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Wakhan Corridor

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For comments or questions about *China Brief*, please contact us at pubs@jamestown.org

1111 16th St. NW, Suite #320
 Washington, DC 20036
 Tel: (202) 483-8888
 Fax: (202) 483-8337

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In a Fortnight

By L.C. Russell Hsiao and Glen E. Howard

CHINA BUILDS CLOSER TIES TO AFGHANISTAN THROUGH THE WAKHAN CORRIDOR

As NATO forces push forward toward stabilizing Afghanistan, backed by the commitment of an additional 30,000 U.S. troops, there has been a growing call by the United States for other countries to shoulder a greater share of the security burden. While China is clearly increasing its commercial stakes in Afghanistan as more U.S. forces patrol the country, Beijing has been dragging its feet when it comes to playing any sort of military or security role in Afghanistan. For instance, China Metallurgical Group Corporation—a Chinese state-owned conglomerate—is reportedly investing \$3.4 billion to develop the strategic copper deposits in Afghanistan near the village of Aynak. Yet, in spite of its widening economic interests in Afghanistan and repeated requests from Western countries for security assistance in the region, China has refused so far to make any sort of police or military commitment to assist the United States in Afghanistan.

According to Chinese media reports, efforts by NATO and Western countries to encourage China to open the strategic Wakhjir Pass that connects Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XAR) and Afghanistan with the eastern end of the 400 kilometer-long Wakhan Corridor have had little or no impact on Chinese decision-makers (*Dongfang Zao Bao*, December 6, 2009). A recent Chinese report has shed light on three major Chinese developments along the Wakhan Corridor that reportedly began in 2009, which highlight preparations in regional infrastructure along that border. These developments may herald a change in thinking by Chinese leaders regarding

their position on the border, as China may be on the verge of becoming more involved in stabilizing Afghanistan's regional security (China Review News, December 28).

First, a 75 kilometers-long road, which will extend up to 10 kilometers from the China-Afghanistan border, is reportedly being built by funds from the Chinese Ministry of Defense. According to this report, construction of the road began in the summer of 2009, and is scheduled for completion sometime in October 2010. The road is intended for use by Chinese frontier patrols and for the transportation of supplies to border units. The reporter that surveyed the site indicated that the road may allow front-line units to change guard during the long winters (China Review News, December 28).

Second, the construction of a supply depot by the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, which began in 2009, is projected to become operational later this year. The facility will reportedly raise the food quality standard for the police forces guarding the volatile Afghan frontier (China Review News, December 28).

Third, a mobile communications center was reportedly established along the Wakhan Corridor last summer that permits the operation of mobile devices along the border, unlike before when Chinese units only had one functioning satellite telephone. Moreover, a specialized optical cable for web connection and internet access has been laid, with plans to construct a special line for the frontier police force beginning later this year (China Review News, December 28).

Meanwhile, in regard to the possible deployment of forces to Afghanistan, Chinese officials continue to uphold the official view of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. For example, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown called on China to contribute troops to the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in Afghanistan as far back as 2008, which Beijing ignored. At that time Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Qin Gang stated that: "Except for the U.N. peace-keeping missions approved by the U.N. Security Council, China never sends a single troop abroad. It's [*sic*] out of the question to send Chinese troops to ISAF in Afghanistan" (Chinese Foreign Ministry Website, November 18, 2008).

A major debate has unfolded in China in recent months among Chinese security experts and commentators who have weighed in on whether China should play a role in helping the West stabilize Afghanistan. In an interview with CNR.Cn, the deputy director of the National Defense University's Institute of Strategic Studies, Wang Baofu,

questioned the efficacy of any Chinese troop deployments in stabilizing Afghanistan, especially in light of the inability of tens of thousands of troops to stabilize the situation. Wang argues that the allied forces are instead trying to shift the risks and responsibilities of the conflict from themselves (Xinhua News Agency, January 4). The deputy dean of the School of International Studies at Renmin University said bluntly: "The expectations in the U.S. that China will send armed police to Afghanistan, that is too much for China." "It is possible that China will send more money, but armed men, no way", says Jin Canrong (*Financial Times*, November 12, 2009). Moreover, several commentaries published by the Beijing-based *Global Times*' newspaper have suggested that Beijing could possibly deploy police forces to Afghanistan instead of military forces, yet whether such deployments should be made is contingent upon them being used as a bargaining chip with the United States to secure China's other national interests, which appears to be an oblique reference to obtaining U.S. support for some sort of *quid pro quo* on Taiwan (Xinhua News Agency, December 23, 2008).

At the same time, there are also those who view NATO operations in Afghanistan more cynically and see them as part of a U.S. strategy to gain control over Central Asia. For example, the Hong Kong-based newspaper *Wen Wei Po*, which takes a pro-Beijing line, took a skeptical position on the issue and suggested that Beijing remain vigilant and take a cautious attitude toward Afghanistan (*Wen Wei Po*, January 4). The director of the Central Asia Research Institute at the Xinjiang Social Science Academy, Pang Zhiping, echoed this view in a recent interview pointing out that the most important task for China's frontier defense is to keep global terrorist forces out of China and prevent them from joining with so-called "separatist" forces. "Why would you make yourself the target of global terrorist organizations?" Pang added (China Review News, December 28, 2009).

These debates reflect China's continued reluctance to play any sort of military or security role in Afghanistan in the near future. Yet at the same time it is undeniable that there is a growing realization in Beijing that Sino interests may be more threatened by a U.S. failure in Afghanistan. In light of China's growing economic footprint in Afghanistan, it remains to be seen whether these developments along the Wakhan Corridor will actually translate into a greater Chinese willingness to play any sort of military or security role in Afghanistan. However, given Chinese efforts to modernize and upgrade its infrastructure in the region bordering the Wakhan Corridor, it is becoming increasingly visible that China perceives a growing need to safeguard its interests in the region, especially as its strategic and economic interests in Afghanistan grow.

Mr. L.C. Russell Hsiao is Associate Editor of *The Jamestown Foundation's China Brief* and Glen E. Howard is the President of *The Jamestown Foundation*.

Major Reshuffles in China's Military and Security Leadership

By Willy Lam

President and Commander-in-Chief Hu Jintao has reshuffled the leadership of China's military and security forces to speed up rejuvenation and raise the efficiency and combat-readiness of the generals. The supremo also wants to ensure the officers' loyalty to the Hu Jintao or Communist Youth League (CYL) Faction, which is the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) dominant clique. The quality of the top brass has assumed critical importance because, at a time of growing socio-political instability, the military forces are playing an increasing role in maintaining order and upholding the CCP's "perennial ruling party status."

