PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATIVE SECURITY IN EAST ASIA: FROM CHINESE PERSPECTIVES

Recommended Citation

Towards the end of the Cold War, relations among major powers in East Asia were in a deep freeze. Most of the countries in the region have been recovering from the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. Economic interdependence between countries has been developing in a fast pace, especially in the East Asia and Pacific region. This trend has been boosted by the major powers' policies to facilitate economic cooperation. As a result, economic interdependence and transnational issues such as pollution, greenhouse effect, drug trafficking, terrorism and so on, are transnational and are unable to be resolved through traditional military means. So common security of all countries in the region should be the objective of regional security cooperation. This is also the case of the regionalization of unresolved issues between the United States and the DPRK.

Furthermore, if the United States transfers TMD systems or technologies to Taiwan, this will give a wrong signal to the separatists on Taiwan. They will think if they declare Taiwan independence and the mainland takes military means, the United States will keep their promise of providing military support. This will force some countries to develop similar weapon systems and to increase their defense spending, which may lead to the arms competition in East Asia.

If the United States deploys TMD in East Asia or make the decision to deploy NMD, arms competition in the region will be aggravated. Some other countries will feel it necessary for them to develop similar weapon systems and to increase their defense spending, which may lead to the arms competition in East Asia. Some experts have warned that deploying TMD in East Asia will lead to the arms competition in the region.

Even though the United States has promised to consult with its allies before any deployment of TMD systems or technologies, there is no guarantee that the United States will carry out its promise. On the other hand, the United States also intends to maintain its traditional security cooperation with Japan on the basis of its military alliances with the countries in East Asia. The US-Japan security cooperation mechanism is the most important component of the US security cooperation with East Asia and the countries in the region are developing their arms forces too fast. Especially from 1991 to 1998, US arms sales to Taiwan had reached to 20 billion US dollar, which made Taiwan become the biggest arms recipient in the world. Those may lead to the arms competition in East Asia.

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