

The 18th Party Congress and Foreign Policy: The Dog that Did Not Bark?

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Foreign policy issues have never played a major role in party congresses, at least during the reform era, for understandable reasons. A party congress is mainly about domestic political power and domestic policies, and even then is primarily an exercise in tedious sloganeering, pumping up the party faithful, and presenting the new leadership lineup. Nonetheless, congresses can be important as indicators of future policy direction and power structure, including within the foreign policy arena. Future policy indicators are usually contained within the congress work report delivered by the current Chinese Communist Party (CCP) general secretary, while power structure indicators are contained in the official membership roster of the new CCP Central Committee, Politburo, and Politburo Standing Committee.

This essay examines the foreign policy aspects of both documents, as presented at the 18th Party Congress. The bulk of the analysis is devoted to the party work report delivered by Hu Jintao, which is compared with past work reports going back to the 14th Party Congress of 1992. The CCP leadership roster is at best only an indirect indicator of the future PRC foreign policy elite, since the government leadership lineup will be selected the following spring, during the National People's Congress. However, the foreign policy team will almost certainly be selected from the new party leadership. Hence, an examination of the congress can provide a few hints of what is to come.

The 18th Party Congress Work Report

Party congress work reports largely perform three concrete tasks: first, to identify the major achievements (and to a lesser extent the failures) of party work occurring since the previous party congress was convened; second, to describe the challenges and opportunities confronting the party in the years ahead; and third, to lay out the basic principles and broad policy goals that will guide the party until the next congress. Emphasis is usually placed on general strategic trends, features, and themes in party

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work, covering all major policy arenas from internal party building, to social and economic development, to defense and foreign relations. Specific policy contents and operational approaches are usually not addressed, however, especially in the realm of foreign policy. As noted above, domestic issues and policies take center stage.

The foreign policy elements of the work report normally include: 1) a depiction of the international environment facing the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and China; 2) the general foreign policy goals of the leadership; and 3) the basic features of China's current and future foreign policy line. Most of these topics are presented in a specific section of the report dealing with foreign policy. However, other foreign policy-related elements are also found in sections on economic policy and army building, among others.

In all of these foreign policy-related areas, the vast majority of the 18th Party Congress Work Report conveys strong continuity with past congresses, in many cases going back to at least the 14th Party Congress work report of 1992. At its broadest level, the work report reaffirms that China faces an international environment in which a major war is unlikely and the opportunity to benefit from contacts with the outside world remain high. Major themes supporting the peaceful evolution of the international environment going forward, including multipolarity and globalization, are similar to those highlighted in past work reports.ⁱ

The underlying assumption is that such balancing and integrating forces serve as powerful incentives to enhance global cooperation and restrain major inter-state rivalries and conflicts. Equally important, multipolarity and globalization are viewed as being most closely associated with and promoted by the nations of the developing world, including, of course, China.ⁱⁱ

Why is this? Because, in the Chinese view, developing states are primarily focused on economic development, and contribute to the process of economic globalization. The growing power and influence of developing states in the international system presumably promote the emergence of multiple power centers. This broader distribution of power serves to restrain negative forces.

Although not always spelled out in detail, this identification of the developing world with forces promoting positive aspects of global security is present to varying degrees in every work report since at least the 14th Party Congress.ⁱⁱⁱ

Another common feature of all the work reports examined for this essay is the presentation of various negative forces that challenge the international environment (and in particular developing nations). Such forces are always paired with the prevailing positive forces detailed above. These representations invariably center on hegemonism and power politics, the latter often involving aggressive or expansionist behavior.^{iv}

However, in the 18th Party Congress Work Report, the phrase "neo-interventionism" was listed for the first time alongside hegemonism and power politics, both considered negative features of the international environment. Although undefined, the term likely

reflects increased Chinese concern over the armed intervention in Libya supported by the West, and more recent Western demands for a similar intervention in the Syrian civil war.^v In fact, work reports generally hint that Western or developed nations are the likely source of hegemonism and power politics. Although never explicitly named, states engaged in such behavior are sometimes referred to in past work reports as “a few countries” with a “Cold War mentality” and are exemplified by efforts to “expand military blocs and strengthen military alliances.”^{vi}

