

The U.S. Military Presence in the Asia-Pacific 2020

National Institute for South China Sea Studies

Foreword

*T*he *U.S. Military Presence in the Asia-Pacific 2020* is the second research report dedicated to the U.S. military presence in the Asia-Pacific after the first one in 2016. Since the Trump administration took office in 2017, the U.S. security policy toward the Asia-Pacific kept evolving until 2019 when the Pentagon formally released its *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report*. It was not until then that we could conduct analysis and assessment on the major changes in the U.S. Asia-Pacific security policy and released the second report three years after the first one.

As the U.S. has turned from its rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region to Indo-Pacific strategy, the report 2020 gives a comprehensive update on the U.S. military deployments and activities as well as its military and security relations under the Trump administration in the Asia-Pacific. It also offers rational analysis and envisages China-U.S. military and security relations in the future. Based on official documents and other open information available in China, the U.S. and other countries, the report aims to provide objective evidences and neutral academic views. In addition, we have drawn upon the works and viewpoints of Chinese and international academics in drafting the report.

The report 2020 is an academic research report representing the personal views of members of the research team of NISCSS, rather than the official positions or views of the Chinese government. It is our hope that this report will facilitate policy discussions and academic exchanges between government departments and academic institutes in China and the U.S., and contribute to the sound growth of China-U.S. relations.

A stylized calligraphic signature in black ink, consisting of several bold, fluid strokes that form the characters '吴世存' (Wu Shicun).

Dr. Wu Shicun

President of National Institute for South China Sea Studies

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Chapter One

The Evolution of U.S. Security Strategy in the Asia-Pacific after the Cold War

Serving its global strategy to counter the Soviet Union in the Cold War, the U.S. security strategy then in the Asia-Pacific region aimed to contain the Russian expansion in Asia by building a system of bilateral alliances. The end of the Cold War has brought tremendous changes to the strategic environment and security pattern in the Asia-Pacific. Accordingly, the U.S. has adjusted its Asia-Pacific security strategy several times. Once, the U.S. played down the “containment” dimension in the strategy of balance of power and deterrence of the George H. W. Bush administration and the strategy of engagement and preventive defense of the Clinton administration. As the U.S. security strategy was geared to the Global War on Terrorism after the September 11, the George W. Bush administration began to emphasize the building of a security cooperation network in the Asia-Pacific in its strategy of engagement and balancing. During the Obama presidency, the U.S. gave more prominence to the Asia-Pacific in its national security strategy, by introducing “pivot to Asia” and “rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region”. During the Trump administration, the U.S. announced a return to “great power competition” and expanded its Asia-Pacific security strategy into a brand new Indo-Pacific strategy.

I. The Evolution of the U.S. Asia-Pacific Security Strategy from the Bush 41 Administration to the Bush 43 Administration

Feeling less threatened globally after the end of the Cold War, the U.S. saw growing call at home for less obligations overseas and withdrawal of some troops posted in Asia so that more resources could be used to address domestic economic and social issues. The U.S. has made adjustment accordingly to its Asia-Pacific strategy. In the Bush 41 presidency, the Pentagon submitted *A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim* report in 1990 and *A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim II* report in 1992 to Congress, envisaging phased withdrawal of U.S. troops stationed in Asia in the following decade. With the complete pullout of the U.S. troops in the Philippines in 1992, the U.S. began to contract in its Asia-Pacific security strategy from comprehensive confrontation and containment in the Cold War era.

Nevertheless, the Bush 41 administration believed that the Asia-Pacific remained critical to the U.S. The Pentagon stressed that “By virtue of geography and history, the U.S. is a Pacific power with enduring economic, political and security interests in the Asia-Pacific region ... Our interests and stake in this dynamic region are large and growing; our future lies across the Pacific no less than the Atlantic.”^① Based on its major and strategic interests, the U.S. believed that it should continue to make interventions in Asian affairs after the Cold War. Adjustments to its security strategy were about to what extent the U.S. should intervene in regional security affairs and how many security obligations should be undertaken.

In 1992, the Pentagon proposed five goals of the U.S. security strategy in the Asia-Pacific after the Cold War—maintaining the U.S. as the premier power in the

^①U. S. Department of Defense, *A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: report to Congress*, 1992, p.2.

Asia-Pacific, preventing the emergence of a hegemonic power in Eurasia, dampening down regional hot spots, encouraging arms control and confidence-building measures and developing a crisis-prevention regime, and finally, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.^① Then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney announced six principles governing the U.S. security policy in Asia—ensuring the continuous U.S. participation in Pacific affairs, strengthening bilateral security mechanisms, maintaining appropriate and robust forward military deployment, keeping adequate overseas assistance structure, more responsibilities shared by its partners, and executing a prudent defense cooperation policy.^②

Since President Clinton took office in 1993, the U.S. slowed down its military reduction in the Asia-Pacific and made clear in planning its Asia-Pacific strategy that it would basically maintain the military presence as it was in the Cold War era. “[U.S. military presence] also denies political or economic control of the Asia-Pacific region by a rival, hostile power or coalition of powers.”^③ The two reports on the U.S. Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region released by the Pentagon in 1995 and 1998 promoted a new Asia-Pacific strategy. With the theme of “preventative defense”, this strategy reflected the desire of the Clinton administration for maintaining the U.S. primacy in the Asia-Pacific and building a “New Pacific Community” in the post-Cold War era. The Pentagon argued that, to keep its military presence in the Asia-Pacific, the U.S. should neither substantially cut its forward deployment, nor make adjustment to the mode of deployment. It made a

①U. S. Department of Defense, *A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Looking Toward the 21st Century*, p.6; Donald S. Zagoria, “The Changing U. S. Role in Asian Security in the 1990s,” p.53.

②Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1993 and the Future Years Defense Program, Hearing before United States Congress Senate Committee on Armed Services, 1992, p.202.

③U. S. Department of Defense, *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*, 1995, p.7.

clear proposal to keep 100,000 troops in Asia. At the same time, the U.S. sought to promote a stable, secure, prosperous and peaceful Asia-Pacific community, and actively participated in it.

An integral part of the Clinton administration's Asia-Pacific security strategy was its engagement policy with China. The 1997 U.S. *Quadrennial Defense Review* pointed out that a national security strategy aligned with the U.S. global interests was an "engagement strategy". The U.S. would continue to engage China and seek cooperation in the areas of shared interests. Secretary of Defense William Perry stressed that "As China does so [becoming a major world power], it is inescapable that China's interest will sometimes harmonize and sometimes conflict with those of the United States. The government of the United States recognizes this fundamental fact. Our response to it as a policy of comprehensive engagement with China ... We believe that engagement is the best strategy to ensure that as China increases its power, it does so as a responsible member of the international community."^①

September 11, 2001 was a game-changer to the U.S. national security strategy. In 2002, the Bush administration released its new *National Security Strategic* in which the U.S. formally proposed a "preemptive" strategy to attack terrorists and hostile states – "The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security ... To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively."^② *The Global Defense Posture Review* in 2004 stressed building comprehensive strengths in the Asia-Pacific and pursued its "absolute security" based on its military power. First, the U.S. would make flexible adjustments to its forward military deployment in the Asia-Pacific – reducing the U.S. troops strength

① "Remarks as Secretary of Defense William H. Perry," Washington State China Relations Council, Seattle, Monday, October 30, 1995, <https://archive.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=1023>.

② *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, p.15.

from 37,500 to 25,000 in the Republic of Korea, for example, and increasing strength in Guam and Hawaii; second, it strengthened relations with traditional allies and built new security partnerships, particularly with India; and third, it enhanced interoperability with its allies and partners to build a network of security relations. This last feature was the most significant innovation in U.S. Asia-Pacific security strategy during the Bush 43 presidency. The previous U.S. security system in the Asia-Pacific, featuring a hub-and-spokes model composed of five pairs of alliances (with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia), was transformed into a federated network in which the five U.S. allies and its partners were asked to build military and defense relations among themselves under the U.S. leadership.

II. The “Rebalance Toward the Asia-Pacific Region” of the Obama Administration

Since President Obama took office, the U.S. has given more prominence to the Asia-Pacific in its national security strategy. President Obama formally announced the U.S. “pivot to Asia” in November 2011 in Hawaii. In the strategy report “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership—Priorities For 21st Century Defense” released in January 2012, the Pentagon argued that “U.S. economic and security interests are inextricably linked to developments in the arc extending from the Western Pacific and East Asia into the Indian Ocean region and South Asia ... we will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region ... The maintenance of peace, stability, the free flow of commerce, and of U.S. influence in this dynamic region will depend in part on an underlying balance of military capability and presence.”^① Claiming the U.S. would substantially cut its global military presence, e.g. substantial reduction from more than half a million for the Army, the report stressed that the U.S. would

^①US Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership—Priorities For 21st Century Defense*, January 2012, p.2.

strengthen its presence in the Asia-Pacific, the gravity of its new national security strategy. The U.S. Secretaries of Defense addressed the Shangri-La Dialogue on the rebalance strategy in great details in 2012 and 2013.

“Rebalance” was a comprehensive and integrating strategy which included bolstering traditional alliances, forging new partnerships, engaging regional institutions, diversifying military forces, defending democratic values, and embracing economic statecraft.^①

On the military front, according to the rebalance strategy, 60 percent of U.S. Air Force and Navy forces would be positioned in the region, including some of the most advanced weapon platforms, on the basis of existing 50,000 U.S. troops; 2,500 Marines would be stationed in Darwin, Australia; five military bases in the Philippines would be used; defense cooperation with Singapore would be stepped up; substantive defense cooperation with India and Vietnam would be initiated; diplomatic coordination and military cooperation based on interoperability with U.S. allies and partners would be highlighted.

In battle doctrine, the Pentagon proposed AirSea Battle in 2009, which was renamed as Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons (JAM-GC) in 2015. The Pentagon set forth its Third Offset Strategy in 2014, seeking to outmaneuver China primarily through new technology.

In diplomacy, the Obama administration stepped up relations with its longstanding allies and new partners in an all-around way in the Asia-Pacific. In Northeast Asia, the U.S. deepened its alliance with Japan, as evidenced by the revised *Guidelines for Defense Cooperation* adopted in 2015. In Southeast Asia, the U.S. conducted high-profile diplomacy—building new ties with Myanmar, elevating relations with Vietnam, forging a new strategic partnership with Indonesia, and

①Kurt M. Campbell, *The Pivot: The Future of American Statecraft in Asia*, New York: Twelve, 2016, p.7.

strengthening its alliance with the Philippines and defense cooperation with Singapore. The U.S. became a party to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), bringing its relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to a substantially higher level. The U.S. joined the East Asia Summit and hosted the first U.S.-ASEAN summit. It also intensified diplomatic efforts and military operations in two hotspots—the East China Sea and the South China Sea.

Economically, the Obama administration pushed for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), to engage in geo-economic competition with China rather than to promote the development of the whole of the Asia-Pacific, including China. In advocating for the TPP, the Obama administration claimed that U.S. strategic credibility and leadership in the Asia-Pacific were at stake and argued that the TPP was “the true sine qua non of the pivot.”

Given the importance of maritime Asia-Pacific to the U.S. security, the Pentagon released the first *Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy* report in 2015, an addition to where the rebalance strategy could be applied. The report made a clear definition on the U.S. maritime security strategic objectives in the Asia-Pacific – safeguarding freedom of the seas, deterring conflict and coercion, and promoting adherence to international law and standards. To realize these goals, the U.S. has adopted measures in the Asia-Pacific, including building military strength, strengthening cooperation with its allies and partners, increasing the use of military and diplomatic means, and constructing a regional security architecture.

III. The Indo-Pacific Strategy of the Trump Administration

Different from his predecessors after the Cold War, President Trump has a disruptive Asia-Pacific security strategy. His strategy has not only used the new concept of “Indo-Pacific” , but also announced “great-power competition” as the strategic guidance for the U.S. national security, indicating a return to the Cold War.

1. The Making of the Indo-Pacific Strategy

The Indo-Pacific strategy of the Trump administration has been notably influenced by conceptual discussions with two of its allies—Japan and Australia. It took the Trump administration ten months, from January to October 2017 to discuss, accept, and apply this concept.

U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis delivered the first speech on the Trump administration’s Asia policy at the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2017. In this policy address, Secretary Mattis continued to use the traditional concept of “Asia-Pacific” and outlined three ways for the Trump administration to uphold order in the Asia-Pacific – strengthening alliances, defense cooperation with countries in this region, and U.S. military capabilities in the Asia-Pacific. He offered strategic reassurance to countries in the Asia-Pacific that U.S. presence would continue, in much the same tone as the Obama administration’s rebalance strategy.

In his speech on U.S. relations with India in October 2017, State Secretary Rex Tillerson used “Indo-Pacific” rather than “Asia-Pacific” to refer to the vast geopolitical landscape composed of the entire Indian Ocean, the western Pacific, and the nations that surround these bodies of water. Thus, “Indo-Pacific” officially emerged as the key word in U.S. policy toward this region. At the APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting in Vietnam the following November, President Trump officially introduced the concept of “a free and open Indo-Pacific” , which has become the general narrative for the U.S. strategy toward this region. In the same month, U.S.-Japan-Australia-India security consultations resumed after a decade-long hiatus. By July 2019, four such consultations had been held.

The Trump administration’s *National Security Strategy*, released in December 2017, updated the U.S. Asia-Pacific strategy into the Indo-Pacific strategy and renewed the concept of great-power competition, arguing that “A geopolitical competition between free and repressive visions of world order is taking place in the Indo-Pacific region ... The U.S. interest in a free and open Indo-Pacific extends

back to the earliest days of our republic.”^① “In addition, after being dismissed as a phenomenon of an earlier century, great power competition returned. China and Russia began to reassert their influence regionally and globally.”^②

The *National Defense Strategy* issued by the Pentagon in January 2018 announced the return to great-power competition as the main challenge from “revisionist powers” – “The central challenge to U.S. prosperity and security is the reemergence of long-term, strategic competition by what the National Security Strategy classifies as revisionist powers. It is increasingly clear that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model—gaining veto authority over other nations’ economic, diplomatic, and security decisions.”^③ “Long-term strategic competitions with China and Russia are the principal priorities for the Department. The U.S. defense objectives include sustaining Joint Force military advantages, maintaining favorable regional balances of power in the Indo-Pacific, sharing responsibilities for common defense, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, opposing terrorist activities and ensuring common domains remain open and free.”^④

In May 2018, the U.S. renamed its Pacific Command as the Indo-Pacific Command, as the first substantive step in implementing its Indo-Pacific strategy. In the following month, Defense Secretary Mattis attended the Shangri-La Dialogue again and introduced the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy for the first time; he summarized it as consisting of strengthening U.S. alliances and partnerships, supporting ASEAN’s centrality, and pursuing cooperation with China whenever possible. Under this strategy, he listed four themes: naval and law enforcement capabilities and

① *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, December 2017, pp.45-46.

② *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, December 2017, p.27.

③ *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy—Sharpening the American Military’s Competitive Edge*, US Department of Defense. p.2.

④ *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy—Sharpening the American Military’s Competitive Edge*, US Department of Defense, p.4.

capacities; interoperability with U.S. allies and partners; the rule of law, civil society, and transparent governance; and private sector-led economic development. This strategy not only covered Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Oceania and the Pacific islands but also extended far beyond the region to encompass even the United Kingdom, France and Canada, in an attempt to connect all these countries together.

At the end of July 2018, U.S. Secretary of State Pompeo announced the initial U.S. financial commitment to its Indo-Pacific strategy. The U.S., he said, would invest \$113 million in digital economy, energy, and infrastructure initiatives in the Indo-Pacific as a “down payment on a new era.” With regard to infrastructure, Mr. Pompeo announced the establishment of two new institutions – the Infrastructure Transaction and Assistance Network and the Indo-Pacific Transaction Advisory Fund.^① He also pledged nearly \$300 million to enhance maritime security.^②

But it was Vice President Pence’s remarks at the 2018 APEC CEO Summit in Papua New Guinea that further deepened the Indo-Pacific strategy. While aligning his remarks with Secretary Tillerson’s speech in October 2017, Vice President Pence added further substance to the Indo-Pacific strategy.^③ He stressed that the U.S. had given the nations of the Indo-Pacific a better option to support infrastructure projects by more than doubling its financing capacity to \$60 billion and would transform the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) into the U.S.

①Michael R. Pompeo, “Remarks on America’s Indo-Pacific Economic Vision,” U.S. Department of State, July 30, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2018/07/284722.htm>.

②Michael R. Pompeo, “Press Availability at the 51st ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting and Related Meetings,” U.S. Department of State, August 4, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2018/08/284924.htm>.

③Mike Pence, “Remarks by Vice President Pence at the 2018 APEC CEO Summit,” Port Moresby, November 16, 2018, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-2018-apec-ceo-summit-port-moresby-papua-new-guinea/>.

International Development Finance Corporation (DFC). In addition, he announced four specific measures: partnering with Australia in a joint initiative at Lombrum Naval Base on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea; launching the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative, at a cost of more than \$400 million; working with Japan to invest \$10 billion in the region's energy infrastructure; and teaming with Australia and Japan to provide power supply to 70 percent of the population in Papua New Guinea.

At the end of December 2018, President Trump signed the *Asia Reassurance Initiative Act*, which authorized additional spending of \$1.5 billion in five years to support the Indo-Pacific strategy and asked the White House to “develop a diplomatic strategy that includes working with United States allies and partners to conduct joint maritime training and freedom of navigation operations in the Indo-Pacific region, including the East China Sea and the South China Sea, in support of a rules-based international system benefitting all countries.”^① By the end of 2018, the Indo-Pacific strategy had taken shape. It aimed, ultimately, to protect U.S. supremacy in the region; advocated a “rules-based order” based on principles of so-called “freedom and openness”; covered not only security but also economic issues; and sought to deepen its military, diplomatic and economic presence by beefing up relations with its allies and partners in the region.

In June 2019, the Pentagon released its *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report*, which explained the U.S. strategy in the security field in a systematic way. In November, the State Department published *A Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Advancing a Shared Vision*, which further expounded the Indo-Pacific strategy from political, economic and international relations perspectives. These two reports testified to the level of the Trump administration's commitment to its new strategy. The Obama administration,

^①115th Congress of the United States of America, “Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018,” January 3, 2018, <https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/s2736/BILLS-115s2736enr.pdf>, p.16.

despite its “pivot” and “rebalance” rhetorics, had never issued any strategic report on rebalance.^①

2. Main Contents of the Indo-Pacific Strategy

The Trump administration declared that the Indo-Pacific strategy has the following values: “free and open”; respect for the sovereignty and independence of all nations; peaceful resolution of disputes; free, fair, and reciprocal trade based on open investment, transparent agreements, and connectivity; and adherence to international rules and norms, including those of freedom of navigation and overflight. Notably, the Indo-Pacific strategy attempts to connect economic relations, domestic governance, and security relations, and, in particular, stresses that economic security is national security. In other words, the Indo-Pacific strategy is not a security strategy in the traditional sense.

The *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report* has identified four challenges in the Asia-Pacific strategic environment: China as a revisionist power; Russia as a revitalized malign actor; North Korea as a rogue state; and the prevalence of transnational challenges in the Indo-Pacific, including terrorism, illicit arms, drug, human, and wildlife trafficking, and piracy, as well as dangerous pathogens, weapons proliferation, and natural disasters.^②

The report also reiterates four major objectives of the U.S. National Security Strategy – to defend the homeland, remain the world’s preeminent military power, ensure that the balance of power in key regions remains in the U.S.’s favor, and

①U.S. Department of Defense, *The Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy: Achieving U.S. National Security Objectives in a Changing Environment* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, July 2015).

②U.S. Department of Defense, *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, June 2019), pp.7-13.

advance an international order that is most conducive to its security and prosperity. Among these, the most important goal is to maintain U.S. preeminence in military power and a favorable balance of power in the Indo-Pacific. The report claims that the Defense Department's military advantage vis-à-vis its rivals is eroding and that this erosion will undermine its ability to "deter aggression and coercion".

The report proposes three strategic means for the U.S. to retain its relative preeminence.

First, the U.S. will modernize and redesign its military to enhance the lethality, resilience, agility, and readiness of the Joint Force. The report directs the Pentagon to posture ready, combat-credible forces forward—alongside allies and partners—and, if necessary, to fight and win. On the basis of existing forward deployment in Japan, South Korea, and Guam, the Trump administration will implement new forward deployments in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Oceania. One of these is the aforementioned partnership with Australia in a joint initiative at Lombrum Naval Base on Manus Island. The U.S. is beefing up its military presence in the Indo-Pacific, not only in terms of quantity and quality, but also in deterrence and combat readiness against "high-end adversaries". This term obviously envisions the possibility of future conflicts with China, making the report significantly different from the rebalance strategy.

Second, the U.S. will strengthen and expand its security alliances and partnerships with countries in the Indo-Pacific. While continuing to improve its own capabilities, the U.S. is placing more emphasis on partnerships. The report stresses the importance of expanding interoperability between the U.S. and its allies and partners, with a clear understanding of the U.S. strategic basis in the region. Without support from its allies and partners, it acknowledges, the U.S. cannot maintain its preeminence relative to China and Russia.

The report envisages a structure of seven concentric circles for the U.S. regional security system. The innermost circle is composed of five pairs of bilateral

security alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand, comparable to the traditional hub-and-spokes system. The second circle includes four additional security partners: Singapore, China's Taiwan, New Zealand, and Mongolia. The third circle consists of five South Asian countries—India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh, and Nepal. The fourth circle includes three Southeast Asian countries—Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia—with three more nations from Southeast Asia (Brunei, Laos, and Cambodia) occupying the fifth circle. The sixth circle covers the Pacific Islands, particularly those with a U.S. military presence—namely, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and Tonga. Finally, the seventh circle refers to the U.S. global alliance network, including the U.K., France, and Canada, each with their own traditional interests in the Indo-Pacific. The circles closest to the center are considered the most important. This Indo-Pacific strategy includes every ASEAN country except Myanmar, indicating the importance of Southeast Asia to the U.S.

Third, the U.S. will promote a networked and more integrated region. This networking process, initiated in the second term of the Bush administration and strengthened in the rebalance strategy of the Obama administration, has risen to become a major pillar of the Indo-Pacific strategy under the Trump administration. It aims to deter aggression, maintain stability, and ensure free access to common domains. U.S. allies and partners constitute the basis of this networking strategy, which is to be implemented in three major ways. First, on the “mini-lateral” level, the U.S. emphasizes trilateral cooperative relationships of U.S.-Japan-South Korea, U.S.-Japan-Australia, and U.S.-Japan-India, in addition to the restarted quadrilateral consultations among the U.S., Japan, Australia, and India (the Quad). Second, on the plurilateral level, the U.S. supports the centrality of ASEAN in the regional security architecture and participates in a number of ASEAN-centered regional mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). In September 2019, the U.S. conducted its first joint maritime exercise with ASEAN to enhance security

cooperation with that regional entity. Finally, the U.S. encourages its allies and partners to develop “partnerships with purpose”, or stronger bilateral or trilateral security relations among themselves, such as those between Vietnam and Australia; Japan and India; Japan and Vietnam; Japan and the Philippines; India and Vietnam; India, Japan, and Australia; and Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Despite being located on the geographic edge of the Indo-Pacific, the U.S. is striving to become the region’s center in terms of both geopolitical conception and strategic planning. Rather than a simply reinforced hub-and-spokes system composed of five pairs of traditional alliances, the current Indo-Pacific strategy incorporates an ambitious vision of increasing forward deployment, expanding security partnerships, and building a U.S.-centered regional security network based on the existing architecture. This is fundamental to the Indo-Pacific strategy.

For its Indo-Pacific strategy to succeed, the U.S. needs to invest sustained input. At the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2019, Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan stressed that the strategy was much more than words, stating that it underpinned the Pentagon’s budget decisions and drove its resourcing. In the economic field, he highlighted the \$60 billion of international development financing approved by the U.S. Congress. In the security field, he declared that the U.S. would make massive investments in its military modernization effort. The defense budget for R&D in FY 2020 would reach \$104 billion, the highest level ever. At the same time, \$125 billion would be used for operational readiness and sustainment in its priority theater—the Indo-Pacific. Mr. Shanahan pointed out that support from Congress and President Trump made the Indo-Pacific strategy fundamentally different from the Asia strategies of the previous administrations. In the past, he said, there was only a strategy with no resources; now, with strong congressional and presidential support, resource input for the Indo-Pacific strategy would be phased in.

