

Chinese Views on the U.S. National Security and National Defense Strategies

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The Trump administration's recent U.S. National Security and National Defense Strategies have drawn strong criticisms from the Chinese and increased tensions in the U.S.-China relationship. Both authoritative and non-authoritative sources repeatedly, and often bluntly, argue that the two documents' negative statements toward China reflect the United States' hostile "Cold War mentality" and ignore Beijing's supposedly cooperative, win-win approach and peaceful intentions. Often propagandistic, Chinese sources also point out the inconsistent, contradictory, and hypocritical contents of the documents. Despite such criticisms, many Chinese sources express hope for U.S.-China cooperation to avoid future conflict and address common global challenges.

In December 2017 and January 2018, the executive branch of the United States Government published two important documents that purport to describe the main features and rationale for America's overall security stance toward the world: the National Security Strategy (NSS) and the Summary of the National Defense Strategy (NDS), respectively.¹ The former is designed to provide the basis for developing a common view across the government of the United States' strategic environment and key global interests, goals, and objectives essential to its security. The latter, derived from the NSS, is intended to focus on: defining and prioritizing the specific threats confronting the United States; delineating a national military strategy intended to meet those threats; and providing a description of the specific goals, concepts, and resources necessary for the successful implementation of that strategy.²

These two documents deal extensively with China. Indeed, in the NSS, "China is mentioned 23 times, nearly twice as many times as it was in the Obama administration's last report."³

In both documents, Beijing is apparently seen as a near-existential threat to the United States and the West in general, engaged in a concerted effort to realize a "repressive vision of world order" by overthrowing the long-standing "free" vision of world order led by Washington. Unlike their predecessors, the strategies entirely "neglect to portray China as a potential contributor to regional or global stability and prosperity, or as a possible collaborator on common global and regional security (and other) problems."⁴ Instead, they "seek to pit the United States and other democracies against China in a zero-sum competition" for dominance.⁵

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These documents thus represent a fundamental shift in U.S. national security and defense priorities away from the post-9/11 focus on terrorism and other transnational threats that require cooperation with China—such as climate change, pandemics, and WMD proliferation—and toward a traditional emphasis on great power rivalry and the threat of a rising China.

Many observers point out that neither the NSS nor the NDS actually serves as an authoritative guide for concrete policies and behavior across the U.S. government. For many, they have become largely rhetorical exercises, marked, at least in the case of the NSS, by “grandiose ambitions and laundry lists of priorities.”⁶

Nonetheless, both documents unquestionably serve to set a tone and orientation for the executive and legislative branches in dealing with key foreign and defense policy concerns. As a consequence, they can reinforce existing biases or preferences within the U.S. government and policy community, thereby narrowing the range of options considered while squelching or ignoring criticisms of existing policies. In addition, there is little doubt that the NDS provides considerable impetus behind efforts to focus and reorient national resources in particular directions, in this instance investing less in capabilities intended to deal with non-state threats and more in conventional components of military force, such as warships and aircraft.

As one might expect, these documents have generated considerable, and almost uniformly critical, reactions from Chinese sources, with some interesting variations. As in past issues of the *Monitor*, this essay will describe and assess these Chinese views as comprehensively as possible using open sources. As usual, such views are divided into authoritative and non-authoritative categories to distinguish between official and unofficial perceptions, and to identify possible differences and lines of debate within both official and unofficial leadership and elite circles.⁷ The essay ends with a summary and assessment of the Chinese perspective and its implications for future U.S.-China relations.

Chinese Assessments and Observations

Authoritative Sources

As previous *CLM* essays have indicated, authoritative Chinese sources are often very cautious in directly criticizing U.S. foreign policy statements and actions. On occasion, however, they can be very blunt and unambiguous in expressing official opposition. This appears to be the case with the NSS and NDS. Both civilian and military sources, in addition to senior foreign policy figures, have largely condemned both documents using a variety of sometimes colorful language.

