

Pacific Rim Security II: Managing the Global Commons

22-24 Feb 2010

Stanford University, Palo Alto CA

Executive Summary

PACRIM II, held at Stanford University 22-24 Feb 2010, brought together senior officials from the security sector, academia, and the private sector from Pacific Rim countries to continue the discussion launched by PACRIM I in 2009 on common challenges and opportunities facing nations in the region in the global commons. While PACRIM I was more about the security of the maritime domain, which understandably remains a high priority for maritime Pacific nations, PACRIM II attempted to broaden the scope of discussion. Thus, a great deal of time was devoted to energy and environmental security as well as the cyber domain and pandemic disease. The above transnational challenges were however discussed in their complex relationship with traditional security issues, including the geopolitical dynamic between the region's major powers. The evolution of US-China, China-India and US-India relations was of particular interest. And so was the situation on the Korean Peninsula both in and outside the context of the nuclear challenge.

Major workshop outcomes:

- Better appreciation of common and distinct security challenges experienced by nations on both sides of the Pacific Ocean
- Identification of possible collaborative mechanisms across the Pacific in dealing with common security challenges
- Improved partnership opportunities between organizations represented at the workshop
- Constructive interaction between the policy and scientific communities represented at the workshop

General Workshop Findings:

- The participants were unanimous about the need to advance regional cooperation but were also appreciative of the many hurdles and challenges that continue to undermine it. The lack of trust and transparency were viewed as the most obvious ones
- There are several areas of divergence between the Asian and the American nations of the Pacific Rim

Notably in regard to nuclear proliferation, Asia faces severe challenges of horizontal and vertical nuclear proliferation. By contrast, in Latin America Brazil and Argentina have increased peaceful nuclear cooperation since their mutual decision in the 1990s to forego the option of nuclear weapons.

With regard to Transnational Threats, the Asian nations seemed to have a greater focus on inter-state issues, while the nations of the Americas are looking more at intra-state challenges, such as criminal networks, smuggling and illegal arms smuggling.

Specific Workshop Findings:

A. Nuclear Issues:

- a. Nuclear energy, with its promise of almost zero carbon emissions, is an important part of global energy future. However, concerns were raised about challenges which may cloud its future:
 - i. safety concerns, particularly given the fast pace of reactor construction planned in some parts of the globe
 - ii. Proliferation concerns as the sheer number of material, facilities and experts grows
 - iii. Fuel supply confidence, both in the face of limited suppliers and possible limits on the global supply of Uranium
- b. A North East Asia multilateral fuel arrangement would leverage the strengths/needs of each state in region: Mongolia has bountiful Uranium reserves, Russia has excess technological capacity to enrich Uranium, and China/Japan/Korea need low enriched Uranium fuel
- c. Brazil and Argentina's cooperation to abandon nuclear weapons programs and to build safe and secure nuclear energy facilities demonstrates the effectiveness of international cooperation
- d. Nuclear weapons will continue to pose a challenge even as major nuclear weapons states have pledged to reduce their arsenals to Zero. As we work toward zero, perhaps it is possible to enhance security through a verifiable No First Use posture...with verification coming from low numbers of weapons, de-mating of warheads, low alert levels, no overseas deployment, and no arms race

B. Building Resilience in the face of Transnational Threats:

- a. The experience of some South American countries demonstrates that leadership is key to success versus insurgency, criminal networks, and arms smuggling. "Colombia is actually the model of resilience: 40 years of fighting against guerrilla and drug trafficking. Only a clear perception of the threat and of the drivers necessary to counter it, including critical cooperation particularly from the U.S., effected the current successes."
- b. Collective security requires common threat perceptions, which is lacking at this time
- c. Coalitions need to be built both among nations and among agencies within nations

C. Renewable Energy:

- a. Korea's Green Growth Plan will invest 2% GDP in Green Technologies over the next 5 years...Green is the future engine of growth

- b. There needs to be better communication between the science and policy communities, and the public...Scientific community sees need for “numbers not adjectives” in public debate
- c. One problem with key renewables such as wind and solar is that the supply cycle does not well match the demand cycle
- d. Different countries will require different alternative energy mixes – no one size fits all

D. Climate Change

- a. Efforts to address climate change through international negotiations have been obstructed by three key issues: Geopolitics, efforts to achieve global consensus, and efforts to solve all problems at once
- b. Getting an agreement on climate change is important for resiliency and maintaining the relevancy of existing international institutions
- c. Water will become an increasingly important resource, key to the prosperity and survival of populations, and an object of political struggle and potentially, military conflicts.

E. Pandemic

- a. International Cooperation Essential vs Pandemic...not least because diseases and the animals carrying them do not respect Customs and Immigration posts
- b. SARS forged unprecedented unity of cooperation of the public and private sector
- c. Advances in biotechnology, and biomedical research in disperse laboratories throughout the world, create the possibility for new “man-made” diseases leading to pandemics as well.

F. Cyber Security:

- a. One uniqueness of the cyber commons is that it has been created rather than discovered, allowing an unprecedented ability to manipulate
- b. While security concerns are a driving force for reduced anonymity, one key value of the anonymity of the internet is that it allows for a “free conversation between opponents” – whether commercial or political
- c. Current technology means that cyber attack is extremely difficult to defend against, but the indirect consequences which could affect attackers act as a partial deterrent
- d. The energy grid and banking system’s vulnerability to cyber attack may be an existential threat to advanced nations

Recommendations for the Future:

Several notable recommendations for the future came out of the workshop:

- Regarding nuclear energy, re-energizing work on multilateral fuel supply mechanisms could prove to be a highly effective way of ensuring a safe and reliable fuel supply as global nuclear power capacity grows
- Renewable energy holds great promise to address carbon emissions but current market structures mean the private sector alone will not be able to address. Thus, governments should find ways to fund research and development efforts in these areas
- Since alternatives to carbon energy are unlikely to be sufficient, success in future climate change negotiations is critical. Thus, negotiations should begin between the largest emitters, and then extend agreements out to progressively larger groups of nations. Disaggregating the issues negotiated will also help, such as focusing initially on energy efficiency and reforestation.
- To Combat Pandemic disease all nations must build up the transparency and information sharing demonstrated in response to the SARS outbreak
- Effective security in cyberspace requires stronger international collaboration and it may also be useful to pursue a No-First-Use policy for cyber attack

Ultimately, all participants agreed that although there is no one-size-fits-all solution, the key to success in all these endeavors will be greater international cooperation and collaboration. In that regard, PACRIM II was a highly successful workshop to do just that, enhancing mutual understanding of the challenges and opportunities among key nations of the Asia-Pacific Rim, and identifying paths forward.