Chapter Two

U.S. Military Presence and Deployment in the Asia-Pacific

The U.S. military forces include 1.33 million active-duty Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force service members as well as 800,000 Reserve and National Guard members,^① making this the world’s third-largest military contingent behind China and India. At present, the U.S. has deployed 375,000 enlisted members in the Asia-Pacific region, accounting for 28% of its total force, including 60% of its Navy ships, 55% of its Army, and two-thirds of its Marine Corps.^② In addition, the Pentagon hired 38,000 civilian staff members in this region. With 85,000 forward-deployed soldiers,^③ intensive training, and a large amount of high-tech and new weaponry, the U.S. military has maintained its supremacy in the Asia-Pacific over the years, and this supremacy has served as a

①“U.S. Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request,” <http://www.defense.gov/cj>.

②Adm. Phil Davidson (Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command), “Ensuring a Free and Open Indo-Pacific,” Fullerton Lecture Series, March 7, 2019, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Speeches-Testimony/Article/1779396/fullerton-lecture-series-hosted-by-iiss-on-ensuring-a-free-and-open-indo-pacific/>.

③Remarks by Adm. Phil Davidson, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, at the Aspen Security Forum, July 18, 2019, <https://www.bitchute.com/video/Nvmfc9o0fdQ9/>.

pillar of the U.S. Asia-Pacific strategy.

I. The U.S. Military Command System in the Asia-Pacific

The U.S. military forces in the Asia-Pacific are under the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) headquartered in Camp H. M. Smith in Oahu island, Hawaii, which had been known as the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) since its establishment in 1947; the change to the current name occurred on May 30, 2018. Adm. Philip S. Davidson is its first commander. Presently, the U.S. has six combatant commands: Central, Africa, European, Northern, Indo-Pacific, and Southern. As the command with the largest geographic scope, USINDOPACOM is responsible for military operations in an area west to 68°E in the Indian Ocean, east to the U.S. West Coast, north to the Bering Strait, and south to the Antarctic. This expanse covers 36 countries (or regions) in the Indian and Pacific area and encompasses 260 million square kilometers, or roughly 52 per cent of the Earth's surface, including what we usually consider the Asia-Pacific region.

- Leadership^①
 - Commander: Admiral Philip S. Davidson, U.S. Navy (since May 2018)
 - Deputy Commander: Lieutenant General Michael A. Minihan, U.S. Air Force (since September 2019)
 - Chief of Staff: Major General Ronald P. Clark, U.S. Army (since December 2019)
- Eight Directorates : J1 (Manpower and Personnel), J2 (Intelligence), J3 (Operations), J4 (Logistics, Engineering, and Security Operations), J5 (Strategic Planning and Policy), J6 (Communication Systems), J8 (Resources and Assessments), and J9 (Pacific Outreach)

^①This description was current as of June 10, 2020.



Figure 2-1 USINDOPACOM Area of Responsibility^①

- Four subordinate component commands: U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific; U.S. Pacific Fleet; U.S. Army Pacific; and U.S. Pacific Air Forces
- Three subordinate unified commands: Commander, U.S. Forces Japan; Commander, U.S. Forces Korea; and Commander, Special Operations Command Pacific
- One standing joint task force: Joint Interagency Task Force–West
- Two direct report units: the Joint Intelligence Operation Center and the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management

① This map was taken from the official website of USINDOPACOM, for reference only to show its area of responsibility in general. This does not mean this report recognizes its geographical information and accuracy of national boundaries. <https://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/USPACOM-Area-of-Responsibility/>.

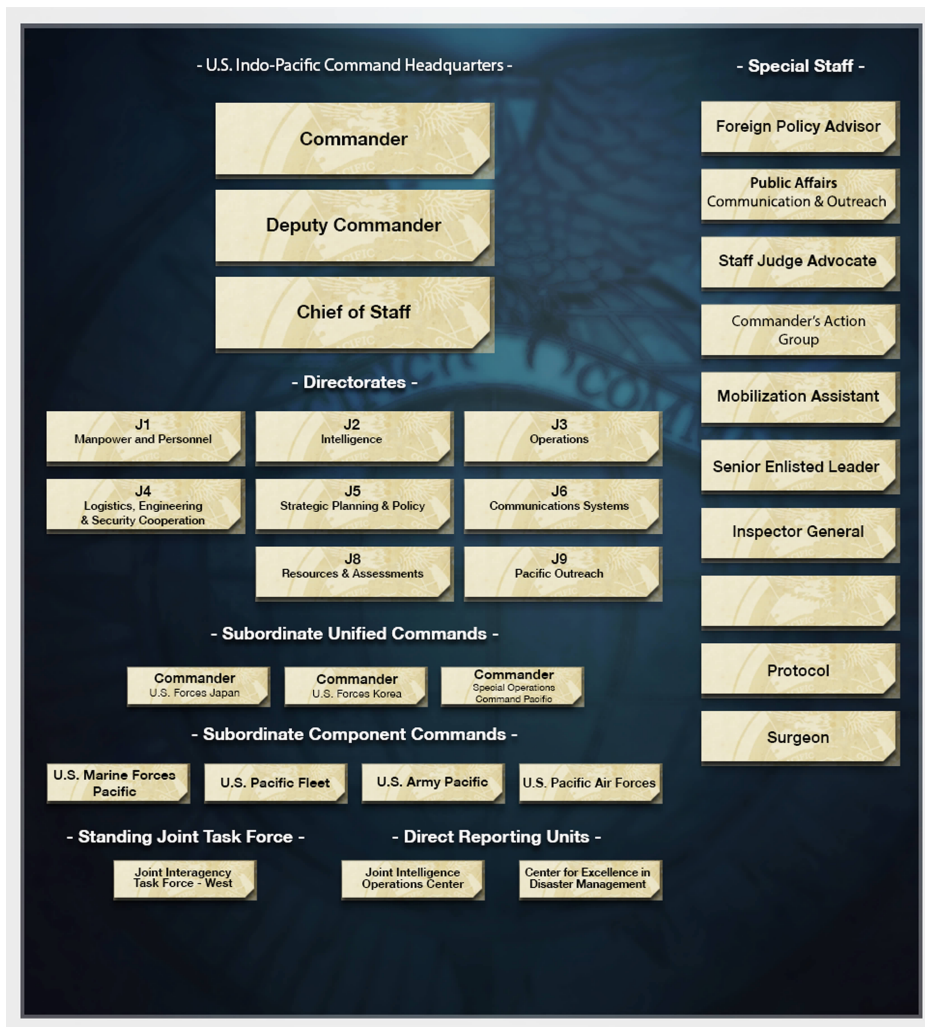


Figure 2-2 USINDOPACOM Organization Chart^①

The U.S. clarified its primary strategic objective in its *National Defense Strategy* in 2018: to compete, deter, and win with its allies and partners. Under this strategic framework, USINDOPACOM has identified five key challenges—North Korea, China, Russia, violent extremist organizations, and natural and manmade disasters. It has further designated China as the greatest long-term strategic threat.

^①This chart comes from the USINDOPACOM website, available at <https://www.pacom.mil/Organization/Organization-Chart/>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

In response to these five challenges, USINDOPACOM has set forth four focus areas:^①

1. Increase joint force lethality.
2. Enhance its design and posture.
3. Exercise, experiment, and innovate. Targeted innovation and experimentation will evolve the joint force while developing asymmetric capability to counter adversary capabilities.
4. Strengthen its allies and partners.

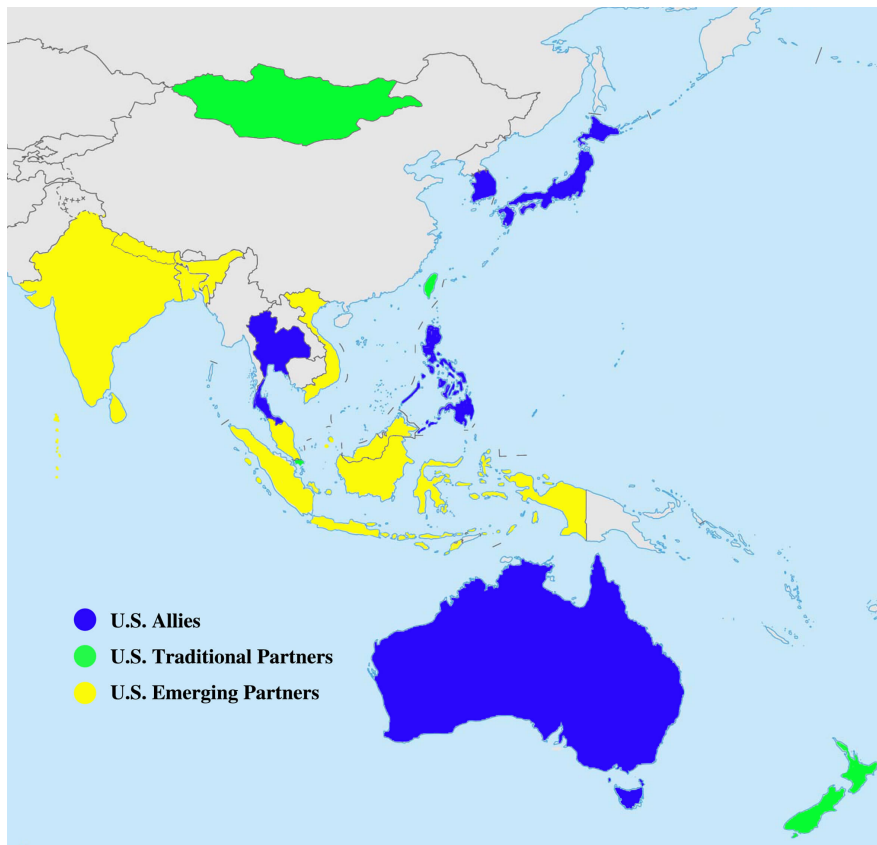


Figure 2-3 U.S. Allies and Partners in the Asia-Pacific

^①Philip S. Davidson, “Statement of Admiral Philip S. Davidson, U.S. Navy Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee on U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Posture,” February 12, 2019, available at: https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Davidson_02-12-19.pdf.

U.S. allies in the Asia-Pacific include Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Australia, all of which have signed mutual defense treaties with the U.S. The U.S. also has traditional partners such as Singapore, Taiwan Region, New Zealand, and Mongolia, as well as emerging partners such as India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia.^①

II. USINDOPACOM Subordinate Component Commands

1. U.S. Marine Forces, Pacific (MARFORPAC)^②

Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific—the U.S. Marine Corps Service Component Commander for INDOPACOM and the largest field command in the U.S. Marine Corps—is in charge of all U.S. Marine Corps forces assigned to the Asia-Pacific (representing two-thirds of all Marine Corps operating forces). The current commander (as of August, 2018) is Lieutenant General L. A. Craparotta.^③ According to the President’s budget for fiscal year 2020, the U.S. intends to increase the Marine Corps’ active-duty end strength to 186,200 Marines while maintaining reserve end strength at 38,500.^④ With about 86,000 active duty soldiers, MARFORPAC consists of:

- I Marine Expeditionary Force (headquartered at MCB Camp Pendleton, California);

① U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy Report, June 1, 2019, https://media.defense.gov/2019/may/31/2002139210/-1/-1/1/dod_indo_pacific__report_june_2019.pdf.

② See “U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific In Any Clime and Place,” at the official MARFORPAC website, <https://www.marforpac.marines.mil/>, <https://www.marforpac.marines.mil/Unit-Home/About/>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

③ Retrieved February 20, 2020.

④ Department of Defense, “FY 2020 Budget Rollout Brief,” March 2019, available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Mar/12/2002099931/-1/-1/1/FY-2020-BUDGET-ROLLOUT-BRIEF.PDF>.

- III Marine Expeditionary Force (headquartered at Camp Courtney, Okinawa, Japan);
- Marine Rotational Force—Darwin, Australia.

Both I and III Marine Expeditionary Forces are Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTFs) featuring global rapid response, forward deployment capacity in the Pacific theater at any time, and capability of crisis response and forward presence operation. In November 2011, the U.S. and Australia reached a 25-year-long agreement under which the U.S. would station Marine ground and air forces on a rotating basis in Darwin and conduct joint training with the Australian Defense Force. In 2019, the U.S. completed the eighth rotation of Marines, the most capable to date. As of July 2019, the rotational force had reached its full complement of 2,500 for the first time.

The U.S. Marine Corps Aviation operated 1,133 fixed-wing aircraft and 522 helicopters, including about 640 aircraft deployed by MORFORPAC.^①

Table 2-1 Numbers of U.S. Marine Corps Aircraft^②

Type	Number	Notes
AV-8B/TAV-8B Harrier II	124	108 AV-8Bs and 16 TAV-8Bs in five VMA and one VMAT squadrons
F/A-18 (A-D) Hornet	524 (80 A, 14 B, 307 C, 123 D) aircraft in operational service and in test roles, and 23 F/A-18Cs in inactive storage	Six active squadrons flying F/A-18A ++s or F/A-18Cs/C +s, four squadrons of F/A-18Ds and one Reserve squadron flying F/A-18A ++/Bs, and one fleet-replacement squadron
F-35B/C	88 (as of February 2020)	In 2011, the Marine Corps decided to procure 353 F-35Bs and 67 F-35Cs. The service plans to equip four Fighter Attack Squadrons (VMFAs) with F-35Cs to augment Navy carrier air wings

① “About USINDOPACOM,” the official USINDOPACOM website, <https://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM>, retrieved December 17, 2019.

② “Marine Corps Aircraft,” *SeaPower 2019 Almanac*, Navy League of the United States, Volume 62, Number 1, January 2019, pp.111-117.

(Continued)

Type	Number	Notes
EA-6B Prowler		One squadron of ICAP III EA-6Bs (VMAQ-2)
KC-130T/J Hercules / Super Hercules	66	54 KC-130Js assigned to three active-duty and one Reserve Aerial Refueler Transport Squadrons (VMGRs) and 12 KC-130Ts assigned to one Reserve VMGR squadron. The KC-130J inventory objective is 86 aircraft
Passenger plane	15	Two UC-35Cs, and 11 UC-35Ds, and two C-20s
MV-22 Osprey	327	The V-22 program total quantity requirement is 464 aircraft (360 Marine Corps MV-22s, 56 Air Force CV-22s, and 48 Navy CMV-22s). As of October 31, 2018, 379 aircraft (327 MV-22s, 52 CV-22s) had been delivered. As of October 2018, there were 18 active and two Reserve VMM squadrons, and one VMMT squadron
AH-1W Super Cobra/ AH-1Z Viper	189 AH-1Zs	Eight active and one Reserve Light Attack Helicopter Squadrons (HMLAs); each has a mix of 15 AH-1W/Zs and 12 UH-1Ys
UH-1Y Venom/HH-1N Iroquois	160 UH-1Ys; 10 HH-1Ns	
CH-53E Super Stallion	142	Eight active Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadrons (HMHs), one Marine Heavy Helicopter Training Squadron (HMHT), and one Reserve HMH squadron
CH-53K King Stallion	200 (procurement plan)	The CH-53E will be replaced by the CH-53K King Stallion
VH-3D/UH-3D Sea King	11	
VH-60N/UH-60N Black Hawk	9 (8 VH-60Ns and 1 UH-60N)	

2. The Pacific Fleet

Headquartered in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the Pacific Fleet is the largest U.S. fleet command, with Adm. John C. Aquilino as its commander since May 2018.^① The Pacific Fleet consists of approximately 200 ships (including four aircraft carrier strike groups) and submarines, nearly 1,200 aircraft, and more than 130,000 sailors and civilians.^② The subordinate commands of the Pacific Fleet include operational commands, type commands, and region commands, as follows:

- Two operational commands: The 3rd Fleet, headquartered in San Diego, California, is responsible for the eastern Pacific, which is delineated by a line halfway between Midway and Japan, generally east of 160°E. The 7th Fleet, headquartered in Yokosuka, Japan and responsible for the western Pacific and the Indian Ocean, is the largest U.S. forward-deployed fleet. Under the Pacific Fleet, operational commands are responsible for operational command and control, tactical control, and supporting operations. Since 2015, the 3rd Fleet has expanded its engagement in the western Pacific and the Indian Ocean to support the 7th Fleet.
- Four type commands: Command of Naval Air Force, Command of Naval Surface Force, Command of Submarine Force, and Command of Navy Expeditionary Combat. Type commands are responsible for administration, personnel, and combat training of naval air forces, surface ships, submarines, and other forces under the Pacific Fleet.
- Five region commands: Command of Naval Forces, Japan; Command of Naval Forces, Korea; Command of Joint Region, Marianas; Command of Logistics Western Pacific; and Command of Navy Region Hawaii. Region commands are

①As of February 20, 2020.

②“U.S. Pacific Fleet advances Indo-Pacific regional maritime security and enhances stability,” the official website of the Pacific Fleet, <https://www.cpf.navy.mil/about/>; the official website of the U.S. Navy, https://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact_display.asp?cid=4200&tid=200&ct=4, retrieved February 20, 2020.

responsible for supporting naval and joint operations and providing base and combat operational support.

As of December 2019, the Pacific Fleet had 133 warships deployed, accounting for 56 per cent of all U.S. combat vessels. The home ports of its four aircraft carriers are: Bremerton, Washington State, for USS Nimitz and USS Carl Vinson; San Diego, California, for USS Theodore Roosevelt; and Yokosuka, Japan, for USS Ronald Reagan. The other seven U.S. aircraft carriers have their home ports in Norfolk, Virginia and Newport News on the East Coast.

Table 2-2 Numbers of Major Combat Ships and Submarines of the Pacific Fleet^①

Type	U.S. Navy	Pacific Fleet	Share of the Pacific Fleet
Nuclear-Powered Ballistic Missile Submarine	14	8	57%
Nuclear-Powered Cruise Missile Submarine	4	2	50%
Nuclear-Powered Attack Submarine	55	31	56%
Aircraft Carrier	11	4	36%
Cruiser	22	12	55%
Destroyer	69	38	55%
Littoral Combat Ship	19	12	63%
Amphibious Assault Ship	32	18	56%
Command Ship	2	1	50%
Mine Countermeasures Vessel	11	7	64%
Total	239	133	56%

The U.S. Naval Air Force had 2,491 aircraft, including 1,782 fixed-wing aircraft and 709 helicopters. The Naval Air Force under the Pacific Fleet had nearly 1,100 aircraft, approximately 44% of all aircraft operated by the U.S. Naval Air Force.

^①“Our Ships,” on the official website of the U.S. Navy, https://www.navy.mil/navydata/our_ships.asp, retrieved February 20, 2020.

Table 2-3 Numbers of Fixed-Wing Aircraft of the U.S. Naval Air Force^①

Type	Number	Notes
F/A-18E/F Super Hornet	551	Super Hornets equip 33 operational U.S. Navy strike fighter squadrons, two fleet replacement squadrons, and three air test and evaluation squadrons
F/A-18A/B/C/D Hornet	—	Hornets in the Navy equip one active, one fleet replacement, and one Reserve VFA squadron; one Navy Reserve fighter composite squadron; three VX squadrons; the Navy’s Flight Demonstration Squadron (Blue Angels) ; and the Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Center
F-35C Lightning II	33	
EA-18G Growler	153	
E-2C Hawkeye	38	
E-2D Advanced Hawkeye	35	
C-2A Greyhound	34	
P-8A Poseidon	92	Nine of the 12 active-component patrol squadrons had completed the transition to the P-8A
P-3 Orion	96	
EP-3E Orion (Aries)	14	
E-6B Mercury	16	
C-130T Hercules	20	
KC-130T Hercules	11	
Passenger aircraft	55	
Trainer	634	
Total	1,782	

① “Navy Aircraft,” *SeaPower 2019 Almanac*, Navy League of the United States, Volume 62, Number 1, January 2019, pp.59-68.

Table 2-4 Numbers of Helicopters of the U.S. Naval Air Force^①

Type	Number
MH-60R Seahawk	280
MH-60S Seahawk	275
HH-60H Seahawk	12
MH-53E Sea Dragon	29
TH-57 Sea Ranger	113
Total	709

3. U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC)

Headquartered at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, the U.S. Army Pacific is the largest regional component command of the U.S. Army, with General Paul J. LaCamera as its Commanding General since November 2019.^② Commanding 106,000 active-duty, reserve soldiers and civilians as well as equipped with 300 aircraft,^③ USARPAC consists of the 8th Army in South Korea, I Corps, the U.S. Army in Washington State, the U.S. Army in Alaska, the U.S. Army in Japan, the 8th Theater Sustainment Command, the 311th Signal Command (Theater), the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command, the 9th Mission Support Command, the 196th Infantry Brigade, the 500th Military Intelligence Brigade, the 18th Medical Command, and the 5th Battlefield Coordination Detachment. In addition, USARPAC can maneuver 9,000 National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers.

^①“Ship Weapons” and “Navy Aircraft”, *SeaPower 2019 Almanac*, Navy League of the United States, Volume 62, Number 1, January 2019, pp.58-70.

^②See the official website of USARPAC, <https://www.usarpac.army.mil/comgen.asp>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

^③“About USINDOPACOM,” the official USINDOPACOM website, <https://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

4. U.S. Pacific Air Forces

The U.S. Air Force has ten major commands and the Air National Guard. The U.S. Pacific Air Forces are one of the two commands outside the U.S. homeland. Its current commander is Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr. (since July 2018; on May 14, 2020, President Trump nominated Gen. Brown Air Force’s Chief of Staff and Lt. Gen. Kenneth S. Wilsbach was nominated to succeed him.)^① It consists of 46,000 members, including active-duty members, the Air National Guard, reservists, and civilians. It consists of:

- The 5th Air Force (headquartered at Yokota Air Base, Japan);
- The 7th Air Force (headquartered at Osan Air Base in the Republic of Korea);
- The 11th Air Force (headquartered at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska);
- The 15th Airlift Wing (Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam).

Its major air bases include Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii; Andersen Air Force Base, Guam; Eielson Air Force Base and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; Osan Air Base and Kunsan Air Base, the Republic of Korea; and Yokota Air Base, Kadena Air Base, and Misawa Air Base, Japan.^②

Table 2-5 U.S. Air Force Major Commands and Numbers of Aircraft^③

Commands (Headquarters)	Bomber	Fighter/Attack	Helicopter	ISR/BM/C3	Operations Forces	Special Operations	Tanker	Trainer	Transport	Total	Others
Air Combat Command (JB Langley-Eustis, Va.)		659	39	366				45		1,109	

① “Wilsbach Nominated to Lead Pacific Air Forces,” Air Force Magazine, May 15, 2020, <https://www.airforcemag.com/wilsbach-nominated-to-lead-pacific-air-forces/>.

② “Major Commands and Air National Guard,” *USAF ALMANAC 2019*, Air Force Association, June 2019, pp.64-74.

③ “Pacific Air Forces Units,” the official PACAF website, <https://www.pacaf.af.mil/Info/PACAF-Units/>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

(Continued)

Commands (Headquarters)	Bomber	Fighter/ Attack	Helicopter	ISR/BM/C3	Operations Forces	Special Operations	Tanker	Trainer	Transport	Total	Others
Air Education and Training Command (JBSA-Randolph, Texas)		212	44		15		18	1,132	31	1,452	
Air Force Global Strike Command (Barksdale AFB, La.)	134		25	4				14		177	400 ICBMs ^①
Air Force Material Command (Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio)	5	46	5	23			2	15	21	117	
Air Force Reserve Command (Robins AFB, Ga.)	18	109	15	10			72		96	320	
Air Force Space Command ^② (Peterson AFB, Colo.)											77 satellites in orbit
Air Force Special Operations Command (Hurlburt Field, Fla.)				44	124					168	
Air Mobility Command (Scott AFB, Ill.)							161		251	412	
Pacific Air Forces (JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii)		259	13	4			18		30	324	
U.S. Air Forces in Europe—Air Forces Africa (Ramstein AB, Germany)		155	5				15		22	197	
Air National Guard (Washington D.C.)		575	17	74	4		171		209	1,050	
Total	157	2,015	163	525	143		457	1,206	660	5,326	

① Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles.

② On December 20, 2019, as President Trump signed the fiscal 2020 National Defense Authorization Act into law, the U.S. Space Force (USSF) was formally established. Air Force Space Command was abolished and transformed into the Space Force.