For example, they clearly imply that in depicting China as a predatory proponent of a repressive world order striving for regional and global dominance, the documents engage in “malicious slander” (恶意诋毁), deliberately distorting the facts regarding Beijing’s strategic intentions and generally playing up strategic competition between the two countries.⁸

Echoing past Chinese descriptions of negative U.S. assessments of China and the Asia security environment, authoritative sources describe the views contained in the NSS and NDS as further examples of a U.S. “Cold War mentality” in pursuit of a “zero-sum game.” Such views are characterized as being “fundamentally wrong.”⁹

Going further, in addressing the NDS, the spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense (MND) implies that its view of China as a military threat is an example of a “sick mentality” (病态的心理). He adds: “It does not matter whether people speculate on, sabotage, or contain [China]. All are a waste of time.”¹⁰

Rather naïvely, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs states:

I cannot help but wonder that as the world’s top military power with a military budget exceeding the total of the other top seven, how could the US still allege that it is threatened by others?¹¹

In a somewhat more analytical manner, several authoritative sources point out the apparent contradiction in U.S. policy toward China implied by the two U.S. strategy documents. For example, in reference to the NSS, the Chinese embassy in Washington states:

The U.S. effort to regard China as a rival contradict[s] its previous claim to develop a partnership with China, [and] goes against the interdependent nature of China-U.S. ties as well as the two countries’ efforts to cooperate in bilateral and international affairs.¹²

In unambiguously pushing back against the generally hostile viewpoint toward China contained in the NSS and NDS, several authoritative sources offer the standard defense of Chinese policies and intentions as peaceful, win-win-oriented, non-confrontational, and therefore highly beneficial to regional and global stability and growth. Perhaps the most representative example of this viewpoint is again provided in the rejoinder to the NSS contained in the above statement issued by the Chinese embassy in Washington:

China has always been committed and constructive in the pursuit of world peace, global development, and maintenance of the international order. We see a win-win strategy of “opening-up” in our relations with all nations. What China seeks in the world is global partnership, not global dominance. We pursue a vision of global governance featuring extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. China further stands for democracy in international relations, with the aim of building a new model of global affairs defined as a community with a shared future for mankind. In this spirit, China’s economic and diplomatic activities around the globe are broadly welcomed.¹³

Foreign Minister Wang Yi adds to this standard description of China's peaceful strategic intent by asserting that Beijing's commitment to peaceful development and win-win cooperation "is completely different from that of traditional powers and, as such, is commended and welcomed by a growing number of countries."¹⁴

The MND spokesperson was a little more pointed in his defense of Chinese views and policies, stating:

Facts will tell and justice will prevail. Unlike some countries with a hegemonic thinking, China has no intention of claiming hegemony or seeking hegemony—"seeking hegemony" is not a hat that you can put on China's head.¹⁵

Finally, in addition to such direct criticism of the outlook and views contained in the NSS and NDS, authoritative Chinese sources nonetheless also contain numerous conciliatory exhortations for the United States to abandon its hostile, confrontational stance toward China, acknowledge the common interests and challenges facing both countries, and work with Beijing to enhance Sino-American cooperation. Again, the PRC embassy in Washington provides the best example of this sentiment, stating:

China and the United States shoulder important responsibilities and have extensive common interests in upholding world peace and stability and promoting global development and prosperity. We hope that the United States can align itself with the trend of the world and the will of the people, and put the world and China-US relations into the perspective of cooperation. We hope the United States will join hands with China to uphold the sound and steady growth of China-US relations. This is the right choice that serves the interests of our two peoples, and the people of the world.¹⁶

Similar statements have been made by the Foreign Ministry spokesperson and the Chinese ambassador to the United States, Cui Tiankai.¹⁷

In response to the NDS, even the oft-contentious PLA expressed the need for continued, mutually beneficial relations between the U.S. and Chinese militaries:

We hope that the U.S. side *can meet China halfway*, [author's italics] grasp the momentum of the development of the relations between the countries and militaries, and make the military relations a stable factor in China-U.S. relations.¹⁸

Non-Authoritative Sources

It is no surprise that many non-authoritative sources echo most of the critical themes and arguments leveled by Chinese agencies and senior officials, including references to Washington's "Cold War" mentality and zero-sum game plan.¹⁹ It is also no surprise that such sources use similar or even more provocatively colorful language than authoritative

sources to characterize the U.S. views contained in the documents. For example, Zhong Sheng asserts:

The U.S. is suffering from a zero-sum game paranoia and is unable to extricate itself—the body has entered the 21st century, but its mind is still in the past.²⁰

And, in commenting on the NSS, the reliably critical *Global Times* opines that the U.S. administration is “blinded by arrogance” and “false beliefs.”²¹

Non-authoritative sources also offer explanations, albeit in much greater detail, of the supposed motivations behind Washington’s efforts in the NSS and NDS to treat China as an adversary and to engage in zero-sum thinking. In an oft-heard view, many attribute such views to the anxious U.S. desire to retain global dominance in an increasingly challenging environment where its relative power is declining. For example, Zhong Sheng states:

