

## **International Collaboration in U.S. Integrated Deterrence: A Partner Perspective**

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### **Background**

The U.S. collaborates with other nations to deter and maintain global stability. Effective integration of partners is crucial. In 2022, the USA promulgated the Integrated Deterrence (ID) concept within foundational doctrinal documents, positioning it as a pivotal construct for adeptly managing competitive dynamics with its primary competitors, notably Russia and China. The U.S. is immersed in an extensive process to delineate and operationalize the ID concept. The conceptual framework of ID comprises two distinct components: integration and deterrence. Research endeavors have predominantly centered on ‘deterrence,’ scrutinizing the application of deterrence theories and doctrines following the shifts in the contemporary world order. Comparatively less scholarly attention has been directed toward the second facet of ID: ‘integration.’ Even with the significance of this dimension, it remains a relatively untested and less-explored concept when juxtaposed with deterrence.

### **Scope**

This non-paper, prepared at the Swedish Defence University (SEDU), investigates the dynamics of deterrence in cooperation with the U.S.<sup>1</sup> It is crafted for the SMA audience, providing preliminary insights into collaborative efforts within ID and emphasizing the value of partner contributions. The document utilizes international relations theories to explore effective engagement strategies in ID, laying the groundwork for in-depth discussions on pivotal topics related to partner involvement. The content encompasses a brief overview of theories and concepts, setting the stage to address the following inquiries:

- What does integration signify in the context of deterrence?
- What are the objectives of integration in this context?
- What are the essential means and ways to attain the objectives?
- What prerequisites are essential for successful integration?

### **Delineations and assumptions**

As articulated in the US National Defense Strategy 2022 (NDS), integration encompasses three target groups to coordinate with to advance ID: internally within the DoD, within and across the U.S. government apparatus, and with allies and partners. While recognizing the importance of a comprehensive integration approach, this paper only considers international partners.

While it is essential to consider a broad range of domains for ID, this paper emphasizes topics pertaining to defense and military applications.

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<sup>1</sup> The contents of this informal document are derived from initial research conducted at the Swedish Defence University. Please note that it does not reflect the official stance, policies, or opinions of either the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden or the Swedish Defence University.

The term ‘ID’ is utilized as an abbreviation for Integrated Deterrence, as outlined in the doctrinal concepts presented in the National Security Strategy (2022) and the National Defense Strategy (2022).

The term ‘partner’ refers to both ‘allies and partners.’ Distinctions between treaty allies and partners are highlighted as required.

### **US Concept of Integration in Integrated Deterrence**

Initial investigations suggest that within the ID framework, ‘integration’ entails fundamental shifts in the relationships between the U.S. and its partners. The definition of ‘integration,’ its objectives, and its scope all point toward a demand for a profound transformation of U.S. doctrine. The term ‘integrated’ reflects a desire for close cooperation among actors and nations to the extent that these entities become assimilated, incorporated, and united in their endeavors, acting as a unified entity. ID aims to coral all elements of national power across various domains, geographies, and conflict spectrums while collaborating with partners to achieve deterrence. No apparent restrictions exist on the domains that can and should be integrated, including nuclear deterrence. However, practical, legal, and policy limitations among nations may impose constraints on complete integration.

ID seeks a broad-based approach to collaboration, not confining itself to traditional military ties or specific partner-defined integration areas. It aims to harness a full spectrum of power, signaling a shift towards more in-depth and innovative cooperation, including with nations already closely aligned with the U.S. The goal of ID is “the right mix of technology, operational concepts, and capabilities—all interwoven and networked to be credible, flexible, and sufficiently formidable to give any adversary pause,”<sup>2</sup> as articulated by SECDEF Austin. Arguably, the focus should be on integration rather than introducing new concepts or capabilities. The fundamental premise is that the U.S. and its partners have not yet effectively coordinated and synchronized their resources to their full potential. Indeed, the evolving global landscape, with multiple peer competitors engaging in comprehensive competition, demands a new approach.

Nested with the notion of ID is the concept of ‘campaigning.’ This refers to the necessity for proactive, ongoing actions to strengthen deterrence and gain military advantages.<sup>3</sup> It encompasses the endeavors of the Joint Force and its domestic and international partners to attain policy objectives through the combined use of military and non-military efforts, adequately broad and simultaneous in scope, and sustained over time across various domains. This suggests methods for applying and executing ID, even though the conversation about campaigning precedes the formal establishment of the ID concept.