The Pacific Air Forces account for only 6% of all the aircraft in the U.S. Air Force. Aircraft of other commands of the U.S. Air Force, however, are regularly deployed in the Indo-Pacific Command’s area of operations, providing rapid support to the Pacific Air Forces at any time. For example, since 2004, B-1B, B-52, and B-2 strategic bombers under the Air Force Global Strike Command have had rotating deployment at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, adding global strike and deterrence capabilities to the Indo-Pacific Command. As an integral part of the command’s security assurance to its allies, these bombers conduct Continuous Bomber Presence Missions (CBPMs) on a regularly basis in the Indo-Pacific area of operations,^① covering the western Pacific and Indian Ocean including the Sea of Japan, the East China Sea, and the South China Sea. They are also deployed at Diego Garcia Air Force Base in the Indian Ocean. In addition, about 2,600 aircraft of the Navy, the Marine Corps and the Army is also deployed in the area of operations of the Pacific Air Forces.

Table 2-6 Wings and Centers of the U.S. Pacific Air Forces^②

Wings/Centers	Location	Types and Notes
3rd Wing	JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska	C-12, C-17 E-3 F-22A
8th Fighter Wing	Kunsan AB, South Korea	F-16C/D
15th Wing	JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii	C-17A, C-37A, C-40B F-22A (AA) KC-135R (AA)

^①Information on the official website of Anderson Air Force Base of the U.S. Air Force, <https://www.andersen.af.mil/CBP/>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

^②“Pacific Air Force”, USAF ALMANAC 2019, Air Force Association, June 2019, p.72.

(Continued)

Wings/Centers	Location	Types and Notes
18th Wing	Kadena AB, Japan	E-3B/C F-15C/D KC-135R HH-60G
35th FW	Misawa AB, Japan	F-16C/D
36th Wing	Andersen AFB, Guam	Rotating combat forces
51st FW	Osan AB, South Korea	A-10C F-16C/D
354th FW	Eielson AFB, Alaska	F-16C/D
374th Airlift Wing	Yokota AB, Japan	C-12J, C-130H, UH-1N
607th Air and Space Operations Center (AOC)	Osan AB, South Korea	Plan and direct air operations
611th AOC	JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska	Plan and direct air operations
613th AOC	JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii	Plan and direct air operations
673rd Air Base Wing	JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska	Joint base facilities support
Regional Support Center	JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska	Remote facility operations, communications, engineering

5. U.S. Forces Korea

Established in July 1957, U.S. Forces Korea is the sub-unified command of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in the Republic of Korea, with headquarters at Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek, south of Seoul. Its current commander is Gen. Robert B. Abrams since October 2018,^① who is concurrently Commander of the United Nations Command and ROK/U.S. Combined Forces Command. U.S. Forces Korea is composed of:

^①As of February 20, 2020.

- The 8th Army (including the 2nd Infantry Division);
- The 7th Air Force (including the 51st Fighter Wing and the 8th Fighter Wing);
- Commander Naval Forces Korea;
- Marine Forces Korea;
- The Far East Engineer District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.^①

U.S. Forces Korea has forward deployment of 28,500 soldiers.^②

6. U.S. Forces Japan^③

U.S. Forces Japan was originally established at Fuchu Air Station on July 1, 1957. Composed of U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Air Force elements, U.S. Forces are stationed in Japan pursuant to the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security of 1960. The current commander is Lieutenant Gen. Kevin B. Schneider,^④ who is concurrently Commander of the 5th Air Force. U.S. Forces Japan has 58,000 soldiers dispersed among 85 facilities located on the islands of Honshu, Kyushu, and Okinawa. The total land area covered by U.S. bases is approximately 77,000 acres (approximately 312km²). Its main bases are Yokota and Misawa, for the Air Force; Camp Zama, for the Army; Iwakuni, for the Marine Corps; and Yokosuka, Atsugi, and Sasebo, for the Navy.

- U.S. Army, Japan consists of about 2,000 soldiers and is charged with operating port facilities and a series of logistics installations throughout Honshu and Okinawa. It is headquartered at Camp Zama.

①The official website of U.S. Forces Korea, <https://www.usfk.mil/>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

②Remarks by Adm. Davidson at the Aspen Security Forum, Video by Murphycat 2012: at the Aspen Security Forum, July 19, 2019, <https://www.bitchute.com/video/Nvmfc9o0fdQ9/>.

③The official website of U.S. Forces Japan, <https://www.usfj.mil/About-USFJ/>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

④As of February 20, 2020.

- The Marine Corps in Japan is composed of III Marine Expeditionary Force and the Marine Corps Installations Command. It is headquartered at Camp Courtney, Okinawa, and the total number of Marines in Japan is approximately 18,000.
- Commander, Naval Forces, Japan, consisting of about 6,000 personnel and headquartered at Yokosuka, is responsible for maintaining and operating the port facilities and providing base and logistic support for the surface, subsurface, aviation, and amphibious elements of the U.S. 7th Fleet. The U.S. 7th Fleet, under the operation control of Commander, Pacific Fleet, has about 13,000 sailors, 18 ships (including one aircraft carrier), and 100 airplanes.
- The 5th Air Force, the main U.S. air force in Japan, has about 15,000 Airmen and Air Force civilians deployed in Yokota (headquarters), Kadena, and Misawa.

7. U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific^①

The Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC) is a sub-unified command of the U.S. Special Operations Command under the operational control of the U.S. Pacific Command. It serves as the functional component for all special operations deployed throughout the Indo-Pacific region. Headquartered in Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii, its current commander is Major General Jonathan Braga (since July 2018) who is in charge of more than 1,200 soldiers for special operation.^② SOCPAC's area of focus includes 36 countries and encompasses half of the earth's surface. SOCPAC divides this area into four sub-regions: Northeast Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Oceania.

① Official website of the U.S. Special Operations Command, <https://www.socom.mil/socpac>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

② See "SOCPAC Change of Command," Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, July 27, 2018, <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/4594749/socpac-change-command>, retrieved February 20, 2020.



Figure 2-4 Main Locations of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Forces

III. U.S. Strategic Nuclear Forces in the Asia-Pacific

The U.S. has never adopted a “no-first-use” policy in its nuclear deterrence strategy. The U.S. government believes such a commitment will mislead its enemies to launch nuclear strikes first or coerce with nuclear weapons, which will increase the danger of a nuclear war;^① and it will erode the confidence of the U.S. allies on their security, leading to the development of nuclear weapons by their own.^② At the beginning of 2019, the U.S. Department of Defense maintained an estimated stockpile of 3,800 nuclear warheads for delivery by more than 800 ballistic missiles and aircraft. It is estimated that approximately 1,750 warheads are currently

① *Nuclear Posture Review*, February 2018, Office of the Secretary of Defense, p.22, <https://theasiadialogue.com/2018/02/13/2018-u-s-nuclear-posture-review/>.

② John R. Harvey, “Assessing the Risks of a Nuclear ‘No First Use’ Policy,” 5 July 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/07/assessing-the-risks-of-a-nuclear-no-first-use-policy/>.

deployed, of which roughly 1,300 strategic warheads are deployed on land-based or submarine-based ballistic missiles and another 300 at strategic bomber bases in the U.S. An additional 150 tactical bombs are deployed at air bases in Europe. The remaining warheads—approximately 2,050 of them—are in storage. Several hundred of them are scheduled to be retired before 2030. In addition to the 3,800 warheads in the Defense Department stockpile, approximately 2,385 retired—but still intact—warheads are stored under custody of the U.S. Department of Energy while awaiting dismantlement, giving a total estimated U.S. inventory of 6,185 warheads.^① The U.S. plans to ultimately cut the number of its nuclear warheads to 1,550.^②

Integrated Nuclear Strike Forces on Land, Sea and in the Air

- **Land-based nuclear forces:** The U.S. operates a force of 400 silo-based Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) split across three bases under the Air Force Global Strike Command: Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana, Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota, and F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming.
- **Airborne nuclear forces:** The U.S. has 564 AGM-86 air-launched cruise missiles, including AGM-86Bs carried by B-52H strategic bombers. In addition, the U.S. has about 500 B61 gravity nuclear bombs that can be carried by B-2 bombers and F-15E/F-16C/D fighters now and that will be transported by B-21 bombers and F-35A fighters in the future.^③ These active-duty aircraft are regularly deployed in the Asia-Pacific.

①Hans M. Kristensen and Matt Korda, “United States Nuclear Forces, 2019,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 75, May 29, 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00963402.2019.1701286>.

②U.S. Nuclear Deterrence Policy, April 1, 2019, U.S. Department of Defense, <https://media.defense.gov/2019/apr/01/2002108036/-1/-1/1/u.s.-nuclear-weapons-claims-and-responses.pdf>.

③“Strategic Weapons,” USAF ALMANAC 2019, Air Force Association, June 2019, pp.123-124.

- Nuclear-missile-armed submarines: Each of the 14 Ohio-class SSBNs on active duty can carry up to 24 Trident II submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), bringing the total number of SLBMs to 336; each missile is topped with 8 to 12 independently-targeted warheads. There are eight Ohio-class SSBNs carrying up to 192 SLBMs operating in the Asia-Pacific,^① accounting for 57 percent of all the U.S. SLBMs.

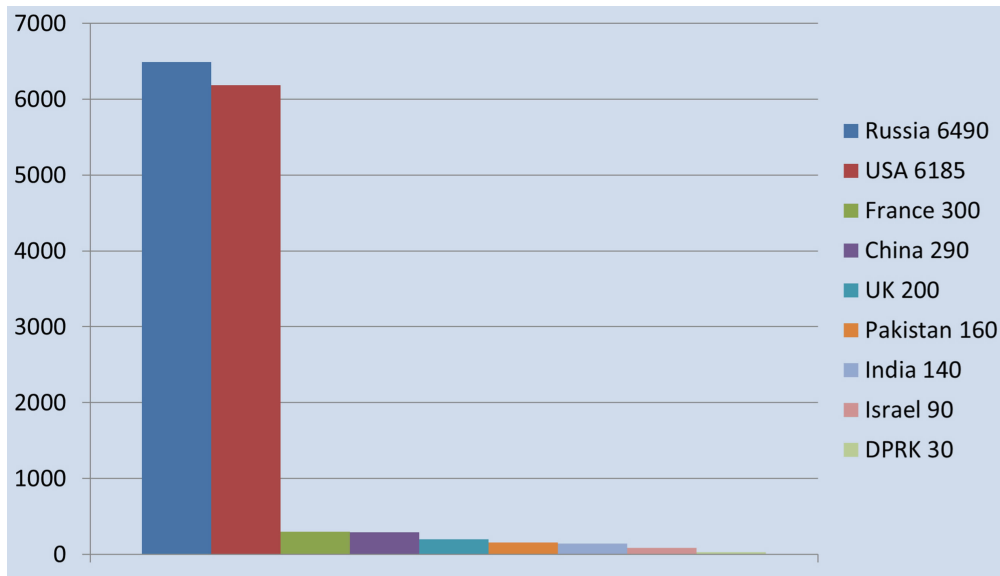


Figure 2-5 Number of Nuclear Warheads around the World (2019)

Source: SIPRI YEARBOOK 2019^②

In 2018, the Trump administration, continuing the practice of the Obama administration, disclosed the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal and the number of weapons dismantled. However, the Pentagon reversed this practice upon instruction

^① See “United States Navy Fact File” and “Fleet Ballistic Missile Submarines-SSBN,” the official website of the U.S. Navy, https://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact_display.asp?cid=4100&tid=200&ct=4, retrieved February 20, 2020.

^② SIPRI, SIPRI YEARBOOK 2019, <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2019/modernization-world-nuclear-forces-continues-despite-overall-decrease-number-warheads-new-sipri>, 22 December 2019.

from the White House in April 2019. This decision in effect changed U.S. nuclear transparency policy, causing a negative impact on the balance of major nuclear powers.

IV. Distribution of U.S. Military Bases in the Asia-Pacific

The U.S. has the largest number of military bases globally. According to statistics available in FY 2018, the Pentagon managed 4,775 military bases or posts around the world (4,150 sites in the U.S., 111 in its overseas territories, and 514 overseas), consisting of over 585,000 facilities and covering approximately 26.9 million acres (109,000km²). Among them, the U.S. has 1,081 military bases and posts in the Asia-Pacific. Specific locations include Washington state, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii; the U.S. overseas territories of Guam, American Samoa, Wake Island, and the Northern Mariana Islands; and several foreign territories – the Marshall Islands, Diego Garcia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, Cambodia, and Singapore.^①

Table 2-7 U.S. Military Bases/Installations in the Asia-Pacific^②

Location	Army	Navy	Airforce	Marine	Others	Total
Washington State	31	57	17			105
Oregon	12	4	10			26
California	71	180	12	45		368
Alaska	86	4	70			160
Hawaii	29	84	21	9		143
American Samoa	1					1

① “Base Structure Report – Fiscal Year 2018 Baseline: A Summary of the Real Property Inventory Data,” [https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/Downloads/BSI/Base% 20Structure% 20Report% 20FY18.pdf](https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/Downloads/BSI/Base%20Structure%20Report%20FY18.pdf).

②Ibid.

(Continued)

Location	Army	Navy	Airforce	Marine	Others	Total
Guam	1	31			20	52
Marshall Islands	7				4	11
Northern Mariana Islands	1	3			1	5
Wake Island			1			1
Australia		3			3	6
Cambodia					1	1
Diego Garcia		1				1
Japan	14	33	23	15	34	119
Singapore		1			1	2
Republic of Korea	47	6	10	1	16	80

In addition, although it withdrew its forces from all its military bases in the Philippines in 1992, the U.S. has been seeking opportunities to return to this Southeast Asian country. In 2014, the U.S. and the Philippines signed a new Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, according to which the U.S. began to station troops at five Philippine military bases since March, 2016: Antonio Bautista Air Base, Palawan; Basa Air Base, Luzon; Fort Magsaysay Military Reservation, Luzon; Lumbia Air Base, Mindanao; and Mactan-Benito Ebuen Air Base, Visayas. In the South Pacific, the U.S. is pursuing new military bases as well. On November 16, 2018, the U.S. Vice President Pence announced that the U.S. would partner with Australia to rebuild and operate Lombrum Naval Base on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea.^①

① U.S. Department of Defense, *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, June 2019), https://media.defense.gov/2019/may/31/2002139210/-1/-1/1/dod_indo_pacific_strategy_report_june_2019.pdf.

V. U.S. Military Supremacy in the Asia-Pacific

The U.S. has a total of 375,000 military and civilian personnel in the Asia-Pacific. The U.S. is able, with its 133 advanced vessels and 2,600 aircraft, to maintain military supremacy in the region. In addition, the 12,000 aircraft located elsewhere can be rapidly deployed in the Asia-Pacific by the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Naval Air Force, the U.S. Marine Corps Aviation, and the U.S. Army Air Forces and Air National Guard in support of USINDOPACOM. It will be very difficult for other countries in the Asia-Pacific to overtake the U.S. and gain military supremacy in the region for the foreseeable future.

1. Military Expenditure

The U.S. has an overwhelming lead in military expenditures among the major military powers in the Asia-Pacific; in fact, its budget far exceeds the combined military outlay of China, Russia, India, Japan and South Korea. The U.S. military supremacy is underpinned by this enormous spending. Due to major adjustments brought about by its Indo-Pacific strategy and the needs of its great-power competition with China and Russia, the U.S. defense budget for FY 2020 reached a record of \$738 billion. The budget for the Pentagon increased by 4.9 per cent over FY 2019. Broken down by military department, the budget includes about \$191.4 billion for the Army, \$205.6 billion for the Navy, \$204.8 billion for the Air Force, and \$116.6 billion for the “defense-wide” account.

2. Land Forces

The U.S. Army holds a clear lead globally in mechanization and information technology. Through its involvement in regional conflicts over the years, the U.S. Army has gained rich combat experience and has maintained a high level of combat readiness, making it one of the most competent land forces in the world. Out of its needs for global operation and deployment, the U.S. has paid close

Table 2-8 Military Expenditures by Major Military Powers in the Asia-Pacific 2010-2019 (excluding China)^①

(in billions of dollars)

Year	U.S.	Russia	India	Japan	ROK
2019	718.69	64.14	70.79	46.56	46.28
2018	648.8	61.39	66.51	46.62	43.07
2017	605.8	66.53	64.56	45.39	39.17
2016	600.1	69.24	56.64	46.47	36.88
2015	596.1	66.42	51.30	42.11	36.57
2014	609.91	84.70	50.91	46.88	37.55
2013	639.7	88.35	47.40	49.02	34.31
2012	684.78	81.47	47.22	60.01	31.95
2011	711.34	70.24	49.63	60.76	30.99
2010	698.18	58.72	46.09	54.66	28.18
Total	6,513	711	551	498	365

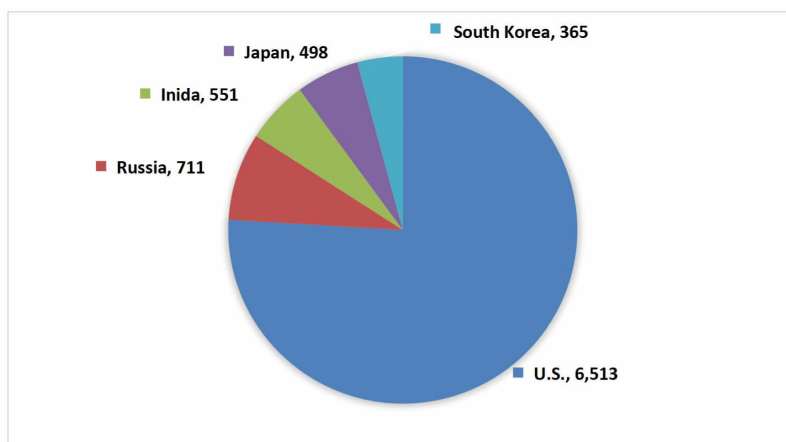


Figure 2-6 Military Expenditures by Major Military Powers in the Asia-Pacific (2010–2019, excluding China)
(in billions of dollars)

^①Data for all countries 1949-2018, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>

attention to the long-range power projection capabilities of its Army and Marine Corps. Of the three U.S. Maritime Pre-Positioning Force Ship Squadrons (MPSRONs), two are deployed in the Asia-Pacific—one at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean and the other in Guam and Saipan in the Pacific.^① Each squadron has prepositioned most of the combat equipment and supplies required to equip and sustain one Maritime Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), featuring rapid crisis response and persistent forward presence, in response to possible wars on land in its theater.

Table 2-9 Armies of Major Military Powers in the Asia-Pacific (excluding China)^②

	U.S.	Russia	India	Japan	ROK
Active-Duty Soldiers (in thousands)	659.5	360	1,262	150	490
Tanks	2,801	2,378	2,290	663	2,219
Armored Vehicles	28,690	8,769	2,995	3,101	3,286
Self-Propelled Artillery	1,579	1,277	300	405	1,758
Towed Artillery	1,538	1,000	7,011	729	4,060
Rocket Guns	630	136	336	99	185
Helicopters	4,320	-	186	441	518
Unmanned Drones	7,759	-	-	-	-
Air Defense Missiles	954	706	231	406	266

Note: The U.S. Marine Corps is included in the U.S. figures.

① “Maritime Prepositioning Ships—T-AK, T-AKR and T-AOT,” United States Navy Fact File, https://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact_display.asp?cid=4600&tid=200&ct=4, retrieved February 20, 2020

② Jane’s World Armies,

U.S.: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwara259-jwar>.

Russia: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwara226-jwar>.

India: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwara169-jwar>.

Japan: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwara177-jwar>.

ROK: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwara182-jwar>. Retrieved February 20, 2020.

3. Naval Forces

At present, the Pacific Fleet under USINDOPACOM has about 200 ships in the Asia-Pacific, including 133 main warships. Despite its numerical disadvantage in ships, the Pacific Fleet has exceeded the Chinese, Russian, Japanese, and South Korean navies combined in indicators of ocean-going operational capacity such as total tonnage, shipboard aircraft, and missiles. In 2016, the U.S. Navy planned to increase its fleet from 308 to 355 ships; with regard to specific categories, it would increase the number of aircraft carriers from 11 to 12, the number of nuclear-powered attack submarines from 51 to 66, and that of cruisers/destroyers from 89 to 104. According to the U.S. Navy's shipbuilding plan for FY 2020, the Navy will have 55 new ships in five years and 304 new ones in 30 years, thereby bringing the total number of ships to 355 by 2034.^① It is expected that the majority of the new ships will be deployed in the Asia-Pacific.

Based on an independent model of maritime combat capability and public information provided by Jane's Information Group, this research report makes an assessment and comparison of five major navies (excluding China) in the Asia-Pacific on their maritime combat capabilities in nine different fields, in order to offer a straightforward picture of the U.S. military supremacy on sea.

^①“Navy Force Structure and Shipbuilding Plans: Background and Issues for Congress, ” Congressional Research Service, August 26, 2019.

**Table 2-10 Numbers of Warships of Major Navies
in the Asia-Pacific (excluding China)**

Type	U.S. Navy (overall) ^①	Russian Pacific Fleet ^②	Indian Navy ^③	Japanese Maritime Self- Defense Force ^④	Republic of Korea Navy ^⑤
Nuclear-Powered Ballistic/Cruise Missile Submarines	18	5	1	-	-
Nuclear-Powered Attack Submarines	55	9	1	-	-
Conventional Submarines	-	8	14	19	16
Aircraft Carriers	11 (825 aircraft)	-	1 (36 aircraft)	4 helicopter carriers (30 aircraft)	-
Cruisers/Destroyers/ Large Frigates	91	7	19	38	20
Littoral Combat Ships/ Small Frigates	19	6	23	6	23
Missile Boats/ Patrol Cutters	13	18	28	6	87

① These data and those in the next column (on the U.S. Pacific Fleet) come from the official website of the U.S. Navy, https://www.navy.mil/navydata/our_ships.asp, as of May 31, 2019, and from *SeaPower 2019 Almanac*, Navy League of the United States, January 2019.

② Jane's World Navies, Russia: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwna0127-jwna>. Retrieved February 20, 2020.

③ Jane's World Navies, India: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwna0070-jwna>. Retrieved February 20, 2020.

④ Jane's World Navies, Japan, <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/1322704>. Retrieved February 20, 2020.

⑤ Jane's World Navies, ROK: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwna0083-jwna>. Retrieved February 20, 2020.

(Continued)

Type		U.S. Navy (overall)	Russian Pacific Fleet	Indian Navy	Japanese Maritime Self- Defense Force	Republic of Korea Navy
Amphibious Warfare Ships		40 (405 aircraft)	4	16	5 (18 aircraft)	10 (10 aircraft)
Command Ships		2	-	-	-	-
Mine Countermeasure Vessels		11	-	-	24	10
Submarines	Number	73	22	16	19	16
	Displacement	731,000 tons	182,000 tons	50,000 tons	54,600 tons	22,000 tons
	SLBM	336	60	4	-	-
Ocean- Going Warships	Number	102	7	20	42	20
	Displacement	1.98 million tons	50,000 tons	196,000 tons	256,600 tons	82,500 tons
	Missile	9,420	472	844	1,576	724
Total	Number	260	52	103	102	166
	Displacement	4.39 million tons	255,000 tons	297,000 tons	376,000 tons	199,000 tons

Notes:

1. SLBM=submarine-launched ballistic missile;
2. Displacement is calculated as load displacement.
3. Only medium- to long-range air defense, anti-ship and anti-submarine missiles on ocean-going surface warships are counted, excluding short-range air defense missiles such as the RIM-116 Rolling Airframe Missile (RAM).

Table 2-11 Assessment Index of Maritime Combat Capability of Major Countries in the Asia-Pacific (excluding China)

Conventional Combat Mode	U.S. Pacific Fleet	Russian Pacific Fleet	Indian Navy	Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force	Republic of Korea Navy
Far-Sea Submarine Warfare	1	0.4	<0.1	0.2	0.1-0.2
Far-Sea Air Operations	1	-	< 0.1	-	-
Far-Sea Surface Warfare	1	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.3
Amphibious Warfare	1	<0.1	-	0.2	0.2
Long-Range Force Projection	1	-	-	0.1	0.1
Far-Sea Logistics Support	1	0.1	-	0.1	0.1
Near-Sea Submarine and Anti-submarine Warfare	1	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2
Near-Sea Surface Warfare	1	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.6
Mine Countermeasures Operations	1	-	-	0.4	0.2

Note: the above Combat Capability Assessment, benchmarked against the U.S. Pacific Fleet, takes the current equipment performance of each country as the main assessment factor, leaving aside the differences among the professional quality and training level of each country's military personnel.