The sharp rise in the sense of a threat is not due to a fundamental change in the environment that the U.S. is facing, but because the U.S. itself has become anxious and lost confidence.²²

According to a *Global Times* editorial, such anxiety “reflects Washington’s reluctance to accept the rise of China . . . But it cannot keep China in check given its large size and colossal economic volume.” In criticizing “Washington’s indisputable insistence on its global hegemony” via threats to “dampen China-US trade and intensify military confrontation,” the editorial also challenges Trump to “just try it,” adding “We believe East Asian nations will not follow the US, nor are they ready to serve as its tool.”²³

In a less confrontational, and decidedly naïve and propagandistic manner, Zhong Sheng makes a likely indirect criticism of the NSS and NDS by asserting the failure of those who hype the “China threat” to “understand the essentials of mutual respect, fairness and justice, and win-win cooperation . . . [they] don’t want to see that people live in a world of lasting peace, common security, common prosperity, openness and inclusiveness, and cleanliness and beauty. They deliberately regard China’s measures to help other countries’ development and achieve win-win results as their own threats.”²⁴

Again echoing authoritative sources, some observers point to the supposedly hypocritical and contradictory stance of the Trump administration in presenting the adversarial views contained in the NSS and NDS. For example, Ma Shikun, a senior journalist at *People’s Daily*, writes that while the NSS claims that China (and Russia) are “revisionist states,” in fact, “given his reckless rewriting and ‘re-evaluation’ of the international status quo in his first year in office, Trump himself could more rightly be called a ‘revisionist.’”²⁵

Similarly, a *Global Times* editorial states, “It is the US that has recently become the biggest saboteur of international rules and challenger of free trade”²⁶

A Xinhua commentary also highlights the contradictory U.S. stance, stating that the NSS

Goes against [the] consensus reached by leaders of the two countries to develop bilateral relations and the reality in which both countries share common interests in many areas.²⁷

Several non-authoritative sources also present the supposed dangers that the NSS and NDS present to China. For example, Ding Gang, a senior editor at *People's Daily* and senior fellow with the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Renmin University of China, asserts that the NSS signifies an unprecedented U.S. stress on competition with China that “will also cause more developed countries to pay attention to competition with China and [this] will lead to difficulties in China’s rise.”²⁸

Similarly, another source states that because rivalry and competition will now dominate U.S. China policy, “China will likely fall victim to vehement US political strife. No one wants to be perceived as being weak on China.”²⁹

And in perhaps the most ominous assessment of the U.S. strategy documents, Zhang Baohui, a professor of political science at Lingnan University in Hong Kong, states that the NSS signifies that the supposed Xi-Trump partnership is now “dead” and that “the two countries are on a long-term collision course.”³⁰

As with authoritative sources, some non-authoritative observers predictably seek to rebut the depiction of China in the NSS and NDS as a predatory threat to the U.S.-led global order by extolling Beijing’s peaceful and beneficial nature and intentions. For example, a professor at the PLA Navy’s Dalian War College asserts:

China has upheld and will always uphold the principle of non-confrontation. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi elaborated on the concept of ‘new type of major-country relationship’, that is, non-conflict, non-confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation in a speech at Washington-based think tank Brookings Institution in 2013. . . . China has no intention of becoming a strategic competitor to any country, let alone the US. Nor has it taken any actions to do so.³¹

A few sources assert the unprecedented nature of this U.S. stance, at least since the advent of the Chinese reform era in the early ’80s. For example, Senior Colonel Liang Fang, a professor at the National Defense University of the People’s Liberation Army, said that “For the first time in history, the US is acknowledging the fact that China’s rapid rise is challenging its status as the world’s sole superpower.”³²

And one of the above-mentioned *Global Times* editorials states:

The White House has now adopted a different view toward US-China relations. For instance, previous administrations concentrated more on developing Sino-US collaboration, through which they expected to mollify

bilateral contradictions. The Trump government, on the contrary, may input more resources to rival and pressure China, in the hope that Beijing will seek cooperation with Washington on Washington's terms.³³

Yet, in contrast to the above views, the editorial also inexplicably states:

China doesn't need to fear a change of heart by the Trump administration toward China since it's no big deal. If US society can live with strained ties with China, so can China.³⁴

