

Sea Power with Asian Characteristics: China, India, and the Proliferation Security Initiative

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Why have China and India remained aloof from the U.S.-led “Proliferation Security Initiative” (PSI), a loose international consortium aimed at interdicting shipments of weapons-related materiel, despite obvious interests in quelling proliferation? The reasons relate to domestic politics, disparate geographical and strategic worldviews, and cultural traditions—factors that fall squarely within the realm of Asian studies. How New Delhi and Beijing regard the PSI, then, offers an intriguing glimpse both into these complex societies and into the region’s future. Ultimately, whether Washington can rally enough support behind its weapons-interdiction efforts will depend on how well it understands the dynamics behind policymaking in maritime Asia.

Assembling a Counterproliferation Regime

The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) is a loose consortium of some eighty states dedicated to interdicting the transport of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), ballistic missiles, and the makings thereof—generally at sea, although the PSI’s founding document, its Statement of Interdiction Principles, also contemplates interdiction on shore or aloft.¹ Citing the initiative’s lack of any formal structure, administrative machinery, or membership procedures, its spokespeople seem never to tire of declaring that the initiative is “an activity, not an organization.”² The Statement of Interdiction Principles, issued in September 2003, commits members to

- take “effective measures, either alone or in concert with other states, for interdicting the transfer or transport of WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials to and from states and non-state actors of proliferation concern”;
- exchange information among themselves about suspected proliferation activity;
- work to strengthen national and international law to bolster jurisdiction over weapons-related shipments;

- “seriously consider” allowing fellow members to board vessels registered under their flags when these vessels are suspected of carrying weapons-related items; and
- take “appropriate actions” to interdict suspect cargoes at sea, ashore, and aloft.³

John Bolton, formerly one of the Bush administration’s leading experts on proliferation issues, personally headed the U.S. delegations to plenary-level PSI meetings and was an outspoken proponent of the initiative.⁴ The logic behind this informal counterproliferation initiative, which was founded in May 2003 in keeping with the administration’s predilection toward “coalitions of the willing,” seems to be that, over time, a sizable though not universal group of states can build a new norm against the transport of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, ballistic missiles, and related items. If so, this mode of counterproliferation could ultimately be codified in international law by means of a treaty or a UN Security Council resolution. And, indeed, Bolton and his successors have pushed—thus far with little success—to have language explicitly endorsing PSI operations incorporated into various international agreements and resolutions.

The PSI bears the characteristics of what international relations theorists call a “global prohibition regime.” Such regimes enjoin state and non-state actors from particular activities—in the case of the PSI, transportation of items destined for WMD programs.⁵ Ethan Nadelmann, in an article in the journal *International Organization*, argues that such regimes arise only when national and bilateral law-enforcement measures prove themselves inadequate to defeat criminal activities spanning national borders.⁶ Prohibition regimes, says Nadelmann, typically take shape in four stages: First, the activity is considered legitimate under certain conditions and within certain circumscribed groups. Second, it is redefined as a common problem. Third, proponents of forbidding the activity take to arguing publicly in favor of suppressing and outlawing it. Finally, the activity ends up as a subject of domestic criminal law and police enforcement activity throughout much of the world.

Arguments for forcibly quashing proliferation have become increasingly commonplace in recent years, as have concrete initiatives with just that aim in mind. Trafficking in proliferation-relevant goods and substances would take its place alongside such scourges as slavery and piracy, which were first stigmatized, then suppressed through great-power naval action, then finally banned outright. The efficacy of a prohibition regime, then, depends in large part on eliciting broad support, measured in the number of governments that assent to it. States with powerful naval and air forces clearly have much to offer, as do states with extensive intelligence apparatuses. But even states with sparse resources can play a significant part by supplying information about proscribed activity in their immediate environs.

Much of the proliferation-related activity that gave rise to the PSI has occurred in Asia, as evidenced by the cases of Iran and North Korea, as well as by the 2004 unraveling of the A. Q. Khan proliferation ring, a gray-market network that trafficked for decades in weapons-related items. This connection commends the PSI, a policy initiative, to students of Asian studies. Important regional powers such as India and China—states with real and growing capacity to police their neighborhoods—have remained aloof from the PSI, despite obvious interests in curbing proliferation, and despite openly avowing their support for the principles undergirding the initiative. Why? For reasons relating to domestic politics, disparate geographical and strategic worldviews, and cultural traditions—factors that fall squarely within the realm of Asian studies. How New Delhi and Beijing regard the PSI, then, offers an intriguing glimpse both into these complex societies and into the region's future.

