy toward China or Russia, do not extend beyond a limited sub-regional scope. The reason why the US should focus on cultivating one designated regional ally to oppose regional competitors is because recent developments in Northeast Asia have shown the difficulties of multilateralism. Diplomatic and military tensions between Japan and South Korea have recently escalated. Furthermore, South Korea has shown tendencies toward North Korea that are contrary to US policy thinking (South Korea's most recent defense white paper does not list the DPRK as an enemy). Thus even in an arrangement of multiple bilateral alliances, policy alignment with the US as well as strong relations between American allies themselves cannot be taken for granted. Concentrating on having one country help defend US interests while not upsetting US strategy toward great powers is also beneficial because a single state - as opposed to multiple countries - is less likely to aggravate US ties with the great powers. The Japan-US alliance, though formed in the Cold War era, is not designed to manage great power competition on a global scale.

The enclosed proposal comes with one major caveat - even if it is easier for the US to concentrate on delegating one country to help the US manage its interests against regional competitors, there is no guarantee that the policies of the US ally in question will always coincide with American interests. Continuing with the example of Japan: thus far Japan, with its increase in military spending and attempts to push for greater sovereignty in matters of defense, has demonstrated itself to be a more agreeable ally than the ROK in terms of US interests toward North Korea. Yet anything from major shifts in Japanese domestic politics to diplomatic developments at the sub-regional level could change the extent to which the US can rely on Japan.

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U.S.-China Competition in the Asia-Pacific

There is little evidence to suggest that America's partners and allies in the Asia-Pacific wish to "choose" between Washington or Beijing, even those that have the greatest reservations about China's regional ambitions. Instead, they seem determined to pursue for as long as possible a balancing act that they have been undertaking for the past decade or so: strengthening their diplomatic and military ties with the United States while expanding their trading and investment ties with China. If Washington exhorts them to make a choice, it may end up undercutting its long-term position in the Asia-Pacific: to China's neighbors, after all, China is a geographical fixture and, despite its cooling growth rate, an economic fulcrum; the United States is a distant superpower and, despite its extant margin of preeminence, an inconsistent presence. One of the chief figures behind the Obama administration's much-discussed rebalance, Kurt Campbell, laments that Washington "often pursues its Asia strategy in fits and starts, exhibiting an accordion-like tendency to surge into the region and then retreat as concerns elsewhere drain away American attention."¹⁵

The credibility of America's professed commitment to the Asia-Pacific diminishes with each such cycle of surging and retreating; the region's evolution, however, does not stop. The founding father of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, observed that "Americans seem to think that Asia is like a movie and that [they] can freeze developments out here whenever the [United States] becomes intensely involved elsewhere in the world."¹⁶ Beyond affording China more room to translate its economic growth into strategic heft, U.S. vacillation compels China's neighbors to take measures that insulate their fortunes from the vagaries of U.S. foreign policy; the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's Evan Feigenbaum, a prominent architect of the George W. Bush administration's policy towards the Asia-Pacific, warns that "when Washington absents itself (or merely shows disinterest in the region's concerns), Asians will grope for their *own* solutions" (emphasis his).¹⁷ The aftermath of America's withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership offers a recent illustration: the 11 remaining parties to the agreement proceeded with negotiations, ultimately signing the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. Feigenbaum observes that "for all their tensions with one another, forging agreement on pan-Asian rules beats both 'Chinese' rules and no rules."