Fan Gaoyue, a well-known military scholar at the PLA Academy of Military Sciences, more precisely captures the apparent essence of the unprecedented U.S. shift. He writes:

Trump's NSS admits that the engagement strategy the U.S. has followed for 20 years has failed to integrate adversaries into the Western system but instead has helped them develop rapidly and challenge the Western system. Therefore the U.S. must discard its 'engagement strategy' for a 'competition strategy' and compete with and prevail over them in politics, economics, military affairs, and diplomacy. . . . With this guideline . . . [f]riction and confrontation will increase between the two countries and their relations will become more complicated and volatile.³⁵

As suggested above, many observers place this U.S. shift within the larger context of the overall power and policy dynamics influencing Sino-U.S. relations and reflected in the larger global order. For many observers, the U.S. shift marks its "return to traditional great power politics," which stands in contrast to China's support for "a new type of great power relations" marked by "no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect, and win-win cooperation."³⁶

Moreover, in this power rivalry, the U.S. is viewed as increasingly anxious, as noted above, and China as more confident. For example, for many observers, such as former Foreign Ministry Vice Minister He Yafei, this U.S. stance results from the perceived threat that a rising China poses to "[Washington's] absolute military advantage, its dominating currency system and its status as an economic and trading power." Among these features, He stresses in particular the supposed challenge felt by many Americans that China's "new development model" poses to the "core principles of the Washington Consensus," characterized by "privatization, superiority of the market and liberalization."³⁷

Despite such apparently contrasting approaches, however, He also asserts that "Beijing has no strategic intention to challenge or even replace Washington." He stresses instead that "cooperation is the only way ahead for [Beijing's] relations with the US," especially given the dominant trend of the times toward globalization and multipolarization.³⁸

Thus, despite the two documents' more pronounced tilt toward strategic competition with China, He believes that Washington has not yet fully adopted an adversarial stance. In his view, the U.S. has two options:

One is to maintain the existing global governing system and make appropriate adjustments via peaceful coexistence and competition. The other is to continue with its clichéd policies toward the rise of other major countries by means of repression and containment.³⁹

Other non-authoritative observers seem to place less stress on the U.S. driving the emerging security competition with China, focusing instead on the overall dynamics of the “realist” great power rivalry. For example, Shi Yinhong, director of American Studies at Renmin University in Beijing, states in response to the NDS, “It is clear that conflicts between China and the US are heading in the direction of becoming more strategic, more serious . . . and more comprehensive . . . While the US sees China and Russia as becoming increasingly assertive, China and Russia have much the same view of the US . . . so we’re seeing action, reaction and rising tension that is similar to [what happened] during the Cold War.”⁴⁰

Guo Xiaobing, deputy director and a research professor at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations Institute of Arms Control and Security Studies, similarly concludes that an emphasis on competition

Will lead to a vicious circle of an arms race, escalate tensions among big powers and result in traditional geopolitical conflicts . . . in this way, the US National Defense Strategy will become a self-fulfilling prophesy.⁴¹

Dingding Chen, a professor of international relations at Jinan University and non-resident fellow at the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin, also argues that the NDS signifies a new era of geopolitical competition. However, in marked contrast to most other Chinese observers, Professor Chen optimistically states:

Even geopolitical competition, if conducted in a peaceful and healthy way, can lead to a greater provision of regional public goods and stabilize the regional order. There are many positive structural and agential reasons to believe that even an intense U.S.-China competition will not lead to unstable outcomes in Asia. Nuclear balance between the two, economic interdependence, self-restraint on both sides, and rational leadership, can all play a role in ensuring competition does not lead to negative outcomes.⁴²

Teng Jianqun, the director of the Department for American Studies and a senior research fellow at CIIS, the Foreign Ministry’s think tank, similarly asserts:

Strategic competition is not necessarily a bad thing for China. It can force China to deepen reforms in various fields and accelerate China’s pace of indigenous innovation.⁴³

Finally, a particularly even-handed approach to the relationship is offered by Sun Zhe, the founding director of the Center for U.S.-China Relations at Tsinghua University in Beijing. He states:

Beijing and Washington should not make mistakes on fundamental issues when dealing with confrontational and sensitive subjects. Instead of brute force or simple national strength, the two countries should focus on how to win with wisdom and implement dialogue and cooperation mechanisms that can eliminate confrontation.⁴⁴