The PSI, then, might furnish one vehicle by which a regime opposing shipments of WMD-related materiel becomes universal and embedded in law; but its success is far from foreordained. True, like-minded states can band together over time to generate new norms and, perhaps, international law. Steadfast opponents, though, can register opposition to emerging norms; a critical mass of states can prove indifferent, depriving new norms of any force; or events can intercede to render existing rules or norms moot. Such possibilities render the process of creating customary and treaty law an intrinsically messy one, casting doubt on the PSI and similar enterprises.

The Case of China

Consider China, whose central geographical position in East Asia, proximity to “problem states” such as North Korea, substantial intelligence, law-enforcement, military capabilities, and permanent membership on the UN Security Council would make it an ideal contributor to the Proliferation Security Initiative. Like India, China is a rising Asian diplomatic, economic, and military power that boasts considerable reserves of soft power.⁷ Each is a traditional continental power turning its attention seaward. Each understands that the chief threats to its security in recent centuries have emanated from the sea. And, intent on economic development, each thinks in distinctly geostrategic terms about its oceanic surroundings. Beijing and New Delhi have lodged similar complaints against the PSI, so reviewing Chinese attitudes toward counterproliferation could help illuminate India's outlook and options in this area.

The United States and its PSI partners have been unable to push a resolution through the UN Security Council authorizing this form of counterproliferation. Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) directed UN member states to take a range of measures to curtail proliferation, but it stopped

short of explicitly endorsing the PSI, owing in large part to Chinese objections.⁸ Indeed, China's ambassador to the United Nations, Wang Guangya 王光亚 (b. 1950), openly bragged of having language endorsing interdiction "kicked out" of the resolution.⁹ A Security Council resolution would have gone far toward alleviating China's ostensible legal concerns about the PSI, and it was within Beijing's power to make such a resolution a reality. Its effort to deny the initiative the UN imprimatur suggested that other motives were at work in Chinese diplomacy.

As a result, Bush administration spokespeople have been reduced to arguing that the "PSI and 1540 are complementary," rather than citing the resolution as unambiguous legal authority for PSI activities.¹⁰ Chinese accession to the initiative would bring the last of the permanent five members of the Security Council into the PSI's "core" group—presumably clearing the way for a resolution that would give the initiative the legal sustenance it needs to attract more universal support from the international community.¹¹

In effect, Beijing has endorsed the PSI's overarching goal of stemming weapons proliferation while remaining noncommittal about eventual Chinese participation in the initiative.¹² Why? Chinese spokespeople have voiced a variety of objections and concerns. For instance, a vice president of the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association offers a detailed critique of the initiative.¹³ His objections come down to the following: (1) the PSI is only weakly anchored in international law, owing to the lack of a treaty or Security Council resolution; (2) it would represent an "intrusion and encroachment" on state sovereignty were cargo to be intercepted in national waters or airspace; (3) the Bush administration wants to leave the "implementation and enforcement components" beyond UN oversight, even though it seemingly concedes the need for a supporting UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR); (4) the PSI provides no mechanism to compensate shipping firms for wrongful interdictions; and (5) the initiative's endeavors depend excessively on martial means.¹⁴

Beijing's criticisms of the PSI are explicable in terms of Chinese national interests and seem to be held sincerely, even if, in some respects, the criticisms are exaggerated. Like other PSI skeptics, Beijing seemingly objects less to what the PSI is today—an initiative under which participants agree to work together to intercept suspect shipments where national sovereignty is at its apex—than to what it could mutate into in the future.

Nevertheless, the PSI is only tenuously anchored in international law, as the Bush administration tacitly admitted when it attempted to incorporate a UN blessing for the initiative into UNSCR 1540. Additional legal authority *will* be necessary, especially in the rare case when PSI members want to interdict cargo in international waters or airspace but lack a boarding agreement with the flag state or are unable to elicit permission from the flag state on an ad hoc basis.¹⁵ The most recent incident took place in fall

2006, when the Security Council leveled sanctions against North Korea following Pyongyang's nuclear test. Among other things, UNSCR 1718, enacted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, encouraged UN members to stop and search cargo bound to or from North Korea to look for weapons-related materiel.¹⁶ Although the resolution neither endorsed nor even mentioned PSI operations vis-à-vis Pyongyang, this kind of explicit backing could be used by the initiative in its own endeavors—particularly in exceptional cases involving non-consensual boarding operations.

