

International Security Situation

The Military Security Situation in 2015: Security Cooperation Made some Breakthroughs while Turmoil and Conflicts Became somewhat Aggravated

-----In 2015 in the face of stability with some chaos in the world, one should not fear its sight being blotted out by floating clouds only if facing the situation with sober-mindedness and detailed analysis

By Meng Xiangqing, Zhou Peiqi and Zhang Chi
National Defense University

The Global military security situation in 2015 was stable as a whole, with obviously increasing uncertainties. Local conflicts and regional turmoil were getting more aggravated, non-traditional security threats becoming more prominent; major countries accelerated military transition, and accompanied by more severe strategy competition; the Asia-Pacific was becoming the main battlefield for major countries game-play, and China was facing more complicated security environment and security challenges.

The Changing Comparative Military Strength in the World, and Deepening Readjustment of Global Strategic Pattern

Presently, the Western developed countries still maintain the strong position in the international system, but their capability to affect international situation is on the decline. Following the collective rise of emerging market economies and major developing countries, the comparative international strategic strength is continuously changing, and the global strategic pattern is under continuous readjustment.

First, the comparative gap of economic strength narrows down. In recent years, the ratio of the developed countries to world GDP is on constant decline. The Seven Western countries accounted for 46.6% of the world total GDP in 2013, but the World Bank

statistics forecast the percentage down to about 45% in 2015. Meanwhile, economic strength of emerging market economies is on the rise, accounting for about 40% in 2015. The United States is the largest economy in the world, accounting for 31.8% of the world total GDP in 2013, and down to about 21.9% in 2015. China is the largest developing country in the world, its national GDP was only about 10% of the U.S. GDP in 1979, while up to 57% in 2014 and it is estimated that the percentage would be well over 60% in 2015.

Secondly, the comparative military strength is also changing somewhat. As the world No.1 military power, the United States always maintains military superiority. However, because of declining economic capabilities and military budget cut, its war power and its capabilities to control world situation by military strength are on the eclipse. In the wake of increasing economic strength, emerging market economies built military strength fairly fast. Russia has completed the “New Phase” military transformation, turned around its military strength downturn since the end of the Cold War, and following the military power demonstration in Ukraine crisis, taken resolute measure to combat the IS in Syria and made tremendous achievements. China held the 9/3 military parade on the Victory Day, the new equipments shown accounted for 84% and the military building attained obvious progress.

India sustainably pushed forward its military modernization, accelerated the national R&D on armaments, and purchased a large amount of advanced military equipments from the United States, Japan and Russia, and its military strength becomes continuously strengthened.

Thirdly, China's position and role in maintaining world peace are on the sustained rise. In 2015 having presented a series of "China Initiatives" and "China Programs" with wide-ranging impacts in the global economic and security areas, etc., China played a constructive role in maintaining world peace. China established China-UN Fund for Peace and Development and South-South Fund for Cooperation, participated in the UN Peace-keeping Mission Stand-by Mechanism and set up the UN Peace-keeping Stand-by contingent of 8000 personnel. China took part in negotiations on the Iran nuclear issue, actively mediated the national reconciliation of South Sudan, presented the "four-step" framework thinking for the political solution of the Syrian issue, dispatched 2700 peace-keepers to several hot-spots in the world, and got the talks started between Afghan Government and Taliban.

International Security Cooperation Continuously Becomes Deepened, Reliance and Constraint among Major Countries Show New Characteristics

In the era of globalization, various countries become a community of shared destiny that all countries are prosperous if one country is prosperous and all countries are harmed if one country is harmed, various countries attach more importance to bilateral and multilateral security cooperation, and hope for responding to increasingly exacerbated security challenges with collective efforts

First, security cooperation increasingly takes diversified forms. First of all, security interactions become frequent. In the beginning of 2015, the four-party coordination by Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine promoted relaxation of the Ukrainian situation. In June, China and the United States held the seventh round of strategic and economic dialogue; in September President Xi Jinping

visited the United States, stabilizing the overall Sino-American relations. Close interactions of the six-parties regarding the Iran nuclear issue promoted the basic solution of the issue. In order to counter the Islamic State (IS), France was engaged in coordination between the United States and Russia to work for establishment of an anti-terrorism alliance. The international conference on the Syrian issue started the UN-led Syrian peace process. Secondly, security summit became normal. In September NATO held the summit, in January and December EU held two summits. In November G-20 summit was held in Turkey, with wide-ranging topics related to many security issues such as Ukrainian and Syrian situations, etc. In November the UN Climate Change Conference was held in Paris, and adopted the Paris Agreement to respond to global climate change. Thirdly, the traditional alliance relationship became increasingly strengthened. The NATO coherence was consolidated because of the Ukrainian issue, while the U.S.-Japan, the U.S.-Philippines, the U.S.-Korean alliances were becoming solidified.