The 18th Party Congress Work Report does not employ such telling language. However, other recent official Chinese statements criticizing hegemonism and power politics do make an explicit connection with the developed world, suggesting a consistency of characterization with examples appearing in past work reports.^{vii}

Overall, the clear implication is that Western powers—the United States in particular as a major participant in military alliances—are the foremost practitioners of hegemonism and power politics. In contrast, developing states do not generally engage in such behavior due to their focus on development. The exception to this characterization is found in one past work report, which cites ethnic and religious strife as a source of global instability in emerging nations.^{viii}

In addition to factors allegedly associated with Western nations, the 18th Party Congress Work Report also mentions, for the first time and as a separate force, the effects of the global financial crisis, as well as increasingly disruptive forces associated with “food security, energy and resource security and cyber security.” All of these forces presumably contribute to what is described as a “volatile global environment and fierce competition in overall national strength.”^{ix}

A third common feature of the work reports is the depiction of broad Chinese foreign policy objectives. These objectives are largely a product of the above positive and negative forces. In particular, market-oriented economic development, through peaceful and productive relations with all nations, is cited in the 18th Party Congress Work Report as the primary objective of China’s foreign (as well as domestic) policies. Indeed, economic development has retained this starring role since the advent of the reform era in the late seventies.^x

In this undertaking, China is seen, as always, to have made great strides during the past five years:

New progress has been made in China’s diplomacy. We have staunchly protected China’s interests and the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese nationals and legal persons overseas. We have increased exchanges and cooperation with other countries. We have promoted reform in global governance, enhanced world peace and development, secured more representation and a greater say for China in international affairs, and created favorable international conditions for China’s reform and development.^{xi}

The specific mention of protecting “Chinese nationals and legal persons overseas” (a possible reference to Beijing’s successful extraction of Chinese nationals from Libya) appears for the first time in the 18th Party Congress Work Report, marking a notable variation in theme as compared with previous work reports.^{xii}

The general characterization of China’s current and future foreign policies in the 18th Party Congress Work Report is also similar to those in recent work reports. Specifically, it stresses that China will “...continue to hold high the banner of peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit and strive to uphold world peace and promote common development. China will unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development and firmly pursue an independent foreign policy of peace.”^{xiii} The work report also repeats past descriptions of China’s adherence to a foreign economic policy based on “reform and opening up.”

Variations on this general description of Chinese foreign policy are contained in every work report examined for this essay. That said, China’s overall approach is consistently characterized as an “independent foreign policy of peace” and an economic policy of “reform and opening up” .^{xiv}

A more recent addition to this description of a peace-oriented, cooperative foreign policy approach, found only in the 18th and 17th Party Congress Work Reports, is the reference to a “win-win strategy of opening up.” The use of the phrase “win-win” to describe China’s interactions with foreign states derives from Beijing’s recent efforts to counter the notion, implicit in the so-called “China threat theory,” that its growing power occurs at the expense of other nations or otherwise leads to a “zero-sum” challenge to the United States and other major powers.^{xv}

In dealing with the various foreign challenges posed by the negative forces outlined above, the 18th Party Congress Work Report strikes a resolute and oppositional stance:

We are firm in our resolve to uphold China’s sovereignty, security and development interests and will never yield to any outside pressure. We will decide our position and policy on an issue on its own merits and work to uphold fairness and justice. China is committed to peaceful settlement of international disputes and hotspot issues, opposes the wanton use of force or threat to use it, opposes any foreign attempt to subvert the legitimate government of any other countries, and opposes terrorism in all its manifestations. China opposes hegemonism and power politics in all their forms, does not interfere in other countries’ internal affairs and will never seek hegemony or engage in expansion.^{xvi}