Because China has couched its protests against informal arrangements like the PSI in legal terms, observers tend to interpret the challenge of coaxing Beijing into the initiative as a matter of crafting legal arguments able to persuade Chinese leaders. Yet other, less obvious factors also help account for these leaders' ambivalence toward the PSI. Even though Beijing has premised its critique of the PSI primarily on the initiative's legal shortcomings, geopolitical imperatives figure just as prominently, if not more so, in Chinese diplomacy toward the PSI—just as such imperatives influence ongoing efforts to bring China into elements of the international nonproliferation regime.¹⁷

These imperatives find partial voice in *China's National Defense in 2004* and *China's National Defense in 2006*, Beijing's most detailed, most transparent public appraisals of the diplomatic, economic, and security outlook for East Asia and of China's strategies for coping with that environment.¹⁸ The framers of these two defense white papers are evidently of two minds about the international milieu. Although they strike a hopeful note regarding the prospects for peace and development in East Asia, they also prophesy that "struggles for strategic points, strategic resources and strategic dominance will crop up from time to time." Thus, the "military factor plays a greater role in international configuration and national security."¹⁹ To hedge against politico-military struggles in East Asia, says the 2004 defense white paper, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) must build forces capable of "winning both command of the sea and command of the air," while the 2006 document calls for "gradual extension" of the navy's "strategic depth for offshore defensive operations."²⁰

Official Chinese directives, then, contemplate command of the "commons," namely the seas, skies, and space that commerce and military power can traverse freely.²¹ Influential voices in Beijing currently espouse "absolute control" of China's contiguous seas.²² Although the defense white papers stop short of using such language, even their more muted advocacy of command of the sea connotes naval competition and conflict, suggesting that top Chinese leaders have endorsed a maritime build-up that would allow China to vie for control of East Asian littoral seas.

What has beckoned Beijing's gaze to the East Asian commons and, in particular, to East Asian waterways? Two imperatives are apparent. First,

China needs assured foreign supplies of raw materials, particularly oil and gas from Africa and the Middle East. Energy security seems to impel China's diplomatic and security deliberations.²³ Second, Beijing wants the capacity to control these waters during a conflict over Taiwan, and it is amassing the military wherewithal to do so. The 1996 crisis in the Taiwan Strait, when the Clinton administration deployed two aircraft-carrier battle groups to deter Chinese military action, prompted China to step up its military modernization effort. The PLA's inability to respond to the U.S. deployment, or even to detect the two battle groups in East Asian littoral waters, impressed upon Chinese leaders the need for forces able to hold American forces at bay during any future showdown. China's increasingly powerful fleet of submarines, capable of lurking in nearby waters to discourage U.S. warships from venturing near the island, is one potent means to that end.²⁴

Beijing is palpably reluctant to entrust the security of vital resources—and thus the prosperity on which the communist regime, its ideological appeal in steep decline, has staked its survival—to the uncertain goodwill of the United States. Chinese strategists fear that the United States, which has long used dominant naval power to assure free passage through Asian waters, might withdraw that international public good should Sino-American relations go sour. Hedging against a downturn in relations seems prudent to many in Beijing. A China that pursues an economically driven foreign and security policy thus will be forced to contend with the U.S. Navy.²⁵

Viewed in light of these geopolitical interests and concerns, the vehemence of China's objections to the PSI becomes intelligible. Beijing attaches overriding importance to economic development, which increasingly depends on the free flow of seagoing commerce through shipping lanes connecting Chinese seaports with Middle Eastern and African petroleum suppliers. These sea lanes pass through the Indian Ocean and the Strait of Malacca into the South, East China, and Yellow seas, riveting attention on waters that were once an afterthought for Chinese foreign-policy thinkers. No less a figure than President Hu Jintao has spoken of a "Malacca Dilemma" arising from China's energy needs.²⁶ Thus, asserting some control over the seas adjacent to its coastlines seems a prudent move for an increasingly powerful China. Assenting to a counterproliferation effort that seems to ratify U.S. naval preeminence in regional waters does not.

Beijing does, in fact, have a history of using weapons proliferation to balance nearby rivals or to accumulate geopolitical influence in key regions.²⁷ For example, China helped Pakistan develop a nuclear-weapons program and field long-range ballistic missiles.²⁸ In 1998, in the oil-rich Persian Gulf region, Beijing secretly supplied Saudi Arabia, the world's foremost oil exporter, with ballistic missiles.²⁹ China may have decided that continuing to supply weapons-related materiel to these states is no longer in its interest, or it may have merely given Western governments assur-

ances to this effect. But China should want to keep its options open if its strategic interests dictate further transfers of this type in the future.