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<sup>2</sup> Lloyd Austin, Remarks at Indo-Pacific Command Change of Command, April 30, 2021, at <https://www.defense.gov/News/Speeches/Speech/Article/2592093/secretary-of-defense-remarks-for-the-us-indopacom-change-of-command/> Secretary of Defense Remarks for the U.S. INDOPACOM Change of Command > U.S. Department of Defense > Speech

<sup>3</sup> Department of Defense, National Defense Strategy 2022, page 12. Oct 2022. US Joint Staff, Joint Concept for Integrated Campaigning, page iii, 16 March 2018.

Grasping the rationale for the ID launch in 2022 is key for partners. Several reasons for its introduction in 2022 can be inferred:

- To respond to competition occurring in areas and ways not seen hitherto, driven by China and Russia's coordinated use of all instruments of power.
- To address competition in domains less developed within the deterrence framework, including cyber, space, information, technology, and the economy, along with a greater emphasis on Gray Zone tactics.
- To reaffirm US commitment to its extensive network of partners following a period of uncertainty in US foreign policy.
- To manage competition from at least two major powers that have altered the balance of power in ways unfavorable to the US, with the integration of partners potentially changing the force ratio.
- To provide greater flexibility in responding to challenges and crises.
- To compel the sprawling US government structures to cooperate and coordinate more effectively.

These motivations inform partners' national decision-making on commitment. It will also guide the implementation of the concept. Importantly, the dialogue surrounding the motives and operationalization of ID will delineate the U.S. perception of its role and that of its partners. Given the desired high degree of integration among nations, interactions must change, possibly even fundamentally, for some nations, including the U.S. The way ID is implemented and operationalized in interactions between the US and its partners is paramount, as "Integrated Deterrence is a simple concept but very difficult in execution."<sup>4</sup>

### **Integration in the realm of international relations theory**

In the realm of international relations, integration reflects states growing together economically, politically, socially, and in security matters. Economic integration sees countries reducing trade barriers and forming common markets. Political integration may involve creating cooperative frameworks and even supranational entities with shared governance.<sup>5</sup> Social integration emphasizes the flow of people, ideas, and culture across borders. Security integration, where ID is anchored, involves states collaboratively addressing security threats.<sup>6</sup> While the European Union is often studied as a model of such integration, its blend of intergovernmental and supranational structures only partially applies to the emerging concept of ID. Intergovernmentalism underscores the role of states as rational actors negotiating for their national interests within international institutions, positing integration as an outcome of negotiated agreements rather than automatic spillover. Theories like Functionalism, which advocates for shared interests and cooperation,<sup>7</sup> and Neofunctionalism, which suggests cooperation in one area can lead to broader integration, are considered more aligned with the goals of ID.<sup>8</sup> These frameworks are invaluable for navigating the multifaceted collaborations within ID. Consequently, these theories exhibit value in exploring the cross-domain collaboration required in ID.

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<sup>4</sup> US Naval Institute, Defense Forum Washington 2022, Implementing Integrated Deterrence, 6 Dec 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Jürgen Neyer, *The Justification of Europe: A Political Theory of Supranational Integration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> Manuel Muniz, "Explaining Security and Defence Integration: The Case of Europe" (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> David Mitrany, *The Functionalist Theory of Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976).

<sup>8</sup> Mitrany; Ernst B Haas, "The Uniting of Europe: Political," *Social and Economic Forces* 1957, no. 2 (1950).

In the security realm, several theoretical frameworks can inform how integration strengthens partner collaboration in ID. The key paradigms in political theory, realism, liberalism, and constructivism, identify various incentives and obstacles for integration. Considering the theories of alliance, game, and institutions is also prudent.

As a predominant theory within security studies, realism underscores power politics, state-centric conduct, and the pursuit of national interests. It places a particular emphasis on military strength while concurrently acknowledging the importance of diplomatic and economic power. Realism recognizes the role of nuclear deterrence in shaping global power dynamics. Within Realism, the concepts of ‘Balance of Threat’ and ‘Bandwagoning’ have particular utility for ID. Balance of threat theory posits that states align their actions based on the perceived common threat from other states.<sup>9</sup> The level of conformity of perceptions by partners with the U.S. regarding threats posed by Russia and China drives alignment. By aligning their national security objectives with those of the U.S., partners demonstrate a commitment to balancing against shared threats. Balance of threat is the norm in forming alliances like NATO. Partners contribute to ID by engaging in military cooperation that strengthens the collective ability to counter shared threats, promoting a balanced power distribution. Actively sharing intelligence and information about potential threats enhances collective situational awareness, allowing for more effective deterrence strategies. Bandwagoning, within the context of realism, refers to states aligning with the source of the threat.<sup>10</sup> Rising or dominant powers have perceived the certainty of its success or the desire to share the benefits of association.<sup>11</sup> Thus, this theory applies to non-traditional partners that find themselves in a weak position and see the utility in aligning with the US due to its power and influence without necessarily sharing its values and threat assessment. Partners can contribute to ID by participating in financial collaborations and trade partnerships that align with U.S. interests, strengthening collective economic position and reinforcing the deterrence posture. They may also align their military capabilities and strategies with the U.S. However, their commitment is not as far-reaching as that of partners that subscribe to a balance of threat strategy.

