Strategic Challenges in the Asia-Pacific Region

Three Waves of Five…& Some Trends Ahead

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With us now:

1. The attraction of terrorism to those disadvantaged and with little hope.

- An opportunity for identity; a means to act
- Enablers:
  - Socio-economic gaps
  - Transnational crime
  - Globalization (seamless internet effectiveness)
With us now:

2. The limiting effect of corruption, particularly within governments, throughout the region and the world.

- Pervasive
- Enervating
- Tolerated, too often by many
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3. Political polarization leading to extremist views...AND diminishing shared values.

- Interest→Identity→Values clashes
- Strategic alignments—major actors
  - PRC-Russian security cooperation
  - PRC-South Asian nations
  - Entire region positioning, given PRC economy
  - US presence, a security ctr-weight
4. Disrespect due to a lack of appreciation for cultural/racial/ethnic diversity.

- Rooted in intellectual, ethnic, racial, social, & psychological arrogance
- Fundamental to collaborative progress
- Ldr-to-ldr relationships “decide the day”
5. Extremes in educational opportunities.

- Deeds, not words
  - Availability
  - Quality
  - Access

- Why not main effort collaborative prioritization?
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1. Extremes in human security due to the growing have and have-not gaps the world over.

- Demographic profiles identify possible security threats
- Socio-economic trends are key
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2. Interruptions in information-technology networks that impact global security.

• Info-age *absolute* dependence on IT, especially in the economic and military dimensions.

• Are “degraded-mode” operations still an alternative?
  – F-22s
  – World financial systems
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3. Environmental effects physically impacting large portions of the region/world due to unchecked global warming.

- Fact: Global economic competition driving adverse environmental impacts
- Energy security gained using less environmentally threatening energy sources
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...on the horizon:

4. Over-extension of multinational and multilateral forums intended to foster collaboration on security-cooperation opportunities.

• UN simultaneously in crisis & demand
• Many international orgs face calls for reform (UN, WTO, IMF)
• Shaping potential of Asia-Pacific forums...impacts?
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5. Uncontrolled means of mass destruction and/or mass chaos.

- Unraveling global nonproliferation
- Nuclear wpns: security asset or liability?
- Shock event → Chaos, in info age
  - Dirty bomb, or atk on nuclear reactor
  - Low-tech tactics also show potential
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1. Conflict over scarce and valuable resources and/or disputed territory believed to contain such resources.

• For example, potable water in South Asia...or anywhere else
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2. Balancing country X’s demand for increased power and influence and the willingness of other major actors to accommodate this.

• PRC
• India
• Smaller countries on the rise (Vietnam)
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• “One in ten chance of human-to-human transmission in next ten yrs.”
• World health orgs not as confident
  – Not “if” but “when”
• What type, where, by whom, & how much prep is enough?
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4. Understanding, and managing, reactions to the perceived threat of information globalization to cultural identity.

• Pursued “inside out”
• Grounded in promise, not fear
• Transforming from power to coerce to power to aid
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5. Leaders without a vision that serves the common good…the harder right.

• How do we develop ldrs with such vision?
So What?

• If these are trends, how do we influence and shape them, to advantage? Or, mitigate those we cannot shape?

A couple final thoughts…
Final Thoughts

• Security challenges have always been complex, but perhaps the nature of the complexity today is shifting.

• Ways (problem analysis), toward solutions, require “centering” highly dynamic, diverse knowledge/people relationships and their impacts on organizational potential.

• Means must be adapted to applications in very different social & cultural frameworks.

• Ends sought → conditions v. endstates.