Again, variations on this phrase are contained in all previous work reports examined. Opposition to foreign interference in the internal affairs of other countries has been standard fare in Chinese foreign policy statements for many years. However, the specific phrase “opposes any foreign attempt to subvert the legitimate government of any other

countries” is unprecedented in work reports as an explicit statement of opposition to this type of foreign intervention. This suggests a connection to the reference to “neo-interventionism” mentioned above. At the same time, the use of the word “legitimate” suggests conditions under which intervention might be permitted (i.e., if the government of the state in question is determined to be illegitimate). Less qualified opposition to foreign intervention has occurred in past work reports.^{xvii}

This could reflect a Chinese desire to avoid appearing to other states as an inflexible opponent of intervention in the affairs of sovereign states by the international community for certain humanitarian reasons. Such a desire conceivably stems from growing international support for the notion of intervention on the basis of a “responsibility to protect” a nation’s citizens against the genocidal behavior of their government.^{xviii}

Fourth, the 18th Party Congress Work Report also contains a similar description of those aspects of China’s defense policies of relevance to foreign affairs, including the continued implementation of the military strategy of active defense as a central component of the overall effort “...to safeguard China's sovereignty, security and territorial integrity and ensure its peaceful development.”^{xix} However, for the first time, the work report also asserts the need to construct a “...strong national defense and powerful armed forces that are commensurate with China's international standing and meet the needs of its security and development interests...” Although seemingly unremarkable at first glance, the placement in a Party Work Report of a direct linkage between China’s military and its *international* standing implies an official recognition of an expansive level of military power and presence that is not found in other work reports or party statements.^{xx}

The work report also for the first time explicitly asserts the need for the Chinese military “...to increase cooperation and mutual trust with the armed forces of other countries, participate in regional and international security affairs, and thus play an active role in international political and security fields.”^{xxi} This new reference to the military’s political role in promoting cooperation and understanding with other militaries probably reflects the regime’s increased desire to reduce foreign suspicions of China’s growing power and to enhance its role in supporting security missions beyond the defense of Chinese territory.

All of the above foreign policy-related features of the 18th Party Congress Work Report confirm, with a few notable exceptions, its overall continuity with past work reports. But what about features that, as a result of either specific references, or an absence of references, signal truly new dimensions in China’s foreign policy going forward? In particular, does the work report contain hints on how Beijing will address the top three foreign policy concerns discussed among foreign, and many Chinese, observers? Namely, 1) Beijing’s more “assertive” or “aggressive” diplomatic and military or para-military approach toward a variety of foreign policy-related issues, most notably maritime sovereignty disputes with Japan and several Southeast Asian nations in the East and South China Seas; 2) its greater involvement in new fields that combine foreign and defense policy elements, such as space and cyberspace; and 3) repeated Chinese

emphasis in recent years on the need to create “a new type of great power relationship” that avoids the frequent confrontation and conflict that has characterized the interaction between rising and established powers in the past.^{xxii}

Unfortunately, the 18th Party Congress Work Report contains few direct references to these important issues. Its standard espousal of a peaceful, cooperative foreign policy, the unswerving commitment to the defense of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and repeated references to the need to develop China’s technological prowess in various fields all serve either to rebut the first point, explain the second point, or reinforce the third point. But none of these indirect references shed light on the specific origins, rationale, or content of these new issues as elements of China’s current and future foreign policy.

The foreign affairs section of the work report explicitly states an intent for China to “...strive to establish a new type of relations of long-term stability and sound growth with other major countries.” This remark, although not identical to current official use of the phrase “a new type of great power relations” (*xinxing daguo guanxi*), is nonetheless strikingly similar. Its inclusion in the 18th Party Congress Work Report points to the significance of this general concept in China’s foreign policy. That said, it does not receive particularly prominent or detailed treatment in the work report; it is merely mentioned once, in a long paragraph describing China’s intention to work cooperatively with other nations and support various multilateral regimes and forums, and is not defined beyond its association with stability and growth.^{xxiii}

This perhaps reflects the largely (at this point) rhetorical nature of the concept in Chinese foreign policy. And while the phrase as it appears in the work report does mention “major countries,” it is not linked to relations with the United States or the classic problem produced by past power transitions, as is sometimes the case in other official sources.^{xxiv}