Conclusion

It is no surprise that both authoritative and non-authoritative Chinese views of the NSS and NDS are highly critical, given the adversarial nature of both documents. Much of this criticism simply repeats past characterizations of negative U.S. statements toward China as being reflective of a hostile “Cold War mentality” or a “zero-sum game plan.” As often occurs, a sharp contrast is drawn between this viewpoint and China’s cooperative, “win-win” approach, reflected in the Chinese interpretation of the so-called “new type of great power relations.” In this sense, the Chinese response to these new documents is unremarkable and to a large extent merely propagandistic, seeking to use any critical U.S. stance toward China’s rise as a means of extolling the preposterous notion that China, as an opponent of “great power politics,” is entirely unlike any other great power of the past.

That said, great powers certainly do not behave simply as power maximizing and contentious hegemonies in an anarchic world, as the theory of offensive realism would suggest. Culture, history, and leadership personalities can at the very least temper such impulses, often encouraging a level of policy pragmatism that seeks balance over dominance, and reassurance alongside deterrence. For China in the modern era, these factors, reinforced by the recent trend of globalization and the emergence of multiple power centers, have arguably contributed to a genuine belief among some Chinese that “win-win” outcomes and efforts to avoid hard power dominance are both necessary and possible, as long as nations respect one another’s “core interests.” This view does not make China unique in any way, but it does suggest a possible level of moderation and optimism that stands in sharp contrast to the decidedly pessimistic and one-sided thrust of the NSS and NDS. And in that sense, the Chinese critique of these documents is welcome, indeed necessary.

The Chinese are generally also correct in pointing out the internally contradictory and unprecedented nature of the NSS and NDS in proposing an invariably adversarial approach to China that clashes not only with the balanced views of previous U.S. administrations, but also with the occasionally more cooperative and moderate views toward China expressed by President Trump and some other U.S. government officials. This perhaps reflects the apparent chaos and inconsistency of the current administration’s China policy.

Some Chinese observers also, again correctly, note the somewhat hypocritical nature of the charge in both documents that China is a “revisionist” power seeking to overturn the

U.S.-led “free” world order. This categorical statement seems strange when one considers the Trump administration’s threat to undertake punitive economic measures against Beijing in the form of massive trade tariffs that would likely violate the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), a major pillar of the global free trade order. It has also given scant attention to promoting human rights, regarded by many as the core liberal aspect of the existing world order, and withdrawn from the Paris climate change agreement and the negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, both arguably components of the global order.⁴⁵ Indeed, President Trump routinely casts doubt on the entire concept of multilateral agreements and hence the notion that states benefit through collective action, another key feature of the global order.

While both types of Chinese sources adopt a decidedly critical stance toward the NSS and NDS, and point to the dangers both documents present for China, it is notable that many Chinese nonetheless express the continued hope that Washington will align itself more closely with the supposed global trend toward interdependence and cooperation, and thus work with Beijing to address common challenges. This conciliatory stance, evident in both civilian and military sources, most likely reflects the need for Chinese commentators to remain loyal to the basic guiding judgment of the Chinese Communist Party that the current era is one of peace and development, not great power contention and conflict. It also likely stems from the need for a still weak-but-rising China to avoid serious conflict with the “global hegemon.” Yet in some cases, it could also reflect a sincere recognition of the fact that many common global challenges require a significant level of Sino-U.S./Western cooperation.

As is often the case with other foreign policy issues, non-authoritative Chinese sources present a more detailed, nuanced, and somewhat heretical take on the origins, nature, and implications of the NSS and NDS. While many such sources predictably see the zero-sum, adversarial nature of the two documents as reflective of America’s anxiety over its declining relative power, others see them as a response to the supposed failure of the West to integrate China into the Western system, or as a reaction to the challenge that China’s supposed “new development model” poses to the so-called Washington Consensus. Most interestingly, in a decidedly unorthodox manner, some non-authoritative sources (and most often academic scholars of international relations) view the documents as indicative of a sharpening strategic competition between two great powers, thus implying that both sides are in fact at fault in creating the current situation. Equally notable, some non-authoritative sources even suggest that strategic competition could be beneficial to China in various ways, as long as it does not become too excessive.

So, despite the obvious propagandistic and at times sharp and predictably critical thrust of much of the Chinese commentary on the NSS and NDS, there is, in some instances, a level of balance and indeed moderation that some Western observers might find surprising. That said, there is little doubt that most authoritative and non-authoritative Chinese sources generally recognize and condemn the unprecedentedly hostile and adversarial stance basic to both documents.