4. Air Forces

U.S. airpower consists of five branches – the U.S. Air Force, Naval Aviation, Marine Corps Aviation, Army Aviation, and Air National Guard. Each branch itself is a formidable force globally. At present, USINDOPACOM has 2,600 aircraft, including those regularly deployed in the Asia-Pacific by the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and Army. In addition, aircraft of other Air Force commands are stationed on a regular rotating basis in the USINDOPACOM area of operations.

The large-scale deployment of the fifth-generation jet fighters,^① represented by F-22s and F-35s, has brought profound changes to the ways of air warfare and tipped the balance of air power in the Asia-Pacific. In the evaluation of operational capacity, a fifth-generation fighter is considered as effective as at least two fourth-generation fighters in air battle,^② and its exchange ratio, according to one American specialist, is up to 30 times better than that of a fourth-generation fighter in similar high-threat scenarios.^③ The U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard are equipped with 187 F-22s, the first model of fifth-generation jet fighter, which entered service in 2002 and the production of which came to an end in 2011. The second model of the fifth-generation jet fighter—F-35 entered service in 2015. By January 2020, 491 F-35s have been delivered and some have been exported to Japan, South Korea, and Australia in the Asia-Pacific.

Table 2-12 Major Air Powers in the Asia-Pacific (excluding China)^④

Type	U.S. ^⑤	Russia	India	Japan	ROK
Bomber	157	270	-	-	-
Fifth-Generation Jet Fighter	428	-	-	12	8

① Fifth-generation jet fighters are classified here in a way generally used in Western countries, which is equivalent to fourth-generation jet fighters under the Chinese classification.

② “The U.S. Initial Operational Test and Evaluation on F-22,” *F-22 Raptor*, p.227, Aviation Industry Press, 2008.

③ Lt. Col. Christopher J. Niemi, USAF, “The F-22 Acquisition Program,” *Air & Space Power Journal*, November/December 2012, p.64.

④ “World Air Forces,” Jane’s Information Group,
 Russia: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/1319109>.
 India: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/jwafa119-jwaf>.
 Japan: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/1319056>.

ROK: <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/1319061>. Retrieved February 20, 2020.

⑤ USAF ALMANAC 2019, Air Force Association, June 2019, pp.97-123.

(Continued)

Type	U.S.	Russia	India	Japan	ROK
Fourth-Generation Jet Fighter	2,746	1,116	494	264	228
Second- and Third-Generation Jet Fighters	281	-	367	52	267
Special Operations Aircraft	155	-	-	-	-
Recon./AEW&C/Joint STARS	652	195	43	50	46
Tankers	549	20	6	20	-
Transport	1,278	842	277	43	45
Patrol	188	47	19	109	16
Helicopters	4,905	1,599	519	614	620
Trainers	1,189	563	404	328	166
Total	12,528	4,652	2,129	1,492	1,396

The Goal of U.S. Military Power Building – Maintaining its Long-Term Superiority. Despite the U.S. military superiority in the Asia-Pacific, the U.S. military has been pursuing more military deployments in order to expand and maintain its superiority. Former Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr. stated in 2018 that “There was no shortage of challenges that confront us. From North Korea to China to Russia to terrorism. China remains our biggest long-term challenge. Without focused involvement and engagement by the U.S. and our allies and partners, China will realize its dream of hegemony in Asia. We should cooperate with Beijing where we can ... but stand ready to confront them where we must.”^①

On the other hand, some U.S. think tanks argue that U.S. military power is

^①Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr., remarks at the Change of Command Ceremony of USINDOPACOM, May 30, 2018, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Speeches-Testimony/Article/1537219/us-indo-pacific-command-change-of-command-ceremony/>.

declining, although this may be a convenient excuse to justify more military spending. In its *2019 Index of U.S. Military Strength* issued in October 2018, the Heritage Foundation pointed out that “the current U.S. military force is likely capable of meeting the demands of a single major regional conflict while also attending to various presence and engagement activities but ... certainly would be ill-equipped to handle two nearly simultaneous major regional contingencies. U.S. military services, the index stated, tend to be small with aging equipment and virtually at the ‘lowest’ level according to this assessment.”^①

In its FY 2020 Budget Request, the Pentagon claimed that China and Russia are developing their military capabilities to prepare for high-end conflicts in the future and to attempt to erode U.S. influence. Therefore, according to the Pentagon, the U.S. defense strategy requires sufficient resources for long-term competition with China and Russia. The focus will shift to engaging the great-power competition with China and Russia and maintaining sustained and full-spectrum readiness. The U.S. seeks to enhance its competitive edge in all operational domains in FY 2020. In the foreseeable future, U.S. military power will continue its rapid growth, particularly in the Asia-Pacific, with a clear objective of maintaining supremacy over its competitors.

^①Heritage Foundation, “2019 Index of U.S. Military Strength,” <https://www.heritage.org/military-strength/download-the-2019-index>.

Chapter Three

U.S. Military Activities in the Asia-Pacific

The U.S. military forces in the Asia-Pacific region maintain regular peacetime military activities in the following five categories: military training and exercises, military reconnaissance and intelligence collection, military diplomacy, military operations other than war for non-traditional security threats, and special operations for national policies.

I. Military Training and Exercises

The U.S. military conducts more than 90 code-named military exercises in the Indo-Pacific every year.^① Most of these are joint exercises with its allies and partner countries, in addition to a larger number of joint training and smaller exercises. From 2017 to 2019, the number of joint military exercises organized by the U.S. worldwide increased by 17%, with the Asia-Pacific region serving as a

^①Admiral Phil Davidson (U.S. Indo-Pacific Command), “On Ensuring a Free and Open Indo-Pacific,” Fullerton Lecture Series, Singapore, March 7, 2019, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/Speeches-Testimony/Article/1779396/fullerton-lecture-series-hosted-by-iiss-on-ensuring-a-free-and-open-indo-pacific/>.

major contributor to this growth.^① The training and exercises can be unilateral, bilateral, and multilateral, and they involve a variety of armed services from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. The peacetime military training and exercises organized by the U.S. military in the Asia-Pacific are an important symbol of the U.S. military presence and a major way to show U.S. muscle.

As for the subjects of these exercises, the U.S. military remains consistently focused on traditional security threats. In particular, on the Korean Peninsula, despite frequent and multi-level dialogues between the U.S. and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) over the past two years, the U.S. and ROK conducted nearly 100 joint conventional military training and exercise events of different sizes in 2019. In the field of non-traditional security, joint exercises organized by the U.S. military cover a wide range of areas, including maritime search and rescue/salvage, humanitarian aid and disaster reduction, anti-piracy, and operations against drug trafficking, weapon smuggling and maritime crimes.

Among the U.S.-organized joint military exercises, the biennial RIMPAC held by the Third Fleet in Hawaii and off the coast of California is the largest joint military exercise in the world, encompassing military operations in both traditional and non-traditional areas on land, sea and in air. The Chinese navy was invited to participate in 2014 and 2016. The annual "Cobra Gold" joint military exercise between the U.S. and Thailand is the largest joint military exercise in Southeast Asia.

① Patrick M. Shanahan, "Acting Secretary Shanahan's Remarks at the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue 2019," June 1, 2019, U.S. Department of Defense, <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/1871584/acting-secretary-shanahans-remarks-at-the-iiss-shangri-la-dialogue-2019/>.

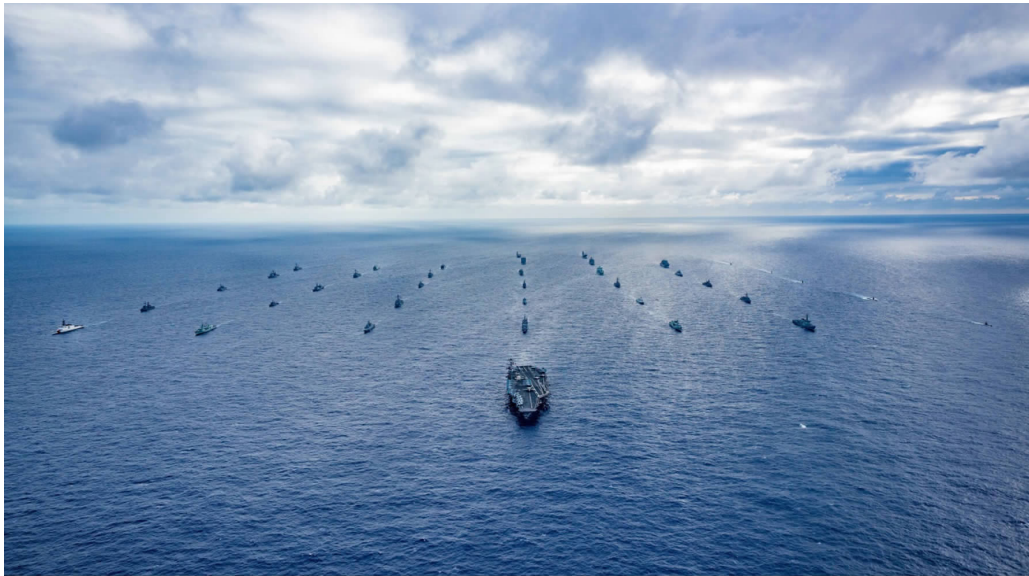


Figure 3-1 RIMPAC 2018^①

Note: 46 surface vessels, 5 submarines, 200 aircraft and around 25,000 soldiers participated.

Among the unilateral U.S. exercises, “Continuous Bomber Presence” , which has been organized by the U.S. Air Force in the Asia-Pacific since 2004, is a typical traditional unilateral military training and exercise. By rotating the deployment of B-1B, B-52, and B-2 strategic bombers at Anderson Air Force Base in Guam and the Diego Garcia Air Base in the Indian Ocean, and by conducting routine cross-zone deployment and long-range flight and bomber training from the Western Pacific to the Indian Ocean, the Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) supports the Indo-Pacific Command with global strike and deterrence capability and sends a strong signal in strategic deterrence to the countries in this region. (See Table 3-1: U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020.)

①RIMPAC Public Affairs, “Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2018 Concludes,” USINDOPACOM, 3 August 2018, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1593407/exercise-rim-of-the-pacific-2018-concludes/>.

II. Military Reconnaissance and Intelligence Collection

The U.S. military has been conducting intensive reconnaissance and intelligence collecting activities concerning its strategic competitors and potential threats in the Asia-Pacific throughout the year.

In such operations, the U.S. military usually deploys ocean survey and surveillance ships, missile tracking ships, electronic reconnaissance aircraft, and unmanned aerial and underwater vehicles (UAVs and UUVs). The U.S. military currently has six Pathfinder-class ocean survey ships and four Victorious-class ocean reconnaissance ships available for marine and hydrological surveys. By tracking, detecting, and measuring marine environment information such as submarine topography, geomorphology, and hydrological data as well as underwater targets such as submarines over the years, the U.S. military has established a robust database of marine natural environment information and related underwater acoustics. The U.S. military currently has three models of aircraft—P-8A, P-3C, and EP-3E—designed for communication, electromagnetic, and radar reconnaissance activities, which has enabled the establishment of regional and country-specific electromagnetic signal databases. The USNS Howard O. Lorenzen and USNS Invincible, both missile-range instrumentation ships, are used mainly to monitor the launch data of strategic ballistic missiles, conduct missile tests, and analyze the performance of opponents' missiles.^①

In peacetime, such forms of information and intelligence provide a basis for strategic decision making by the U.S. military. In wartime, these databases serve as underlying intelligence for modern weapons and platforms to play effective roles in the context of information technology. In recent years, UAVs and UUVs have been widely used for U.S. reconnaissance, measurement, and intelligence-collecting activities. Unmanned aircraft and vessels, which are more flexible, stealthier, and

^①“Military Sealift Command Ships,” *SeaPower 2019 Almanac*, Navy League of the United States, volume 62, number 1 (January 2019), pp.36-37.

less sensitive than manned ones, can greatly reduce the hardware and human costs involved in this work.

III. Military Diplomacy

The diplomatic activities carried out by the U.S. military mainly include military personnel visits and exchanges, port visits, international military assistance, military intelligence cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and medical services. These military diplomatic activities help to build the U.S. soft power and expand its influence in the Asia-Pacific. Pacific Angel and the Pacific Partnership Mission are two cases in point.

Pacific Angel, a joint humanitarian assistance operation led by the U.S. Pacific Air Forces (PACAF), aims to strengthen relations with allies and partners, and improve living conditions of local communities in the Asia-Pacific.^① Since it was launched in 2007, this annual event focuses on general health services (such as dental, optometry and pediatrics), engineering programs, as well as various exchanges among subject matter experts. By June 2019, thirteen iterations have been held.

The Pacific Partnership Mission is the largest military diplomatic operation on humanitarian and disaster relief carried out by the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet, along with the region's governments, military forces, and humanitarian and non-governmental organizations. Since it was launched in 2006, fourteen iterations have been held.^② The U.S. hospital ships USNS Mercy and USNS Comfort are the main vessels involved in the humanitarian assistance delivered by both of these annual operations. (See Table 3-2: U.S. Humanitarian Aid Operations in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2019.)

①“Pacific Angel 2019,” Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, December 17, 2019, <https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/PacificAngel19>.

②“Pacific Partnership 2019 Mission Concludes,” the official website of the U.S. 7th Fleet, <https://www.c7f.navy.mil/Media/News/Display/Article/1858150/pacific-partnership-2019-mission-concludes/>, retrieved December 17, 2019.

IV. Military Operations other than War for Non-traditional Security Threats

In response to non-traditional security threats in the Asia-Pacific, the U.S. military has been involved in military operations other than war (MOOTW) such as maritime search and rescue/salvage; humanitarian rescue and disaster reduction; counter-terrorism; combating piracy; operations against drug trafficking, weapon smuggling and maritime crimes; enforcement of United Nations embargos and sanctions; and assistance to other countries in maritime law enforcement.

In humanitarian rescue and disaster reduction, recent operations involving the U.S. military in the Asia-Pacific include the Thailand cave rescue in June 2018; the earthquake and tsunami rescue in Sulawesi, Indonesia in September 2018; and humanitarian relief after the Super Typhoon Yutu in the Mariana Islands in November 2018. In the counter-terrorism realm, the U.S. special forces provided technical and logistical support to the Philippine army for its operation in Marawi against Islamic radical groups in May 2017.^① In accordance with U.N. Security Council resolutions and unilateral U.S. sanctions, the U.S. Navy and Air Force, in recent years, have forcefully intercepted and inspected North Korean ships and checked whether they have carried materials or fuel covered by the sanctions. In March 2019, the patrol ship USCGC Bertholf arrived to patrol the East China Sea, claiming that it was enforcing an embargo pursuant to the U.N. Security Council resolutions on the DRPK.^② In July 2019, the U.S. Coast Guard announced that it would deploy two patrol ships in Yokosuka, Japan and expand its operations in the Western Pacific. In addition, the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command is also involved in

①“U.S. Special Forces Intervene in Philippines Fight against Terrorism,” Xinhuanet, June 11, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/asia/2017-06/11/c_129630013.htm.

②“U.S. Vessels Coming to the Korean Peninsular Waters to Intercept North Korean Smuggling Ships,” Radio France Internationale, March 21, 2019, <http://www.rfi.fr/tw/亚洲/20190321-美国急派军舰至朝鲜半岛海域拦截破坏制裁朝鲜的走私船只>.

combating transnational criminal activities in the Asia-Pacific such as human trafficking at sea, drug trafficking, and illegal fishing, and it also shares information with the U.S. allies and partners.^①

V. Special Operations for National Policies

Special operations mainly include U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) and operations with political intent in sensitive areas.

The U.S. FONOPs in the Asia-Pacific are based on a unilateral national policy that has been in place since 1983.^② The U.S. freedom of navigation policy provides that the United States will exercise and assert its navigation and overflight rights and freedoms on a worldwide basis, and it will not acquiesce in unilateral acts of other states designed to restrict the rights and freedoms of the international community in navigation and overflight and other related high seas uses. The freedom of navigation policy operates on a triple track, involving not only diplomatic representations and operational assertions by U.S. military units on the sea and in the air, but also bilateral and multilateral consultations with other governments. Among them, in FONOPs, the U.S. Navy and Air Force challenge domestic legislations and policy claims of other countries in their operations to strengthen its freedom of military navigation. From 1991 to 2018, the U.S. military has challenged 654 “excessive maritime claims” of 61 countries and regions in its FONOPs. The ten countries most frequently challenged by the U.S. – the Philippines, Iran, Maldives, Cambodia, India, Oman, Indonesia, Malaysia, China and Vietnam—are all in the Asia-Pacific. (See Table 3-3: The U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations in the Asia-Pacific, 2017-2018.)

The U.S. frequently directs warships to sail across the Taiwan Straits, in a typical example of politically motivated operations carried out by the U.S. military in the Asia-Pacific. These operations not only assert U.S. claims to the right of

①Davidson, “Ensuring a Free and Open Indo-Pacific”.

②The President’s United States Oceans Policy Statement of March 10, 1983, <https://www.jag.navy.mil/organization/documents/Reagan%20Ocean%20Policy%20Statement.pdf>.

navigation, but also give the U.S. a way to intervene in the Taiwan question, offering a kind of political support to the Taiwan regime and a highly sensitive political demonstration against China. In particular, U.S. warships travel through these waters at the times of rising tensions in cross-straits relations, with a deliberate intention to pressure China. For example, the cruiser USS *Antietam* crossed the Taiwan Straits on July 25, 2019, the day right after the white paper *China's National Defense in the New Era*, which reiterated that on Taiwan question Beijing make no promise to renounce the use of force, was published. On August 21, 2019, the U.S. administration announced the approval of an \$8 billion arms sale to Taiwan, which provoked a backlash from Beijing. Two days later, two U.S. Navy warships passed through the Taiwan Straits. After the election in Taiwan was held on January 11, 2020, a U.S. cruiser headed north through the Taiwan Straits on January 16. On February 15, a U.S. warship transited through the Taiwan Straits again. (See Table 3-4: U.S. Warships Transiting the Taiwan Straits, 2018-2020.)

VI. U.S Policy Adjustments and Military Activities Regarding the South China Sea

The U.S. has a consistent policy on the South China Sea. From the “rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region” to the Indo-Pacific strategy, the U.S. security and strategic objectives remain largely unchanged. Backed by military power, the U.S. aims to maintain regional balance of power and counter immediate and long-term threats. It advocates the establishment of “a rules-based maritime order”, challenges China’s “excessive maritime claims”, and consistently conducts FONOPs and close-in military renaissance activities on the sea and in the air. Since the Trump administration took office, the U.S. has substantially intensified its military activities in the South China Sea – increasing FONOPs, conducting more military exercises, and sending the Coast Guard vessels.

The U.S. has made public its FONOPs in the South China Sea since the Obama administration – once in 2015 and thrice in 2016. Since the Trump

administration came to office, the FONOPs in the South China Sea jumped to 4 times in 2017, 5 times in 2018 and 8 times in 2019, including three missions composed of two warships at the same time in 2018 and 2019 respectively, according to statistical information available. It is worth noting that, unlike U.S. operations in other parts of the world, the FONOPs in the South China Sea are disclosed to the media on each occasion, and U.S. military spokespersons have consistently stressed their country's unilateral claims with a clear intention to pressure China. (See Figure 3-2: The Scope of U.S. FONOPs in the South China Sea, 2017–2020; and Table 3-5: The U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations in the South China Sea, 2017-2020.)

Since the 1990s, the U.S. military has begun to conduct military reconnaissance and measurement activities in the South China Sea and gradually put them on a regular basis. Incidents such as the clash between a Chinese J-8II and a U.S. EP-3E ARIES II over the South China Sea in 2001, the USNS Impeccable incident in 2009, and the seizure by the Chinese Navy of a U.S. underwater drone in the South China Sea in 2016 have all shown that the U.S. conducts routine military reconnaissance and intelligence collecting activities in China's coastal waters. During the Trump administration, the U.S. military has disclosed details of such missions to the media. For example, the U.S. Navy invited CNN and ABC journalists to get aboard its P-8A aircraft in its overflight missions near the Chinese islands and reefs in the South China Sea in August and September 2018, to give high-profile coverage on its reconnaissance operations.^① China's 2019 white paper *China's National Defense in the New Era* notes, "Countries from outside the region

① 'Leave immediately': US Navy plane warned over South China Sea, August 24, 2018, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/08/10/politics/south-china-sea-flyover-intl/index.html>, Reporter's notebook: Flying with the US military as it keeps tabs on China over the South China Sea, September 12, 2018, <https://abcnews.go.com/International/reporters-notebook-flying-us-military-tabs-china-south/story?id=57745253>, retrieved February 20, 2020.

conduct frequent close-in reconnaissance on China by air and sea, and illegally enter China's territorial waters and the waters and airspace near China's islands and reefs, undermining China's national security. ... China is firmly opposed [to] ... U.S. illegal entry into China's territorial waters and maritime and air spaces near relevant islands and reefs, and wide-range and frequent close-in reconnaissance."^①

Since the Trump administration came to office, the U.S. and its allies have become more active in conducting joint military drills in the South China Sea, with new ways and more participating forces than before. In August 2018, the U.S. Ronald Reagan Strike Group held a joint exercise with the helicopter carrier JS Kaga and other Japanese vessels. In June 2019, the U.S. Ronald Reagan Strike Group held a joint deployment and exercise with the Izumo helicopter carrier group from the JMSDF in the South China Sea. In January 2019, the guided-missile destroyer USS McCampbell and the Royal Navy frigate HMS Argyll held a joint naval exercise, the first between the U.S. and British navies in the South China Sea. In May 2019, the U.S., India, Japan and the Philippines held a joint exercise in the South China Sea. Frequent joint exercises between the U.S. and its allies in the South China Sea have made the security landscape in the South China Sea even worse.

On the part of the U.S. Coast Guard, the USCGC Bertholf arrived in the South China Sea in March 2019 and conducted a joint search and rescue exercise with the Philippine coast guard forces in the waters west to Manila in the following May. In August 2019, the USCGC Stratton conducted joint exercises with Indonesia and Malaysia respectively in the South China Sea, and berthed in Singapore. In addition, the U.S. military has unilaterally deployed its vessels, conducted its own

^①The State Council Information Office of China, *China's National Defense in the New Era* (July 24, 2019), chapters 1 and 6.

exercises and frequently sent its B-52 strategic bombers in overflight missions in the South China Sea.