Regarding the two other new issues described above, the brief military section of the work report explicitly states the need to “...attach great importance to maritime, space, and cyberspace security.” The reference to cyberspace is unprecedented in a work report, and only occurs once in the 18th Party Congress report; likewise the mention of space in the context of military security. The reference in the report to maritime security occurs in only one other past report, the 14th Party Congress Work Report of 1992.^{xxv} However, the 18th Party Congress Work Report places greater stress on China’s maritime interests than previous work reports, and explicitly refers to the need to “...build China into a maritime power” in another portion of the report.^{xxvi}

This greater emphasis is significant as an indicator of the rising importance of maritime issues in China’s development. That said, the reference to building maritime power occurs in neither the foreign affairs section nor the military modernization section of the report, but rather within a short section devoted to the proper development of China’s geographical spaces. There is no explicit mention of China’s policies or approach to its maritime territorial claims.

Hence, while placing greater stress on new security issues, including maritime security, the work report provides no basis for concluding that Beijing has adopted or intends to adopt a new, more aggressive strategy for dealing with its maritime disputes; certainly not beyond anything implied by the longstanding, general statements of resolve to defend Chinese sovereignty contained in all recent work reports.

Foreign Policy Personnel

As stated above, it is too early to determine exactly who will exercise day-to-day control over the foreign affairs apparatus or “system” (*xitong*) of the Chinese government, since those positions will only be revealed next spring, at the National People’s Congress (NPC) meeting. Nonetheless, the backgrounds, apparent interests, and expertise of the new party leadership can provide some hints regarding the likely leaders, and perhaps even the general direction, of China’s foreign policy during the period of the 18th CCP Central Committee.

Within the new Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC), no individual has served within the Chinese foreign policy apparatus. However, three members, Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, and Wang Qishan, have visited several foreign countries and have some experience dealing with foreign leaders.^{xxvii} The absence of direct foreign policy expertise at the highest level of the CCP leadership is unremarkable, however. No PBSC member has displayed such a close linkage since Zhou Enlai exercised direct control over PRC foreign policy in the early seventies.

The most of the current PBSC membership is affiliated with the central and provincial party structures. That said, as in the past, the CCP G-S exercises ultimate authority over foreign as well as overseas security policy, as reflected in his leadership of the three leading small groups responsible for foreign policy-related issues—the National Security Leading Small Group, the Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group, and the Taiwan Affairs Leading Small Group—as well as his chairmanship of the Central Military Commission, the leading party body in charge of military affairs. The current general-secretary, Xi Jinping, is also reportedly head of the recently formed Maritime Issues Leading Small Group.^{xxviii}

Almost nothing is known of Xi’s personal views toward foreign policy. Although he has never served in the foreign policy apparatus, he has spent a notable amount of time overseas. He lived in the United States in 1985 and has visited several other countries, affording him direct experience with the outside world and perhaps the attitudes of at least some foreigners (and especially Americans) toward China. The few remarks he has made on foreign policy issues, including relations with the United States, have reflected the official PRC position in almost all respects. Xi’s likely supervision of the largely status quo-oriented 18th Party Congress Work Report further reinforces this conclusion. The fact that he served as provincial leader in Fujian and Zhejiang and party head in Shanghai, areas known as major drivers of outward-oriented, market-led reform, might suggest that Xi will support closer economic ties with the outside world.^{xxix} But such thinking is purely speculative.

The next level of party leaders (i.e., politburo members) also contains no individuals with direct experience in the foreign policy apparatus. However, as with the PBSC, a few individuals (Zhang Gaoli, Wang Huning, and Liu Yandong) have served in economic or foreign trade-oriented posts and/or had experience with the outside world that probably provides them with some awareness of foreign policy and foreign trade-related issues. In particular, Wang Huning, a PB member with notable experience overseas (especially in the United States) and an academic background in international issues, is rumored to have a chance of being named the senior government official (at the Vice Premier or State Councilor level) in charge of overseeing the foreign policy apparatus. If Wang is selected for that post, it will mark the first time since 2002 that a PB member has overseen foreign relations.^{xxx} However, other, less senior party officials, such as the current Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, are also rumored to be candidates for the position.