Notes

¹ *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2017), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf> and *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America: Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2018), <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>.

² Although the reports are supposed to be produced on an annual and semi-annual basis, respectively, they are sometimes produced late or not at all.

³ Rob Schmitz quoted in Scott Neuman, “Trump’s National Security Strategy Angers China,” NPR, December 19, 2017, <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/12/19/571873355/trumps-national-security-strategy-angers-china>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Rebecca Friedman Lissner, “The National Security Strategy Is Not a Strategy,” *Foreign Affairs Snapshot*, December 19, 2017, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/usa/2017-12-19/national-security-strategy-not-strategy>.

⁷ Several types of PRC sources are considered authoritative in the sense of explicitly “speaking for the regime.” Authoritative statements include, in descending order of authority, PRC government and CCP statements, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) statements, MFA spokesperson statements, and MFA daily press briefings.

Many types of low-level commentary and signed articles appearing in a wide variety of PRC and Hong Kong media convey notable yet decidedly non-authoritative views. Such articles appear in the PRC government news service (Xinhua), CCP and PLA newspapers, the Hong Kong-based (and *People’s Daily*-owned) *Global Times* (环球时报), and many minor PRC and Hong Kong newspapers and academic publications. See Michael D. Swaine, “Chinese Views and Commentary on Periphery Diplomacy,” *China Leadership Monitor*, no. 44 (Summer 2014), p. 28.

Several types of usually homophonous, bylined articles appearing in *People’s Daily* are considered non-authoritative. A major example of this is articles using the byline “Zhong Sheng” (钟声). See Michael D. Swaine, “Chinese Views on the South China Sea Arbitration Case between the People’s Republic of China and the Philippines,” *China Leadership Monitor*, no. 51 (Fall 2016), p. 2.

⁸ “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference on December 19, 2017,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China (hereafter PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs), December 19, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1520766.shtml. Also see Charlotte Gao, “Trump’s National Security Strategy Faces Severe Backlash in China,” *The Diplomat*, December 20, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/12/trumps-national-security-strategy-faces-severe-backlash-in-china/>.

⁹ “Ren Guoqiang, Spokesman for the Ministry of National Defense, Made a Statement on the China-related Contents of the U.S. National Security Strategy” (国防部新闻发言人任国强就美《国家安全战略报告》涉华涉军内容发表谈话), Ministry of National Defense of the

People's Republic of China (hereafter PRC Ministry of National Defense), December 20, 2017, http://www.mod.gov.cn/info/2017-12/20/content_4800426.htm; “Remarks by the Spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in the United States regarding the China-related content in the U.S. National Defense Strategy,” Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, January 20, 2018, <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zmgxss/t1527313.htm>; Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference on January 22, 2018,” PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 22, 2018,

http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1527756.shtml. Also see “China blasts new US defense strategy,” PRC Ministry of National Defense, January 20, 2018, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2018-01/20/content_4802961.htm.

¹⁰ “Don't waste time on ‘China military threat’ hype: spokesman,” PRC Ministry of National Defense, January 25, 2018, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2018-01/25/content_4803290.htm.

¹¹ “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference on March 1, 2018,” PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 1, 2018, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1538767.shtml.

¹² “China committed to global peace, development, order: Chinese embassy in Washington,” Xinhua News Agency, December 19, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-12/19/c_136837249.htm and “A spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in the United States discusses the U.S. National Security Strategy and its contents on China” (中国驻美国使馆发言人关于美《国家安全战略报告》涉华内容的谈话), Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, December 19, 2017, <http://www.china-embassy.org/chn/zmgx/t1520592.htm>.

¹³ “Remarks by the Spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in the United States regarding the China-related content in the U.S. National Defense Strategy.”

¹⁴ “Foreign Minister Wang Yi Meets the Press,” PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 9, 2018, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjb_663304/wjbz_663308/2461_663310/t1540928.shtml.

¹⁵ “The Ministry of National Defense Ren Guoqiang's remarks on the U.S. publication of the 2018 National Defense Strategy” (国防部发言人任国强就美公布《2018 美国国防战略报告》答记者问), PRC Ministry of National Defense, January 20, 2018, http://www.mod.gov.cn/info/2018-01/20/content_4802879.htm.

¹⁶ “Remarks by the Spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in the United States regarding the China-related content in the U.S. National Defense Strategy.”