Liberal theories underscore the significance of cooperation and economic integration as avenues toward achieving peace and security. Engaging in global financial and trade initiatives with allies is seen as a strategy to undermine potential adversaries’ economies, diminishing their inclination for conflict and fostering more profound partnerships based on shared interests. Collaborative efforts on non-traditional security challenges, such as climate change and pandemics, are viewed as mechanisms to build trust and cooperation, fortifying the overall deterrence posture.<sup>12</sup> Liberals advocate for upholding international law and reinforcing multilateral institutions to establish order and address security challenges. Strengthening international rules and norms through collaboration with partners is perceived to delegitimize aggressive actions and discourage violations. Leveraging multilateral institutions like the UN and regional security organizations like NATO is essential for collective action and crisis management.<sup>13</sup> Liberalism emphasizes human rights and democratic values in the creation of a peaceful and stable international order. Promoting and defending these principles alongside partners is believed to enhance the legitimacy of deterrence efforts by aligning them with shared values, simultaneously diminishing potential adversaries’ legitimacy and support base.

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<sup>9</sup> Stephen M Walt, *The Origins of Alliance* (Cornell University Press, 1990)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> John J Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2001).

<sup>12</sup> Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 4th ed. (Boston: Longman, 2012).

<sup>13</sup> Thomas G Weiss, *Thinking about Global Governance: Why People and Ideas Matter* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2012).

U.S.-led alliances and partnerships, including ID, serve as platforms for collective action, fostering shared norms and values. Encouraging economic collaboration with partners is seen as a strategy to raise the cost of aggression, thus reinforcing deterrence. Liberalists acknowledge the complexity of balancing national interests with those of partners, as partner nations may exhibit varying levels of commitment to liberal values and institutions.

Constructivism emphasizes the role of shared norms and identities in shaping the behavior of states. Advocates of constructivism argue that states' actions are molded by their shared perceptions of the world and their identities within it.<sup>14</sup> Establishing robust partnerships necessitates cultivating a shared understanding of threats and security challenges. Highlighting common values and identities with partner nations bolsters trust and cooperation. Constructivists underscore the significance of international norms and their impact on state behavior. Collaborating with allies and partners to uphold and strengthen relevant international norms is considered a strategy to delegitimize potential adversaries' actions. Framing deterrence efforts within a rules-based order is believed to enhance their legitimacy and effectiveness. According to constructivists, states' interests and intentions are not fixed but are shaped by social interactions and discourse. Therefore, open communication and dialogue with partner nations are crucial for understanding their perspectives and intentions. Clear and consistent communication is viewed to mitigate misperceptions and unintended consequences. Diplomatic efforts can be directed toward building common norms and identities among international partners to fortify the deterrence narrative. Soft power, involving influence through attraction rather than coercion, is considered applicable.<sup>15</sup> The U.S. can engage in cultural and diplomatic exchanges to foster positive perceptions, contributing to a collective deterrence effort. Constructivists also stress the role of domestic politics and national identity in shaping foreign policy. Understanding the domestic political dynamics of partner nations is seen as instrumental in tailoring cooperation strategies. Appealing to shared values and identities is posited to garner domestic support for partnerships and deterrence efforts. Given that partner nations have diverse interpretations of norms and identities, balancing national interests with international norms is acknowledged as a challenging task. While constructivist approaches can be complex and require an in-depth understanding of social and cultural factors, they offer valuable tools for building trust, cooperation, and a shared understanding of threats within ID. By considering these principles and addressing associated challenges, the U.S. can strengthen ID. They also illuminate the disparity of perspectives that partners may harbor. The U.S. can build a resilient network of international partners by understanding and leveraging power dynamics, fostering cooperation, and shaping shared norms, and contributing to a comprehensive and effective deterrence strategy. Addressing challenges through diplomatic means and strategic communication is essential to sustaining collaborative efforts to pursue global security and stability.

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<sup>14</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>15</sup> Joseph S. Nye, "Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept," *Journal of Political Power* 14, no. 1 (2021): 196–208, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2021.1879572>.