Since the October 1 National Day military parade, dozens of senior appointments in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the quasi-military People's Armed Police (PAP)—both of which report to the Central Military Commission (CMC) headed by Hu—have been announced by the official media. Given the party's reliance on the PAP to crack down on "the three evil forces of separatism, terrorism and religious extremism" across the nation, high-level personnel changes at the PAP deserve special attention. In late December, Lieutenant General Wang Jianping was appointed PAP Commander. The 56-year-old General Wang replaced General Wu Shuangzhan, 64, who is retiring after having served a record ten years as head of the paramilitary force. Wang and about two dozen officers were promoted in what the Chinese media described as one of the largest-ever reshuffles since the PAP was set up in 1983 (News.China.com, December 26, 2009; *People's Daily*, December 31, 2009).

A native of Hebei Province, General Wang is deemed a protégé of President Hu's. A fast-rising star within the military and security establishment, Wang was elevated two times in 2009—from PAP chief of staff to Vice-Commander, and then Commander. Like most senior PAP staffers, Wang began his career in the regular army. His career might have benefited most from having served as Commander of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) PAP from 1996 to 2000. With conditions in Tibet and Xinjiang expected to remain unpredictable for the near future, the PAP is Beijing's main weapon in thwarting "splittist" activities in China's vast

western flank. Moreover, experience in Tibet—where Hu served from 1988 to 1992 as party secretary—is deemed critical for senior military and security cadres (Xinhua News Agency, December 26, 2009; *Southern Metropolitan News* [Guangzhou], December 25, 2009). It is perhaps not coincidental that the newly minted Party Secretary of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, Hu Chunhua, 46—the most senior-ranked among Sixth-Generation cadres—also earned his spurs in the TAR. Both General Wang and Hu Chunhua (who is not related to Hu Jintao) have impressed the President with their ability to "nib the destabilizing forces in the bud" (See "CCP Party Apparatchiks Gaining at the Expense of Technocrats," *China Brief*, December 16, 2009).

In addition to Commander Wang, eight other senior PAP headquarters staff received their commissions from the CMC recently. They included the Deputy Commander, Lieutenant General Xue Guoqiang, as well as Chief of the General Staff, Major General Niu Zhizhong and Director of the Political Department, Major General Wei Liang. Quite a number of these newly elevated officers have college degrees in addition to diplomas from military academies. General Xue, 58, for instance, is a graduate of the elite Nanjing Political Academy. Equally significant are reshuffles of provincial PAP commanders and political commissars. Within China's 31 provincial-level PAP brigades, nine commanders and 15 political commissars have been named since last autumn. Personnel shifts in regions plagued by ethnic strife have attracted the most attention. Soon after the July 5, 2008 Urumqi riots, Xinjiang PAP vice-commander Major General Chi Baowen was promoted Commander. Chi's predecessor, Major General Dai Sujun, was given a lateral transfer to PAP headquarters. General Dai, who had become Xinjiang PAP Chief just nine months earlier, had to vacate his post to take political responsibility for the uncontrolled outbreak of violence in the summer. While his new position—Vice-Chief of Staff at PAP headquarters—did not amount to a demotion, it seems clear that the career of the 54-year-old officer has been dealt a big blow (Sina.com.cn, December 25, 2009; Qingdaonews.com [Qingdao], August 15, 2009).

Personnel changes in the four headquarters of PLA units—the General Staff Department (GSD), General Political Department (GPD), General Logistics Department (GLP), and the General Equipment Department (GED)—as well as major divisions reflect the strict implementation of the retire-at-65 regulation for generals. As in the case of the PAP, the CMC has rewarded PLA officers who boast solid academic and professional credentials, including long stints in renowned military institutes. Examples include GPD Vice-Director Lieutenant General Tong Shijing,

who was formerly political commissar at the National Defense University; and the Assistant GDP Director, Lieutenant General Nian Fuchun, who is a former vice-political commissar at the Academy of Military Sciences. Exceptionally qualified officers were given double promotions. Thus, Major General Niu Hongguang, a Chief of Staff at the GED, was elevated to GED Vice-Director; and Lieutenant General Hou Shusen, a Chief of Staff of the Shenyang Military Region took the proverbial helicopter ride to the post of Vice-Chief of the General Staff, the No. 2 slot at the GSD (*People's Daily*, December 31, 2009; *Wen Wei Po* [Hong Kong], December 15, 2009).

Equally significant, several rising stars had distinguished themselves in unconventional campaigns such as the reconstruction of Sichuan Province after the devastating earthquake of May 2008. This reflected a just-issued CMC directive on the fact that the PLA must boost its capacity in mobilization and operations that are not related to military combat (Xinhua News Agency, December 1, 2009). Given the fact that China had not been at war since 1979, large-scale maneuvers ranging from combating natural disasters to fighting pirates in international waters have given up-and-coming officers an ideal platform to prove their mettle. For example, the new Vice-Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Sun Jianguo and the new Assistant Chief of the General Staff, Major General Qi Jianguo, had impressed the CMC with their leadership of relief and rebuilding projects in Sichuan (*People's Daily*, December 29, 2009; China News Service, December 15, 2009)

From the perspective of factional politics, it is significant that President Hu is speeding up personnel changes in the defense and security establishment in the run-up to the 18th Party Congress in 2012. A key goal of the CMC Chairman is to dilute the stranglehold that “princelings”—the sons of party elders—have on a sizeable number of top slots in the PLA and the PAP. After all, the so-called Gang of Princelings, which is headed by Vice-President Xi Jinping, is deemed the clique that will give the most competition to the CYL Faction in the coming decade or so (See *China Brief*, “Hu Jintao Picks Core Sixth-Generation Leaders,” May 15, 2009). The strength of the Gang of Princelings is demonstrated by the fact that quite a few of the freshly elevated officers are the sons of illustrious party elders and generals. They include General Zhang Haiyang, the Political Commissar of Chengdu Military Region who was made Political Commissar of the Second Artillery Corps, or the Strategic Missile Forces, last month. Zhang is the son of General Zhang Zhen, a former Politburo member and CMC vice-chairman. Another princeling who just won promotion is the Assistant Chief of the General Staff Major General Chen Yong. His father is the former Commander of the Shandong Military District, General Chen Fangren

(Globaltimes.com, December 30, 2009; Zhengzhou Evening Post [Zhengzhou], December 30, 2009). The CYL Faction, by contrast, is thinly represented, if at all, in the PLA and the PAP.

According to unpublicized decisions made at the 17th Party Congress of 2007, Vice-President Xi, 56, the most senior-ranked among China's Fifth-Generation leaders, is slated to take over the post of Party General Secretary and State President from Hu at and soon after the 18th Party Congress. However, Xi's failure to be made a CMC vice-chairman at the Fourth Central Committee Plenum last September has fed speculation that Hu will hang on to his CMC chairmanship beyond the 18th CCP Congress (*Straits Times*, December 9, 2009; *Apple Daily* [Hong Kong], November 12, 2009). “Xi's delayed entry into the CMC suggests that Hu Jintao would like to remain in charge of the military a few years past his retirement from the party general secretary's position in 2012,” said Northwestern University Sinologist Professor Victor Shih. “Hu would like to maintain power in order to place trusted followers from the CYL system in important [party and state] positions. This is especially important for Hu as the influence of princelings is growing rapidly in China” [1].