Second, bright spots of security cooperation obviously increase. The biggest bright spot of international security cooperation in 2015 was the solution of the Iran nuclear issue. The Iran nuclear issue stayed on for 12 years and showed a turnaround opportunity in 2014. In April 2014, the six countries and Iran reached the framework solution program on the Iran nuclear issue, and in July reached the historical agreement on comprehensive solution of the Iran nuclear issue. The signed agreement on the Iran nuclear issue symbolized the basic solution of the issue, and was in favor of relaxation of the Mid-East situation. Another big bright spot was the convocation of the Paris Climate Conference and the signed Paris Agreement. Climate warming is a grim non-traditional security threat to mankind, and needs urgent response effectively. The Paris Climate Conference and the Paris Agreement are the most successful case for the international community to jointly respond to a non-traditional security threat.

Third, both cooperation and prevention

are strengthened. While promoting security cooperation and collective response to threats and challenges, some countries endeavor to exclude and prevent potential competitors by relying on allied force. The Anti-IS Alliance set up by the United States in the Mid-East excluded Russia. In December Saudi Arabia organized a 34-country anti-terrorism alliance to combat the Mid-East terrorist organizations, but excluded Iran, a major country in the Mid-East. The U.S.-Japan, the U.S.-India, Japan-India and Japan-Philippines cooperation were increasingly enhanced, one of whose goal was to constrain China jointly.

Traditional Security Threats Interwoven With Non-Traditional Security Threats Elevate, World Security Situation Still Remains Grim.

In 2015 the world was not tranquil, local wars and hot spot issues were frequent indeed, violent terrorist activities rampant, challenges such as refugees exodus problems and environmental degradation became severe, traditional security threats were deeply interwoven with non-traditional security threats, and these problems were spiraling one after another.

First, local wars and regional conflicts increase. In 2014 there were 15 local armed conflicts with relatively big global impact, while 17 in 2015 with the Mid-East and Africa as the main regions of the armed conflicts.

Syria was immersed deeply in war. In March 2011 a war broke out between the Syrian Government forces and the armed opposition groups. In April 2013, the IS expanded rampantly in Syria. In August 2014 the United States declared war on the IS, so Syria emerged a complex situation of civil war interwoven with anti-terrorism war, and rivalry of several forces. In September 2015 Russia started the air strike against the IS in Syria. After Paris terrorist attacks, France declared the national state of war, and dispatched troops to combat the IS. Germany decided to send 1200 troops to support the French anti-terror efforts, which was the largest oversea dispatch in post-WWII. Under the multi-lateral strike, the

IS suffered heavy setbacks. However, the chaotic situation in Syria could hardly be turned around in short term. The stalemate between the Syrian Government forces and the armed opposition groups made it difficult to forecast the outcome in the battle field in the foreseeable future. The anti-terrorism war targeted at the IS may become a protracted warfare. On striking against the IS, there were continuous games play among major countries, so an international anti-terrorism alliance could hardly be shaped through coordination among them, but constraints may even fall in place. In November, a Russian Su-24 fighter was shot down by Turkey, which deteriorated the Russia-Turkey relations immediately, hence, the efforts to counter the IS by the international community were badly disturbed.

The Ukrainian situation was sustainably chaotic. Entering 2015, the Ukrainian situation was becoming relaxed. In February, Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France held a summit and signed the New Minsk Agreement (NMA), stipulating the cease-fire in the Eastern part of Ukraine on February 15, and the conflicts there were brought under control. Moreover, on June 3, the largest armed conflict broke out in Donetsk since the NMA. In the face of tense situation, Russia & Ukraine side and the United States & Europe side upheld different opinions, and criticized its counterpart for the violation of the NMA. Because of fierce confrontation between the two sides in the Ukrainian conflicts, and no accommodations possible, internally a pro-Russian faction and a pro-West faction in existence, plus sharp contradictions difficult to be coordinated between Russia and Ukraine, and also with a background of geo-strategic competition between Russia and the United States & Europe, therefore, the prospect for the Ukrainian situation is not optimistic.