¹⁷ “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference on December 19, 2017”; “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Conference on January 22, 2018”; and “China does not seek global dominance—Chinese ambassador to the U.S.,” Xinhua News Agency, December 21, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-12/21/c_136842488.htm.

¹⁸ “Long-term interests crucial to China-U.S. military relations: spokesman,” PRC Ministry of National Defense, March 30, 2018, <http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2018->

03/30/content_4808315.htm. Also see “China urges US to be rational on Chinese military development,” PRC Ministry of National Defense, December 21, 2018, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/news/2017-12/21/content_4800436.htm.

¹⁹ James Griffiths and Serenitie Wang, “China says Trump’s new security policy shows ‘Cold War mentality,’” CNN, December 19, 2017, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/12/19/politics/china-trump-national-security-strategy-intl/index.html>; Kinling Lo, “Beijing hits back at US defense strategy and ‘cold war mindset,’” *South China Morning Post*, January 20, 2018, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2129828/beijing-hits-back-us-defence-strategy-and-cold-war>; and Teng Jianqun, “On the Trump Administration’s Core Strategic Shift” (论特朗普政府战略中心转移), China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), March 8, 2018, http://www.ciis.org.cn/chinese/2018-03/08/content_40245620.htm. Teng is the director of the Department for American Studies and a senior research fellow at CIIS.

²⁰ Zhong Sheng, “The Cold War mentality is comparable to the stubborn illness of ‘rougeness’” (冷战思维, 堪比“无赖”的完整 [钟声]), *People’s Daily*, February 6, 2018, <http://world.people.com.cn/n1/2018/0206/c1002-29807178.html>.

²¹ “US security strategy blinded by arrogance, false beliefs,” *Global Times*, December 19, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1080994.shtml>. A somewhat less bombastic criticism of American arrogance is presented in Li Haidong, “US security plan rebels against world order,” *Global Times*, December 24, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1081794.shtml>. Li is a professor with the Institute of International Relations at China Foreign Affairs University. Li states: “The architects of US diplomacy do not consider other nations’ viewpoints and are unwilling to talk with other countries on equal terms, making it apparent that Washington cannot stand the growing military and economic influence of China and Russia.”

²² Zhong Sheng, “Confident, grasp the key words of China’s future” (自信, 把握中国未来的关键词), *People’s Daily*, March 12, 2018, <http://opinion.people.com.cn/n1/2018/0312/c1003-29861349.html>.

²³ “US security strategy blinded by arrogance, false beliefs.”

²⁴ Zhong Sheng, “Demonstrating the vigor of China’s diplomacy in a new era” (彰显新时代中国外交浩荡之气), *People’s Daily*, March 9, 2018, http://opinion.china.com.cn/opinion_33_180433.html.

²⁵ Ma Shikun, “Trump needs a rational China policy,” *China Daily*, January 14, 2018, <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201801/13/WS5a59746ca3102c394518efc2.html>.

²⁶ “Hegemonic US accuses China of economic aggression,” *Global Times*, December 17, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1080745.shtml>. Also see Haidong, “US security plan rebels against world order.”

²⁷ “Commentary: Unwise for U.S. to label China competitor instead of partner,” Xinhua News Agency, December 19, 2017, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-12/20/c_136838153.htm.

²⁸ Ding Gang, “Why US strategy plan calls China a rival?,” *Global Times*, December 27, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1082307.shtml>.

²⁹ Zhao Minghao, “US politics likely to hurt China ties in 2018,” *Global Times*, January 14, 2018, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1084719.shtml>. Zhao is a senior research

fellow with the Charhar Institute and an adjunct fellow at the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Remin University of China.

³⁰ Griffiths and Wang, “China says Trump’s new security policy shows ‘Cold War mentality.’”

³¹ Xu Lyushan, “China is not a strategic competitor to US,” *China Daily*, January 29, 2018, <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201801/29/WS5a6e61c0a3106e7dcc1373b6.html>. For a similar view, see He Yafei, “Time for US to make right choice toward cooperation with China,” *China Military*, February 15, 2018, http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/view/2018-02/15/content_7946123.htm. He is the director of the Global Governance Research Center at the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Remin University of China, and former vice minister of the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