The taxonomy of alignment archetypes in international security cooperation emphasizes the distinction between traditional alliances and various alignments, reflecting the contemporary complexity of international security dynamics.<sup>16</sup>

- Alliances represent formal, long-term commitments between states, typically bound by legally binding treaties. They are often centered around mutual defense agreements and involve comprehensive military cooperation and planning. A high level of institutionalization and formal commitments characterizes alliances. Examples include NATO.
- Coalitions are generally issue-specific, temporary alignments of states that address a particular challenge or crisis. Unlike alliances, coalitions do not require long-term commitments and are less institutionalized. They are flexible and can be formed rapidly to respond to immediate security concerns. The U.S.-led coalition to defeat IS includes 86 partners.
- Security Communities are groups of states that have established high trust and shared values, leading to a dependable expectation of peaceful interaction. Security communities are marked by strong socio-political integration and often share democratic values and norms. Examples include the Five Eyes intelligence-sharing partnership (USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and UK), and the US-Japan cooperation in missile defense and maritime security in the Indo-Pacific.
- Strategic Partnerships refer to less formal, more flexible arrangements between states not necessarily bound by legal treaties. Strategic partnerships are typically based on mutual interests in economic cooperation, counter-terrorism, or regional stability. They are more adaptable and less rigid than traditional alliances. The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is an informal strategic forum between the United States, India, Japan, and Australia, characterized by semi-regular summits, information exchanges, and military drills among member countries. It is not a military alliance, and it lacks binding legal obligations.

The precise placement of ID within this classification framework remains undetermined. An alliance configuration would foster integration more than other options.

### **What does integration signify in the context of deterrence?**

The strategic culture of the U.S. is grounded in Realism, prioritizing the articulation and safeguarding of national interests. The theoretical framework posits diverse incentives and rationales for partners aligning their efforts with the U.S. in deterring mutual adversaries. Nations with limited exposure to armed conflict and those embracing more liberal orientations in their foreign policies will likely approach such partnerships distinctively, prioritizing various aspects of building international consensus. They may focus on channeling efforts through existing multilateral organizations such as NATO. Conversely, other nations may underscore the significance of upholding and advancing human rights principles and safeguarding the local populations in Russia and China from potential repercussions.

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<sup>16</sup> Thomas S Wilkins, “‘Alignment’, Not ‘Alliance’—the Shifting Paradigm of International Security Cooperation: Toward a Conceptual Taxonomy of Alignment,” *Review of International Studies* 38, no. 1 (2012): 53–76.

In addition to these differing emphases, all states perceive these collaborative endeavors through the lens of national interests to protect their priorities. The implications of integration vary among partnering nations. Consequently, the integration process should accommodate flexible and customizable agreements aligned with a comprehensive array of national priorities. Moreover, these integrated efforts must be contextualized in relation to existing bilateral arrangements, conceptualized as tailored supplements that offer enhanced value for the involved partners, thereby outweighing associated political risks and burdens.

A bilateral approach to aligning partners based on their unique considerations is imperative in pursuing successful partnerships. ID aims to achieve a high degree of coordination in as many areas as possible and, therefore, requires a comprehensive dialogue and understanding between the US and the partner that is difficult to achieve in a multilateral context. ID entails consolidating these loosely managed bilateral arrangements into a collective effort, acknowledging that the true strength and commitments emerge from bilateral settings. To effectively implement integration as an overarching cooperative framework, the U.S. must enhance its capacity for bilateral consultations and accommodate national considerations.

### **What are the objectives of integration in this context?**

**Achieving Cohesiveness:** The foremost objective of integration is fostering cohesiveness by amalgamating diverse perspectives, actions, and activities among partners. This is crucial for projecting a unified and committed front to competitors, notably Russia and China. The integration process enhances the deterrence capacity for the mutual benefit of the U.S. and its partners and illuminates the potential trajectory of the evolving bilateral relationships. Despite its collaborative nature, ID is predominantly led by the U.S., prompting partners to seek additional value aligned with national priorities. While flexible arrangements are necessary to harbor a disparate set of national priorities, they will curtail the efficiency of the deterrence efforts. Moreover, inherent in achieving integration is the possibility, even the necessity, to evaluate the roles of both the U.S. and its partner in the efforts to achieve deterrence.

**Defining the limits of integration:** close cooperation between nations is complicated, takes time, and ultimately entails giving up parts of sovereignty. ID needs to define the boundaries of required integration and what degree that is possible to achieve in a given situation or time.

**Identifying Core Deterrence Ambitions:** Building upon bilateral arrangements, ID must identify common ground that unifies diverse perspectives, defining core objectives all partners can commit to. This shared ambition is derived as the "least common denominator," not necessarily aligned with the level of ambition set forth by the U.S. Nonetheless, for successful partner integration, it is imperative to establish a common foundation for the project, ensuring the accommodation of core interests and concerns for all participants.