Apart from personally selecting the country's top PLA and PAP officers, President Hu has effectively raised his prestige among the top brass by giving the forces double-digit annual budgetary boosts—as well as repeatedly raising the salaries and fringe benefits of military personnel. Last month, the CMC approved unprecedented four-fold and six-fold increases in insurance payouts to soldiers who died in the course of duty, and those honored as “martyrs” respectively (*Wen Wei Po*, March 6, 2009; China News Service, December 25, 2009). Anxiety to win over the generals, however, may run counter to the goal of streamlining and modernizing the military structure. For instance, the long-contemplated abolition of the seven regional commands of the ground forces, deemed a relic of Maoist-era military thinking, has been delayed owing to the top brass's opposition to the likely curtailment of a slew of senior positions. In the final analysis, President Hu and the CCP leadership must strike a balance between maintaining the generals' loyalty and nurturing a leaner, more professional defense corps that can effectively uphold national security.

Willy Wo-Lap Lam, Ph.D., is a Senior Fellow at The Jamestown Foundation. He has worked in senior editorial positions in international media including Asiaweek newsmagazine, South China Morning Post, and the Asia-Pacific Headquarters of CNN. He is the author of five books on China, including the recently published “Chinese Politics in the Hu Jintao Era: New Leaders,

New Challenges.” Lam is an Adjunct Professor of China studies at Akita International University, Japan, and at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

NOTES

1. Author’s interview with Professor Victor Shih, January 2, 2010.

China’s Conventional Cruise and Ballistic Missile Force Modernization and Deployment

By Martin Andrew

The People’s Republic of China (PRC) 60th National Day, which took place on October 1, 2009, was lauded by the Chinese-media for its display of the military’s ‘precision striking capabilities.’ According to Yu Jixun, deputy commander of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Second Artillery Corps—China’s strategic missile forces—its conventional missiles “could launch precision strikes in all weathers and directions” (Xinhua News Agency, October 1, 2009). Indeed, new Chinese-built ballistic and cruise missiles exhibit the significant stride made by Chinese defense-industries in missile technology and development, but more importantly, the advent of a formidable class of Chinese-made conventional cruise and ballistic missile force underscore another element of the changing strategic landscape in the Asia-Pacific region (China Military Online, October 2, 2009).

The Soviet Union was able to use its large arsenal of theater ballistic missiles to threaten all of China during the Cold War, while leaving its strategic missile and bomber forces for targets in the United States and elsewhere. After more than two decades, the role has reversed and the leadership in Moscow is well aware of its increasing vulnerability to the plethora of Chinese theater nuclear ballistic and cruise missiles that are coming into service (RIA Novosti, October 17, 2007).

When the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty between the United States and the former Soviet Union came into force in December 1987, China witnessed a major threat to its cities along with its nuclear and conventional forces rescinded. At the same time, China was modernizing its theater ballistic missile forces by introducing the 2,150 km range DF-21 (CSS-5) mobile solid fuel intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) while selling ballistic technology and missiles abroad. Saudi Arabia received CSS-2 IRBMs

and Iran is believed to have received technology to produce the DF-15 (CSS-6) and DF-11 (CSS-7) short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs). The Chinese have upgraded the DF-21 to 2,500 km and have developed new systems that could easily place large parts of Russia under nuclear threat from mobile launchers situated deep inside China.

The PLA’s new strategic weapons systems have the range and accuracy to accurately attack hardened targets like airfields and command and control centers in the Asia-Pacific region. The DF-21 IRBM and the DF-15D have been accurized in recent years, which are the Corps’ support weapon for the PLA’s new heavy mechanized corps. Warheads, similar to the synthetic aperture radar guided earth penetrator employed on the Pershing II IRBM have been observed utilizing satellite guidance updates from China’s own *Beidou* system (International Assessment and Strategy Center, July 24, 2007). The appearance of an accurized Chinese IRBM and cruise missiles might be a factor in President Vladimir Putin’s threats to pull Russia out of the INF treaty in October 2007 (RIA Novosti, October 25, 2007).

The C602 Long-range Anti-ship Cruise Missile and the CJ-10 ground launched cruise missile are two systems that would give Russian air defense planners nightmares [1]. The C602 and especially the CJ-10 missile could easily be mistaken for the U.S. BGM-109G Gryphon GLCM that was scrapped under the 1987 INF Treaty. The technology for China to develop these missiles into a GLCM was given a huge boost with the illegal transfer of six Russian designed Kh 55 (AS-15 Kent) air launched cruise missiles from Ukraine in 2000 (International Assessment and Strategy Center, June 22, 2006). Chinese missile designers received the same missile from which the 3,000 km range Soviet SSC-X-4 ‘Slingshot’ KV-500 GLCM was developed, which were destroyed along with their TELs under the INF Treaty (Missilethreat.com).

CJ-10 GROUND LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILE

The *Chang Jian* (Long Sword) CJ-10 (DF-10) long-range cruise missile system reportedly started trials with the Second Artillery Force in 2004 and between 50 and 250 missiles had been deployed along with between 20 and 30 launch vehicles as of September 2009 [2]. The Chinese media initially revealed their existence during the 60th Anniversary Parade. The CJ-10 is identified by three long launch canisters, square in circumference, mounted on the rear of the Chinese WS 2400 8 x 8 tractor-elevator-launcher (TEL), and the missile has a reported range of over 1,500km and up to 2,000 km.

The DF-10 is a land-based variant of the Kh-55/AS-

15 Kent, and at least six were illegally transferred from Ukraine in 2000 (International Assessment and Strategy Center, February 10, 2009). A Chinese article on the CJ-10 commented on the comparison made by Western military analysts between the CJ-10 and the defunct United States BGM-109G Gryphon, and its Soviet equivalent, the 3,000 km range SSC-X-4 'Slingshot,' which was developed from the Kh-55 [3]. The article also discussed Western observers' comments on the illegal transfer of the Kh-55 and did not deny that the transfer or the idea that the CJ-10 is based on the Kh-55.

The missile uses both GLONASS and GPS satellite systems for guidance with four different types of warheads available—a heavy variant weighing 500 kg, and three 350 kg variants: high explosive blast, sub-munition and earth penetrator [4].

The CJ-10, along with the introduction of the C-602 anti-ship long-range cruise missile and the satellite guided DF-15D intermediate range ballistic missile, may be further reasons why Russia wanted to scrap the INF Treaty.