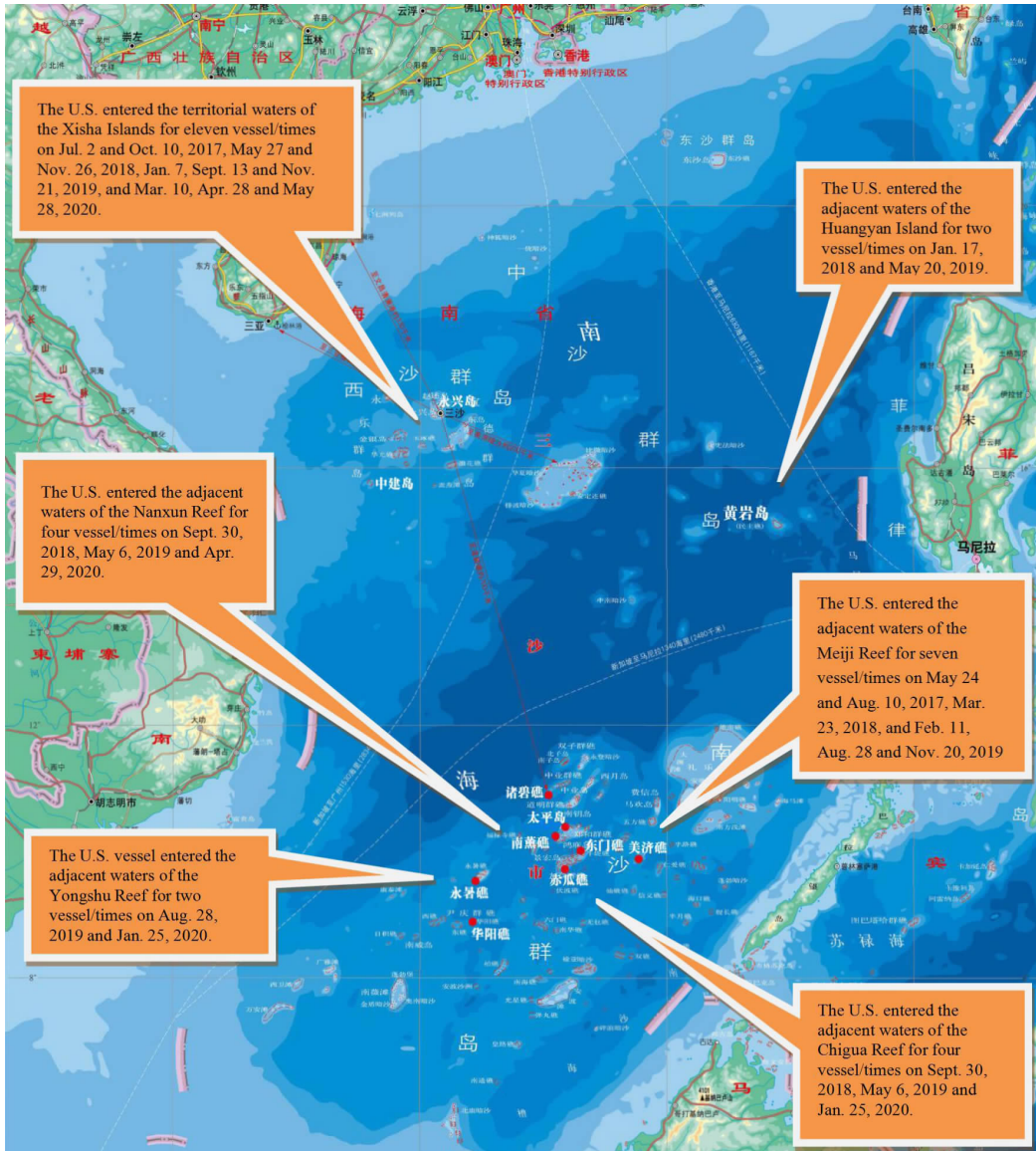


Figure 3-2 The Scope of U.S. FONOPs in the South China Sea, 2017-2020^①

^①According to statistical information available.

Chapter Four

U.S. Military and Security Relations in the Asia-Pacific

Under the Trump administration, U.S. military and security relations in the Asia-Pacific region have been further expanded and adjusted while generally retaining their established posture.

I. U.S. Military and Security Relations with Its Allies in the Asia-Pacific

The bilateral military alliances with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia and Thailand remain central to U.S. military and security relations in the Asia-Pacific.

1. Japan

The most important alliance for U.S. military and security relations in the Asia-Pacific is its relationship with Japan. Since 2017, the two countries have increased military and security cooperation despite their differences on a number of issues, including how to share responsibility for the costs of U.S. forces stationed in Japan.

Security coordination mechanisms. At the leadership level, U.S.-Japan summits, meetings of the Security Consultative Committee (SCC) (the “2+2”

Ministerial Meeting), and high-level diplomatic and defense consultations have become more frequent. Between July 2017 and June 2018 alone, 36 such high-level meetings occurred, indicating a robust and close alliance.^①

At the working level, the “2+2” meeting in August 2017 decided to accelerate implementation of the 2015 Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation and to explore new and expanded activities in various areas, such as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and training and exercises.^② Moreover, as coordination mechanisms have improved, the U.S. forces and the Japanese Self-Defense Forces have enhanced their joint combatant capability.

Beyond their bilateral security framework, the U.S. and Japan are also engaged in plurilateral security arrangements such as U.S.-Japan-X and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad), which includes the U.S., Japan, India and Australia, so as to increase the influence of the U.S.-Japan alliance in the Asia-Pacific.

Arms trade and cooperation on military technology. Since President Trump took office, arms trade and cooperation on military technology between the U.S. and Japan have intensified, involving many cutting-edge weapon systems. U.S. arms sales to Japan reached US\$3.837 billion in FY 2017. The U.S. sold a total of 150 Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) Block IB missiles to Japan in November 2018 as well as April and August 2019, with a total price of US\$5 billion.^③ In response to the U.S. call for more military purchases, the Abe government considered the acquisition of up to 100 F-35 fighters beyond the already approved 42 F-35As.

①Ministry of Defense of Japan, *Defense of Japan 2018*, pp.533-535.

②“Los Angeles-class sub joins exercise Keen Sword,” *Naval Today*, November 2, 2018, <https://navaltoday.com/2018/11/02/los-angeles-class-sub-joins-exercise-keen-sword/>.

③Aaron Mehta, “US State Department clears \$4.2B in arms sales to Japan, South Korea, Hungary, Lithuania and Denmark,” *Defense News*, August 27, 2019, <https://www.defensenews.com/global/asia-pacific/2019/08/28/state-clears-42-billion-in-potential-arms-sales-to-japan-s-korea-hungary-lithuania-and-denmark/>.

Joint military exercises. The Trump administration values joint military exercises and trainings with Japan. During his June 2018 visit to Japan, U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis stressed that U.S.-Japan joint exercises should be intensified to reaffirm the U.S. security commitment to Japan. In November 2018, the two countries conducted the “Keen Sword 2019” joint exercise in Japan and its surrounding waters, with the participation of about 10,000 U.S. service members. The drill was conducted in the air, on the sea, and on amphibious platforms, showing the maturity of a comprehensive, multi-tiered, and all-dimensional U.S.-Japan alliance. Notably, a Los Angeles-class fast-attack nuclear submarine from the U.S. Submarine Group 7 participated with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) submarines in the exercise.

In addition to engaging in regular bilateral war games, the U.S. Navy and JMSDF have engaged in joint trainings and exercises in the South China Sea, including one between the U.S. Carl Vinson Strike Group and JS Ise helicopter carrier (DDH-182) in March 2018 and one involving the U.S. Ronald Reagan Strike Group along with JS Kaga (DDH-184) and other Japanese vessels.

In fact, the U.S.-Japan joint exercises have begun to “go trilateral”. In December 2015, the U.S. and India announced the inclusion of Japan as a formal party in the “Malabar” joint exercise, turning the U.S.-India naval drills into trilateral activities. The U.S. and Japan have continued to play the major role as the three countries held annual naval drills in Sasebo (2016), the Bay of Bengal (2017), and Guam (2018).

Outer space and cyber security cooperation. Committed to maintaining its favorable position in outer space and the cyber world, the U.S. has placed strong emphasis on cooperation with Japan in these fields. The National Defense Program Guidelines and the Mid-Term Defense Program issued by Japan in December 2018 stressed that Japan would “further deepen various operational cooperation and policy coordination with the United States”, particularly in the space and cyber domains.

Moreover, Japan planned to set up a command center for space, cyberspace and electronic warfare to further cooperation with the U.S. in these areas, as well as to collaborate with the U.S. in upcoming years on R&D of electromagnetic pulse weapon for advanced fighters. The U.S. and Japan have initiated cooperation in the fields of space, cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum, expanding this regional military alliance into a strategic relationship with a global reach.^①

2. The Republic of Korea

After Japan, the Republic of Korea (ROK) is the second most important U.S. ally in the Asia-Pacific. Since President Trump took office, U.S.-ROK security relations have remained stable and have continued to expand, despite differences between the two countries on sharing defense costs and on the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea.

Slow progress in the transfer of wartime command of South Korean troops. Taking over wartime operational control (OPCON) of its forces is a major issue for the ROK in its security relations with the U.S. The governments of both Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye delayed the date of this shift. Among the 100 tasks contained in the five-year plan unveiled after President Moon Jae-in took power in 2017, he pledged to take over OPCON at an early date on the firm basis of the U.S.-ROK alliance and to build a new, ROK-led joint defense system. The Security Consultative Meeting held on October 31, 2018 decided to work together toward the transfer of OPCON. After the meeting, the two countries' defense chiefs signed the Alliance Guiding Principles, which were jointly developed "to ensure a strong combined defense posture following OPCON transition." This document reaffirmed the continuous U.S. presence in South Korea, the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command, the United Nations Command (CFC), and the selection of a four-

^①Yang Mujiang and Mu Jian, "The Evolution, Tensions and Impact of the U.S.-Japan Alliance in the Trump Administration," *Contemporary World*, v3 (2019): pp.11-17.

star general from the ROK as commander of the future Combined Forces Command.

Suspension or cancellation of large-scale U.S.-ROK joint military exercises.

Large-scale U.S.-ROK joint military exercises include “Key Resolve” and “Foal Eagle” drills in each spring and “Ulchi Freedom Guardian” drills in summer and autumn. Since he took office, President Trump has been critical of large-scale U.S.-ROK war games, believing that such activities were “tremendously expensive” and “provocative”. As negotiations between the U.S. and the DPRK appeared to be making progress, the U.S. and ROK decided to suspend or cancel large-scale joint exercises. In July 2018, U.S. Defense Secretary Mattis announced that select military and training exercises on the Korean Peninsula would be “indefinitely suspended” , including “Ulchi Freedom Guardian”. In March 2019, the U.S. and South Korea decided to terminate the large-scale “Key Resolve” and “Foal Eagle” exercises and replace them with modified joint drills. In November 2019, the U.S. and South Korea cancelled the joint military air exercise “Vigilant ACE” for the second consecutive year to pave the way for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Sharing of defense costs in U.S.-ROK security relations. Ever since taking office, President Trump has pointed the finger at South Korea for “free riding” over the years and demanded that the latter pay a substantially greater portion of U.S. defense costs. The two sides entered negotiations on this matter and, in February 2019, signed the 10th Special Measures Agreement (SMA). According to this bilateral cost-sharing deal, South Korea agreed to pay 1038.9 billion South Korea won (about US\$900 million), up 8.2% over 2018. In the latest round of negotiations on the Special Measures Agreement (SMA) on November 19, 2019, the U.S. asked South Korea to contribute US\$5 billion, an increase of more than five times of its current share, leading to the breakdown of the negotiations. In the meeting between the two countries’ defense chiefs on February 24, 2020, no breakthrough was made

on sharing defense costs of U.S. troops in ROK.

Sustained and active U.S. arms sales to the ROK. South Korea is the second-largest buyer of U.S. weapons in the Asia-Pacific, with expenditure growing year by year. U.S. arms sales to South Korea reached US\$930 million in FY 2017. In September 2018, the State Department had approved US\$2.6 billion of arms sales to South Korea, including six P-8A Poseidon maritime reconnaissance aircraft and 64 Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) Missile Segment Enhancement (MSE) missiles. In August 2019, the Pentagon announced the sale of antisubmarine helicopters—specifically, 12 MH-60R Seahawks with a total price of US\$800 million—to South Korea. In October 2019, South Korea planned to purchase 20 F-35 fighter jets with a total price of US\$3.3 billion. Previously in 2014, it had ordered 40 F-35 fighters from the U.S. with a total price of US\$6.4 billion.

Further development of U.S.-Japan-ROK military and security cooperation.

While beefing up its bilateral alliances with the ROK and Japan, the U.S. has also pursued trilateral military and security cooperation with the two countries by leveraging the nuclear and missile threats from the DPRK. This trilateral cooperation started with military intelligence. In November 2016, with U.S. backing, South Korea and Japan signed the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), a major step forward for the sharing of military intelligence among the three countries. After that, the three countries conducted the “Pacific Dragon” exercise, which was the first joint ballistic missile defense drill aimed at the threat of missiles from the DPRK. Furthermore, the three countries have stepped up high-level coordination and their defense dialogue mechanism has become more mature, as evidenced by the Trilateral Defense Ministerial Meetings held in 2017 and 2018. At the 10th Trilateral Defense Ministerial Meeting in March 2018, the three ministers expressed their commitment to continuing existing security cooperation, including information sharing, high-level policy consultation,

combined exercises, and other exchanges, through trilateral mechanisms.^①

3. The Philippines

The Philippines is a traditional ally of the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific. The U.S. strengthened its alliance with the Philippines under the presidency of Benigno Aquino III through arms sales, joint exercises, and bilateral treaties. Since Rodrigo Duterte took power in June 2016, U.S.-Philippines military and security relations have been weakened – for example, the Philippines unilaterally terminated the Visiting Forces Agreement in February 2020, but the alliance framework remains intact.

The Mutual Defense Treaty is about to be revised. The Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), signed in 1951, is the legal cornerstone of the U.S.-Philippines military alliance. After taking office in 2016, President Duterte stated publicly that the treaty should be abolished. However, the Philippine government began to prepare for revising rather than revoking the treaty. At the end of December 2018, Secretary of National Defense Delfin Lorenzana declared that his department had begun to review the provisions of the 1951 treaty to determine specific revisions to be implemented so as to make the country’s alliance with the U.S. stronger. The U.S. responded positively to the Philippine position, indicating that it would increase military support to its ally. In February 2019, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that the MDT was applicable to the South China Sea.^② In November 2019, U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper stressed that the MDT should be applied to the

① “Japan-Republic of Korea-United States Defense Ministers Meeting Joint Press Statement,” [https://media.defense.gov/2018/Jun/03/2001926148/-1/-1/0/180603%20ROK%20-%20JPN%20-%20US%20JOINT%20PRESS%20STATEMENT%20\(002\).PDF](https://media.defense.gov/2018/Jun/03/2001926148/-1/-1/0/180603%20ROK%20-%20JPN%20-%20US%20JOINT%20PRESS%20STATEMENT%20(002).PDF)

② Michael R. Pompeo, “Remarks With Philippine Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin, Jr.,” U.S. Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/remarks-with-philippine-foreign-secretary-teodoro-locsin-jr/>.

entire Pacific region, including the South China Sea.^① These statements indicate that the U.S. is obliged to come to the aid of the Philippines if the territories claimed by the Philippines or its forces in the South China Sea come under attack.

Joint military exercises have been scaled down. Since taking power, President Duterte has said that he wanted to end joint military exercises with the United States and that the U.S. troops in Mindanao in southern Philippines “must go”. In fact, however, the joint war games have continued, albeit with decreasing frequency and on a smaller scale. Joint combat operations conducted under the traditional alliance framework have been toned down. In the annual “Balikatan” (shoulder-to-shoulder) drills in 2017, the number of participating soldiers was reduced from 10,000 under the presidency of Benigno Aquino III to 5,000, with humanitarian rescue operations being highlighted. In the same drills the following May, the number of service members was increased to 8,000. But with Japan and Australia also participating, this event was no longer a traditional exercise between the U.S. and the Philippines. To mend relations with China, President Duterte requested that the joint exercises to be relocated outside the South China Sea.

U.S. military aid and arms trade have declined. U.S. military aid to and arms trade with the Philippines have been an important part of their military alliance. Since 2016, however, U.S. military aid to the Philippines has declined sharply, from US\$154 million in FY 2016 to just US\$18 million in FY 2018. In addition, the U.S. announced in August 2018 that it would transfer four OV-10 “Bronco” light attack planes for free to the Philippines.

4. Thailand

Thailand is an important ally of the U.S. in Southeast Asia and enjoys

① “U.S. Defense Secretary Confirms U.S.-Filipino Pact Covers the SCC and the Entire Pacific,” Voice of America, November 21, 2019, <https://www.voachinese.com/a/pentagon-philippines-treaty-china-20191119/5172796.html>.

preferential treatment as a “non-NATO ally”. After a military coup took place there in 2014, the U.S. administration demanded a reevaluation of U.S.-Thailand military cooperation. Nevertheless, U.S.-Thailand military relations have remained stable. In 2017, Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha visited the U.S. and met with U.S. President Trump. Since then, U.S.-Thailand military relations have basically recovered.

U.S. military aid to Thailand totalled US\$5 million in FY 2016 and FY 2017 respectively, basically the same as in previous years. Apart from multilateral military exercises such as “Cobra Gold” and CARAT, the U.S. and Thailand conduct regular joint military exercises. Since 2012, the two countries have held the “Guardian Sea” joint bilateral military exercises annually, which usually last about five days and focus on maritime operations.

5. Australia

The U.S.-Australia alliance is an integral part of the U.S. military alliance system in the Asia-Pacific. The U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy has further highlighted the role of Australia as a strategic pivot nation, one that has aligned itself more closely with the U.S. in military and security affairs. The *Australian Defense White Paper*, issued in 2016, expressed clear concerns about China’s rise, stating that “our [i.e., Australia’s and China’s] strategic interests may differ in relation to some regional and global security issues”. It explicitly opposed China’s practices in the South China Sea and expressed the belief that Australia should strive to maintain a U.S.-led, “rules-based” regional and global order.^①

Against this background, the U.S.-Australia alliance has further deepened. The U.S. military has continued to strengthen its military deployment in Australia, especially in the port of Darwin in northern Australia, as well as participating in

① “2016 Defence White Paper,” Australian Department of Defence, pp.57-58, <https://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/Docs/2016-Defence-White-Paper.pdf>.

scaled-up joint military exercises with Australia. In June 2017, the bi-annual “Talisman Saber” military exercises reached a record size, with 33,000 U.S. and Australian soldiers participating. In 2018, the U.S. and Australia began to redevelop their military base in Papua New Guinea by renovating the abandoned military base on Manus Island. Meanwhile, the annual anti-submarine warfare exercise Sea Dragon between the two countries continues. In April 2018, Australia sent three warships—HMAS Anzac, HMAS Success, and HMAS Toowoomba—to the South China Sea for a three-month mission.

In addition, the U.S.-Australia military exercises have become increasingly multilateral. In May 2019, the U.S., Australian, Japanese and South Korean troops kicked off their inaugural “Pacific Vanguard” naval exercise. In June 2019, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) sent the JS Ise helicopter carrier and the JS Kunisaki transport dock ship to participate in the “Talisman Saber” exercise with a larger number of servicemen than in 2015 and 2017, a clear sign that this exercise has gone trilateral.

II. U.S. Military and Security Relations with Its ASEAN Partners

As indicated in the Indo-Pacific strategy articulated by the Trump administration, the U.S. has recently paid increasing attention to ASEAN. Secretary of State Pompeo claimed that “ASEAN is literally at the center of the Indo-Pacific, and it plays a central role in the Indo-Pacific vision that America is presenting.”^① In the Shangri-La Dialogue of June 2018, Secretary of Defense James Mattis stressed that “we have reinvigorated our longstanding alliances with the Philippines and Thailand while bolstering our enduring partnership with Singapore. At the same time, we are

^①Michael R. Pompeo, “America’s Indo-Pacific Economic Vision,” U.S. Department of State, July 30, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/remarks-on-americas-indo-pacific-economic-vision/>.

seeking to develop new partnerships with pivotal players across the region, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam.”^① Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam are major recipients of the U.S. assistance to the Asia-Pacific on matters of maritime security, humanitarian assistance, and preventing transnational crime. In September 2019, the U.S. and ASEAN countries held joint military exercise. This military exercise marked the first time that the U.S. and ASEAN as a whole conducted naval drills together, indicating a deepening of U.S.-ASEAN defense relations.

1. Singapore

The U.S. enjoys close military cooperation with Singapore. In 1990, the two countries signed a MOU on defense cooperation, allowing the U.S. military to use Singapore’s military facilities which, Singapore stressed, are not U.S. military bases. In 2005, the two countries reached a security strategic framework agreement which confirmed Singapore’s unique role as the U.S. “main security partner”. In September 2019, the 1990 MOU on defense cooperation was updated, allowing the U.S. to extend the use of Singapore’s military facilities for 15 years and Singapore will provide logistical support for U.S. transit personnel, military aircraft and warships.^② Under this defense cooperation framework, U.S. vessels stop at Singapore for an average of more than 100 times per year. Since 2017, the littoral combat ships have been regularly deployed at the Changi Naval Base.

The two countries have conducted regular joint military exercises, with growing intensity and complexity to the level of alliance. Since 2017, the U.S. and Singapore have conducted annual naval exercises “Pacific Griffin” off the coast of Guam. The exercise “Valiant Mark” 2019 is the 23rd annual military exercise held by the

①James N. Mattis, “Remarks by Secretary Mattis at Plenary Session of the 2018 Shangri-La Dialogue,” June 2, 2018, <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/1538599/remarks-by-secretary-mattis-at-plenary-session-of-the-2018-shangri-la-dialogue/>.

②Ye Pengfei, “Singapore Updates Security Assurance,” *Lianhe Zaobao*, September 26, 2019, <https://www.zaobao.com.sg/zopinions/views/story20190926-992126>.

Armies and Marine Corps of the two countries. In addition, the U.S. has active arms trade with Singapore, whose military hardware basically comes from the U.S.

2. Vietnam

With the growing intensity of disputes over the South China Sea, U.S.-Vietnam military relations have developed rapidly, making Vietnam a major strategic partner of the U.S. in ASEAN and potentially one of the most important littoral states adjoining the South China Sea for the U.S., following only the Philippines.

High-level exchanges. In May 2017, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc visited the United States, becoming the first leader of an ASEAN country to do so after President Trump took office. In a joint statement released after the summit, the U.S. stated its official position on the South China Sea for the first time, indicating that the two countries would step up cooperation on maritime security. In November 2017, President Trump paid a return visit to Vietnam. As part of high-level military exchanges, Secretary of Defense James Mattis visited Vietnam twice in 2017. In November 2019, his successor, Mark Esper, included Vietnam as the first stop in a four-country journey that included three allies—South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines—reflecting the importance the U.S. has placed on its military and security relations with Vietnam.

Military exchanges. The U.S. and Vietnam affirmed the 2018-2020 Plan of Action for United States-Vietnam Defense Cooperation to strengthen military exchanges in personnel training and other areas. In March 2018, the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson paid a four-day visit to Vietnam, marking the first port call for a U.S. aircraft carrier since the end of the Vietnam War. In the same year, Vietnam was invited for the first time to participate in the U.S.-led RIMPAC exercise. In March 2020, another U.S. aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt visited Vietnam. Such frequent military exchanges were rare between the U.S. and a Southeast Asian country, even more intensive than with its regional allies—the Philippines and Thailand, indicating mil-to-mil relations between the U.S. and Vietnam have been

brought to a new level.

Military aid. In recent years, military aid and arms trade between the U.S. and Vietnam have grown substantially. U.S. military aid to Vietnam reached US\$59 million in FY 2016 and FY 2017, the second-largest amount among ASEAN countries after the Philippines. In arms trade, the U.S. has focused on enhancing maritime operational capacity of Vietnam Coast Guard (VCG). By April 2019, the U.S. had delivered 18 patrol boats to the Vietnam Coast Guard. The U.S. transferred for free a nearly 50-years-old Hamilton-class cutter to the VCG in May 2017 (formerly known as USCGC Morngethau, commissioned in 1969 and decommissioned in 2017), and in November 2019, U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper announced that the U.S. would provide another cutter to Vietnam.^① Among other states bordering the South China Sea, only the Philippines has received similar support, getting three Hamilton-class cutters from the U.S.

3. Indonesia

Indonesia occupies an important position in the Indo-Pacific strategy of the Trump administration, given its geography, population, and economy. In recent years, the U.S. has stepped up its partnership with Indonesia, making further progress in military and security cooperation.

Overall military relations. As for high-level exchanges, U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis met with his Indonesian counterpart, Ryamizard Ryacudu, four times in his two-year term; this frequency of interaction with U.S. leadership is rare among ASEAN defense chiefs. In addition, during his visit to Indonesia in

①“U.S. Defense Chief: One Cutter for Vietnam Coast Guard,” November 20, 2019, VOA, <https://www.voachinese.com/a/ESPER-SAYS-US-PROVIDING-VIETNAM-WITH-COAST-GUARD-SHIP-20191120/5173595.html>.

January 2018, Secretary Mattis said that the U.S. defense cooperation with Indonesia covered “Kopassus” – an Indonesian Army special forces group on which the U.S. Congress and judicial authorities have imposed sanctions due to alleged human rights violations. This statement indicated a strong U.S. desire for tighter overall relations between the U.S. and Indonesian militaries.

Military aid and arms trade. The U.S. has had a robust military aid and arms trade relationship with Indonesia. U.S. military aid to Indonesia totalled a cumulative US\$54 million during the three fiscal years from 2016 to 2018, the third-largest amount among ASEAN countries. As for arms trade, Indonesia has purchased eight AH-64E Apache attack helicopters and 24 F-16 jets and has applied to buy more F-16 aircraft, AIM-9 Sidewinder short-range air-to-air missiles, and AIM-120 advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles.