Though the United States has long maintained an inconsistent disposition towards the Asia-Pacific, its policy towards China has changed significantly in recent years: unlike its predecessor, the Trump administration regards Beijing not as a challenging partner, but as a security threat. While the Obama administration grew increasingly frustrated by China's theft of intellectual property and espionage for commercial gain, it largely embraced the proposition that economic interdependence between the two countries was a source of stability in their relations. The Trump administration, by contrast, has forcefully challenged that judgment, arguing that the United States was mistaken to support China's accession to the World Trade Organization and facilitate the economic revival of what has become its principal competitor. Its national security strategy warns that "China is using economic inducements and penalties," among other instruments, "to persuade other states to heed its political and security agenda. China's infrastructure investments and trade strategies reinforce its geopolitical aspirations."¹⁸ Citing Beijing's technological aspirations as a threat to U.S. national security, the administration has imposed tariffs of 25 percent on \$250 billion worth of Chinese exports, announced that it will impose tariffs of ten percent on an additional \$300 billion of Chinese goods starting in December, and attempted to restrict high-tech exports to major companies such as Fujian Jinhua and Huawei.

It is true, of course, that China had been growing its economic self-sufficiency well before the Trump administration took office. In the

¹⁴ The views expressed in this submission are solely those of Mr. Wyne; they do not reflect those of the RAND Corporation or any of its other employees.

¹⁵ Kurt M. Campbell, *The Pivot: The Future of American Statecraft in Asia* (New York: Twelve, 2016): p. 138

¹⁶ Graham Allison, Robert D. Blackwill, and Ali Wyne, *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master's Insights on China, the United States, and the World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013): p. 28

¹⁷ <https://macropolo.org/analysis/reluctant-stakeholder-why-chinas-highly-strategic-brand-of-revisionism-is-more-challenging-than-washington-thinks/>

¹⁸ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>

aftermath of the 1997-98 Asian-Pacific currency crisis and especially the global financial crisis a decade later, it judged the United States to be an unreliable steward of the world economy, and it adjusted accordingly; where China's exports to the United States were equivalent to nine percent of its GDP in 2007, that figure stood at just four percent in 2017.¹⁹

Up until recently, though, there was little evidence that China sought to develop greater autonomy as an alternative to greater interdependence; rather, it appeared set on increasing both. Now, however, in light of the Trump administration's commitment to readjusting economic ties between the two countries, it appears to have concluded that Washington regards trade entanglement less as an instrument for maintaining stable bilateral ties than for constricting China's resurgence. As such, what had, until recently, been a gradual Chinese effort to reduce its reliance on the U.S. economy may well accelerate significantly. China is tasked with absorbing the short-term pain of decoupling en route to becoming more competitive over the long run. That charge entails not only rerouting to other countries the exports it has thus far been sending to the United States; it also involves finding alternative providers of advanced technology and concurrently growing an indigenous capacity for advanced manufacturing.

Because the United States is the top destination for Chinese exports and, as the near-death of telecommunications giant ZTE affirms, the principal supplier of high-tech inputs to China, finding a substitute for Washington will not be easy. The Trump administration's policy could accrue strategic dividends if it induces partners and allies to follow suit and nurtures the formation of a broad-based coalition to counter China's economic practices; a recent analysis observes that the country's leadership fears "a potential coordinated assault by the Trump administration, [the European Union], and Japan on their unique model of Chinese 'state capitalism' that has been integral to the country's economic success over the past 40 years."²⁰

The evidence thus far, however, suggests that such a coalition is unlikely to form. Japan, China, and South Korea are accelerating talks on a free-trade agreement (FTA), and negotiations over the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership—a 16-country arrangement that excludes the United States and accounts for some 30 percent of gross world product—are gaining momentum. All told, China has "17 FTAs with 25 countries and regions, and is in talks over 12 new or upgraded FTA deals."²¹ Beijing is also gaining economic leverage abroad through BRI, though that undertaking has started to experience growing pushback.