RUSSIA'S RESPONSE

China's IRBM and cruise missile programs have caught Moscow's attention, but Russian forces are limited in their ability to respond with a counter strike to a TBM or cruise missile attack, short of using their strategic bomber forces or inter-continental ballistic missile systems (ICBMs). The lack of a credible intermediate range strike system against China and possibly other nations—although it would be difficult to conceive of another—is another possible reason behind Russian threats to withdraw from the 1987 INF Treaty (RIA Novosti, November 14, 2007). The technology is readily available. The Iskander-M mobile short-range ballistic missile system has a range of 400 km, which could easily be modified to carry a nuclear warhead in excess of 500 km with high accuracy, if Russia were to withdraw from the INF treaty [5].

If Russia were to come under the threat of a conventional Chinese GLCM or IRBM attack, hunting them down before they launched their missiles by air would be almost impossible. Su-34 and Tu-22M3 bombers could be used to hunt down the TELs and resupply vehicles after a launch but this would be fruitless given prior Western experience in hunting elusive targets from the air. The Russian military does not have anywhere near the kind of ISR assets that the Allies had in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, yet 'The Great Scud Hunt' achieved very little tactically given the effort involved and this was essentially in a desert environment [6]. In over 3,000 sorties conducted over Kosovo during the 77 day Operation Allied Force, NATO aircraft succeeded

in only destroying 26 tanks out of the 440 in what was a very small area geographically. Serb ground forces, which consist mainly of company strength units of 80 – 150 personnel, with around six armored vehicles, operating autonomously or semi-autonomously of each other were hard to locate by their size and movement. Operating in woods they were not a large target, and by not moving in a set direction, they did not allow the formation of a clear intelligence picture (*Aviation Week & Space Technology*, May 3, 1999). Chinese DF-21 and GLCM detachments might be even smaller.

Russian ground based defense against ballistic and cruise missiles is centered on the in-service S-300 series and the recently introduced S-400 *Triumf* surface-to-air missile system, all of which have an anti-ballistic missile capability [7]. The S-300 PMU-1 and PMU-2 can intercept DF-11 and DF-15 SRBMs, and the S-300VM and S-400 *Triumf* systems are capable of intercepting a multiple IRBM attack by all DF-21 model IRBMs. Whether or not there are currently enough deployed, or ready to be procured, along with their radars to protect Russian air space against the plethora of Chinese theater ballistic and cruise missile systems becoming available, is open to question.

The Russians clearly regard the threat from China's ballistic and cruise missiles as serious, deploying S-400 missile and radar systems along its eastern borders ostensibly to protect Russia from wayward North Korean missiles (*RIA Novosti*, August 26, 2009). Interestingly, no North Korean missiles are recorded as having accidentally landed in Russia. North Korean missiles are launched eastwards toward the Yellow Sea away from Russia and China. The S-400 deployment did however coincide nicely with China's October 1 parade.

TAIWAN STRAIT – NEW ROCKET SYSTEMS TAKING OVER FROM BALLISTIC MISSILES?

A 2008 U.S. government estimate reported that all of China's 300 km range DF-11 and 600 km range DF-15 SRBMs facing Taiwan amounted to a combined total of between 970 and 1,070 missiles along with 200 GLCMs (Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008). The amount of these launchers facing Taiwan is around 210 to 250, assuming each DF-15 TEL is capable of firing three missiles, and each DF-11 can fire five missiles before needing to be refurbished. For every DF-15 TEL deployed there needs to be one missile-reloading vehicle and two for each DF-11, as each reloading vehicle is assumed to carry two missiles. Add a command and communications vehicle or two and this means a lot of road movement by large vehicles that could easily attract attention.

The PLA can now start to remove the earlier models of their DF-11 and DF-15 missiles as new developments in Chinese self-propelled multiple rocket systems have created more survivable, easily deployed systems that can overwhelm existing air defenses within their range. The WS-2 Wheeled Self-Propelled Wheeled Multiple Launched Rocket System uses a six-tube launcher, on a simple 6 x 6 truck. The rocket has a 200 kg warhead, a peak speed of Mach 5.6 and a maximum range of 200 km with the newer WS-2D quoted as having a maximum range of 380 km [8]. The WS-3, the GPS guided version of the WS-2 has the same performance figures, including warhead weight, and with a CEP of 20 meters that could easily, and far more cheaply, swamp Taiwan's defenses than the DF-11 and DF-15 ballistic missile systems

The numbers of missiles and TELs quoted in the Department of Defense report to Congress are taken as accurate by many observers, and undoubtedly, the majority of China's SRBMs are facing Taiwan, but there are others. There would be a few launchers and missiles for use for test firing as part of their reliability program and to trial new warheads. More importantly at least 12 DF-15D TELs and their attendant vehicles are in Xinjiang as part of the PLA's new heavy mechanized corps [9]. Some of the DF-15 TELs deployed to Leiping would be for China's heavy corps in Shenyang and dedicated for use against North Korea. A critical issue for Taiwan's future defense is how to counter China's accurized warheads.

THE FUTURE

China's ballistic and cruise missile forces have increased in capability over the past decade and are now starting to pose a considerable conventional threat to nations within Southeast, South and West Asia as well as European Russia. With the expected deployment of satellite guided multiple rocket launchers opposite Taiwan, the DF-11 and DF-15 missiles would no longer be required and can be deployed opposite India and the South China Sea. The DF-15s could be refurbished to carry a nuclear or precision-guided conventional warhead. The over the horizon radar (OTHR) system under development on Hainan Island when fully developed would provide the PLA with early warnings of incoming ballistic and cruise missiles, aircraft and would provide accurate targeting of United States carrier battle groups [10]. The latter is of special concern to the United States as is China's continued development and deployment of new ballistic and cruise missile systems, as its regional neighbors pursue an arms race, equipping their forces with both offensive and defensive systems to counter China's growth in strategic weapons.

after 28 years of service and holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Bond University. His book, 'How the PLA Fights: Weapons and Tactics of the People's Liberation Army' was recently published by the U.S Army. He is the editor of the 'GI Zhou Newsletter', which is used by customers in the United States Department of Defense and elsewhere.