A severe civil war broke out in Yemen. Upon entering 2015, the Yemen situation suddenly elevated. After outbreak of the civil war in March, at the invitation of Yemen Government, Saudi Arabia associated with 10 Mid-East countries carried out a 9-month air-strike against the Huthi contingents. In

December, the Yemen Government announced a cease-fire with the Huthi contingents, all sides concerned held a new round of peaceful talks in Geneva, hence the Yemen situation temporarily relaxed. The Yemen civil war had a rather complex background, with conflicts between Shiite sect and Sanni sect, the two major sects of Islam, and also the different impacts of Saudi Arabia and Iran, two major regional countries in the Mid-East, and could not expect a solution in a short term.

Second, non-traditional security threats become increasingly acute. In the wake of growing globalization, interdependence among countries becomes further deepened, various global transnational problems increase. In 2015 the refugees crisis and terrorist activities in Europe were the most striking non-traditional security threats faced by the international community.

The refugees problems became worsened. Since 2015, the biggest refugee exodus in the post-war swept across the whole Europe, into which 0.34 million refugees flooded in the first 7 months, most of whom were from Syria. The refugees problems severely impacted the social stability of Europe, and how to respond to the problems witnessed huge differences. Italy and Greece took laissez-faire attitude to these refugees, France and Hungary adopted encirclement tactics, Western European countries such as Germany, France, Italy, etc. upheld refugee ration mechanism, and Central and Eastern European countries opposed strongly the incoming refugees, hence, the European integration faced prominent challenges. Meanwhile, the refugees problems also affected the European economic recovery. In 2015 the European economic recovery was weak, and the unexpected refugee crisis brought tremendous fiscal pressure on the European countries, and worsened the weary European economic recovery. Besides, terrorists were mixed up with hidden inside the refugees, increasingly highlighting the European security threats, and anti-terrorism situation became more stern and complicated.

Terrorist activities were getting more rampant. In 2015 international terrorist activities were concentrated in the Mid-East,

Northern Africa and South Asia, and were spreading to Europe. Terrorist activities also showed new features: Firstly, large-scale terrorist attacks were on the increase. The year 2015 was the year that witnessed increasing large-scale terrorist attacks. After the Paris Schallie Weekly was attacked by terrorists, terrorist attacks also occurred in Baicheng of Xinjiang, China, The suicide bombs attacks launched by Boko Haram in Nigeria, Chad and Cameroon, and especially on Paris in November shook the whole world. Secondly, terrorist organizations showed a networking tendency. Al Qaeda was networking the extremist organizations in Western Asia, Northern Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia. The IS was infiltrating into Africa, Central Asia and South Asia, many extremist organizations such as Boko Haram in Africa declared loyal to it. Besides, rivalry for terrorist leadership among extreme organizations was getting sharp. The rivalry for leadership between al Qaeda and the IS was becoming white-hot, competing for launching terrorist attacks with the biggest impact and the worst casualty, leaving profound harm on the regional stability and security.

Major Countries Deepened Military Transformation With More Acute Competition for Strategic High-Ground

Major countries continuously readjust their security strategy and military strategy, sustainably push forward military transformation, strengthen military building, accelerate R&D on new and high-tech armaments, and augment competition in the new military dimensions.

First, security strategy and military strategy are in deep readjustment. In February 2015 the U.S. National Strategy Report stated that the main threat it faces is the non-state actors, mainly including non-traditional security threats such as extremism and terrorism. Russia began implementing the new version of the Russian Military Doctrine released at the end of December 2014, which lists the NATO as its No.1 military threat, reserves the conditions for it to use nuclear weapons, and for the first time uses high-tech advanced conventional weapons as strategic

deterrence. Japan adopted the New Defense Legislation, which is related to amendments to 11 laws, opens the gate for the Japanese Self-Defense forces to go overseas, and exercises the right of collective defense, and a major turnaround for the Japanese defense policy. In May China published China Military Strategy white paper, which believes that China's external environment is generally favorable, but still faces with plural and complex security threats, and China would observe the strategic principle of active defense.

Second, military transformation further deepens. Presently, The large scale military transformation by major countries such as the United States and Russia has largely come to an end, and entered a refined period. The U.S. latest National Military Strategy Report points out that it in the future should nurture leaders of renovation, optimize decision-making process and develop advanced military capability. Russia stresses that introducing modern management system and improving combat training quality and intensity are priorities for the military building in the future. After many years of preparedness and explorations, China's military reform has entered a substantial period, and aroused extensive concerns in the world. This reform is mainly to push forward leadership management restructuring, optimize the functions and institutions for the Central Military Commission (CMC), and improve the leadership management restructuring for various forces; to improve the CMC combined combat command institutions and the regional combined command system; optimize the military structure, and cut the number of troops by 300000; restructure the armed forces and promote the military to develop in the filling-up, combined, multi-capable and flexible orientation.