North Korea represents a final element in Chinese leaders' geopolitical calculus. If Beijing acceded to the PSI, North Korea would find itself geographically enveloped by participants in the initiative, namely, Russia, Japan, and China. China in particular would be ideally positioned to thwart proliferation-related cargoes, given its proximity to sea lanes leading into the west-coast ports along the Korean Peninsula—and with its ability to deny overflight rights to North Korean aircraft that must transit through Chinese airspace to reach their destinations. Yet Beijing is reluctant to take any action that might destabilize Kim Jong-Il's regime in Pyongyang. Some sort of reunification process could well take place on the peninsula in the coming years. Chinese leaders would like to manage any such process, avoiding problems such as a massive influx of refugees across the Sino-Korean border and encouraging the emergence of a neutral (if not friendly) Korea from the unification process.³⁰ In all likelihood, these tangible, pressing concerns weigh more heavily on Chinese minds than the seemingly abstract dangers of proliferation.

For China, clearly, acceding to the PSI is more than a simple matter of restating and acting on its fealty to the principle of nonproliferation. If the PSI participants hope to woo Beijing into their ranks, they need to fashion an outreach that factors in China's geopolitical needs and concerns while conceding to China the leadership role it covets in East Asian waters. Whether even the most effective appeal would sway Beijing is unclear. What is possible, however, is that China might work with the PSI on a low-key, ad-hoc basis when mutual interests warrant. Over time, Beijing might come to view the initiative as an asset rather than a threat to national aspirations, much as it eventually warmed to the multilateral export control regimes after years of denouncing them.

The Case of India

Like China, India would make a valuable contributor to the Proliferation Security Initiative. India possesses real and growing capacity to police the Indian Ocean basin, and its leaders have made no secret of their desire to do so.³¹ Indian leaders propound the ideal of nonproliferation with at least the same vigor as their Chinese counterparts, and they are not so averse to maritime counterproliferation. Why? For one thing, precedent tends to set China against PSI-like activities, while the opposite is true in India. The 1993 controversy surrounding the *Yinhe* 银河, a Chinese merchant ship bound for Iran, has colored Beijing's perceptions of interdiction. U.S. intelligence officials adamantly—and wrongly—claimed that the freighter was carrying chemical-weapons precursors to Iran to support Tehran's weapons

programs. Chinese officials agreed to allow a Saudi–U.S. team to search the vessel, only to brand the Clinton administration a “self-styled world cop” when the inspection turned up no illicit substances or hardware.³² To this day, the consequences of *Yinhe*-like foul-ups involving Chinese-flagged ships are a mainstay of Chinese discourse on the PSI.³³

In contrast to the Chinese case, history would seem to justify counter-proliferation activity in Indian eyes. In June 1999, Indian Customs detained the North Korean freighter *Kuwolsan* after it put into the northwestern Indian seaport of Kandla to sell a cargo of sugar. Customs officers boarded the vessel after receiving a tip that it was carrying arms or ammunition to nearby Pakistan. After a scuffle with the *Kuwolsan*'s crew, the Indian agents discovered a complete assembly line for North Korean Scud ballistic missiles. Although Pakistan might not have been the destination for the shipment, it easily could have been—a fact that doubtless reminded India of the threat of seaborne proliferation through the Indian Ocean.³⁴ More recently, in October 2006, the Indian Coast Guard apprehended the North Korean freighter *MV Omrani-II*, which had strayed into Indian territorial waters, evidently after a propulsion failure. As it turned out, the ship was bound for Iran and contained no cargo. The crew offered the unconvincing explanation that their ship was steaming to the Islamic Republic on sea trials.³⁵ The mission of the *MV Omrani-II* remains a mystery at this writing, but the incident will likely add to New Delhi's worries about illicit trade on the high seas.

New Delhi has nonetheless demurred from the PSI, despite the initiative's goal of thwarting WMD proliferation in waters and skies of vital interest to India. Like Beijing, it cites the PSI's shaky legal basis and its independence of Security Council oversight and control. Why is this so, given that Indian officials outspokenly oppose the proliferation of weapons-related materiel?³⁶ First, the PSI has become a matter of contention among the Indian electorate. This situation represents a marked difference from China, where the leadership can manage public opinion in the interests of the ruling Communist Party, and even from the United States, where the PSI enjoys broad bipartisan support. Indeed, the Bush and Kerry campaigns engaged in a virtual bidding war over counterproliferation during the run-up to the 2004 presidential elections, with each candidate insisting that he would prosecute PSI activities more aggressively and effectively than his opponent. As a result, the initiative is likely to remain a fixture in American foreign and security policy for some time to come, notwithstanding the changeover of Congress from Republican to Democratic control in the 2006 elections and the coming change of presidential administrations in 2008.