**Galvanizing Collective Action and Compromise:** Integration should facilitate the advancement of common actions, policies, and statements through mechanisms such as dialogue, transparency, and, crucially, compromise. The integration process must incorporate mechanisms that build confidence, inspire collaborative efforts, and ideally elevate the core ambition, thereby enlarging the "least common denominator."

**Flexible Utilization of Deterrence Tools:** The integration process entails the development of a format that fosters creative and time-sensitive responses to unfolding events. This flexibility in employing deterrence tools is integral to effectively navigating dynamic geopolitical scenarios and emerging challenges.

### **What are the essential means and ways to attain the objectives?**

The success of integrating within the concept of ID is dependent on achieving the desired degree of integration to produce deterrence. The ways and means in the relationship between the US and its partners are essential to understanding what is required, and the following indicate preliminary areas to consider.

To galvanize partners, a working format must be established to enhance shared situational awareness continuously. It is paramount to augment the common understanding of unfolding events. Sharing intelligence in a layered approach depending on the partners' commitments is an essential early step for cooperation. It is critical to get partners ready for preparing common actions. Moreover, some partners will likely regard information sharing as a critical incentive for joining the project. The information exchange could comprise sharing intelligence, threat assessments, and early warning signals. Situational awareness also requires a dialogue about US and partner capabilities, capacities, and weaknesses. ID is built on the concept that integrating resources and activities in many areas produces deterrence, and this requires a deep and open dialogue aiming at complementing each other and protecting weaknesses. Ideally, strengths can be built, and weaknesses eliminated in common capability development. It is essential to cultivate relations that encompass candid deliberations on weaknesses.

Recognizing and capitalizing on diversity becomes imperative in tandem with the customized alignment of partners. Factors such as geographical proximity to competitors or preferred operational domains may lead partner nations to adopt distinct and occasionally sequential deterrence measures. This necessitates thorough consultations and strategic planning. While orchestrating a spectrum of diverse responses poses challenges, the resultant gains in deterrence effects can be substantial. The role of U.S. stewardship in coordinating these efforts arguably constitutes a crucial component of ID.

Annex A outlines key domains and activities that may contribute to ID.

### **What prerequisites are essential for successful integration?**

A precisely delineated and mutually advantageous augmentation of extant bilateral relations between the U.S. and their counterparts necessitates a nuanced understanding of each participating country's intricacies, interests, and contextual frameworks.

Adopting adaptable modalities constitutes a paramount facet of contributing to the ID endeavor. Partners are encouraged to contribute commensurate with their priorities and available resources, with reciprocal provisions for access to information and consultations.

The efficacy of the U.S. in engaging bilaterally is complemented by its capacity to propel multilateral initiatives through diverse working formats. This encompasses adopting a "light" approach to multilateral cooperation, characterized by limitations on formal agreements, legal documents, and administrative structures.

The imperative to circumvent competition with existing multilateral frameworks, such as NATO, is underscored through a clear delineation of the U.S.-led deterrence efforts. It ensures coherence and synergy without encroaching on established multilateral formats.



It is a significant step in the relations between nations to move from achieving the possibility of coordination to a situation where all of the state's instruments of power are integrated with another country. It is possible to distinguish the most critical requirements and prerequisites for successful integration:

- A common understanding of ID.
- Shared values and trust.
- Common perspectives on threat, risk, and at least overlapping national interests.
- A common understanding of what needs to be done and a definition of limitations.
- A common understanding of the need to integrate instruments of power and domains.
- Resources that are meaningful to integrate.
- Means and methods how to integrate.
- A common view of the division of roles.
- American insight and acceptance of the importance of allies and partners.
- Time to integrate.

### **Recommendations**

The US leadership in deterrence is crucial. A key component involves managing diverse national interests within ID. The USA should navigate these differences through diplomatic negotiations and compromise.

ID must be underpinned by mutual and enduring commitments between the US and its partners, sufficiently robust to sustain multiple election cycles. A significant current challenge lies in providing partners with the necessary reassurance regarding the long-term sustainability of the present ID policy.

Partners do not constitute a homogeneous entity; instead, they exhibit diverse incentives for alignment, and disparities are evident in their respective roles and capabilities in the context of deterrence. Notwithstanding the diversity, partners, probably coalesce around fundamental considerations before entering collaboration, explicitly contemplating the associated costs and benefits.

While collaborating with the USA has substantial advantages and attractions, partners will also recognize the accompanying drawbacks. The potential limitation of their sovereignty is of utmost significance when their interests align with US priorities.

Variability in commitment levels among partners requires careful consideration. Ensuring a balance in contributions and responsibilities is crucial for sustained collaboration.

The value proposition of ID needs to clarify what kind of alignment it seeks to accomplish and how it complements extant multilateral cooperation, such as NATO.