Joint military exercises. Bilateral joint military exercises, an integral part of U.S.-Indonesian military and security relations, include annual CARAT drills, “Garuda Shield” exercises between the two armies, and “Cope West” air drills as well as humanitarian rescue and disaster relief exercises. The two countries have also participated in multilateral exercises such as “Cobra Gold” and RIMPAC.

4. Malaysia

The U.S. has stable military ties with Malaysia, which has been an important participant in bilateral and multilateral joint military exercises in the Asia-Pacific. Since 2015, Malaysia has engaged in CARAT and “Cobra Gold” drills with the U.S. every year, and it participated in RIMPAC in 2016 and 2018.

The U.S. also has a stable arms trade with Malaysia. The U.S. has paid particular attention to enhancing Malaysia’s maritime situational awareness capabilities. In May 2019, the Pentagon announced that it would sell 34 ScanEagle drones to Southeast Asian countries, with Malaysia as the biggest buyer (12),

followed by Indonesia (8), the Philippines (8), and Vietnam (6).^①

III. U.S. Military and Security Relations with South Asian Countries

The Indo-Pacific strategy of the Trump administration has included South Asian countries into the traditional Asia-Pacific region. With China’s growing strength and the introduction of its Belt and Road Initiative into the Indian Ocean region, the U.S. has intensified its military and security relations with South Asian countries.

1. India

U.S.-Indian military relations, driven by the two countries’ common strategic interests, have continued to warm since 2015, with their cooperation framework taking shape, their arms trade expanding, and joint exercises and training becoming more extensive. Since the U.S. proposed its Indo-Pacific strategy, military and security cooperation remains the brightest spot in U.S.-Indian relations, with a considerable impact on regional and international security.

The comprehensive defense cooperation framework. Since the two nations signed a ten-year defense framework agreement in 2005 and renewed it for another decade in 2015, U.S-India defense cooperation has become increasingly substantive and has broadened to cover more issues. A complete defense cooperation framework has taken shape, encompassing not only a defense policy working group on strategic planning and guidance, but also seven Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) joint working groups on next-generation protective ensemble, mobile hybrid power sources, jet engines, aircraft carriers, future advanced tactical ground combat

^①United States Department of Defense, “Contracts For May 31, 2019,” <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Contracts/Contract/Article/1863144/>.

vehicles, and vertical lift, etc. In June 2016, the U.S. designated India a “major defense partner”, making defense trade and technology transfer to India a top priority. In September 2018, the first “2+2” dialogue including U.S. and Indian foreign and defense ministers was held, and at this event the two sides agreed to further expand their defense cooperation. The *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report* issued by the Pentagon in June 2019 reaffirmed India’s strategic position as a “major defense partner” and declared that the U.S. would elevate its defense partnership with India to a level “commensurate with that of the United States’ closest allies and partners.”^①

Breakthroughs in military cooperation agreements. In recent years, the U.S. and India have made notable breakthroughs in their military cooperation, as evidenced by the military cooperation agreements signed between the two countries. In August 2016, the U.S. and India signed the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), enabling each country’s military forces to use the other’s bases for supplies and maintenance. This means that U.S. aircraft and vessels, if necessary, have access to Indian airports and ports. In September 2018, the U.S. and India signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) during their first “2+2” dialogue, indicating a new level of military cooperation. Under this agreement, India can communicate information through encrypted communication networks with the U.S. military, and with other nations’ militaries that have signed similar agreements with the U.S. At the end of 2019, the U.S. and India negotiated the third foundational military agreement—the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA), which will allow India to make use

^①United States Department of Defense, *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region*, June 2019, <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/01/2002152311/-1/-1/1/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-INDO-PACIFIC-STRATEGY-REPORT-2019.PDF>.

of the U.S. geospatial intelligence to improve the accuracy of such weapons as its automated weapon systems, cruise and ballistic missiles, and unmanned aircraft.^①

Enhanced military coordination with India. The U.S. has conducted more joint military exercises and training than other U.S. non-allies in the Asia-Pacific. Their annual drills cover all services, with increasingly substantive programs and close, large-scale coordination. Among these activities, the two armies conduct an annual “Yudh Abhyas” exercise and the two air forces engage in “Cope India” and “Red Flag” drills. Even the U.S. and Indian special forces have regular joint exercises, and the joint naval drills are particularly noteworthy. The Indian navy was invited to participate in the multilateral RIMPAC exercise in 2018 and, for the first time, in the “Malabar” joint exercise off the coast of Guam in 2018. This exercise has been trilateralized, to include Japan since 2015 and possibly Australia in the future.

Substantially increased arms sales. In recent years, the U.S. has been steadily increasing its arms sales to India. Between 2014 and 2018, the U.S. replaced Russia as India’s largest arms provider. It has sold P-8I long-range antisubmarine aircraft, “Sea Guardian” long-endurance drones, C-17 and C-130J military transport aircraft, and AH-64 Apache helicopters to India, and the two countries are negotiating the possible sale of F-16 fighters and NASAMS-II air-defense missiles. In July 2018, the U.S. designated India as a Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) country, a status previously enjoyed only by members of the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Australia Group, and the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Under these special arrangements, India’s status was placed on a par with that of such U.S. allies as South Korea, Australia, and Japan.

①Navtan Kumar, “BECA: India and US may sign third military pact soon,” *Sunday Guardian Live*, November 9, 2019, <https://www.sundayguardianlive.com/news/beca-india-us-may-sign-third-military-pact-soon>.

Deepening cooperation on counterterrorism. Shared interests and goals have contributed to the rapid expansion of U.S.-India counterterrorism cooperation, another priority and highlight in their overall security cooperation portfolio. In December 2017, the U.S. and India held the first Counterterrorism Designations Dialogue in New Delhi. In March 2018, the U.S.-India working group on counterterrorism held its 15th meeting in New Delhi. The working group reviewed threats posed by terrorist groups worldwide and in their respective regions, including cross-border terrorism in the South Asia region. Both sides committed to stronger information sharing regarding terrorist groups and individuals, and they exchanged views on efforts to counter the financing and operations of regional and global terrorist organizations. In addition, under its counterterrorism framework, the U.S. has provided aid to India and trained a large number of Indian counterterrorism security officers.

U.S.-India military and security cooperation will continue in the years to come. In particular, they can be expected to deepen cooperation on arms trade, military technology transfer, intelligence, and joint exercises. However, due to a myriad of uncertainties in the overall U.S.-India relationship, the scope, frequency, and progress of military and security cooperation will be affected by broader political, diplomatic, and economic concerns.

2. Pakistan

Whereas the U.S. military relationship with India is flourishing, its relationship with another major South Asian country, Pakistan, has been plunging. There has been a notable tendency in U.S. policy regarding South Asia to favor India at the expense of Pakistan.

The U.S. previously enjoyed close military ties with Pakistan. After the Afghanistan war in 2001, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, which featured the

countries' cooperation in counterterrorism activities, became an alliance as the U.S. designated Pakistan a "major non-NATO ally". In the last years of the Obama administration, U.S.-Pakistan relations suffered due to differences over counterterrorism, but the two countries still had high-level military cooperation. The relationship continued to deteriorate after President Trump took office in 2017. In August 2017, President Trump outlined the new U.S. strategy toward Afghanistan and South Asia and accused Pakistan of providing safe havens for members of the Taliban and other terrorist groups. In the following month, President Trump announced that the U.S. had withheld US\$255 million from its Coalition Support Fund aid to Pakistan. On January 1, 2018, President Trump lashed out at Pakistan on Twitter, accusing the country of cheating the U.S. on the counterterrorism. He tweeted, "The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit. ... They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan." In September 2018, a Pentagon spokesman announced that the U.S. would cancel US\$300 million in aid to Pakistan "due to a lack of Pakistani decisive actions in support of the South Asia Strategy". The Trump administration suspended its International Military Education and Training (IMET) program with Pakistan in August 2018 as a way to impose pressure (recently resumed). Along with these cuts in military aid, the U.S.-Pakistan arms trade also continued to decline.

Chapter Five

China-U.S. Military Relations in the Great Power Competition

Since they established diplomatic relations in 1979, military relations between China and the U.S. have evolved along with their overall interaction, from practical cooperation and close exchanges in the 1980s to an abrupt end after the political turbulence in Beijing in 1989. During the 1990s, the mil-to-mil relations went through twists and turns and was affected by a myriad of factors, such as discriminatory U.S. legislation against China, the Taiwan question, U.S. military alliances and partnerships, U.S. strategic adjustments toward China, and emergency air and maritime military accidents, indicating their profound ideological and political rift between the two great powers. As the 21st century dawned, China and the U.S. showed increasing awareness of their shared interests in addressing non-traditional security threats and deepened practical cooperation in global counter-terrorism and regional security. This perception of mutual interests, however, has eroded in recent years.

With the release of the *National Security Strategy*, *National Defense Strategy* and *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report* since 2017, the focus of the U.S. security strategy has shifted from global counter-terrorism to strategic competition between great powers. A stance to contain China has risen to become the mainstream in the U.S. political

and military circles, leading to the gradual deterioration of China-U.S. military relations. Unlike previous ups and downs, this deterioration is likely to foster regular competition or even confrontation in the years ahead. Mutual nuclear deterrence serves as a major guarantee to avoid the outbreak of a full-scale war between these two nuclear powers. However, the possibility remains for localized military conflicts over the East China Sea, Taiwan, or the South China Sea. It will be a central issue in the military relations for the two countries to more effectively manage their differences and control skirmishes and conflicts within reasonable limits so as to prevent them from escalating into a regional war.

I. The Status of China-U.S. Military Relations in the Trump Administration

In the early months of the Trump administration, China-U.S. military relations remained stable. However, the release of the *National Security Strategy* and the *National Defense Strategy*, as well as subsequent public speeches by senior Trump administration officials and members of Congress, all clearly showed that the U.S. government had abandoned its policy of engagement with China and shifted into a stance of strategic competition. In 2018, China-U.S. military relations continued to deteriorate. On May 23, 2018, the Pentagon announced that it had disinvited China from participating in the 2018 RIMPAC due to China's "continued militarization" in the South China Sea. This U.S. decision was interpreted as "disguised sanctions" in response to China's construction activities on islands and reefs in the South China Sea. On the next day, May 24, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (NDAA), with a clause that prohibited China's participation in the RIMPAC.

During the Obama administration, despite differences and tensions between the two countries in the field of security, the U.S. invited China to take part in the RIMPAC in 2014 and 2016. This cooperation helped enhance mutual trust between

the two countries and avoid unplanned accidents at sea. The Trump administration apparently did not believe that such an argument should be taken into account in its new U.S. security strategy. On September 20, 2018, the State Department announced that it would impose sanctions on the Equipment Development Department of China's Central Military Commission and its director for purchasing defense equipment from Russia. This unprecedented U.S. sanction against a Chinese military department and its chief caused further deterioration in military relations. In April 2019, the U.S. sent only a captain-level naval attaché and no warship to attend the 70th anniversary of the PLA Navy and the International Fleet Review. On previous occasions, the U.S. had sent its Chief of Naval Operations, a four-star Admiral, and warships to participate in the 60th anniversary of the PLA Navy in 2009 and the 14th Western Pacific Naval Symposium in 2014.

Despite the reduced level of exchanges and cooperation, the two militaries did not completely cut off their communication channels, but maintained some degree of high-level mutual visits and institutional meetings. The year 2018 saw mutual visits between the Chinese Defense Minister and the U.S. Defense Secretary; a visit by the Commander of the PLA Ground Force to the U.S.; the second round of the China-U.S. Diplomatic and Security Dialogue; the annual meeting and two working group meetings of the China-U.S. Military Maritime Consultation Agreement; defense policy coordination talks; joint exercises in humanitarian relief and disaster reduction; and multiple exchanges and visits between the countries' military academies, including the National Defense University, the Army War College, the Air War College and the Marine Corps War College on the U.S. side and the National Defense University, the Academy of Military Sciences, and the Air Force Command Academy on the Chinese side.

The following year, 2019, witnessed a visit by Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations, to China in January; the third Asia-Pacific Security Dialogue between the two defense departments in May; the Military Maritime

Consultative Agreement Working Group meeting in June;^① and hotline contacts between the Chinese Defense Minister and the U.S. Defense Secretary as well as between the Chinese Chief of the United Staff Department and the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.^②

II. Conceptual Differences in Security Strategies

China-U.S. military relations are intertwined with the two countries' conceptions of each other's security strategy. On the level of national defense strategy, China has an objective, rational, and consistent stand with regard to the U.S. Asia-Pacific security strategy, recognizing the challenges that the U.S. strategy could present to China's security interests. But China does not regard the U.S. as a potential rival, nor does it envisage a new cold or hot war with the U.S. In 2019, the white paper *China's National Defense in the New Era* noted, "The U.S. has adjusted its national security and defense strategies, and adopted unilateral policies. It has provoked and intensified competition among major countries, significantly increased its defense expenditure, pushed for additional capacity in nuclear, outer space, cyber and missile defense, and undermined global strategic stability. The U.S. is strengthening its Asia-Pacific military alliances and reinforcing military deployment and intervention, adding complexity to regional security."^③ Despite being critical of the U.S. Asia-Pacific security policy since the Obama administration announced its

①U.S. Department of Defense, Annual Report to Congress, "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2019," Appendix II: Military-to-Military Exchanges, May 2019.

②"General Wei Fenghe Talking with U.S. Defense Secretary over the Phone," November 6, 2019, <http://world.people.com.cn/n1/2019/1106/c1002-31439502.html>; "Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley Has a Phone Call with PLA United Staff Department Chief Gen. Li Zuocheng," WeChat public account of the U.S. Embassy in China, December 4, 2019, <https://www.jcs.mil/Media/News/News>.

③The State Council Information Office of China, *China's National Defense in the New Era* (July 24, 2019), chapter 1.

rebalance strategy, China has never made it a strategic goal to drive the U.S. out of the Asia-Pacific region. Rather, it has called for a new vision of a common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security, and a path of security featuring broad consultation, joint contributions, and shared benefits.^① However, the U.S. has embraced a more self-centered and unipolar security vision with the goals of ensuring that the balance of power remains in the U.S. favor and of advancing an international order that is most conducive to U.S. security and prosperity.^② Therefore, there are structural tensions between China and the U.S. in their Asia-Pacific security strategies.

The U.S. holds an extremely negative perception of China's security strategy, designating China as a potential threat to security in the Asia-Pacific and even the world. In its *National Security Strategy* of December 2017, the U.S. made clear that "China and Russia challenge American power, influence, and interests, attempting to erode American security and prosperity. They are determined to make economies less free and less fair, to grow their militaries, and to control information and data to repress their societies and expand their influence."^③ In the *2018 National Defense Strategy*, the U.S. went further, claiming that "China is a strategic competitor using predatory economics to intimidate its neighbors while militarizing features in the South China Sea. China is leveraging military modernization, influence operations, and predatory economics to coerce neighboring countries to reorder the Indo-Pacific region to their advantage ... As China continues its economic and military ascendance,

①The State Council Information Office of China, *China's Policies on Asia-Pacific Security Cooperation* (January 11, 2017).

②U.S. Department of Defense, "Introduction," Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of The United States of America, January 2018, <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>, p1.

③The White House, "Introduction," National Security Strategy of the United States of America, December 2017, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>, p.1.

asserting power through an all-of-nation long-term strategy, it will continue to pursue a military modernization program that seeks Indo-Pacific regional hegemony in the near-term and displacement of the United States to achieve global preeminence in the future.”^①

Regarding China’s normal military development, the U.S. Defense Department has made this statement: “China’s leaders have set major economic and political milestones for 2021, 2035, and 2049 in the lead up to the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China. China’s military ambitions are linked to these milestones. By 2035, China’s military leaders seek to complete military modernization and by 2049, they have characterized their goal as becoming a ‘world-class’ military. In this regard, China’s efforts are designed with a clear purpose in mind: to displace the United States in the Indo-Pacific region; to expand the reaches of its state-driven economic model; and to reorder the region in its favor.”^②

The U.S. believes that China’s normal development of military power has caught up or even surpassed that of Western countries in many fields. The U.S. claims, for example, that China has adopted an anti-access/area-denial (A2/AD) strategy to deter U.S. military intervention in the Indo-Pacific and has the capability of doing so, including over Taiwan as well as in China’s territorial and maritime disputes with its neighbors. The blue Chinese Navy is viewed as a major and brand new challenge to the U.S. Navy’s ability to achieve and maintain wartime control of blue-water ocean areas in the Western Pacific and to the long-standing status of

①U.S. Department of Defense, “Strategic Environment,” Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of The United States of America, January 2018, pp.2-3, <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>.

②Mary Beth Morgan (Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense), “A ‘World-Class’ Military: Assessing China’s Global Military Ambitions,” Testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, June 20, 2019.

the United States as the leading military power in the Western Pacific.^①

With regard to nuclear strategy, China and the U.S. used to have extensive cooperation in the areas of nuclear arms reduction and non-proliferation. However, the Trump administration's policy adjustments have caused China to become a major opponent of U.S. nuclear strategy. China has expressed its commitment to a no-first-use policy regarding its use of nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances; it also has vowed not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones unconditionally.^② In contrast, the U.S. has never adopted a policy declaring that it would not use nuclear weapons first in a conflict. "Implementing a no-first-use policy could undermine the U.S. ability to deter Russian, Chinese, and North Korean aggression, especially with respect to their growing capability to carry out non-nuclear strategic attacks."^③ The Trump administration's nuclear strategy has gone further and become more adversarial against China, stating "Direct military conflict between China and the United States would have the potential for nuclear escalation. Our tailored strategy for China is designed to prevent Beijing from mistakenly concluding that it could secure an advantage through the limited use of its theater nuclear capabilities or that any use of nuclear weapons, however limited, is acceptable ... The United States is prepared to respond decisively to Chinese non-nuclear or nuclear aggression."^④ Shortly after the Trump administration withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in August 2019, U.S. Secretary of Defense Esper said

①China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities, Summary, August 30, 2019, Congressional Research Service.

②The State Council Information Office of China, *China's National Defense in the New Era*, chapter 2, July 2019, http://www.mod.gov.cn/regulatory/2019-07/24/content_4846424.htm.

③Dangers of a Nuclear No First Use Policy, May, 2019, US DOD, <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Apr/01/2002108002/-1/-1/1/DANGERS-OF-A-NO-FIRST-USE-POLICY.PDF>.

④Office of the Secretary of Defense, "VI. U.S. Strategies to Counter Contemporary Threats," Nuclear Posture Review, February 2018.

he would like to see the deployment of land-based, medium-range missiles in Asia “in a few months” to counter the Chinese threat. The U.S. has obviously placed China on the opposite side of a new nuclear arms race.

In the strategic framework of the great power competition, the Pentagon has clearly identified China as a potential adversary that intends to replace the U.S. as the dominant global power. It has even regarded China as the chief challenger today, more threatening than Russia, in its *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report*. This has naturally made containment of China central to the U.S. security strategy. However, in contrast to the rivalry between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, it is not China’s objective to become the rival of the U.S. Rather, the competition is openly perceived as such only on the U.S. side. China’s overall military power is still far behind that of the U.S., but many senior U.S. military officers believe that the Chinese military has overtaken the U.S. in some areas now and will eventually surpass the U.S. overall. This sense of crisis is widely shared in the Trump administration and Congress, leading to the subsequent adjustment to its China strategy based on a broad consensus. The U.S. misjudgment on China at the level of security strategy has fundamentally eroded the basis for rational military relations between the two countries.

III. A Weakening of Common Security Interests between China and the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific

For a period of time after the Cold War, China and the United States shared extensive interests in such traditional areas as ensuring security in the Asia-Pacific, maintaining stability in the Korean Peninsula, and preventing regional tensions. In particular, as the 21st century began, the two countries also had extensive common interests and potential for cooperation in non-traditional areas such as counter-terrorism, nuclear security, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peace keeping, maritime search and rescue, humanitarian aid, cracking down on transnational crimes, and response to natural disasters due to climate change. The

adjustment of U.S. security strategy and more its emphasis on strategic competition with China have notably weakened common interests in traditional security areas and affected the capacity for cooperation in non-traditional fields.

The major negative factor between the two militaries in the traditional security areas in the Asia-Pacific is the biased U.S. position on the territorial disputes and maritime jurisdictions between China and its maritime neighbors. This negative approach has done a disservice to regional security and stability.

For instance, in the China-Japan dispute on sovereignty over the Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea, although the U.S. government claims that it does not take a position on the ultimate sovereignty of the Diaoyu Islands, the U.S. also recognizes the Japanese administration of the islands and, by leveraging this conceptual ambiguity, has in effect supported Japan in its confrontation with China. In 2014, President Obama claimed that the Diaoyu Islands were covered by the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, making him the first U.S. president to say so.^① In February 2017, U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis reiterated the U.S. commitment to its defense treaty with Japan and stressed that Article V of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security shall be applied to the Diaoyu Islands under disputes in the East China Sea.^② Recently, the Japanese government revealed that

①Ankit Panda, “Obama: Senkaku Covered Under U.S.-Japan Security Treaty,” *The Diplomat*, April 24, 2014, <https://thediplomat.com/2014/04/obama-senkakus-covered-under-us-japan-security-treaty/>.

②Article V of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security states as follows: “Each Party recognizes that an armed attack against either Party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional provisions and processes. Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations in accordance with the provisions of Article 51 of the Charter. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.”

the two countries were planning a joint armed-forces response to Chinese actions targeting the Diaoyu Islands, based on the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation as revised in 2015.^① Pending the resolution of the dispute between China and Japan over these islands, the U.S. has kept stressing its obligations to protect Japan's security. This stance has delivered a strong boost to Japan's ambition in confronting China, leading to worsening tensions in the East China Sea and enhancing the possibility of skirmish between China and the U.S. over the Diaoyu Islands.

Since 2015, the U.S. has beefed up its military deployment and activities in the South China Sea in an all-around way, with the excuse of "China's militarization of the South China Sea", leading to intensified military competition between the two countries and eroded willingness to cooperate militarily in non-traditional security fields in the South China Sea.

Eyeing with great interest in China's disputes on sovereignty over islands and reefs and on maritime rights and interests, the U.S. takes the opposite side in various ways to support the military buildup of China's neighboring countries to confront China. The U.S. military has conducted more open military operations in the South China Sea, including training and drills of its aircraft carrier strike groups, amphibious ready groups, and strategic bombers in the South China Sea, to demonstrate its intention and capacity to intervene in this part of the world. Since the Trump administration took office, the U.S. has conducted 18 Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) near the Chinese islands and reefs in the South China Sea, thereby challenging China's domestic legislation and maritime claims.

^①Kyodo, "Japan and U.S. plan joint armed forces response to Chinese Threats to Disputed Diaoyu Islands," *South China Morning Post*, November 4, 2018, <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/east-asia/article/2171579/japan-and-us-plan-joint-armed-forces-response-chinese-threats>.

Through FONOPs, the U.S. aims ultimately to forcefully promote its unilateral claims on the international law in order to shape a U.S.-led regional security, maintain its network of allies and security partners and counterbalance China's military development and influence in the South China Sea.

In addressing non-traditional security challenges, the U.S. has developed independent and comprehensive solutions under the frameworks of its national security strategy, national defense strategy, and Indo-Pacific strategy on the basis of its own military power and in cooperation with its allies and partners, rather than China. On non-traditional security cooperation with China, the former willingness for cooperation has been replaced by engagement in strategic competition, as the U.S. is more concerned that China's involvement would weaken U.S. influence over its allies and partners and challenge its dominance in regional security matters.

In recent years, the U.S. military has stressed that its military cooperation with China should be results-oriented, rather than existing in form and rhetoric. As Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs Randall Schriver said, "On the defense side, I would just say our metric should not be how much engagement, how many meetings we have. It should be the quality of that interaction and of our meeting objective we define."^① This statement suggests that the U.S. defines China-U.S. military relations completely in terms of its own unilateral intentions. A typical example is the recent and frequent U.S. criticism of China's passivity regarding the enforcement of the United Nations embargo against the DPRK and the Chinese "harassment" of U.S. efforts to enforce the embargo off the Chinese coast. Although some U.S. senior officials have repeatedly stressed possible

^① Remarks by Randall Schriver, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, at a symposium in Washington, D.C. on November 7, 2019, VOA, <https://www.voachinese.com/a/esper-asia-defense-trip-china-20191108/5158624.html>.

areas of cooperation even while engaging in competition with the Chinese military,^① the lack of specific cooperation projects in non-traditional fields between the two militaries in the last two years shows that this statement is more out of political consideration.