In addition, while the Trump administration's strategy may well cause short-term economic headaches for China, it is unlikely to deal a long-term setback; China presently occupies a commanding position in global supply chains, accounting for nearly 35 percent of clothing exports and over 32 percent of office and telecommunications equipment exports last year.²² Its GDP, meanwhile, was over three-fifths as large as America's in 2017, roughly twice as high a proportion as in 2008.²³ China is also expected to account for roughly 35 percent of global growth between 2017 and 2019.²⁴ In brief, Beijing is unlikely to wither in the face of tariffs. Indeed, concludes Beijing-based economics correspondent Michael Schuman, the Trump administration's course of unilateral protectionism has only "reinforced the critical importance of [its] quest for greater independence....China is content to go its own way on its own terms."²⁵

The worst-case scenario from Washington's perspective would be one in which it confronts, without its European and Asian partners and allies, a China whose economy is not only significantly larger but also more resilient; Jeffrey Bader, President Obama's principal China advisor between 2009 and 2011, made this point powerfully in a recent policy brief:

- Americans need to understand that if we go down the road of disengagement from China in pursuit of unbridled competition, it will not be a repetition of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, when the United States was joined by a phalanx of Western and democratic countries determined to join us in isolating the [Soviet Union]. [...] ...the rest of the world, like us, is deeply entangled with China economically and in other ways. Even those most wary of Beijing, like Japan, India, and Australia, will

¹⁹ <https://www.ft.com/content/c4df31cc-4d26-11e8-97e4-13afc22d86d4>

²⁰ <https://www.ft.com/content/ee361e2e-b283-11e8-8d14-6f049d06439c>. The Chinese international relations scholar Yan Xuetong contends that "the core of competition between China and the United States will be to see who has more high-quality friends." See "How China Can Defeat America," *New York Times* (November 21, 2011).

²¹ <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/2165260/china-japan-and-south-korea-aim-speed-talks-free-trade>

²² <https://www.ft.com/content/03e4f016-aa9a-11e8-94bd-cba20d67390c>

²³ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=US-CN>

²⁴ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/04/the-worlds-biggest-economies-in-2018/>

²⁵ <https://www.bloombergquint.com/opinion/china-s-far-from-desperate-to-make-a-trade-deal-with-trump>

not risk economic ties with China nor join in a perverse struggle to re-erect the “bamboo curtain,” this time by the West. We will be on our own.²⁶

²⁶ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/u-s-china-relations-is-it-time-to-end-the-engagement/>

Subject Matter Expert Biographies

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat

Professor, National Security Affairs, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies
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Dr. Gawdat Bahgat is professor of National Security Affairs at the National Defense University's Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Study. He is an Egyptian-born specialist in Middle Eastern policy, particularly Egypt, Iran, and the Gulf region. His areas of expertise include energy security, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, counter-terrorism, Arab-Israeli conflict, North Africa, and American foreign policy in the Middle East. Bahgat's career blends scholarship with national security practicing. Before joining NESA in December 2009, he taught at different universities. Bahgat published ten books including *Alternative Energy in the Middle East* (2013), *Energy Security* (2011), *International Political Economy* (2010), *Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East* (2007), *Israel and the Persian Gulf* (2006), and *American Oil Diplomacy* (2003). Bahgat's articles have appeared in *International Affairs*, *Middle East Journal*, *Middle East Policy*, *Oil and Gas Journal*, and *OPEC Review*, among others. His work has been translated to several foreign languages. Bahgat served as an advisor to several governments and oil companies. He has more than 25 years of academic, policy and government experience working on Middle Eastern issues. Bahgat has contributed to CNN, BBC, Washington Post and Al-Jazeera. He has spoken at Tufts University, Columbia University, London School of Economics, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Swiss Foreign Ministry, Yildiz Technical University in Istanbul, Qatar University, Kuwait University, Oman Diplomatic Institute, Griffith University (Australia), and India School of Business.