At the Central Committee (CC) level, several members have direct experience in foreign trade-related areas, and within the foreign policy apparatus. The most notable are Wang Yi, Wang Guangya, Yang Jiechi, Zhang Zhijun, and Zhang Yesui (an alternate CC member). One other member, Wang Jiarui, is currently the head of the CCP CC International Department and has much experience working with North Korea. As noted above, Yang is a possible candidate for the senior government post that oversees foreign affairs, while Zhang Zhijun (currently vice foreign minister) is rumored to be the leading candidate for Foreign Minister, although Wang Yi and Wang Guangya are also apparently in the running.

None of these individuals are known to be proponents of any particular foreign policy viewpoint. But if Wang Huning, the sole PB member in this cohort of leaders, is selected to become the senior official in charge of foreign affairs, it could very likely indicate an effort by the government to increase the political clout of the foreign affairs apparatus within the Chinese decision making system. Many outside observers, including the author, believe that such a development is needed to strengthen central civilian coordination and control over China's foreign relations, both of which have been lacking in recent years. However, none of this will become clearer until well after the NPC concludes next spring.

Concluding Remarks

A party work report rarely, if ever, provides radically new or detailed information on any policy, especially not foreign policy. The above examination of the foreign policy-related personnel and policy events of the 18th Party Congress suggests strong continuity with the recent past. Uncertainties remain about Beijing's stance toward recent, highly publicized foreign policy developments, such as China's greater assertiveness with regard to maritime disputes, its future implementation of security policies in space and cyberspace, and its efforts to promote a new type of great power relations. At most, the 18th Party Congress Work Report merely seems to confirm Beijing's growing focus on and concern toward both maritime issues (broadly defined) and the phenomenon of "neo-interventionism" in international politics, while perceiving the problems of space and cyberspace security as sufficiently important to merit a mention.

These issues aside, the 18th Party Congress Work Report overall provides few if any hints that Chinese foreign policy in the immediate future will cast aside the 30-plus year emphasis on peaceful development and generally cooperative relations with the outside world to challenge the existing international order. The report's references to opposing hegemonism and power politics are entirely unremarkable, while the new reference to "neo-interventionism" occurs without any real explanation beyond a possible cautious association with efforts to undermine "legitimate" governments. If anything, the work report suggests an increased Chinese desire to find new ways to avoid inter-state conflict associated with its rising power, as reflected in the mention of the need for a new type of great power relations. It also confirms, unsurprisingly, that China's attention remains heavily focused on domestic issues. The only hint of future trouble arising from Chinese foreign policy is, as always, associated with sovereignty issues. Any evidence of truly new and disruptive trends in Chinese foreign policy must be sought elsewhere.

Notes

ⁱ The 18th Party Congress Work Report states: "The global trends toward multipolarity and economic globalization are deepening. Cultural diversity is increasing, and an information society is fast emerging. New breakthroughs are in the making in the scientific and technological revolution. Global cooperation is expanding at multiple levels and on all fronts." The 17th Party Congress Work Report contained virtually identical language: "The progress toward a multipolar world is irreversible, economic globalization is developing in depth, and the scientific and technological revolution is gathering momentum. Global and regional cooperation is in full swing, and countries are increasingly interdependent. The international balance of power is changing in favor of the maintenance of world peace, and the overall international situation is stable." See "Full text of Hu Jintao's report at 18th Party Congress," Xinhua, November 17, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm.

ⁱⁱ "Emerging market economies and developing countries are gaining in overall strength, tipping the balance of international forces in favor of the maintenance of world peace. All this has created more favorable conditions for ensuring general stability in the international environment." See "Full text of Hu Jintao's report at 18th Party Congress," Xinhua, November 17, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm.