Third, armaments modernization takes an accelerating step. The U.S. new National Military Strategy Report states that the future U.S. armaments development focuses on air-based and land-based targets and strategic warning systems, integrated intelligence and reconnaissance system, strategic transportation, long-range precision strike weapon, missile

defense technology, sub-water systems, pilotless system and technology, and special corps and cyber troops. Russia is making the National Armaments Program for 2016-2025, the goal of which is to substantially increase the ratio of Russian new armaments, with emphasis on the "trinity" of nuclear weapons, navy ships and submarines, army's tanks and guns, and air forces space-ships and fighters. etc. Japan has consecutively increased military budget, which is mainly used for purchasing f-35, pilotless reconnaissance aircrafts, destroyers and building submarines, etc. India did not hesitate to purchase many advanced armaments from Russia and the United States. In December during the visit to Russia, Indian Prime Minister reached the biggest arms deal with Russia since 2001 including Russian frigates and submarines, military transport helicopters, armored vehicles, etc.

Fourth, fierce rivalry in new strategic dimensions. The rivalry in new strategic dimensions mainly in space and cyber space is becoming white-hot. Major countries are developing space armies, and the space arms race is in the ascendant. The United States is currently the No.1 space power, and the U.S. military has been pursuing the global space dominant position. Presently, the U.S. Space Command of Air Force is deploying advanced anti-missile weapons, and the U.S. space R&D projects include providing satellite mobility, mini-satellite, reinforced satellite circuits and remote control as well as repairing damaged satellite. Russia is a strong space power in the world, and attaches importance to developing space military. In August 2015, Russia's BKC was established, composed of long-range aviation, transportation aviation, frontline aviation, radar troops, air defense missile and anti-aircraft forces and space forces, and anti missile troops, with the task of finding a target in the air and destroying it. Japan in January 2015 adopted a 10-year space strategy, which is included in the national security strategy for the first time, and accelerates space military building. Meanwhile, major countries are giving more attention to developing cyber space military strength, and contending for cyber space dominance. In recent years, the

U.S. military has continuously intensified cyber space power building, pursuing absolute cyber space superiority. The United States is further restructuring cyber space forces, accelerating establishment of cyber space task force, setting up an institution especially responsible for cyber security, intensifying the R&D on cyber space weapons, and conducting a series of cyber space exercises, as a result, the U.S. military cyber space combat ability is sustainably enhanced. In 2014, Japan established its cyber defense corps, and carried out cyber-war exercise. On January 9, 2015, Japan set up its cyber security strategy headquarter, and released the *Cyber Security Strategy* in August, stressed on increasing capability to respond to cyber attacks.

In the Tension-tilting Situation in the Asia-Pacific Stability, the Strategic Risks and Pressures Faced by China Expand

The Asia-Pacific region is speedily returning to the focus of global power, major countries increase input into the region, games play regarding the regional leadership is getting acute, disputes on maritime rights and interests become warmed up, arms race get fierce, and the complexity of China's security environment is on the increase with rising strategic pressure.

First, major countries actively push forward their Asia-Pacific strategies

The Asia-Pacific region is the region of convergence of multi-strategic forces, major countries strategic readjustment, force lay-out and resources configuration tilt toward the Asia-Pacific. In May 2015, openly stating that the U.S. Asia-Pacific rebalancing strategy entered a new phase, U.S. Defense Secretary Carter stressed that new high-tech armaments, the U.S.-Japan-Korea alliance and TPP are the three corner stones for its Asia-Pacific rebalancing strategy. In March the United States released its new version of *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, stating that Indo-Pacific importance for the United States, its allies and partners is on the increase, and emphasizing that it should maintain all-dimensional capability. In August the United States released its first Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy, proposing clearly

to increase its military strength in the Asia-Pacific, reinforcing allies maritime security strength, and currently is deploying a large amount of advanced weaponry into the Asia-Pacific. In April the United States and Japan adopted the New Guideline for Defense Cooperation, thus, the U.S.-Japanese military integration was upgraded. In June, the U.S.-ASEAN relationship was upgraded to strategic partnership, with frequent interactions between them.