Dean Cheng

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Dean Cheng brings detailed knowledge of China's military and space capabilities to bear as The Heritage Foundation's research fellow on Chinese political and security affairs. He specializes in China's military and foreign policy, in particular its relationship with the rest of Asia and with the United States. Cheng has written extensively on China's military doctrine, technological implications of its space program and "dual use" issues associated with the communist nation's industrial and scientific infrastructure. He previously worked for 13 years as a senior analyst, first with Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC), the Fortune 500 specialist in defense and homeland security, and then with the China Studies division of the Center for Naval Analyses, the federally funded research institute. Before entering the private sector, Cheng studied China's defense-industrial complex for a congressional agency, the Office of Technology Assessment, as an analyst in the International Security and Space Program. Cheng has appeared on public affairs shows such as *John McLaughlin's One on One* and programs on National Public Radio, CNN International, BBC World Service and International Television News (ITN). He has been interviewed by or provided commentary for publications such as *Time* magazine, *The Washington Post*, *Financial Times*, *Bloomberg News*, *Jane's Defense Weekly*, South Korea's *Chosun Ilbo* and Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post*. Cheng has spoken at the National Space Symposium, National Defense University, the Air Force Academy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies. Cheng earned a bachelor's degree in politics from Princeton University in 1986 and studied for a doctorate at MIT. He and his wife reside in Vienna, Va.

Dr. John Delury

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Professor John Delury is a historian of modern China and expert on US-China relations and Korean Peninsula affairs. He is the author, with Orville Schell, of *Wealth and Power: China's Long March to the Twenty-first Century*, and his articles have appeared in the *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Asian Perspective* and *Late Imperial China*. He contributes regularly to *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *Global Asia*, and *38 North*. He is a senior fellow of the Asia Society and Pacific Century Institute and member of the Council of Foreign Relations, National Committee on US-China Relations and National Committee on North Korea. Prior to joining the Yonsei faculty in 2010, Dr. Delury offered courses at Brown, Columbia, Yale and Peking University, and served as founding associate director of the Asia Society Center on US-China Relations in New York. He is currently writing a book about US-China relations during the Cold War, focusing on the case of imprisoned CIA officer Jack Downey. He is also working on a series of articles on China-North Korea relations and co-authored book project with Patrick McEachern on North Korean politics and history.

Abraham M. Denmark

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Abraham M. Denmark is Director of the Asia Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, which conducts independent research and hosts frank dialogues to develop actionable ideas for Congress, the Administration, and the broader policy community on issues related to the Asia-Pacific. He also holds a joint appointment as a Senior Fellow at the Wilson Center's Kissinger Institute on China and the United States. Prior to joining the Wilson Center, Mr. Denmark served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, where he supported the Secretary of Defense and other senior U.S. government leaders in the formulation and implementation of national security strategies and defense policies toward the region. Mr. Denmark previously worked as Senior Vice President for Political and Security Affairs at The National Bureau of Asian Research, a Fellow at the Center for a New American Security, and held several positions in the U.S. Intelligence Community. Mr. Denmark has authored dozens of articles and edited several books on the Asia-Pacific and U.S. national security, including several editions of the *Strategic Asia* book series. He has testified multiple times before the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, as well as the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. His commentary has been featured in major media outlets in the United States and in Asia, including *Foreign Affairs*, National Public Radio, *the Financial Times*, *the National Interest*, *Foreign Policy*, and *the Atlantic*. In January 2017, Mr. Denmark received the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service. He also received the Order of the Resplendent Banner from the Republic of China (Taiwan), was made an Honorary Admiral in the Navy of the Republic of Korea, and was named a 21st Century Leader by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. A Colorado native, Mr. Denmark holds an MA in International Security from the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver, and received a BA in History with Honors from the University of Northern Colorado. He has also studied at Peking University.

Ken Gause

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Ken Gause is the director of the International Affairs Group, a part of CNA's Center for Strategic Studies. He is CNA's senior foreign leadership analyst and has spent the last 20 years developing methodologies for examining leadership dynamics of hard-target, authoritarian regimes. In particular, he is an internationally respected expert on North Korea who has written three books on North Korean leadership. His latest book is "North Korean House of Cards: Leadership Dynamics Under Kim Jong-un." Leadership and opposing force (OPFOR) analysis are core areas of expertise within