ⁱⁱⁱ The 16th Party Congress Work Report states, "Peace and development remain the themes of our era. To preserve peace and promote development bears on the well-being of all nations and represents the common aspirations of all peoples. It is an irresistible trend of history. The growing trends toward world multipolarization and economic globalization have brought with them opportunities and favorable conditions for world peace and development. A new world war is unlikely in the foreseeable future. It is realistic to bring about a fairly long period of peace in the world and a favorable climate in areas around China." See "Full text of Jiang Zemin's report at 16th Party Congress," china.org.cn, November 17, 2002, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/49007.htm>.

The 15th Party Congress Work Report states, "Relations between the big powers are undergoing major and profound adjustments. Regional and intercontinental organizations of cooperation are active as never before. The overall strength of the great number of developing countries is growing. The development of the trend toward multipolarity contributes to world peace, stability and prosperity. The call of the people of all countries for treating each other on an equal footing and living together in amity is becoming louder and louder. It has become the mainstream of the times to desire peace, seek cooperation and promote development. The factors safeguarding world peace are gaining strength. For a fairly long period of time to come, it will be possible to avert a new world war and secure a favorable, peaceful international environment and maintain good relations with our surrounding countries." See "Jiang Zemin's report at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China," Federation of American Scientists, September 12, 1997, <http://www.fas.org/news/china/1997/970912-prc.htm>.

The 14th Party Congress Work Report states, “The world today is in a historical period of great change. The bipolar structure has come to an end, forces are disintegrating and their elements are being realigned and the world is moving in the direction of multipolarization. The formation of a new structure will be a long and complex process. For a long time to come, it will be possible to secure a peaceful international environment and avert a new world war.” See “Full text of Jiang Zemin’s report at 14th Party Congress,” a Google-cache copy from *Beijing Review*, October 26, 1992, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://www.bjreview.com.cn/document/txt/2011-03/29/content_363504.htm.

^{iv} The 16th Party Congress Work Report states, “However, the old international political and economic order, which is unfair and irrational, has yet to be changed fundamentally. Uncertainties affecting peace and development are on the rise. The elements of traditional and non-traditional threats to security are intertwined, and the scourge of terrorism is more acutely felt. Hegemonism and power politics have new manifestations. Local conflicts triggered by ethnic or religious contradictions and border or territorial disputes have cropped up from time to time. The North-South gap is widening. The world is far from being tranquil and mankind is faced with many grave challenges.” See “Full text of Jiang Zemin’s report at 16th Party Congress,” china.org.cn, November 17, 2002, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/49007.htm>.

The 15th Party Congress Work Report states, “However, the cold war mentality still exists, and hegemonism and power politics continue to be the main source of threat to world peace and stability. Expanding military blocs and strengthening military alliances will not be conducive to safeguarding peace and security. The unjust and irrational old international economic order is still harming the interests of developing countries, and the gap between the rich and poor countries is widening. It is still serious that ‘human rights’ and other issues are used to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. Local conflicts due to ethnic, religious and territorial factors crop up from time to time. The world is not yet tranquil.” See “Jiang Zemin’s report at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China,” Federation of American Scientists, September 12, 1997, <http://www.fas.org/news/china/1997/970912-prc.htm>.

The 14th Party Congress Work Report states, “At the same time, it should be pointed out that the current international situation remains turbulent. Contradictions everywhere are deepening, and in quite a few countries and regions ethnic contradictions, territorial disputes and religious conflicts have sharpened and have even led to bloodshed and local war. International economic competition has become increasingly intense. The economies of many developing countries have deteriorated even more, and the gap between North and South has further widened.” See “Full text of Jiang Zemin’s report at 14th Party Congress,” A Google-cache copy from *Beijing Review*, October 26, 1992, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://www.bjreview.com.cn/document/txt/2011-03/29/content_363504.htm.

^v The 18th Party Congress Work Report states, “There are signs of increasing hegemonism, power politics and neo-interventionism, and local turmoil keeps cropping up.” The report also cites global terrorism as a negative force. An earlier work report also referred to religious and ethnic conflict as a negative aspect of state behavior. See the 16th Party Congress Work Report: “Local conflicts triggered by ethnic or religious contradictions and border or territorial disputes have cropped up from time to time.”