³² Zhang Zhihao, “US report called ‘poisonous’ to ties,” *China Daily*, December 22, 2017, <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201712/22/WS5a3c3ffea31008cf16da2bc2.html>. In addition, Teng Jianqun states that the NDS represents a strategic shift by the US from tackling global issues such as terrorism and climate change to focusing on buttressing American interests and influence. Also see Zhang Zhihao and Chen Weihua, “Military rebuts US report calling China a threat,” *China Daily*, January 22, 2018, <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201801/22/WS5a6520efa3106e7dcc135993.html>. Also see Chen Weihua, “US’ strategies poison the well for cooperation with China,” *China Daily*, February 9, 2018,

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201802/09/WS5a7cde55a3106e7dcc13babd.html>, and Guo Xiaobing, “New US defense strategy a zero-sum game,” *Global Times*, January 24, 2018, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1086388.shtml>. Chen is the deputy editor of the *China Daily USA*. Guo is deputy director and a research professor at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations Institute of Arms Control and Security Studies.

³³ “US security strategy blinded by arrogance, false beliefs.” A subsequent *Global Times* editorial asserts: “If the Trump administration turns China-US relations from the status quo to Cold War confrontation, international relations in this century will be fundamentally changed. See “Anxiety pushes US to turn hostile to China,” *Global Times*, January 21, 2018, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1085907.shtml>.

³⁴ “Anxiety pushes US to turn hostile to China.”

³⁵ Fan Gaoyue, “Trump’s National Security Strategy,” *China-US Focus*, February 2, 2018, <https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/trumps-national-security-strategy>. Fan is a guest professor at Sichuan University and a former Chief Specialist at PLA Academy of Military Science.

³⁶ Teng Jianqun, “Trump’s ‘America First’ National Security Strategy and the U.S.-China Contest,” China Institute of International Studies, January 18, 2018, http://www.ciis.org.cn/chinese/2018-01/18/content_40193244.htm. For a similar view, see “Commentary: Unwise for U.S. to label China competitor instead of partner.”

³⁷ He, “Time for US to make right choice toward cooperation with China.” Also see Teng, “Trump’s ‘America First’ National Security Strategy and the U.S.-China Contest.”

³⁸ He, “Time for US to make right choice toward cooperation with China.” For a similar observation of the contradiction between the narrowly competitive thrust of the NSS and the interconnected demands of “a globalized world,” see Li, “US security plan rebels against world order.”

³⁹ “Time for US to make right choice toward cooperation with China.” Li apparently believes that the mere “adjustments” in the global order called for by He Yafei might prove impossible. He states: “In fact, the world order established by the US is an outdated and exclusive alliance that is not constructive and comprehensive.”

⁴⁰ Lo, “Beijing hits back at US defense strategy and ‘cold war mindset.’” Also see Zha Daojiong, Pamela Kyle Crossley, Aaron L. Friedberg, Edward Friedman, Oriana Skylar Mastro, Philippe Le Corre, Xiao Kang, and John S. Van Oudenaren, “Trump’s National Security Strategy and China,” *ChinaFile*, December 19, 2017, <http://www.chinafile.com/conversation/trumps-national-security-strategy-and-china>. Zha, a professor of International Political Economy at Peking University, states: “The real competition between the two countries’ political and diplomatic establishments is how they manage the spillover effect from the bilateral race to third countries and regions of the world.”

⁴¹ “New US defense strategy a zero-sum game.”

⁴² Dingding Chen, “The Trump Administration’s National Security and Defense Strategies Reveal a Change in Mindset Toward China,” *The Diplomat*, January 26, 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/the-trump-administrations-national-security-and-national-defense-strategies-reveal-a-change-in-mindset-toward-china/>. For a similarly optimistic assessment, see “US’ national security strategy is still a work in progress: China Daily editorial,” *China Daily*, December 19, 2017, <http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201712/19/WS5a3833e3a3108bc8c67357f6.html>. The editorial nonetheless acknowledges, “we may be in for a bumpy ride.” (!)

⁴³ Teng “On the Trump administration’s core strategic shift” (论特朗普政府战略中心转移). For a similar view, see Cui Lei, “Healthy International Cooperation,” China Institute of International Studies, March 20, 2018, http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2018-03/20/content_40258797.htm. Cui is a research fellow at CIIS.

⁴⁴ Sun Zhe, “Sino-US conflicts should be resolved smartly,” *Global Times*, January 28, 2018, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1086917.shtml>.

⁴⁵ Erik Brattberg and Michael Kimmage, “Trump and the (Liberal) International Order,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 26, 2018, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2018/02/26/trump-and-liberal-international-order-pub-75659>.