The fundamental building block in ID must be stronger bilateral relations. ID should draw on these relations to orchestrate multilateral synergy.

Loose coalitions based on shared interests and cooperation often evolve through tacit agreements. ID should adopt an incremental approach in the design, sensitive to the emerging collaboration dynamics.

In its nature, ID is a process of interaction between the US and partners to build deterrence. This success depends not only on the US but, to an increasing degree, on the partners and their willingness to commit to being a part of ID. The participation starts with a deep understanding of the doctrinal concept of ID and having the resources for engagement in dialogues and processes with the US to build deterrence and hereby committing to have relevant capabilities and capacity to integrate and the insight that all instrument of power is needed, not only military, in this endeavor. The partner's role in ID will most likely expand and will require a willingness to accept increased responsibility for deterrence.

## **Annex A: Key domains and activities that may contribute to ID**

In the following, some key domains are considered in terms of engagement with partners:

Military posturing. A key element in the deterrent posture is military posturing. It demands collaborating on military planning, conducting joint exercises, and developing shared operational concepts.

- **Joint Military Exercises and Training:**

Conducting joint military exercises and training programs to enhance interoperability and coordination among the armed forces of the U.S. and its partners. This includes regular joint exercises, simulations, and training initiatives to improve collective readiness and effectiveness.

- **Aligned Command Structures:**

Establishing aligned command structures that allow for seamless coordination and communication among military forces of the U.S. and its partners. This involves joint planning, shared intelligence, augmented liaison functions, streamlined organization structures, and synchronized decision-making processes to respond effectively to potential military threats.

- **Coherent Defense Strategies:**

Formulating common defense strategies that align the military priorities and capabilities of the U.S. and its partners. This includes joint threat assessments, collaborative defense planning, and the development of shared strategic objectives to enhance deterrence capabilities. In practical terms, partners and allies can be engaged in the QDR process by providing red teaming functions. Conversely, equivalent processes among partners and allies should allow for U.S. interaction.

- **Strategic Force Posture Alignment:**

Aligning the strategic force postures of the U.S. and its partners to present a unified and credible deterrent. This includes coordinating the deployment of forces, positioning military assets, and joint capabilities to reinforce deterrence against potential adversaries.

- **Mutual Defense Agreements:**

Strengthening and expanding mutual defense agreements and commitments. This involves reinforcing existing alliances, such as NATO, and exploring new security partnerships to address regional and global security challenges collectively. Moreover, bilateral Defense Cooperation Agreements (DCAs) can be expanded to new partners, and the current DCAs can be deepened.

- **Development of Military Capabilities:**

Improving military capabilities to address current and future threats through defense innovation, experimentation, joint R&D, and collaborative capability development.

- **Logistical Support and Infrastructure Sharing:**

Collaborating on logistical support and sharing military infrastructure to optimize resources and enhance operational flexibility. This includes joint use of military bases, logistics hubs, and supply chain coordination to improve the efficiency of military operations.

- **Cybersecurity Collaboration:**

Coordinating cybersecurity initiatives to protect military networks and critical infrastructure from cyber threats. This involves sharing threat intelligence, conducting joint cybersecurity exercises, and developing collective resilience against cyberattacks on military systems.

- **Strategic Communication and Messaging:**

Coordinating strategic communication efforts to present a united front in messaging and narratives related to military activities. This involves joint public statements, press releases, and diplomatic messaging to reinforce the deterrence posture and clarify shared strategic objectives.

- **Deterrence through Presence:**

Collaboratively deploying military forces to key regions to demonstrate a credible deterrent presence. This involves joint patrols, naval task forces, and rotational deployments to signal a collective commitment to security and stability.

- **Crisis Response Coordination:**

Establishing mechanisms for rapid crisis response coordination among the U.S. and its partners. This includes joint planning for contingencies, pre-established communication channels, and a shared understanding of escalation and de-escalation measures.

Nuclear deterrence. The ultimate tool for deterrence involves nuclear options. While some partners may have their own nuclear arsenal and insist on retaining national flexibility in their posture, other partners may, for domestic reasons, want to be disassociated with this facet of deterrence. Moreover, other multilateral formats, particularly the Nuclear Planning Group in NATO, exist to cultivate common views. Partners must be clear on their willingness to support nuclear deterrence, and the US, on the other hand, must be clear and realistic about what partners could influence in the deliberations.

- **Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiatives:**

Participating in joint arms control and non-proliferation initiatives to reinforce global efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. This includes supporting international agreements, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and working together to address violations. Collaboratively advocating for new arms control measures that enhance global stability and reduce the risk of nuclear conflict.