^{vi} For example, see the work reports of the 14th and 15th party congresses: “Jiang Zemin’s report at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China,” Federation of American Scientists, September 12, 1997, <http://www.fas.org/news/china/1997/970912-prc.htm>; and “Full text of Jiang Zemin’s report at 14th Party Congress,” A Google-cache copy from *Beijing Review*, October 26, 1992, http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:http://www.bjreview.com.cn/document/txt/2011-03/29/content_363504.htm.

^{vii} See Cui Tiankai, Pang Hanzhao, “China-US Relations in China’s overall diplomacy in the new era—on China and US working together to build a new-type relationship between major countries,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, July 20, 2012, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t953682.htm>; and an interview with Ambassador Zhang Yesui by Wen Xian, “Building China-US cooperative partnership serves the interests of both countries,” Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the United States of America, October 16, 2012, <http://us.china-embassy.org/eng/dszl/dshd/t979261.htm>.

^{viii} See the 16th Party Congress Work Report: “Local conflicts triggered by ethnic or religious contradictions and border or territorial disputes have cropped up from time to time.” The 18th Party Congress Work Report also cites global terrorism as a negative force, a phenomenon obviously not rooted in the developing world.

^{ix} The 18th Party Congress Work Report states, “On the other hand, the world is still far from being peaceful. The global financial crisis is producing a far-reaching impact on the world. World economic growth is overshadowed by growing factors of instability and uncertainty, and imbalance in global development has widened.”

^x “We should pursue development through opening up and cooperation to benefit all. We should develop ourselves by securing a peaceful international environment and uphold and promote world peace through our own development. We should expand common interests with all others and work to build a harmonious world of enduring peace and common prosperity.” These themes are similar to those of past work reports since the eighties.

^{xi} See “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 18th Party Congress,” Xinhua, November 17, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm.

^{xii} Previous reports focus around the theme of “support[ing] overseas Chinese [and] returned overseas Chinese and their families in endorsing and participating in China’s modernization endeavors.” See “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 18th Party Congress,” Xinhua, November 17, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm. See also, “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 17th Party Congress,” Xinhua, October 24, 2007, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/24/content_6938749.htm; and “Full Text of Jiang Zemin’s Report at 16th Party Congress,” china.org.cn, November 17, 2002, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/49007.htm>.

^{xiii} See “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 18th Party Congress,” Xinhua, November 17, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm.

^{xiv} The 17th Party Congress Work Report states, “the Chinese government and people will always hold high the banner of peace, development and cooperation, pursue an independent foreign policy of peace, safeguard China’s interests in terms of sovereignty, security and development, and uphold its foreign policy purposes of maintaining world peace and promoting common development;” and “Emancipating the mind is a magic instrument for developing socialism with Chinese characteristics, reform and opening up provide a strong driving force for developing it, and scientific development and social harmony are basic requirements for developing it.”

The 16th Party Congress Work Report states, “No matter how the international situation changes, we will, as always, pursue the independent foreign policy of peace;” and “Persevere in reform and opening up and keep improving the socialist market economy. Reform and opening up are ways to make China powerful. We must press ahead with the reform in all areas resolutely.”

The 15th Party Congress Work Report states, “We should adhere to Deng Xiaoping’s thinking on diplomatic work and firmly pursue an independent foreign policy of peace;” and “The reform and opening up have brought about favorable structural conditions for the modernization drive, created broad market demands and sources of funds, and given fuller play to the new creativity of the people in their hundreds of millions.”

The 14th Party Congress Work Report states, “We must adhere to an independent foreign policy of peace and try to create a favorable international environment for our modernization drive. It is essential for us to open to the outside world;” and “He [Deng Xiaoping] urged us to further emancipate our minds, to be more daring in reform and opening up, to quicken the pace of economic development and not to lose any favorable opportunity.”

^{xv} See “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 18th Party Congress,” Xinhua, November 17, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm; and “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 17th Party Congress,” Xinhua, October 24, 2007, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/24/content_6938749.htm.

^{xvi} “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 18th Party Congress,” Xinhua, November 17, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm.