NOTES

1. 'Zhongguo C602 xinxing yuancheng fanchuan daodan,' (C602 new type long distance anti-ship Missile), *Bingqi Zhishi*, (Ordnance Knowledge), 12A/2008, Number 286, p. 2.
2. "'Zhenmi zhishuai" zai puguang — Cong Guoqing 60 zhuonian Dayuebing kan jiefang dier paobing budui', *Tanke Zhuangjia Cheliang*, 2009 Niandi, 11 Qi, Zhongdi 295 Qi, pp. 22-25.
3. 'Lingshou bian guojia "youlu zhongliang" — haiwai pojie Zhongguo CJ-10 luji xunhang daodan,' *Tanke Zhuangjia Cheliang*, 2009 Niandi, 12 Qi, Zhongdi 297 Qi, pp. 15-18.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. Rosenau, William. *Special Operations Forces and Elusive Enemy Ground Targets: Lessons from Vietnam and the Persian Gulf War*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2002, pp. 40 – 43.
7. NATO reporting names for the S-300 PMU-1 is SA-10d Grumble; the S-300PMU-1 is SA-20 Gargoyle; the S-400 is SA-21 Growler; and the S-300VM is SA-23 Giant/Gladiator. Performance figures for the S-300 series are from taken from 'S300VM (Antey-2500)', S-300PMU-1 Air Defense Systems and Favorite Long Range Air Defense System' in 'Air Defense Systems', Rosobornexport Catalogue, Rosobornexport, Moscow, 2003, pp. 10-13.
8. "'Zhongguo Weishi" xilie yuan chengduo guohuojian wuqi xitong', ("Chinese protect soldiers" series long range rocket weapon system *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2009 Niandi, 1A Qi, Zhongdi 260, pp. 30 – 32.
9. Wang Hui, *ZTZ-98 zhuzhantanke zhuangjia*, (ZTZ-98 Armored Main Battle Tank), Inner Mongolia Cultural Publishing Company, 2002, p. 74.
10. China's OTHR system interferes with HAM radio operators who discuss it on their QRZ Internet forum. 'Ever hear of the "Chinese Dragon"?' (over the horizon radar? Annoying!, QRZ Forums, <http://forums.qrz.com/showthread.php?s=856c90d1e521d5685c8eff9084c65fe&t=1730188page=2>, accessed February 22, 2009.

Martin Andrew retired from the Australian Defense Force

Canada Resumes Summit Diplomacy with China

By Wenran Jiang

Canadian Prime Minister Stephan Harper concluded a much-anticipated visit to China in December 2009. The visit was significant because China was not on Harper's foreign policy priority list when he came to office in early 2006, and he had in fact put off his China trip for nearly four years. For a year now, however, Canada's Conservative Party-led government has been making major adjustments to its China policy. Four federal ministers, from International Trade, Foreign Affairs, Infrastructure and Transportation, and Finance, visited China over a span of four months in 2009, apparently to prepare for Harper's maiden visit to Beijing. The Chinese side seems to have taken notice of such a policy shift in Ottawa, and received Harper warmly. The Chinese media described Harper's trip as an attempt to warm up "cool to icy" ties between Ottawa and Beijing (*People's Daily*, December 4, 2009). China's well-endowed sovereign wealth funds and other companies have also picked up pace in investing in Canada's energy, mining and resource sectors in recent months. The most notable example is PetroChina's latest move to acquire a 60 percent, \$1.7 billion stake in Athabasca Oil Sands Corp. in Alberta that was approved by the Canadian government.

THE LONG LEARNING CURVE

Until the Conservatives came to power in early 2006, Canada's China policy was consistent under various Liberal governments, and during the years when the Conservative government of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney was in office for much of the 1980s and the early 1990s. Beijing had also viewed Canada as a friendly Western power and, in recent years, increasingly as a potential market for China's dynamic modernization program.

It was just four years ago that China's relations with Canada seemed to be at their peak. On a visit to former Prime Minister Paul Martin in Ottawa in the fall of 2005, President Hu Jintao declared that a bilateral "strategic partnership"—a term that Beijing uses to define key close relations with countries around the world—had been established. The two countries would cooperate in areas ranging from energy security to environment to trade and investment.

Since the Conservatives ousted the Liberals and formed a minority government in early 2006, however, Sino-Canadian relations entered into a period of uncertainty. In the first three years, Harper simply did not seek to

engage China. Ottawa stopped using the term "strategic partnership" to describe bilateral relations and essentially removed China from the priority list of Canadian foreign policy.

Three factors prevented the Conservatives from articulating a China policy alternative. The first is ideology. Somehow, the Harper inner circle saw China as a communist country that is politically distant from Canada. Some viewed Canada's relations with China through religious lenses while others sympathized with so-called "separatists" forces. The second barrier was partisan politics. The Conservatives loathed the Liberals and their China policy so they decided not to do anything the previous government had done when it came to engagement with China. The third problem was a combination of arrogance, ignorance and lack of China policy expertise. The Conservatives perceived that Canada could carry on a cold relationship with China at the political level while not suffering economically at the same time. Another idea floating around at the time was that China needs Canada more than the other way around.

Harper also decided not to go to the Beijing Olympics in the summer of 2008, an even more explicit message that he was not treating Canada-China relations as a priority. While the Harper government underwent a long learning curve in formulating its policy toward China, Beijing has displayed no urgency to adopt any fresh initiatives. It took a long time for the Harper Conservatives to realize that the "cold politics, warm economics" formula has been hurting Canada a lot more than China, and the continuous disengagement at the highest level would only put Canada in a more disadvantageous position. Yet, Harper's recent trips to Asia, including the visits to India and South Korea, have put Asia back on Canada's foreign policy agenda, and the urgency to engage China is being re-energized.

THE MUCH-DELAYED SUMMIT VISIT

During Harper's first trip to China, he seemed to have finally realized that, in his own words, Canada is only scratching the surface of the Asian giant when it comes to potential economic benefits (CBC News, December 6). If this means Harper has recognized the importance of a rapidly rising China to the future of Canada's wellbeing and world affairs, then the bilateral relations may see a warming-up process.

The prime minister's China trip had some surprises, and the most noticeable was Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's "scolding" of Harper, in public, for taking too long to make his China trip. "Five years is too long a time for China-Canada relations, and that's why there are comments in the media that your visit is one that should have taken

place earlier,” Wen reportedly told Harper (*People’s Daily*, December 4, 2009). There has been much discussion about diplomatic protocol and the loss of face for Harper in the Canadian media over this episode.

The visit, however, was not without substance, and the most important gift Harper took home, among others, was Canada’s “approved destination status” for Chinese tourists by the Chinese government. This is significant because in the next five years, China is projected to become the largest tourist nation in the world in terms of both inflow and outflow. Hundreds of millions of dollars will be injected into the Canadian economy as newly-rich middle class Chinese pour into tourist attractions across the country in the coming years and beyond. For those who had pushed for Harper’s China trip, the “approved destination” package is a clear example of how political engagement with China at the highest level can deliver tangible economic benefits, while the absence of such interaction represents missed opportunities. “Cold politics, warm economics,” once touted by the Conservatives as a possible way of dealing with China, is now no longer seen as a viable approach to dealing with China.

The much-debated relationship between human rights and trade relations has also been reflected in a substantial and wide-ranging Canada-China joint statement released by the two governments [1]. The joint statement placed many bilateral issues back on the table and identified some priorities for improving bilateral relations, including the protracted negotiation of a bilateral investment pact. Yet the statement is also a clear indication of how Harper is treading on his human rights agenda while promoting better economic relations with China.