- **Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures:**

Implementing transparency and confidence-building measures related to nuclear capabilities. This involves regular information exchanges on nuclear arsenals, doctrines, and intentions to build trust and reduce uncertainties. Engaging in joint initiatives to promote responsible behavior in the nuclear domain and prevent misunderstandings that could escalate into a nuclear crisis. Efforts could be leveraged through international organizations like the UN, ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), and OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe).

- **Nuclear Risk Reduction:**

Establishing nuclear risk reduction mechanisms for direct communication between the U.S. and its partners to manage and mitigate nuclear risks. This includes facilitating real-time communication during crises and ensuring swift and coordinated responses.

Economic coordination: By aligning economic policies, sharing information, and coordinating responses, the collective ability to deter and promote shared economic prosperity can be advanced. Collaborative efforts as part of ID can involve the following measures:

- **Economic Information Sharing:**

Establishing a framework for regularly exchanging economic intelligence and information among the U.S. and its partners. This includes data on economic threats, vulnerabilities, and indicators of potential malign activities. Coordinating joint assessments to understand financial trends and possible risks, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of economic vulnerabilities.

- **Harmonized Sanctions and Trade Policies:**

Coordinating sanctions regimes and trade policies ensures a unified response to economic threats. This involves aligning approaches to sanctions against common adversaries and ensuring that trade policies reflect shared economic interests. Collaboratively identify and target entities engaged in economic misconduct, such as illicit financial activities or sanctions evasion, through coordinated actions and policy measures.

- **Joint Investment Screening Mechanisms:**

Establishing joint mechanisms for screening foreign investments to prevent hostile entities from exploiting economic opportunities for strategic gains. This involves sharing information on potential risks associated with certain investments, coordinating investment screening procedures, and developing common guidelines and criteria for assessing the national security implications of foreign investments, ensuring a consistent and collective approach.

- **Trade and Investment Promotion:**

Engaging in joint efforts to promote trade and investment opportunities aligned with shared economic interests. This involves coordinated diplomatic outreach, joint trade missions, and collaborative initiatives to enhance economic ties. Leveraging international platforms and organizations to advocate for fair trade practices and address economic imbalances that may undermine the financial stability of partner nations.

- **Development of Economic Norms:**

Collaboratively shaping international economic norms and standards to reinforce shared values and principles. This includes advocating for transparent and fair economic practices while discouraging predatory economic behavior by adversarial entities and participating in international forums to establish and uphold economic rules that deter malign economic activities and promote a level playing field.

Diplomatic domain. Collaborative efforts to strengthen influence in the political domain as part of ID can include the following collaborative measures:

- **Diplomatic Coordination:**

Establishing regular diplomatic forums and mechanisms for coordination among the U.S. and its allies and partners. This includes joint consultations, diplomatic exchanges, and coordinated diplomatic efforts to address shared political challenges. Collaborating on diplomatic initiatives to shape international norms, institutions, and alliances that align with the U.S.'s and its partners' collective interests and values.

- **Strategic Alliances and Partnerships:**

Strengthening and expanding strategic alliances and partnerships to present a unified political front. This involves reinforcing commitments within existing alliances, such as NATO, and forging new partnerships with like-minded nations to address geopolitical challenges collectively and collaboratively advocating for the adherence to international rules and norms to bolster the effectiveness of political deterrence.

- **Collaborative Policy Formulation:**

Coordinating policy formulation on key political issues to ensure alignment among the U.S. and its allies and partners. This includes joint statements, policy declarations, and shared positions on issues ranging from human rights to regional security and engaging in regular policy dialogues to foster a shared understanding of geopolitical developments and synchronized responses.

- **Democracy Promotion and Support:**

Collaboratively supporting and promoting democratic values and institutions worldwide. This involves joint efforts to strengthen democratic governance, support civil society, and address threats to democratic institutions. Coordinating responses to challenges posed by non-democratic regimes and advocating for promoting democratic principles on the international stage.

- **Conflict Prevention and Resolution:**

Collaborating on conflict prevention and resolution initiatives to address regional and global challenges. This includes joint mediation efforts, peacekeeping missions, and diplomatic interventions to prevent or resolve conflicts. Coordinating responses to political crises ensures a united and effective approach to upholding stability and security.

- **Enhancing International Rule of Law:**

Reinforcing international institutions and the rule of law by collectively upholding and advocating for the principles that underpin these institutions. This includes collaborating on international legal frameworks, supporting the International Criminal Court, promoting adherence to international law, and engaging in joint efforts to address challenges to the rule of law, such as state-sponsored aggression or violations of international treaties.