^{xvii} For example, the 15th Party Congress Work Report states: “No country should interfere in the internal affairs of another country under any pretext, still less bully the weak and invade or subvert other countries.” See “Jiang Zemin’s report at the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of China,” Federation of American Scientists, September 12, 1997, <http://www.fas.org/news/china/1997/970912-prc.htm>.

^{xviii} See Michael Swaine, “Chinese views of the Syrian conflict,” for a discussion of China’s changing views on this topic: “Chinese views of the Syrian conflict,” *China Leadership Monitor*, 2012, No. 39, <http://media.hoover.org/sites/default/files/documents/CLM39MS.pdf>.

^{xix} “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 18th Party Congress,” Xinhua, November 17, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/special/18cpcnc/2012-11/17/c_131981259.htm.

^{xx} The author is indebted to former Ambassador Stapleton Roy for pointing this out in a private conversation.

^{xxi} Ibid.

^{xxii} For a discussion on Beijing’s increasing assertiveness, see Michael Swaine, “China’s assertive behavior—part four: The role of the military in foreign crises,” *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 37, <http://www.hoover.org/publications/china-leadership-monitor/article/116016>; “China’s assertive behavior—part three: The role of the military in foreign policy,” *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 36, <http://www.hoover.org/publications/china-leadership-monitor/article/104181>; “China’s assertive behavior—part two: The maritime periphery,” *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 35, <http://www.hoover.org/publications/china-leadership-monitor/article/93591>; and “China’s assertive behavior—part one: On ‘core interests,’” *China Leadership Monitor*, No. 34, <http://www.hoover.org/publications/china-leadership-monitor/article/67966>. For a discussion on China’s greater involvement in new fields that combine foreign and defense policy elements, see Michael Swaine, “America’s challenge: engaging a rising China in the twenty-first century,” (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012), pages 154-156, 176-182. For sources discussing “a new type of great power relationship,” see 王缉思, “破解大国冲突的历史宿命—关于中美发展新型大国关系的思考,” unpublished, 2012; and Cui Tiankai, Pang Hanzhao, “China-US relations in China’s overall diplomacy in the new era—on China and US working together to build a new-type relationship between major countries,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, July 20, 2012, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t953682.htm>.

^{xxiii} Although the same foreign affairs section also refers to the need for countries to “... establish a new type of global development partnership that is more equitable and balanced,” this phrase appears to refer to economic relations among all states, large and small.

^{xxiv} See 钟声, “相互尊重 互利共赢,” *China Daily*, November 20, 2012, <http://zj.people.com.cn/GB/n/2012/1120/c186982-17743448.html>; and 钟声, “合作理应是中美关系发展主流,” *People’s Daily* in CSSN, October 24, 2012, <http://www.cssn.cn/news/576791.htm>.

^{xxv} The 14th Party Congress Work Report charges the Chinese military to “... be ready to perform even better the sacred mission of defending China’s interests, its sovereignty over its territory, territorial waters and air space, and its maritime rights and of safeguarding the unity and security of the motherland.”

^{xxvi} While the 17th and 16th Party Congress Work Reports contain a single reference each to the need to develop marine industries, the full phrase used in the current work report is: “We should enhance our capacity for exploiting marine resources, develop the marine economy, protect the marine ecological environment, resolutely safeguard China’s maritime rights and interests, and build China into a maritime power.”

^{xxvii} Wang Qishan is particularly notable because he has served since 2009 as the head of the Chinese delegation during the US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue.

^{xxviii} See “Fresh South China Sea dispute,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 05, 2012, <http://www.smh.com.au/world/fresh-south-china-sea-dispute-20121205-2aupd.html#ixzz2EAC3UT00>.

^{xxix} See Elizabeth Yuan, “Xi Jinping: From ‘sent-down youth’ to China’s top,” CNN, November 09, 2012, <http://www.cnn.com/2012/11/07/world/asia/china-xi-jinping-profile/index.html>.

^{xxx} Qian Qichen was the Foreign Minister of China from April 1988 to March 1998 and then Vice Premier from 1993 until 2003 with responsibility for overseeing foreign affairs. He served on the 14th and 15th politburos.