CNA Strategic Studies and Gause has personally directed studies on the North Korean, Iranian and Russian leadership and decision-making. His work on foreign leadership dates back to the early 1980s with his work on the Soviet Union for the U.S. government. Over the last three decades, he has devised analytical techniques used to understand adversary decision-making. These techniques span a five-tier set of methodologies that range from biographical analysis to studies on how to impact and shape an authoritarian or totalitarian regime's actions. These studies include a range of approaches from sophisticated game design to proprietary analysis based on a "virtual network" of researchers around the world dedicated to providing analysis on regimes of interest, their leadership, and how they make decisions. Gause has also published numerous articles on leadership structures for such publications as Jane's Intelligence Review, Jane's Defense Weekly, and the Korean Journal of Defense Analysis. He has a B.A. from Vanderbilt in Russian and Political Science and an M.A. from The George Washington University in Soviet and East European Affairs.

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Mark N. Katz (Ph.D., MIT) is a professor of government and politics at the George Mason University Schar School of Policy and Government. He has written primarily about Russian foreign policy, especially toward the Middle East, for over 35 years. During 2017, he was a visiting scholar first at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington (January-March), and then at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs in Helsinki (April-September). During 2018, he was a Fulbright Scholar at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London (January-March), and was then the 2018 Sir William Luce Fellow at Durham University in the UK (April-June). Since February 2019, he has been a Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council. Links to many of his publications can be found at www.marknkatz.com.

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Peter Layton is a Visiting Fellow at the Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University and a RAAF Reserve Group Captain. He has extensive aviation and defence experience and, for his work at the Pentagon on force structure matters, was awarded the US Secretary of Defense's Exceptional Public Service Medal. He has a doctorate from the University of New South Wales on grand strategy and has taught on the topic at the Eisenhower College, US National Defense University. For his academic studies, he was awarded a Fellowship to the European University Institute, Fiesole, Italy. His research interests include grand strategy, national security policies particularly relating to middle powers, defence force structure concepts and the impacts of emerging technology. He contributes regularly to the public policy debate on defence and foreign affairs issues and is the author of the book *Grand Strategy*.

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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 specializes in Russian foreign policy and Northeast Asian geopolitics. His expertise has been sought for research conducted by the Australian and Indian foreign ministries, as well as DoD. His views have been cited in the BBC, CNBC, Reuters and the Washington Post. Rinna, a US citizen, has a working knowledge of Korean, Russian and Spanish, and has lived in South Korea since 2014.

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Ali Wyne is a Washington, DC-based policy analyst at the RAND Corporation, a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, and a nonresident fellow at the Modern War Institute. He serves as rapporteur for a U.S. National Intelligence Council working group that analyzes trends in world order. Wyne served as a junior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace from 2008 to 2009 and as a research assistant at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs from 2009 to 2012. From January to July 2013 he worked on a team that prepared Samantha Power for her confirmation hearing to be U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. From 2014 to 2015 he served on RAND's adjunct staff, working with the late Richard Solomon on RAND's *Strategic Rethink* series. Wyne received dual degrees in management science and political science from MIT (2008) and earned his Masters in Public Policy from the Harvard Kennedy School (2017). While at the Kennedy School he served on a Hillary for America working group on U.S. policy toward Asia. Wyne is a coauthor of *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master's Insights on China, the United States, and the World* (2013) and a contributing author to *Power Relations in the Twenty-First Century: Mapping a Multipolar World?* (2017) and the *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (2008). Wyne is a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a David Rockefeller fellow with the Trilateral Commission, and a security fellow with the Truman National Security Project.

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Ali Jafri provides research support on issues of national security, armed groups, and human security in the defense and intelligence communities. He previously served as a member of a multi-disciplinary team of analysts, technologists, and data scientists tasked with helping bring innovative practices to customers in the intelligence community. Prior to joining NSI, he worked at Georgetown University, conducting research on emerging threats, focusing on political instability in South Asia. He is a graduate of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, where he completed a Masters in Law and Diplomacy.