- **Human Rights Advocacy:**

Collaborating on human rights advocacy to address violations and promote a common commitment to fundamental human rights. This involves joint initiatives, statements, and diplomatic efforts to address human rights abuses and hold perpetrators accountable. Coordinating responses to situations where human rights are at risk, ensuring a united stance in defense of democratic values.

Information Domain. By pooling resources, intelligence, and expertise, collaboration to strengthen influence in the information domain can enhance the collective ability to counter information threats and bolster deterrence.

- **Shared Intelligence and Analysis:**

Establishing a collaborative intelligence-sharing framework among the U.S. and its partners to exchange information related to disinformation campaigns, cyber threats, and other information warfare activities. This involves sharing intelligence on foreign influence activities, coordinating messaging, conducting joint efforts to counteract adversarial information campaigns, and coordinating joint analysis efforts to assess malicious information campaigns' origin, tactics, and impact, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the threat landscape.

- **Information and Influence Operations:**

Collaborating on information and influence operations to counter disinformation and propaganda. Diplomatic channels and public diplomacy initiatives can be leveraged to present a united narrative and counter-narratives that undermine political stability.

- **Collaborative Strategic Communication:**

Developing a unified strategic communication strategy that aligns messaging across the U.S. and its partners. This involves consistent narratives, shared objectives, and coordinated responses to counter misinformation or propaganda. Conducting joint public diplomacy initiatives to promote shared values and counteract adversarial narratives, presenting a cohesive front in the information domain.

- **Capacity Building and Training:**

Collaborating on capacity-building programs to enhance partner nations' digital literacy and resilience against disinformation. This includes government officials, media professionals, and the general public training programs. Sharing expertise in cybersecurity bolsters partner nations' ability to protect their information infrastructure from cyber threats and attacks.

- **Multilateral Information Platforms:**

Establishing or enhancing multilateral information-sharing platforms where the U.S. and its partners can collaborate on real-time updates, threat assessments, and coordinated responses to emerging information threats. Leveraging existing international forums, such as the UN or NATO, to promote global cooperation in countering information warfare and establishing norms for responsible behavior in the information domain.

- **Public-Private Collaboration:**

Encouraging collaboration between government agencies and private entities, including technology companies and social media platforms, to address information manipulation and disinformation campaigns. Coordinating efforts to identify and counteract the misuse of social media platforms for spreading false information, ensuring a comprehensive approach that combines governmental and private sector expertise.

### Technology domain.

- **Technology Standards and Norms:**

Coordinating the development and promotion of international technology standards and norms. This includes advocating for responsible behavior in cyberspace, preventing the proliferation of malicious technologies, and setting ethical guidelines for emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and biotechnology.

- **Defense Technology Collaboration:**

Collaborating on defense technology research, development, and procurement to leverage each partner's strengths and capabilities. This involves joint projects, technology-sharing agreements, and the mutual development of advanced military capabilities to address emerging threats.

- **Joint Research and Development Initiatives:**

Fostering collaboration in research and development to enhance technological innovation and economic competitiveness. This involves collaborative projects in emerging fields such as AI, quantum computing, and biotechnology, focusing on civilian and defense applications.

Facilitating technology-sharing agreements to pool expertise and resources for mutual benefit. It includes joint projects, technology-sharing agreements, and collaborative efforts to address common economic challenges. Investing in initiatives that strengthen the financial resilience of partner nations and collectively address emerging economic threats.

- **Critical Infrastructure Protection:**

Collaborating on the protection of critical infrastructure from technological threats. This includes joint initiatives to enhance the resilience of energy grids, communication networks, and transportation systems against cyber and physical attacks.

- **Supply Chain Security:**

Coordinating efforts to ensure the security of global technology supply chains. This involves joint assessments of supply chain vulnerabilities, implementing measures to enhance transparency and accountability, and developing common standards for supply chain security. Collaboratively addressing risks associated with the global interdependence of technology supply chains.

- **Regulatory Alignment:**

Aligning regulatory frameworks for emerging technologies to ensure a consistent approach among the U.S. and its partners. This includes collaborative efforts on export controls for sensitive technologies to prevent their proliferation to potential adversaries.

- **Securing access to RRE (Rare Earth Elements):**

Rare Earth Elements (REEs) are a group of seventeen crucial chemical elements for advanced technology products. In defense technology, they are critical to missile systems, laser technology, nuclear reactors, ceramic armor, jet engines, radar, and communications systems. The strategic importance of RRE in defense technology has led to concerns about the global supply chain. Much of the global supply of RRE is controlled by China. Recently, China has indicated limited exports to certain countries, including the USA. The US and partners should develop plans and cooperation to extract RRE and ensure sufficient access.

This material is distributed by Bengt A. Svensson on behalf of the Swedish Defence University, Stockholm, Sweden. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.