Some have characterized Canada’s China policy under Harper as value-based or emphasizing human rights. Yet the reality is that the Harper government has only made some general and occasional public statements regarding China’s human rights issues. It suspended the bilateral human rights dialogues in 2006 on the grounds that they were not effective, yet it has not replaced that mechanism with an alternative. Even Canada’s human rights groups are frustrated with such lack of initiatives. Harper himself even stated that he would not sell out Canadian values for the “almighty dollar” when it came to Canada-China relations. The new joint statement, however, declared that both sides “recognized that each country and its people have the right to choose their own path, and that all countries should respect each other’s choice of development model.” In addition, both sides “acknowledged that differing histories and national conditions can create some distinct points of view on issues such as human rights.” It is not clear if Harper is planning any initiatives on China’s human rights

issues (*People’s Daily*, December 4, 2009).

On the economic and trade front, Canada has lost ground in China in recent years. While trade volumes with China have grown in absolute terms in recent years, Canada’s shares of both trade and investment in the world’s most dynamic economy have dropped. Australia, a country with a much smaller population and economy than Canada, is conducting almost twice as much trade as Canada does with China. Much credit goes to the non-partisan efforts by both the current Labor government of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and the previous Conservative government under John Howard. If Harper’s China trip can re-position Canada, Ottawa may have to learn from Australia the right formula of pursuing both a trade agenda and a human rights agenda effectively.

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK?

Yet a close reading of the Canada-China Joint Statement reveals that the Harper government may be backpedaling on Canada’s commitment to the nature of the bilateral relationship, instead of re-affirming the “strategic partnership” that was announced in 2005. The new joint statement says that the two sides would resume the “Strategic Working Group” initiative as a bilateral relations enhancement mechanism. According to the agreement, “Deputy Minister-level officials from both sides will meet early in 2010 to discuss the nature of this enhancement and likely subjects of focus, including trade and investment, energy and environment, health and governance.”

In other words, neither Beijing nor Ottawa possesses a vision or a clear guidance on where the two countries are taking their relationship in the next step. Harper made a trip to China, was possibly impressed by what he saw and learned a few things. However, Harper is yet to see a clearly articulated China strategy.

The Chinese side has also played a delicate game of using both stick and carrot in dealing with Canada. With the warming-up of bilateral relationship in recent months, many Chinese companies have expressed renewed interests in coming to Canada. Several months ago, the China Investment Corporation, the country’s multi-hundred billion dollar sovereign wealth fund arm, invested \$1.5 billion in Canada’s Teck Resources Ltd., with a 17 percent stake. PetroChina’s \$1.7 billion investment in Athabasca Oil Sands Corporation is currently going through the regulatory approval process. However, China has invested tens of billions in other countries such as Australia, Brazil, Kazakhstan and Iran. Canada has received very little large-scale investment from China so far. The recent deals

point to the positive direction but it is far from clear that China will now make Canada one of its top investment destinations.

Even the two countries are taking a step back on the committed “strategic partnership,” Harper may still pursue a forward-looking China strategy. First, slowly and gradually, the Harper government has come to terms that China is Canada’s second largest trading partner, and that China has a deep pocket in terms of investment. China is also on its way to replacing Canada as the largest trading partner of the United States in the not long distant future, and it will do so in part at the expense of Canada. Canada’s China challenge is not bilateral and across the Pacific, but right here in North America. Second, the Harper inner circle appears to be moving away from treating human rights and trade promotion as mutually exclusive goals when it comes to China. If Harper proposes a sincere human rights dialogue with China on an equal basis, identifying the right mechanism to implement important human rights programs, Beijing may respond positively. At the same time, Ottawa may pursue economic relations with more vigor and give it serious attention at the highest level of the government.

These policy measures are yet to be taken by Ottawa. The United States has a comprehensive set of annual bilateral consultation arrangements with the participation of highest-ranking officials from both governments, far more extensive than anything in existence between Ottawa and Washington. Harper’s China trip may become the starting point for preparing a comprehensive China strategy. A sustained, regular summit level meeting between the two countries’ leaders may compensate for the growing asymmetrical relationship between Canada and China.

Wenran Jiang is Mactaggard Research Chair of the China Institute at the University of Alberta, a senior fellow at the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, and currently a Public Policy Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars in Washington D.C.

NOTES

1. Canada-China Joint Statement, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/canada-china-joint-statement/article1386710/>

China’s Inroads into North Africa: An Assessment of Sino-Algerian Relations

By Chris Zambelis

The geopolitics of African countries such as Algeria, a country in North Africa that has traditionally enjoyed strong relations with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and whose strategic importance and regional profile have increased markedly of late, is key to grasping the dynamics that shape contemporary Sino-Algerian ties and China’s Africa strategy overall. A glimpse into Sino-Algerian relations at this time is appropriate considering Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi’s state visit to Algeria in January (Xinhua News Agency, December 31, 2009). Sino-Algerian relations made headlines in the summer of 2009 when al-Qaeda threatened China in response to the unrest between Beijing and ethnic Uighur Muslims in July; Al-Qaeda’s Algerian-based North African affiliate al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) threatened to target the estimated 50,000 Chinese working and living in Algeria and Chinese interests in the country (*China Brief*, August 5, 2009). In August, a fistfight between a Chinese migrant worker and an Algerian merchant sparked a local crisis that reverberated to the highest levels of power in Beijing and Algiers, raising questions about the role of Chinese migrants in Algeria and xenophobia among Algerians (AFRIK.com [Paris], August 5, 2009). Understanding the dynamics of Sino-Algerian relations, however, requires reading beyond the headlines. This article will examine various aspects of the relationship between China and Algeria as they relate to natural resources, economics and politics. As will be made evident throughout this article, the circumstances underlying Beijing’s relationship with Algiers differ significantly from China’s bilateral ties with most African countries [1].

NATURAL RESOURCES

Considering China’s status as the world’s fastest growing oil consumer and third-largest net importer of oil and Algeria’s position as Africa’s fourth largest producer of crude oil in 2008 (and the world’s 18th largest producer of crude oil), the logic underpinning the PRC’s interests in Algeria seems clear (U.S. Energy Information Administration [EIA], May 13, 2009). China’s relentless pursuit of oil to fuel its growing economy is a key factor driving its Africa strategy. Yet well over 90 percent of Algeria’s high-quality, low sulfur sweet crude oil exports goes to Western Europe (Algeria is the European Union’s second-largest source of natural gas), not China. China’s imports of Algerian oil remain marginal compared to its oil imports from other parts of

Africa. At this stage, China's stake in Algeria's oil industry revolves around exploration and future development projects. At the same time, China's role in exploration and future development in Algeria is—like its overall role in Algeria's hydrocarbon sector—small, especially compared to the role of international blue chip energy giants such as Statoil, Shell, British Petroleum, or Total SA in Algeria's oil industry. In an era of tightening energy markets, even a small presence in Algeria's hydrocarbon sector makes sense for China. Algeria is keen on expanding its oil production and export capacity as well as increasing its proven reserves, and it appears that China is positioning itself to reap some benefits when it does.