Another restraint on China-U.S. military relations is military exchanges between the U.S. and Taiwan. On the Taiwan question, China's core interests are at stake. Taiwan's separatist forces are the top national security threat and challenge facing China. However, the U.S. has always taken actions to set up barriers to China's peaceful reunification, seeking to maintain the status quo across the Taiwan Straits. In the Trump presidency, the U.S. has deepened its military ties with Taiwan. In the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) from 2018 to 2020, the U.S. proposed to invite Taiwan's military forces to participate in "Red Flag" and other exercises, expand senior military-to-military engagement and joint training and to support the visit of a U.S. hospital ship to Taiwan; reiterated both the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances; and recommended to strengthen defense and security cooperation with Taiwan to support its asymmetric defense strategy. In addition, the *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report* hyped up the threat posed by Beijing to Taiwan and stressed that the U.S. should take actions to expand cooperation with Taiwan: "China has never renounced the use of military force, and continues to develop and deploy advanced military capabilities needed for a potential military campaign ... The Department is committed to providing Taiwan with defense articles and services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability."^② As for arms sales, the Trump administration has sold five batches of arms worth a total of \$12.5 billion in less than three years.

①Statement of Admiral Harry B. Harris Jr., U.S. Navy, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, March 15, 2018.

②United States Department of Defense, "Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region," June 2019, p.31.

Among them, on August 20, 2019, the Trump administration approved a major arms sale worth \$8 billion to Taiwan, including 66 F-16V jets and related equipment, making it the single largest arms sale by value to Taiwan in history.

IV. The Role of Military Relations as a Stabilizer in the Great Power Competition

China-U.S. military relations are relatively independent from their economic, diplomatic, and cultural relations. Such independence is both a strength and a weakness. On one hand, military relations tend to be stable as they are not directly associated with fluctuations on economic and other fronts; on the other hand, due to the lack of such an association, when the two sides want to exert pressure on the other, military relations can become a political tool or bargaining chip and the most exposed field in overall relations. Because of the close connection with national security, deteriorating military relations would substantially increase the possibility of a dangerous incident, a conflict, or even a crisis.

China has the following position in dealing with its military relations with the U.S.: it “actively and properly handles its military relationship with the U.S. in accordance with the principles of non-conflict, non-confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation. It strives to make the military-to-military relationship a stabilizer for the relations between the two countries and hence contribute to the China-U.S. relationship based on coordination, cooperation and stability.”^① Although it does not fully accept China’s vision for overall and military relations, the U.S., like China, wants to have stable overall relations. The 2018 *National Defense Strategy* made clear that “The most far-reaching objective of this defense strategy is to set the military relationship between our two countries on a path of transparency and

^①The State Council Information Office of China, *China’s National Defense in the New Era* (July 24, 2019) , chapter 6.

non-aggression.” A core objective of the *National Defense Strategy* is to establish a long-term, transparent, and mutually respectful military relationship with China. The U.S. has said that it wants, consistent with international law, to reduce the risk of miscalculation through bilateral military engagements, such as high-level visits, policy dialogues, and functional exchanges. Through military-to-military engagements, the Pentagon will continue to encourage China to maintain the common order in the region and participate in cooperation where the two countries’ interests align.^① Like China, the U.S. hopes that military relations would be a “stabilizing” force in the overall relationship.^②

Leaderships in both countries regard their military relations as a stabilizing force in overall bilateral relations. The two countries can perhaps start with how to realize this stabilizing role in the development of their military relations in the future context of great-power competition. Central to this stabilizing role, the two countries need to focus on managing their differences and preventing conflicts. First, they should keep current communication channels open, including the hotline between the two defense departments, the dialogue and consultation mechanisms participated in or chaired by the two defense departments, and mutual visits by the two countries’ military leaderships. Second, they should implement the crisis prevention agreements they have signed and follow the code of conduct accepted by both parties, to prevent dangerous incidents and conflicts. Such agreements include the MOU on Notification of Major Military Activities and the MOU on the Rules of Behavior for the Safety of Air and Maritime Encounters. Third, in the China-U.S.

①United States Department of Defense, “Indo-Pacific Strategy Report : Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region,” June 2019, available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/01/2002152311/-1/-1/1/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-INDO-PACIFIC-STRATEGY-REPORT-2019.PDF>.

②Conversation with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford, Brookings Institution, May 29, 2019.

diplomatic and security dialogues, the two militaries should step up communication on nuclear security, cyberspace, outer space, and artificial intelligence, to prevent strategic misunderstanding and miscalculation.

As the two strongest militaries in the Asia-Pacific, the status of China-U.S. military relations has a direct impact on peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific. Should China-U.S. military relations move on a constructive path, peace in the whole of the Asia-Pacific would be within reach. Deterioration in this military relationship will increase the possibility of frictions and even conflicts between the two militaries, posing a threat to regional stability. As the U.S. stresses the importance of its forward-deployed forces and its allies and partners, and the battlefields expected by the U.S. are all in other countries in the Asia-Pacific, any military conflict between the two countries will get other third countries in the region involved. At present, the U.S. is pulling its military relations with China into a “security dilemma” in the Asia-Pacific. Regarding China as its “war rival”, the U.S. has forward-deployed a large number of its forces, strengthened and deepened its military alliances, and conducted intensive military activities targeted at China. With a growing sense of being threatened, China has no alternative but to build military forces as appropriate to uphold its national security. Such “security dilemma” is not a boon for the Asia-Pacific region. Only when the two countries are committed to sound military interaction, can China and the U.S. break this dilemma, uphold peace and stability in the region, and make their military relations a stabilizer for regional prosperity and development.

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020 (code-named military exercises)

Multilateral Military Exercises in 2018

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Feb.13- Feb.23	Exercise Cobra Gold 2018	U.S. and 29 partner countries	One of the largest security exercises in the Asia-Pacific to step up regional cooperation and enhance the capacities of participating countries in multilateral operation and cooperation on combating pirates, providing humanitarian assistance and conducting disaster relief, etc.	Indo-Pacific
Feb.14- Mar.2	Cope North 2018	U.S. Japan Australia	Annual event for training, humanitarian relief and disaster reduction to increase interoperability on the ground and in the air.	Andersen Air Force Base, Guam
Feb.23- Jun.21	Pacific Partnership 2018	U.S. Japan Vietnam and other seven countries	The largest humanitarian relief and disaster reduction exercise in the Indo-Pacific participated by the U.S. Pacific Fleet, governments and militaries in the region, and humanitarian and non-governmental organizations.	Indo-Pacific
May.4- May.9	Komodo	Indonesia and more than 30 other countries	Biannual exercise focused on improving cooperation plans, humanitarian relief and disaster reduction, and enhancing maritime domain awareness capabilities.	Off the coast of Lombok Island, Indonesia
May.7- May.18	Balikatan Exercise	Philippines U.S. Australia Japan	Annual exercise focused on joint defense, counterterrorism, humanitarian aid and disaster relief.	Luzon, the Philippines

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
May.13- May.24	Exercise Maple Resolve 2018	U.S. Canada U.K. Australia France	The largest exercise in North America for the U.S. and its allies to enhance interoperability among participating countries.	The Canadian Maneuver Training Center in Wainwright, Alberta
Jun.7- Jun.22	Red Flag- Alaska	U.S. Japan Singapore U.K.	Practical training in simulated combat environment.	Alaska
Jun.7- Jun.16	Malabar Exercise	U.S. India Japan	The exercise has grown larger and more complex in recent years to address common threats facing maritime security.	Guam
Jun.14- Jun.28	Khaan Quest 2018	17 countries including U.S. Mongolia Australia Bhutan China	The exercise aims to conduct peace support operations for participants to be trained and certified by the UN to increase and improve interoperability with UN peacekeeping operations and military relations between participating countries.	Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia
Jun.27- Aug.2	RIMPAC 2018	U.S. and other 25 countries	Biennial, the largest international maritime exercise in the world. It planned to invite China but the U.S. disinvited China from participation.	Off the coasts of Hawaiian Islands and southern California
Jul.18	2JA mine countermeasure exercise 2018	U.S. Japan India	Annual exercise to increase mine sweeping capabilities of regional allies and partners.	Japan
Jul.31- Aug.17	Exercise Pitch Black 2018	U.S. Australia and 13 other countries	Biennial exercise to enhance flight operations and proficiency as well as maintain interoperability between partner nations.	Darwin

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Aug.27	17th Southeast Asia Cooperation and Training Exercise (SEACAT)	U.S. Philippines and other 7 countries	The exercise, which includes a series of seminars and practical operations, is designed to offer a better understanding of the maritime domain through collaborative and coordinated sharing of data.	Singapore, and Manila, Philippines, etc.
Sept.6- Sept.13	Kakadu Exercise	U.S. Australia and other 13 countries	The main exercise of the Australian navy held every two years.	Darwin
Oct.1- Oct.10	Exercise Kamandag 2	Philippines U.S. Japan	The exercise highlights partnership between U.S. and Filipino militaries and focuses on counterterrorism, humanitarian aid and disaster relief.	Luzon, etc.
Oct.29- Nov.8	Exercise Keen Sword 2018	U.S. Japan Canada	Biennial field exercise to improve combat readiness and interoperability between the U.S. forces and JSDF.	Honshu, Okinawa, Guam, Tinian and surrounding waters

Bilateral Military Exercises in 2018

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jan.15- Feb.2	Exercise Commando Sling 18	U.S. Singapore	Starting from 1990, this annual joint exercise aims to enhance coordination of air tactics, techniques and procedures between U.S. and RSAF aviation units.	Paya Lebar Air Base, Singapore
Feb.7- Feb.11	Exercise Iron Fist	U.S. Japan	The exercise aims to develop interoperability and enhance amphibious operation capabilities.	Southern Californian coast
Feb.16- Feb.23	Resilient Shield 2018	U.S. Japan	Fleet synthetic training-joint exercise focused on missile defense.	Yokosuka, Japan
Mar.8- Mar.14	MultiSail 2018	U.S. Japan	The exercise is designed to improve combat interoperability between the U.S. forces and JSDF.	Maritime territory of the Philippines

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Mar.12- Mar.23	Exercise Cope West 2018	U.S. Indonesia	The exercise aims to promote interoperability between the U.S. and Indonesian air forces and develop partnership.	Indonesia
Apr.25- Apr.30	Exercise Guardian Sea	U.S. Thailand	The exercise is designed to enhance the coordination of the two navies in anti-submarine operations and improve their information sharing.	Andaman Sea
May.14- May.26	Tiger Balm 18	U.S. Singapore	This yearly exercise is the longest running bilateral exercise between U.S. Army Pacific and the Singapore Armed Forces.	Hawaii, etc.
Jun.16- Jul.1	Exercise Hamel	U.S. Australia	The exercise aims to enhance tactical and sustained interoperability between the U.S. and its ally.	Queensland, Australia
Jun.14- Nov.16	The Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT)	U.S.- Thailand, U.S.- Indonesia, U.S.- Malaysia, U.S.-Brunei	A series of annual bilateral military exercises conducted by the U.S. navy and marines with navies of several ASEAN countries onshore and offshore.	Pattaya, Thailand; Jakarta, Indonesia; Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia; South China Sea
Jul.9- Jul.17	Maritime Training Activity Sama Sama	U.S. Philippines	The exercise is designed to step up close cooperation between the two navies.	Naval Station Ernesto Ogbinar, the Philippines
Jul.16- Jul.20	Cope Taufan 18	U.S. Malaysia Japan	Biennial tactical drills of air forces.	Subang Air Base, Malaysia
Jul.23- Aug.3	Exercise Keris Strike 2018	U.S. Malaysia	The U.S. hopes the exercise will improve its interoperability with Malaysia, while Malaysia pays more attention to bilateral disaster relief capabilities.	Camp Senawang, Malaysia

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jul.30	Garuda Shield 2018	U.S. Indonesia	One of a series of multilateral military exercises the U.S. Pacific Army has with its allies and partner countries in the Indo-Pacific.	
Aug.20- Aug.28	Hanuman Guardian 2018	U.S. Thailand	This bilateral army exercise aims to enhance combat capabilities and interoperability between the U.S. and Thai armies.	Royal Thai Army's Cavalry Center in Saraburi Province, Thailand
Aug.31- Sept.14	Exercise Rising Thunder 18	U.S. Japan	The exercise is designed to strengthen the partnership between the U.S. forces and JSDF and enhance their combat readiness and joint operation capabilities.	Yakima Training Center, WA
Sept.16- Sept.29	Yudh Abhyas Exercise	U.S. India	The exercise includes training and cultural exchanges to enhance joint operation capabilities.	New Delhi
Dec.3- Dec.14	Exercise Cope India 2019	U.S. India	The exercise aims to enhance U.S.-India mutual cooperation by building on existing capabilities, aircrew tactics and force employment.	Air Force Station Kalaikunda and Air Force Station Arjan Singh
Dec.7- Dec.19	Exercise Forest Light 19.1	U.S. Japan	This exercise, held every half a year, is designed to enhance joint defense capabilities of the U.S. and Japan.	Oita Prefecture, Japan
Dec.10- Dec.16	Exercise Yama Sakura 75	U.S. Japan	The 37th iteration of this annual exercise aims to train U.S. and JGSDF capabilities to defend Japan during joint unified land operations.	Hokkaido, Japan

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

Multilateral Military Exercises in 2019

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jan.14- Jan.22	Exercise Sea Dragon	U.S. ROK Australia	Anti-submarine warfare (ASW) prosecution	Andersen Air Force Base, Guam
Feb.12- Feb.22	Exercise Cobra Gold 2019	U.S. Thailand Japan Indonesia Malaysia ROK Singapore China India	The exercise is focused on three major components—a military field training exercise (FTX), humanitarian civic assistance (HCA) to communities and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercises.	Thailand
Feb.18- Mar.8	Cope North 2019	U.S. Japan Australia	The largest multilateral exercise organized by the U.S. Pacific Air Force to strengthen multilateral air operations among the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, JASDF and Royal Australian Air Force.	Andersen Air Force Base, Guam
Mar.4- May.29	14th Pacific Partnership Mission	Australia Canada Japan Malaysia Peru Philippines ROK Thailand U.K. U.S.	The humanitarian relief and disaster reduction exercise in the Indo-Pacific participated by the U.S. Pacific Fleet, governments and militaries in the region, and humanitarian and non-governmental organizations.	Indo-Pacific
Mar.11- Mar.22	25th Cope Tiger Exercise	U.S. Thailand Singapore	The 25th iteration of this large-scale multilateral exercise aims to enhance interoperability across the Indo-Pacific.	Korat, Thailand

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Apr.1- Apr.12	Exercise Balikatan 19	U.S. Philippines Australia	The 35th iteration of the multilateral exercise, which used to be bilateral between the U.S. and the Philippines and has included Australia in recent years, conducts amphibious operations, live-fire training, urban operations, aviation operations, and counterterrorism response.	Luzon, Palawan and Mindoro, the Philippines
Apr.30- May.13	ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Exercise	U.S. ASEAN China, etc.	ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) maritime security field exercise aims to enhance cooperation among participating countries, information sharing, interoperability and multilateral response to maritime security issues.	Starting in Busan, ROK and ending in Singapore
May.2- May.8	Joint cruise and multilateral training in the South China Sea	U.S. India Japan Philippines	Joint cruise by the U.S., Indian, JMSDF and Filipino naval ships in the South China Sea.	South China Sea
May.8	Exercise Maple Resolve 19	U.S. Canada U.K. France Australia	The largest annual exercise for the Canadian military to participate. 5,500 participating soldiers tested their ability to integrate with allies as they hone their warfighting skills within a realistic, complex and demanding environment.	Canada
May.14	La Perouse Exercises	U.S. Australia Japan France	French Navy aircraft carrier, FS Charles de Gaulle and its escort ships joined vessels from the Royal Australian Navy, JMSDF and U.S. Navy. The ships perform a series of drills including formation sailing, live fires, communications, search-and-rescue, damage control, and personnel transfers.	Bay of Bengal

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
May.22- May.28, Nov.20	Pacific Vanguard Exercise	U.S. Australia Japan ROK	The quadrilateral exercise which involves more than 3,000 sailors aims to sharpen skills and strengthen practical cooperation at sea. The exercise includes live fire exercises, defensive counter-air operations, anti-submarine warfare, and replenishment at sea. The exercise is held in May and November respectively.	Guam waters and the Marianas Islands
Jun.6- Jun.21	RED FLAG- Alaska 19-2	U.S. Japan ROK Thailand	This U.S.-organized multilateral exercise brings pilots from JASDF, ROK Air Force and Royal Thai Air Force along with the U.S Air Force pilots to exchange tactics, techniques and procedures while improving interoperability.	Alaska
Jul.18	Mine Warfare Exercise 2JA 2019	U.S. Japan India	The exercise, part of an annual exercise series between the U.S. Navy and JMSDF, is joined by participants from the Indian Navy to increase proficiency in mine countermeasure operations.	Coast of northern Japan
Aug.1- Aug.16	RED FLAG-Alaska 19-3	U.S. U.K. Australia Canada	More than 1,500 service members and 100 aircraft participated from the U.S., U.K., Australian and Canadian air forces. The exercise provides realistic training in a simulated combat environment, and enables participants to improve tactics and exchange tactics, techniques and procedures while improving interoperability among participating pilots.	Alaska
Aug.19- Aug.31	Exercise HYDRACRAB 2019	U.S. Australia Canada New Zealand	The exercise conducts Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training, improving the skills and cooperation among participants.	Guam waters and the Marianas Island Range Complex

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Aug.19	18th SEACAT 2019	Bangladesh Brunei Cambodia Indonesia Malaysia Philippines Singapore Sri Lanka Thailand U.S. Vietnam	SEACAT includes 14 ships and more than 400 personnel. The U.S. Navy units include the staff of Destroyer Squadron 7, P-8 Poseidon aircraft assigned to Task Force 72 and personnel from Task Force 73. Participants from the U.S. Coast Guard include Maritime Security Response Team West (MSRT) and Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team (PACTACLET). The exercise includes visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS), maritime domain awareness and maritime asset tracking.	Singapore
Sept.2- Sept.6	ASEAN-U.S. Maritime Exercise (AUMX)	U.S. and ten ASEAN countries	This first maritime exercise between the U.S. and ASEAN includes eight vessels, four aircraft and more than 1,000 personnel from seven countries. Throughout the exercise, ASEAN member states and the U.S. forces operated together under a combined task force structure, executing a variety of realistic scenarios designed to reinforce interoperability in areas such as visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS), maritime domain awareness and maritime asset tracking.	Opening ceremony at Sattahip Naval Base in Thailand
Sept.26- Oct.4	Exercise Malabar 2019	Japan India U.S.	The exercise features training ashore and at sea in waters off the coast of Japan. Training is focused on high-end warfighting skillsets, subject matter expert and professional exchanges, combined operations, maritime patrol and reconnaissance operations, submarine familiarization, surface and anti-submarine warfare, medical operations, damage control, helicopter operations and visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) operations.	Off the coast of Sasebo, Japan

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Oct.1	Arctic Anvil 2019	U.S. Canada etc.	Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 815th Airlift Squadron with the 327th AS, provide airlift and airdrop support for the U.S. Army's Joint Forces.	Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center Mississippi, the U.S.
Oct.9- Oct.18	Exercise KAMANDAG 3 "Cooperation of Warriors of the Sea"	U.S. Philippines Japan	The third-year exercise among the U.S., the Philippines and Japan aims to improve their interoperability, combat readiness and capabilities. The U.S. and Filipino forces conducted training in amphibious operations, live fire drills, military operations in urban terrain, aviation operations and counterterrorism operations. JSDF joined the U.S. and Filipino forces in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief training. The Filipino Marine Corps conducted a multilateral amphibious landing alongside U.S. and JGSDF.	Luzon and Palawan, the Philippines
Nov.4- Nov.15	Exercise Pacific Reach (PACREACH)	U.S. Australia ROK Japan Malaysia Singapore	PACREACH is a triennial, multi-lateral submarine rescue exercise, sponsored by the Asian Pacific Submarine Conference. It aims to ensure interoperability between the international submarine rescue community sponsored by the Asian Pacific Submarine conference. The exercise objectives include the ability to demonstrate regional submarine abandonment and escape rescue (SAER) capabilities through simulated submarine rescue missions utilizing various partner nations' submarines, submarine rescue equipment and platforms.	Fleet Base in Western Australia

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Nov.11	Exercise Dugong	U.S. Australia Canada U.K. New Zealand	The exercise involves mine countermeasure and explosive ordnance disposal professionals from five countries. It brings mine warfare and dive teams from five countries together for two weeks to practice contemporary mine warfare and dive salvage techniques and procedures.	Vicinity of Garden Island, Australia
Nov.18	Mine Warfare Exercise 3JA 2019	U.S. Japan Australia	The exercise is the third one between the U.S. Navy and JMSDF in ANUALEX 19, joined again by Royal Australian Navy. USS Pioneer minesweeper participates. The exercise is designed to increase proficiency in mine countermeasure operations focused on mine warfare tactics such as sweeping, hunting and mine detection.	Off the coast of southwestern Japan

Bilateral Military Exercises in 2019

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jan.11- Jan.16	Exercise in the joint operation in the South China Sea	U.S. U.K.	The guided missile destroyer USS McCampbell (DDG 85) and Royal Navy HMS Argyll (F231) conducted communication drills and personnel exchange, etc.	South China Sea
Jan.17- Feb.1	Bilateral Air Contingency Exchange	U.S. Philippines	U.S Air Force F-16 fighters are deployed from Kunsan Air Base, Korea, to Cesar Basa Air Base, the Philippines for flying and training along with Filipino air force as part of Bilateral Air Contingency Exchange (BACE-P).	Cesar Basa Air Base, the Philippines
Jan.28- Feb.7	Hanuman Guardian Training Exercise	U.S. Thailand	This exercise organized by the U.S. Army Pacific Command and participated by the U.S. Army and the Royal Thai Army aims to enhance military-to-military partnerships, interoperability and mission readiness.	Camp Nimman Kolayut, Thailand

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jan.15- Feb.8	Iron Fist 2019	U.S. Japan	The exercise is focused on fire and maneuver assaults, amphibious reconnaissance, staff planning, logistical support, familiarization of medical capabilities, fire support operations and amphibious landing operations. This year marked the first time Japan brought its own amphibious assault vehicles to the exercise.	Southern California
Feb.4- Feb.15	Exercise Forest Light	U.S. Japan	Approximately 400 Okinawa-based U.S. Marines will partner with JGSDF personnel to conduct the semiannual bilateral exercise.	Aibano Maneuver Area
Feb.22- Mar.1	Resilient Shield 2019	U.S. Japan	Resilient Shield is an annual computer-based Fleet Synthetic Training-Joint (FST-J) exercise. Resilient Shield 2019 is specifically focused on BMD training for JMSDF ships and 7th Fleet's forward-deployed ships.	7th Fleet and other command centers in the region
Feb.27- Feb.28	Guard and Protect 2019	U.S. Japan	The exercise provides a training scenario designed for each major U.S. installation in Japan to match with a respective JGSDF Division to ensure adequate security of facilities and areas across Japan in the event of contingency operations.	Camp Itazuma in Gotemba, Japan
Mar.4- Mar.24	Exercise Salaknib 19	U.S. Philippines	The exercise, participated by the U.S. Pacific Army and Philippine Army, aims to enhance their defense readiness and tactical interoperability in Jungle Field Training Exercise (FTX), Command Post Exercise (CPX), Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEEs), Cooperative Health Engagements (CHE), and Humanitarian Civic Action (HCA) projects.	Palayan, the Philippines