After the Ukrainian crisis, the Russian geo-strategic environment is deteriorating, its Look East Policy takes quickened steps. In July 2015, Russia adopted the revised Russian Maritime Doctrine, emphasizing development of friendly relations with the Asia-Pacific countries such as China and others. In March, Russia decided to join the AIIB, and in May Putin with high profile agreed its Eurasian Economic Alliance docked with China's new Silk Road and Economic Belt. In September during Putin's visit to China, the two countries signed over 20 agreements on economic cooperation projects. With the aid of the U.S. Asia-Pacific rebalancing strategy and the U.S.-Japan alliance as the axis, Japan has actively readjusted its presence and layout in the Asia-Pacific. Having assumed the Prime Minister office, Modi upgrades Indian Look East policy to Indian Eastward policy. In January, India and the United States established global strategic partnership, emphasizing that the Indian Eastward policy could be docked with the U.S. Asia-Pacific rebalancing strategy, and the two countries should strengthen strategic coordination. India-Japan relations is continuously deepened, Abe visited India twice in 2015, and the two sides signed a series of agreements related to investment, infrastructure, high speed rail, nuclear energy, etc. and also including Japanese sales of armaments and technology to India, and participation in military exercises at the Indian invitation.

Second, disputes on maritime rights and interests become warmer. The disputes on maritime rights and interests in the Asia-Pacific increasingly become internationalized, the United States and Japan intervene deeply, and

small countries in the region also took this as an important opportunity for interests redistribution, the positions of relevant countries regarding islands sovereignty and maritime delimitation become hardened.

The disputes in the South China Sea are spiraling. With free navigation as the pretext, the United States has openly intervened in the disputes. In 2015, it sent P-8A anti-submarine aircraft, Larson missile destroyer, B-52 bombers to make provocations around Nansha Islands in the South China Sea. It strengthened relations with Viet Nam, the Philippines and Malaysia that made claims on some islands, sold armaments to them and conducted joint exercises. Japan clamored that the South China Sea situation was closely connected with its national interests, and intervened in the South China Sea disputes in various forms at the pretext of maintaining free navigation in the South China Sea. In May Japanese marine corps held the first joint exercises with the Philippines, provided Viet Nam with second hand patrol boats free, and committed to sale of patrol boats to the Philippines. The Philippines and Viet Nam pretended importance on playing a control of the disputes, and launched provocations in the region on many occasions. The Philippines slandered China at the international Marine Court, and made all-dimensional efforts in an attempt to cook the South China Sea disputes at the APEC summit, East Asia summit, and ASEAN foreign ministers meeting. In November, Viet Nam and the Philippines established strategic partnership.

Tension emerged in the relaxed situation regarding the Diaoyu Islands. Abe Cabinet stubbornly adhered to its position of the undisputed sovereignty of the Diaoyu Islands, and adopted a series of policies, with increasing military preparedness and response, thus, putting the Diaoyu Islands situation in a stalemate. From January to September 2015, planes take-off of the Japanese self-defense corps targeted at China set a record of 231 times. In November Japan decided to deploy 500 garrison troops in the Shihuan Islands close to the Diaoyu Islands in the future, continued the taking-islands exercises aimed at the Diaoyu Islands with the U.S. military, and strengthened the combined war cooperation regarding the Diaoyu

Islands with the United States with the aid of the new guideline for defense cooperation.

Third, regional arms race is warming up.

In order to respond to the complicated security situation in the Asia-Pacific, the Asia-Pacific countries one after another increase military budget, develop or introduce advanced arms. On the basis of consecutive increase of military budget, Japan's military budget in fiscal year 2015 was 4.98 trillion yen, and a record high of over 5 trillion yen in 2016. In March Izumo helicopter aircraft carrier of the Japan's Maritime Self-defense Corps was launched, with displacement of 24000 tons. In October, Japan held a watch ceremony for the carrier, advanced armaments of the Maritime Self-defense Corps participated to show off its maritime military strength on this occasion. South Korea continuously strengthens military strength based on growing economic strength. In April it released its National Defense Mid-term Program, with a big increase of military spending. In line with the Program, for fiscal years 2016 to 2020, its military budget would reach 232.5 trillion won. In 2016, the ROK military spending would amount to 3.895 billion won, up 4%. In October ROK raised the goal of building a picked and advanced strong troops.

ASEAN countries especially those self-claimed owners of some of the South China Sea islands continuously increased their military input. The Vietnamese military budget grew the fastest among ASEAN countries, the Philippines military budget grew to US\$550 million in 2016. In order to turn around the backwardness of equipments, these countries ordered many missile patrol boats, missile frigates and multi-functional ships, etc. An arms race for the South China sea disputes is becoming acute.

In overall view, the world military security situation in 2015 is featured by elevating games-play among major countries, more complicate and plural threats, and sustainable ferment of regional hot spots. Looking forward to 2016, the global military security situation will maintain the basic stability, but instability and uncertainty may get further elevated with more challenges in security areas.

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