China's minor role in the Algerian oil industry has steadily increased since Algeria has made it easier for foreign companies to enter the Algerian market. In October 2002, China's Sinopec teamed with Algeria's state-owned Sonatrach—the largest company in Africa and the world's twelfth largest oil and gas conglomerate—in China's first oil development venture in Algeria to jointly develop the Zarzaitine oil field in southeastern Algeria at a cost of \$525 million; Sinopec assumed 75 percent of the overall investment (ArabianOilandGas.com [Dubai], August 20, 2009; Alexander's Gas and Oil Connections [Netherlands], October 22, 2002). In July 2003, the China National Oil & Gas Exploration & Development Corporation (CNODC), a section of the China National Petroleum Company (CNPC), built a \$350 million refinery in Adrar, in southwestern Algeria (APS Review Downstream Trends, February 5, 2007). A visit by Chinese President Hu Jintao to Algiers in 2004 ushered in a new round of Sino-Algerian cooperation in the energy sector, leading to agreements between CNPC and Sinopec and Sonatrach for oil exploration rights and related projects (APS Review Downstream Trends, February 5, 2007). Algeria's Energy Ministry recently awarded the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) an exploration license for Hassi Bir Rekaiz (Reuters, December 20, 2009). In October 2009, Sonatrach announced that Sinopec was among a group of four international companies on a shortlist for consideration to design and engineer a new oil refinery in Tairat, in western Algeria, a project estimated to cost \$6 billion. Sinopec is also represented along with other companies bidding for engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) of the Algiers refinery, a project estimated to cost \$300 million (ArabianOilandGas.com, October 21, 2009; Zawya.com [Dubai], October 22, 2009).

In spite of its substantial oil resources and membership in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), it is Algeria's status as a major producer of natural gas and Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) that have solidified its

position as an energy powerhouse. Algeria, which became home to the world's first commercial LNG facility in 1964, is the world's sixth largest producer of natural gas, 70 percent of which is exported to markets in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere. Algeria is also the world's fourth-largest exporter of LNG (EIA, May 2009). Algeria's combined revenues from hydrocarbons account for well over 90 percent of its export earnings. While the United States represents the fifth largest importer of Algerian LNG, China's imports of Algerian LNG are negligible (EIA, May 2009; *New York Times*, October 19, 2009). Instead, China relies on domestic natural gas sources and LNG shipments from the Middle East and Asia. Beijing is also awaiting the completion of pipelines that will transport natural gas to China from Central Asia. At the same time, China is committed to further developing its natural gas networks to meet growing demand, to include expanding its LNG terminal network, which may entail a greater role for Algerian LNG in China (EIA, July 2009; *People's Daily*, June 22, 2006). Chinese firms have partnered with Sonatrach to explore for gas in Algeria, however, the Chinese footprint in gas exploration operations in Algeria is minimal.

ECONOMICS

As Africa's third largest economy and with a population of about 34 million, China sees a great deal of potential in Algeria as a market for Chinese goods and technical expertise. Likewise, Algeria also counts China as a key trading partner. Algeria's economic strength is crucial to understanding the dynamics underlying Sino-Algerian relations, particularly Algeria's leverage in its dealings with China. Unlike much of Africa, Algeria does not seek Chinese loan and aid packages in exchange for granting access to its strategic industries and markets to Chinese firms. In fact, Algerian banks regularly finance major projects undertaken by Chinese companies in Algeria (Magharebia.com, April 19, 2006). This bilateral dynamic is unique in Sino-African relations. China's economic and trade dealings with much of Africa are often characterized by transfers of Chinese largesse into the treasuries of African countries eager to attract Chinese investment. Beijing's higher appetite for investment risk makes it an ideal partner for African countries with a legacy of social, political and economic instability. In addition to securing lucrative contracts in strategic industries such as hydrocarbons and minerals across Africa, China's entry into the economic and business sectors in Africa affords it with political influence in the countries where Chinese money flows. In contrast, Algeria's economic power allows it to negotiate from a position of relative strength and to be more judicious in its business dealings with China [2].

Overall, Sino-Algerian bilateral trade relations are strong. The volume of trade between China and Algeria has increased significantly in recent years. From a figure of \$272 million in 2001, bilateral trade between China and Algeria topped \$4 billion in 2008, and the current trends project a further expansion of trade (*China Daily*, December 19, 2008). After France and Italy, China has emerged as Algeria's third largest import source (*El-Khabar* [Algiers], March 30, 2009). China's economic footprint is most apparent in Algeria's infrastructure sector, a sector where Algeria lacks the technical expertise and the capacity to undertake major projects on its own. Algeria has emerged as one of China's largest overseas markets for infrastructure development. In May 2006, Algeria tapped the China International Trust and Investment Company (CITIC) and the China Railway Construction Company (CRCC) to undertake a mammoth effort to help construct the 1216 km road link dubbed the East-West Highway, which is designed to link eastern and western Algeria, and Algeria to Morocco and Tunisia (Reuters, August 4, 2009). At a cost of approximately 12 billion, the East-West Highway is currently the largest construction project in the world. Algiers also awarded three contracts worth \$2.1 billion to the China Civil Engineering and Construction Corporation (CCECC) to construct railway networks in western Algeria (Agence France-Presse, July 20, 2009). Algeria also tapped China to help alleviate its housing shortages—a major domestic political issue that has sparked tensions in recent years—in urban centers such as Algiers. Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika is counting on Chinese firms to fulfill his promise of creating an additional 1 million affordable housing units over the next three years (Reuters, October 20, 2009; Xinhua News Agency, February 26, 2008).

In a trend typical of China's ventures in Africa and the developing world, Chinese firms awarded contracts by Algeria largely use Chinese laborers—both skilled and unskilled workers—to see their projects to fruition. While Chinese firms do employ Algerians, their overall numbers and the wages they tend to earn remain low. Moreover, skilled and unskilled Chinese laborers are often able to undercut the salary demands of their Algerian counterparts (*Financial Times* [London], June 2, 2008). These circumstances are largely tolerated by Algiers, as the state is primarily concerned with achieving quick completion of its projects. Yet the prominent Chinese presence in the Algerian labor force has also bred resentment in a country where strong overall economic indicators have yet to dent high unemployment rates, especially among youth; with a median age of 26, seven out of 10 Algerians under the age of 30 are unemployed (*Christian Science Monitor*, April 9, 2009; *China Daily*, August 5, 2009). In spite of feelings of resentment, relations between Algerians and Chinese on the personal level in Algeria are characterized as very good

(Agence France-Presse, November 6, 2009). In addition to working as laborers in the construction sector, Chinese merchants also operate shops throughout the country. Estimates of the number of Chinese living and working in Algeria run as high as 50,000, making them one of the largest communities of overseas Chinese in Africa. Questions surrounding the Chinese presence in Algeria topped regional and international headlines when a fistfight erupted over a dispute between an Algerian shopkeeper and a Chinese migrant worker in Bab Ezzouar, a suburb of Algiers, and spiraled into clashes between groups of Algerians and Chinese. Bab Ezzouar has been dubbed “Chinatown” by the local proprietors and customers who shop at the many Chinese-owned businesses there (*El Watan* [Algiers], August 4, 2009). After scores were injured and thousands of dollars in property damage, Sino-Algerian diplomacy stepped in to downplay international media reports claiming that the incident signaled a rift in Sino-Algerian relations. In spite of the media hype, there is little indication that the flare up in violence in August represented something more than an isolated incident.