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Mar.7- Mar.15	Exercise Bersama Warrior	U.S. Malaysia	The exercise focuses on planning and conducting joint and coalition peace enforcement operations	Kuala Lumpur
Mar.11- Mar.15	Exercise Keris Strike	U.S. Malaysia	The 24th iteration of the exercise consists of several subject matter expert exchanges designed to develop the capacity to quickly respond to crisis with greater interoperability and increased mission effectiveness. The exercise this year is focused on regional humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capability in the Indo-Pacific.	Camp Sungai Buloh
Mar.11- Mar.29	Diamond Shield 2019	U.S. Australia	This biennial exercise aims to provide training support to RAAF Air Warfare Centre students while giving the U.S. and Australian Air Force members an opportunity to enhance their interoperability and effectiveness through joint training.	Royal Australian Air Force Base Darwin, Australia
Mar.13	Salvage Exercise (SALVEX) Korea 2019	U.S. ROK	The 35th exchange is focused on combined diving and salvage operations and subject matter expert exchanges. Divers from both navies participated in full-mission profile salvage operations, including the use of side-scan sonar and remote operated vehicles.	-
Apr.7- Apr.12	Exercise Guardian Sea	U.S. Thailand	The eighth exercise in anti-submarine warfare (ASW) aims to enhance interoperability and procedure on tracking submarines in a variety of conditions.	Andaman Sea
Apr.11- Apr.29	Exercise Valiant Mark	U.S. Singapore	The 23rd iteration of annual exercise between the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) and the U.S. Marines consists of joint planning and a deliberate assault by the troops as well as live-firing, jungle training and urban operations training.	Singapore

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
May.6- May.26	Exercise Diamond Storm	U.S. Australia	The exercise focuses on enhancing air cooperation initiative and cooperation between the U.S. Air Force and the Royal Australian Air Force.	Royal Australian Air Force Base Darwin, Australia
May.13- May.17	Beverly Morning 19-01	U.S. Japan	The full-scale exercise, which happens multiple times a year, is designed to enhance base readiness through training and practicing skillsets, ensuring Yokota Air Base is ready to respond to potential real-world contingencies, including Rapid Airfield Damage Repair (RADR).	Beverly
May.14	Joint Search and Rescue Exercise	U.S. Philippines	The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf (WMSL 750) and vessels from the Philippine Coast Guard conducted joint search-and-rescue exercises	at sea west of Manila
May.28- Jun.8	Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training Exercise (CARAT)	U.S. Thailand	The U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard joined Royal Thai Navy and Marine Corps to kick off the 25th annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT). CARAT, the U.S. Navy’s oldest and longest continually running regional exercise in South and Southeast Asia. The Royal Thai Navy has been a part of the annual CARAT series since the exercise began in 1995.	Sattahip Naval Base, Thailand
Jun.10- Jun.12, Jun.20	Cooperative Deployment	U.S. Japan	The U.S. Navy forward-deployed aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) participated in a cooperative deployment with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) ships — helicopter carrier JS Izumo (DH-183), destroyer JS Murasame (DD-101) and destroyer JS Akebono (DD-108). The four vessels conducted communication checks, tactical maneuvering drills and liaison officer exchanges.	South China Sea

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jun.10- Jun.22	Mine Countermeasures Exercise (MINEX)	U.S. Japan	JSMDF Mine Warfare Force (MWF) executes IWOTO, the largest live MINEX in the Pacific, every year in Iwo To, formerly known as Iwo Jima, but this is the first time a U.S. Navy EOD platoon has been invited to actively participate in the exercise. In the past, the U.S. Navy EOD Sailors only observed the exercise.	the island of Iwo To, Japan
Jun.14	Maneuvering and Communication Exercise	U.S. India	The amphibious transport dock ship USS John P. Murtha (LPD 26) with embarked elements from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) participated in maneuvering and communication drills with Indian destroyer INS Ranvijay (D 55).	the Indian Ocean
Jun.17- Jun.28	Cope West	U.S. Indonesia	To promote interoperability, the exercise involves approximately 100 U.S. service members working alongside their Indonesian Air Force counterparts and a combined total of 12 aircraft, including six U.S. Air Force F-16CM/DM aircraft from the 14th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, 35th Fighter Wing based out of Misawa Air Base, Japan, and six F-16 aircraft from the Indonesian air force.	Sam Ratulangi International Airport, Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia
End of June-early August	Talisman Sabre 2019	U.S. Australia	Australia's largest bilateral exercise with the United States. More than 34,000 military personnel from 18 countries including Australia, the U.S., Canada, Japan and New Zealand participated. The exercise aims to enhance combat readiness and interoperability between the Australian and United States armed forces.	Shoalwater Bay Training Area and surrounding State Forests, near Rockhampton

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jul.15- Jul.25	Marine Aviation Support Activity 2019	U.S. Philippines	MASA is a semiannual U.S.-Philippine military exercise focused on mutual defense, counterterrorism, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. MASA 2019 placed emphasis on enhancing interoperability and capacities of the U.S. and Philippine armed forces.	Philippines
Jul.29- Aug.12	Exercise Cartwheel 2019	U.S. Fiji	The U.S. Army Pacific Command sponsored exercise is centered around infantry training events and humanitarian programs in and around Vanua Levu.	in and around Vanua Levu
Aug.1- Aug.7	Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training Exercise (CARAT)	U.S. Indonesia	The exercise featuring hundreds of Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen from both nations consists of both on shore and at-sea training, such as visit board search and seizure drills, mobile dive and salvage training gunnery exercises, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) drills, jungle warfare training and subject matter expert knowledge exchanges in medicine, aviation, law, and explosive ordnance disposal.	Surabaya, Indonesia
Aug.14- Aug.19	Maritime Training Activity (MTA)	U.S. Malaysia	Hundreds of Sailors and Coast Guardsmen from both nations came together for the exercise designed to enhance naval interoperability.	Lumut Naval Base, Malaysia
Aug.19- Aug.30	Garuda Shield 2019	U.S. Indonesia	The third exercise in the Pacific Pathways 19-03 rotation, it is mainly composed of bilateral military training, including exchanges among experts and live-fire drills, to enhance their combat readiness and interoperability.	Indonesia

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Aug.28- Sept.13	Rising Thunder 2019	U.S. Japan	It is an annual exercise between the U.S. Army and the JGSDF and is part of Pacific Pathways 19-03. The exercise consists of company/platoon unilateral and bilateral training events in two phases, culminating with a bilateral live-fire exercise.	Yakima Training Center, WA, U.S.
Sept.5- Sept.18	Exercise Yudh Abhyas 19	U.S. India	Soldiers with the U.S. Army's 7th Infantry Division and the Indian Army's 99th Mountain Brigade participated in the joint drills.	Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA, U.S.
Sept.5- Sept.24	Orient Shield 2019	U.S. Japan	The bilateral training exercise between the U.S. Army and the JGSDF aims to enhance interoperability by testing concepts of multi-domain and cross-domain combat.	Camp Kenjun, Japan
Sept.16- Sept.23	Gema Bhakti 2019 (GB19) (STAFFEX) (Indonesian: Echo of Good Deeds)	U.S. Indonesia	It is a Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff STAFFEX between the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, and the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI, Indonesian Armed Forces).	Jakarta
Sept.27- Oct.10	Pacific Griffin Exercise (an extension of CARAT)	U.S. Singapore	The highest-level naval exercise between the U.S. and Singapore in their long-standing maritime partnership. It consists of onshore and offshore operations: amphibious operation planning, anti-submarine operation demonstration and at-sea replenishment. In the sinking exercise (SINKEX) on October 1, live fire sank the decommissioned ex-USS Ford (FFG 54) in waters approximately 170 nautical miles away. Drills are conducted in targeting and live firing against a surface target at sea.	in the waters near Guam

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Sept.30- Oct.5	Exercise Tiger Strike 19	U.S. Malaysia	It focuses on strengthening joint military interoperability and on increasing readiness by practicing for humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, amphibious and jungle warfare operations, while fostering cultural exchanges between the U.S. and Malaysian armed forces.	USS Green Bay (LPD 20)
Oct.7- Oct.20	CARAT Exercise 2019	U.S. Brunei	USS Harpers Ferry (LSD-49) and Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron 11 came to Brunei to conduct the exercise along with Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF).	Brunei
Oct.27- Oct.31	Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange	U.S. Bangladesh	The U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC), National Guard and the Bangladesh government and military participated in this exercise which simulated large-scale disaster response and disaster relief.	Dhaka
Nov. 4- Nov.7	Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Bangladesh 2019	U.S. Bangladesh	The exercise includes motor diving and salvage, engineering, aviation, hydrology, maritime awareness and maritime law. In addition, there will be aviation activities, including search and rescue on P-8 Poseidon aircraft and tracking operations of targeted vessels.	Chittagong, Bangladesh
Nov.13- Nov.21	Exercise Tiger TRIUMPH	U.S. India	This tri-services amphibious exercise, which hones skills in humanitarian assistance and disaster response, includes planning by staff, simulated humanitarian assistance and amphibious landing by troops for disaster relief.	near Visakhapatnam and Kakinada, India
Dec.9- Dec.15	Yama Sakura 77	U.S. Japan	Since 1982, the U.S. Army and JGSDF have organized this annual exercise to enhance readiness and interoperability through real-time simulations of multi-domain and cross-domain operations. The annual exercise is held on a rotating basis among the five garrison areas of JGSDF.	Camp Asaka in Tokyo

Multilateral Military Exercises in 2020

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jan.20- Jan.30	Exercise Sea Dragon 2020	U.S. Australia Japan ROK New Zealand	A multilateral exercise of the U.S. Navy, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), the Republic of Korea Navy (ROKN) and the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN).	Guam
Feb.12- Feb.28	Cope North 2020	U.S. Japan Australia	More than 100 aircraft and approximately 2,000 military personnel from the U.S. forces, Japan Air Self-Defense Force and the Royal Australian Air Force participated in the exercise, including humanitarian assistance, disaster relief exercises, strike mission training, air combat tactics and a large-force deployment training.	The Northern Mariana Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia
Feb.9- Feb.14	Pacific Defender 20-1	U.S. Japan Australia	Approximately 60 personnel from U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, Japan Air Self-Defense Force and Royal Australian Air Force security forces participated in Pacific Defender 20-1.	Pacific Regional Training Center near Andersen Air Force Base, Guam
Feb.25- Mar.6	Exercise Cobra Gold 2020	U.S., Thailand, ROK, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, as well as dozens of countries as observers	The largest joint and combined military exercise in Southeast Asia. Conducted annually since 1982, the exercise this time includes the amphibious assault demonstration, the non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO), the humanitarian civic action project, landmine destruction, defensive cyber techniques, and the combined arms live-fire exercise.	Thailand

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

Bilateral Military Exercises in 2020

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jan.18- Jan.31	Exercise Forest Light	U.S. Japan	More than 145 Okinawa-based U.S. Marines with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit joined around 500 Japan Ground Self-Defense Force service members to enhance the collective operation capabilities.	Kyushu, Japan
Jan.26- Feb.8	Exercise Northern Viper	U.S. Japan	The forces conducted a bilateral, combined arms exercise and live-fire training in conjunction with ground and aviation units.	Hokudaiei and Yausubetsu Training Areas in the Hokkaido, Japan
Feb.1- Feb.6	Exercise Cope South	U.S. Bangladesh	A Pacific Air Forces-sponsored, bilateral tactical airlift exercise. Approximately 60 U.S. Airmen along with two U.S. Air Force C-130J Super Hercules joined approximately 100 Bangladesh air force service members and three Bangladeshi C-130s for the exercise.	Kurmitola Cantonment, Dhaka
Feb.24	Resilient Shield 2020	U.S. Japan	Resilient Shield is an annual computer-based Fleet Synthetic Training-Joint (FST -J) exercise focused on Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD).	Yokosuka, Japan
Feb.3- Feb.14	Exercise Iron Fist	U.S. Japan	USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) and amphibious transport dock ship USS Portland (LPD 27) along with more than 400 Marines to exercise amphibious operational core competencies of joint American-Japanese forces.	
Feb.24- late May	Exercise Hanuman Guardian	U.S. Thailand	An annual exercise designed to enhance U.S. Army and the Royal Thai Army. The primary planned training events include a military decision-making process exercise, a platoon and company level field training exercise, and a live fire exercise.	Thailand

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Jan.- Feb.	Joint/Combined Exchange Training (JCET)	U.S. Philippines	Pentagon sponsored seven U.S.-Philippine JCET events in 2019. The U.S. Army Special Operations Forces and the Philippine Special Forces conduct joint training that covered a variety of counterterrorism subjects and exercises.	Palawan Island
Feb.21- Feb.23	Tomodachi Rescue Exercise	U.S. Japan	Joint bilateral disaster relief exercise participated by the U.S. Air Force and the Japan Self-Defense Forces	Yokota Air Base
Feb.29	Advanced Warfighting Training (BAWT)	U.S. Japan	A bilateral training exercise between the U.S. Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force focuses on increasing combat readiness and warfighting excellence of coalition forces. The participating forces exercise a wide range of capabilities and demonstrate the inherent flexibility of combined forces. These capabilities range from maritime security operations to more complex anti-submarine and air defense exercises.	
Feb.28- Mar.9	Arctic Edge 20	U.S. Canada	A joint force and international training exercise and the largest joint exercise scheduled in Alaska this year with approximately 1,000 U.S. military personnel working alongside members of the Canadian Armed Forces.	Alaska
Mar.7	Fleet Certification Period 2020	U.S. Australia	A P8 - A Poseidon maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft is sent to conduct drills along with the Royal Australian Navy.	

Table 3-1 U.S.-Led Major Joint Military Exercises in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2020

(Continued)

Time	Name	Countries	Type and Objective	Region
Mar.11- Mar.20	Bersama Warrior Exercise	U.S. Malaysia	An annual bilateral joint exercise sponsored by the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command and hosted by the Malaysian Armed Forces. This year's iteration is a staff exercise that provides preparatory planning participated by the Washington National Guard and the Malaysian Armed Forces. It includes military decision-making process, multinational forces standard operating procedures, counterterrorism and humanitarian assistance missions.	Malaysia
Mar.27	Exercise PACIFIC WEASEL	U.S. Japan	Members of the U.S. 13th and 14th Fighter Squadrons at Misawa Air Base, Japan, execute the exercise.	Draughon Range, Misawa Air Base, Japan
Apr.2	Joint Operation in the Andaman Sea	U.S. Japan	The littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords (LCS 10) and the JMSDF destroyer JS Teruzuki (DD 116) conduct operations together, while sailing through the Andaman Sea.	The Andaman Sea
Apr.9- Apr.11	Joint Operation in the East China Sea	U.S. Japan	Amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6), with the embarked 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit joined the JMSDF destroyer JS Akebono (DD 108) for a series of collaborative events while sailing in the Philippine Sea and East China Sea.	The East China Sea
Apr.13-	Joint Operation in the South China Sea	U.S. Australia	The U.S. Navy and the Royal Australian Navy conducted joint operations in the South China Sea. HMAS Parramatta (FFG 154) began sailing with guided missile-cruiser USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) then rendezvoused with amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6) and guided missile destroyer USS Barry (DDG 52) on April 18.	The South China Sea

**Table 3-2 The U.S. Humanitarian Aid Operations
in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2019**

Time	Mission	Participants	Region
Mar.-Jun., 2018	In the 13th iteration of Pacific Partnership, the U.S military and host countries were engaged in technical and professional exchanges on medical readiness, engineering and humanitarian aid as well as community outreach events.	Fast-transport ship USNS Brunswick and hospital ship USNS Mercy, more than 800 U.S. military and civilian personnel from its allies and NGOs.	USNS Mercy traveling to Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Japan; USNS Brunswick to Yap, Palau, Malaysia and Thailand.
Jun.-Sept., 2018	The 12th iteration of Pacific Angel includes general health, dental, optometry, pediatrics and engineering programs as well as various subject-matter expert exchanges, including maintenance and upgrading services for schools, clinics and community centers in Vietnam.	U.S., Timor-Leste, Vietnamese, Australian, and Vanuatu military personnel and representatives from local NGOs.	Timor-Leste, Vietnam, Vanuatu and Sri Lanka.
Mar.-May, 2019	In the 14th iteration of Pacific Partnership, U.S. engineering, medical and disaster relief experts, along with participants from host countries, conducted social action programs, community healthcare exchanges, medical workshops and disaster relief training events.	Fast-transport ships USNS Brunswick and USNS Fall River. More than 500 military and civilian personnel from Australia, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Peru, the Philippines, ROK, Thailand, U.K. and U.S.	Marshall Islands, the Philippines, Malaysia, Micronesia, Palau, Timor-Leste and Thailand.

Table 3-2 The U.S. Humanitarian Aid Operations in the Asia-Pacific, 2018-2019

(Continued)

Time	Mission	Participants	Region
Jun.-Sept., 2019	The 13th iteration of Pacific Angel includes Royal Australian Air Force's engagement in humanitarian and healthcare services and subject matter expert exchanges in PNG; casualties disposal training between the U.S. Air Force and Mongolian Armed Forces; and renovation and maintenance services by armed forces from a couple of countries for local school classrooms in PNG.	U.S. Australian, PNG, Fijian, Mongolian and Nepalese armed forces.	Sri Lanka; Port Moresby, PNG; and Mongolia.

**Table 3-3 The U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations
in the Asia-Pacific, 2017-2018^①**

No.	Year	Countries/Regions Challenged by the U.S.	Geographical Location
1	2018	Myanmar	Andaman Sea
2	2017/2018	Cambodia	Gulf of Thailand
3	2017/2018	China	Xisha Islands, Nansha Islands, South China Sea, East China Sea
4	2017	India	Indian Ocean
5	2017/2018	Indonesia	Java Sea, Lombok Strait
6	2017/2018	Iran	Strait of Hormuz, Persian Gulf
7	2018	Japan	East China Sea
8	2017/2018	Malaysia	Strait of Malacca, South China Sea
9	2017/2018	Maldives	Indian Ocean
10	2017/2018	Oman	Arabian Sea, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman
11	2018	Pakistan	Arabian Sea
12	2017/2018	Philippines	Sulu Sea
13	2018	Saudi Arabia	Persian Gulf
14	2017/2018	Sri Lanka	Indian Ocean, Laccadive Sea
15	2017/2018	Taiwan of China	Xisha Islands
16	2018	Thailand	Gulf of Thailand

① Freedom of Navigation: FY 2017 OPERATIONAL ASSERTIONS, U.S. DoD website: <https://policy.defense.gov/Portals/11/FY17%20DOD%20FON%20Report.pdf?ver=2018-01-19-163418-053>, Freedom of Navigation: FY 2018 OPERATIONAL ASSERTIONS, U.S. DoD website: [https://policy.defense.gov/Portals/11/Documents/FY18%20DoD%20Annual%20FON%20Report%20\(final\).pdf?ver=2019-03-19-103517-010](https://policy.defense.gov/Portals/11/Documents/FY18%20DoD%20Annual%20FON%20Report%20(final).pdf?ver=2019-03-19-103517-010).

Table 3-3 The U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations in the Asia-Pacific, 2017-2018

(Continued)

No.	Year	Countries/Regions Challenged by the U.S.	Geographical Location
17	2018	UAE	Persian Gulf
18	2017/2018	Vietnam	Xisha Islands, South China Sea
19	2017/2018	Yemen	Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Bab al-Mandeb Strait

Note: the countries (regions) challenged by the U.S. in FONOPs and maritime territories in which FONOPs are conducted represent unilateral U.S. statistics. They do not represent that China recognizes their claims of jurisdiction over these maritime territories.

Table 3-4 U.S. Warships Transiting the Taiwan Straits, 2018-2020^①

No.	Time	US Vessels
1	July 7, 2018	Destroyer USS Benfold (DDG 65), Destroyer USS Mustin (DDG 89)
2	October 22, 2018	Cruiser USS Antietam (CG 54), Destroyer USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54)
3	November 28, 2018	Destroyer USS Stockdale (DDG 106), replenishment oiler USNS Pecos (T-AO 197)
4	January 24, 2019	Destroyer USS McCampbell (DDG 85), replenishment oiler USS Walter Diehl (T-AO 193)
5	February 25, 2019	Destroyer USS Stethem (DDG 63), dry cargo ship USNS Ceasar Chavez (T-AKE 14)
6	March 24, 2019	Destroyer USC Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54), U.S. Coast Guard maritime security cutter USCGC Bertholf (WSML 750)
7	April 28, 2019	Destroyers USS Stethem (DDG 63) and USS William P. Lawrence (DDG 110)
8	May 23, 2019	Destroyer USS Preble (DDG 88), replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl (T-AO 193)
9	July 24, 2019	Cruiser USS Antietam (CG 54)
10	August 23, 2019	Amphibious transport dock USS Green Bay (LPD 20)
11	September 20, 2019	Cruiser USS Antietam (CG 54)
12	November 12, 2019	Cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62)
13	January 16, 2020	Cruiser USS Shiloh (CG 67)
14	February 15, 2020	Cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62)
15	March 25, 2020	Destroyer USS McCampbell (DDG 85)
16	April 10, 2020	Destroyer USS Barry (DDG 52)
17	April 23, 2020	Destroyer USS Barry (DDG 52)
18	May 13, 2020	Destroyer USS McCampbell (DDG 85)
19	June 4, 2020	Destroyer USS Russell (DDG 59)

^①“USS Green Bay Transits Taiwan Strait,” August 23, 2019, United States Naval Institute, <https://news.usni.org/2019/08/23/uss-green-bay-transits-taiwan-strait>.

**Table 3-5 The U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations
in the South China Sea, 2017-2020^①**

No.	Time	U.S. Vessels	U.S. Operations
1	May 24-25, 2017	Destroyer USS Dewey (DDG 105)	It transited within 12 nautical miles of the Meiji Reef, the Nansha Islands.
2	July 2, 2017	Destroyer USS Stethem (DDG 63)	It transited within the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands,
3	August 10, 2017	Destroyer USS John S. McCain (DDG 56)	It transited within 12 nautical miles of the Meiji Reef, the Nansha Islands.
4	October 10, 2017	Destroyer USS Chafee (DDG 90)	It transited within the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands.
5	January 17, 2018	Destroyer USS Hopper (DDG 70)	It transited within the 12 nautical miles of Huangyan Island.
6	March 23, 2018	Destroyer USS Mustin (DDG 89)	It transited and maneuvered within 12 nautical miles of the Meiji Reef, the Nansha Islands.
7	May 27, 2018	Destroyer USS Higgins (DDG 76) and Cruiser USS Antietam (CG 54)	The two ships transited and maneuvered within the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands.
8	September 30, 2018	Destroyer USS Decatur (DDG 73)	It transited with 12 nautical miles of the Nanxun Reef and the Chigua Reef of the Nansha Islands.
9	November 26, 2018	Cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62)	It entered the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands.
10	January 7, 2019	Destroyer USS McCampbell (DDG 85)	It sailed into the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands.

^①According to public information available.

(Continued)

No.	Time	U.S. Vessels	U.S. Operations
11	February 11, 2019	Destroyers USS Spruance (DDG 111) and USS Preble (DDG 73)	The two ships sailed into the waters within 12 nautical miles of the Ren'ai Reef and the Meiji Reef of the Nansha Islands.
12	May 6, 2019	Destroyers USS Preble (DDG 88) and USS Chung Hoon (DDG 93)	It sailed into the waters within 12 nautical miles of the Nanxun Reef and the Chigua Reef of the Nansha Islands.
13	May 20, 2019	Destroyer USS Preble (DDG 88)	It transited within 12 nautical miles of the Huangyan Island.
14	August 28, 2019	Destroyer USS Wayne E. Meyer (DDG 108)	It sailed into the waters within 12 nautical miles of the Yongshu Reef and the Meiji Reef of the Nansha Islands.
15	September 13, 2019	Destroyer USS Wayne E. Meyer (DDG 108)	It sailed into the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands.
16	November 20, 2019	USS Gabrielle Giffords (LCS 10)	It sailed into the waters within 12 nautical miles of the Meiji Reef of the Nansha Islands.
17	November 21, 2019	Destroyer USS Wayne E. Meyer (DDG 108)	It sailed into the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands.
18	January 25, 2020	USS Montgomery (LCS 8)	It transited near the waters of the Yongshu Reef and the Chigua Reef of the Nansha Islands
19	March 10, 2020	Destroyer USS McCampbell (DDG 85)	It entered the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands.
20	April 28, 2020	Destroyer USS Barry (DDG 52)	It entered the territorial waters of the Xisha Islands.
21	April 29, 2020	Cruiser USS Bunker Hill (CG 52)	It entered the adjacent water of Nanxun Reef, the Nansha Islands
22	May 28, 2020	Destroyer USS Mustin (DDG 89)	It entered the territorial waters of Xisha Islands