

# The Nautilus Institute Nuclear Strategy Project: Sun City Extended Study

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During the Nuclear Posture Review deliberations in 1994, STRATCOM published the Sun City Extended study. Emerging less than a year after completion of the original [Sun City](#) study from 1993, the new study contained important changes compared with its predecessor.

Although the declassified Sun City Extended is heavily redacted, the new study's perhaps most interesting feature is its comparatively extensive analysis of strike options against China. While its predecessor, the 1993 Sun City study, focussed on US-Russian nuclear relations and only mentioned China in passing, Sun City Extended dedicated a total of thirteen pages to examining various "China Scenarios." Two specific "potential US/China adversarial scenarios" were described in detail, one evolving from a conflict over North Korea and the other being a purely US-Chinese confrontation:

- 1st scenario depicts a US/NK/China excursion:
  - regional as opposed to global concern;
  - calls for an "adaptively planned response against NK;"
    - >>Not a full scale attack against China;
  - DPF (Deliberate Planning Force), NSNF (Non-Strategic Nuclear Force), or conventional air-launched/sea-launched cruise missiles.
- 2nd scenario focuses on a China/CONUS (Continental US) confrontation:
  - "implies a need for a major-attack response plan."

The increased focus on China was important for several reasons. First, China had been removed from the SIOP in 1982 to reflect its value as a potential partner against the Soviet Union. Instead, nuclear planning against China was confined to a small number of contingency options involving the strategic reserve force and non-strategic nuclear weapons. The Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) for Fiscal Year 1984, for example, had ordered the preparation of a contingency plan (CONPLAN) for the employment of nuclear weapons against China's power projection capabilities, but this requirement was dropped again in the FY85 JSCP.

As the Soviet threat faded away, China's status as a potential opponent to US interests in the East Asia region increased in the early- to mid-1990s. Coinciding with political antagonism and US intelligence reports about China's slow but steady modernization of long-range strategic nuclear forces, some military planners began arguing that it was necessary to begin to target China on a more ongoing and fundamental basis. During the 1994 Nuclear Posture Review, STRATCOM and some DOD officials unsuccessfully lobbied for increasing nuclear planning against China, and Sun City Extended appeared partially to be intended to support the case by identifying the need for a nuclear "major-

attack response plan" in a direct US-Chinese confrontation. It wasn't until 1998, following Presidential Decision Directive 60, that STRATCOM formally could bring China back into its mainstream nuclear planning.

A partly declassified copy of the Sun City Extended study is provided in the right hand bar. Due to its size (61 pages), the document has been split into six PDF-versions.

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### **Summary report**

["The Matrix of Deterrence"](#)

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

[nautilus@nautilus.org](mailto:nautilus@nautilus.org)