POLITICS

China and Algeria share a strong tradition of political ties rooted in their respective roles as leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and their staunch support for anti-colonial and national liberation movements across the globe. As an Arab, Berber and Muslim country, Algeria has always been a staunch advocate of popular causes such as Palestinian nationalism and resistance against Israeli military occupation. During a July 2009 visit to Algeria by Wu Sike, China's Special Envoy to the Middle East, Algerian officials thanked China for its vocal support for Palestinian self-determination (Chinese Foreign Ministry Website, July 28, 2009). Public diplomacy in Sino-Algerian relations is also imbued with references to the “brotherly” ties both countries profess to share based on equality and mutual respect and their efforts to further South-South cooperation (Xinhua News Agency, August 31, 2008). China's approach to relations with Algeria are well-received; owing to its particularly harsh experience under French colonialism, Algeria often pursues a fervently independent foreign policy and is sensitive to outside interference in its domestic affairs. President Bouteflika once described Sino-Algerian relations as the model for further Sino-African cooperation (Xinhua News Agency, November 7, 2006).

As the first non-Arab country to recognize Algerian independence in 1962, China occupies a special place in Algerian diplomacy. Prior to Algeria achieving formal independence from France, China was among a handful of countries to have recognized the *Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne* (Provisional Government

of the Algerian Republic, known by its French acronym GRPA) in 1958, the political wing of the *Front de Liberation Nationale* (National Liberation Front, known by its French acronym FLN), an armed resistance movement fighting French colonialism. Significantly, Beijing and Algiers mark the establishment of bilateral relations from the day China established ties with the GRPA on December 20, 1958 [3], four years before Algeria won its independence (*People's Daily*, December 31, 2008; China View, March 21, 2008). Chinese diplomacy often contains references to the political, economic, and military support Beijing provided to the FLN during the Algerian independence struggle. China also expresses its gratitude to Algeria for its unequivocal support of the "One-China" principle that defines Taiwan as part of the PRC and its support for the restoration of China's seat at the UN in 1971 (*PLA Daily*, September 16, 2009) [4]. Sino-Algeria relations also contain a strong cultural component marked by regular exchanges of artists, students, scientists and educators. When Algeria was struck with a devastating earthquake in 2003, China dispatched a rescue team to assist relief and aid workers in Algeria. The decision to dispatch rescue workers to Algeria marked the first time China sent rescue workers abroad. China also played a major role in developing Algeria's health care sector following Algeria's independence. Not coincidentally, the team of doctors dispatched by Beijing in 1963 to Algeria marked the first time China sent doctors overseas (Xinhua News Agency, March 21, 2008).

The tradition of strong Sino-Algerian relations also extends to the security realm. Algerian military officers have trained in China over the years. In fact, high-level exchanges between Chinese and Algerian military officials occur regularly; Algeria has maintained a defense attaché in Beijing since 1971 (Xinhua News Agency, August 15, 2006; *China Brief*, May 30, 2007). China has also played a key role in Algeria's nuclear program. At one point, Sino-Algerian cooperation in the nuclear arena raised concerns in U.S. intelligence circles about Algeria's possible intentions to develop nuclear weapons [5]. While Russia remains Algeria's largest source of arms, especially advanced weapons platforms, China is determined to expand its arms exports to Algeria. Algeria was the first country in Africa to import China's C-85 (Project 802) missile boats fitted with C-802 ship-to-ship missiles and a 5,550 ton training ship (UPI, December 31, 2008; UPI, November 5, 2007). Algeria has also purchased Chinese artillery, namely 155mm howitzers (UPI, January 30, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Sino-Algerian relations will remain strong and are poised to develop further in the future. Given Algeria's relative economic strength, growing strategic significance, and

overall leverage, however, the trajectory of Sino-Algerian relations will likely continue to follow a path distinct from China's relations with other countries in Africa. Yet China is not alone in its efforts to expand ties with the Maghreb's preeminent power; long regarded as a country within France's sphere of influence, the United States, NATO, and Russia are also aggressively courting Algeria [6]. How China maneuvers these dynamics will say a lot for the extent of its influence and interests in Algeria and beyond.

Chris Zambelis is an Associate with Helios Global, Inc., a risk analysis firm based in the Washington, DC area. The opinions expressed here are the author's alone and do not necessarily reflect the position of Helios Global, Inc.

Notes

1. Many of the author's insights into Sino-Algerian relations were shaped by a September 2009 trip to Algeria.
2. While a decline in global oil and gas prices will contribute to a decrease in its GDP in 2009, Algeria's economic indicators remain strong, even amid the global financial downturn. A November 2009 assessment of the Algerian economy conducted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded that Algeria is one of the countries least affected by the global economic crisis. The windfall in hydrocarbon revenues in recent years has enabled Algeria to maintain a strong trade surplus and to pay down the majority of its external debt to the Paris Club and other global multilateral financial institutions and to accumulate foreign exchange reserves of about 146 billion. For more details, see "Statement of the IMF Mission on the 2009 Article IV Consultation Discussion with Algeria," Press Release No. 9/388, November 4, 2009, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2009/pr09388.htm>.
3. Prior to formally establishing ties with the GRPA, China acknowledged its legitimacy upon its founding in September 1958.
4. Algeria was one of 23 countries to have put forth a motion at the 26th session of the UN General Assembly to restore the PRC at the UN.
5. See William Burr, "The Algerian Nuclear Problem, 1991: Controversy over the Es Salaam Nuclear Reactor," National Security Archive, Electronic Briefing Book No. 228, September 10, 2007, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb228/index.htm>.
6. For the United States, Algeria's experience fighting radical Islamists on its soil facilitated unprecedented levels of intelligence cooperation between Washington and Algiers immediately following the September 11, 2001 attacks. Given its diplomatic influence in Africa coupled with its own particularly harsh experience under French colonialism, Washington is also sensitive to Algeria's position as it defines the mission of the recently established

Africa Command (AFRICOM). Algeria also participates in joint military training exercises with U.S. and NATO forces. A resurgent Russia is also courting Algeria as more than just a reliable customer when it comes to its defense exports. Russia, the world's leading source of natural gas, and Algeria have floated the idea of establishing an OPEC-like cartel for natural gas powers.

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