In India, by contrast, the PSI has found its way into domestic politics, largely because it was unveiled while Atal Behari Vajpayee (b. 1924), head of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was serving as prime minister. Vaj-

payee voiced guarded support for the PSI, and that was enough to alienate potential supporters of the initiative among the BJP's left-leaning adversaries in the Congress Party and its coalition partners. The government of Manmohan Singh (b. 1932), which depends on support from parties on the left, has studiously avoided aligning India with the PSI—especially following reports that the U.S. side had attached a clause to the U.S.–Indian nuclear deal mandating Indian participation in the initiative.³⁷ No Indian prime minister would willingly be seen as doing the bidding of the United States, particularly in the George W. Bush years; and this apparent effort to strong-arm Indian leaders inflamed sentiments against the PSI. Even Vajpayee never ran the risk of agreeing to PSI participation, so a certain standoffishness on Singh's part is natural in light of domestic politics.

Second, and closely related, discussions of Indian entry into the PSI invoke memories of what Indians regard as maltreatment at the hands of individual governments and the international nonproliferation regime. Bad feelings linger, despite the George W. Bush administration's decision to lift sanctions imposed following the 1998 nuclear tests, to engage in regular consultation with New Delhi on security affairs, and to negotiate a deal providing for partial UN supervision over the Indian nuclear complex in exchange for a U.S. pledge to permit transfers of commercial nuclear technology. Over the years, moreover—largely because it has declined to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and has maintained a distinctive, stand-alone export-control system—India has been denied dual-use technology by the multilateral export control arrangements.³⁸ This situation persists despite good performance—perfect performance, say some officials—on the part of the Indian export control system.³⁹ Acquiescence in the PSI, the de facto enforcement arm of a system that has unjustly targeted India in the past, may represent a bridge too far for India's leadership.

Third, as in the case of China, geopolitical perspectives and the nation's bid for regional and global stature impinge on the question of PSI participation. At issue is not only whether illicit cargoes should be interrupted in the Indian Ocean region but also who should do the interrupting. Long-standing elite consensus in New Delhi holds that India should take the lead in policing the Indian Ocean, with extra-regional powers such as the United States relegated to a supporting role at most. And many Indian officials and pundits construe India's geographic environs—its natural sphere of influence—very broadly indeed, holding that India should be preeminent from the Bab el-Mandeb Strait (or even the Suez Canal) in the west to the Strait of Malacca in the east.⁴⁰

Ample evidence suggests that India has abstained from the PSI primarily because it fears that PSI participation would signify a formal alliance with the United States, something Indian governments have traditionally resisted.⁴¹ Worse, PSI participation might seem to show that New Delhi

had accepted the junior role in this alliance, with the Indian Navy in effect an appendage of the U.S. Navy—a South Asian equivalent to the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. Accepting subordinate status in its own geographic backyard, where successive governments have pursued something resembling America's Monroe Doctrine, would vitiate India's claim to regional preponderance.⁴² Despite its eagerness for closer defense ties with Washington, New Delhi might balk at such appearances.

Fourth, although it is unclear whether Indian Navy or Ministry of Defence officials think in such terms, it is at least plausible that the naval establishment worries that interdiction operations would work against the Indian Navy's maritime doctrine. Promulgated in 2004, the doctrine elaborates four primary missions for Indian naval forces: (1) sea-based deterrence, (2) economic and energy security, (3) forward presence, and (4) naval diplomacy.⁴³ How might PSI operations intersect with these missions, given what we know about the motives and threat perceptions of Indian policymakers and naval strategists? This mode of counterproliferation should have no impact on sea-based deterrence. By helping delouse commercial shipping traffic of weapons-related materiel, the PSI should actually help advance New Delhi's goal of economic and energy security, contributing to economic development and buttressing its claim to great-power status.

Forward presence and naval diplomacy are another matter. If India acceded to the PSI while concurrently maintaining its claim to regional predominance, it would have accepted the burden of policing vessels that fly the flags of neighboring Indian Ocean powers, not to mention East Asian powers such as China and Japan. If the Indian Navy came to be seen as wantonly stopping and searching merchant ships—and especially if it mishandled its visit-and-search efforts, as Washington did during the *Yinhe* incident—then perceptions of bullying could undercut regional goodwill and cooperation not only among India's neighbors in the Indian Ocean but also in Southeast Asia, where India has courted good relations in hopes of extending its influence eastward of Malacca.⁴⁴ Apparent highhandedness would tend to reduce the political capital New Delhi earned through tsunami relief and other naval-diplomatic enterprises, and it could induce India's neighbors to scale back their participation in combined training and exercises, impairing the forward-presence mission. Governments in the region would evince less willingness to follow India's lead in future security initiatives, harming New Delhi's overall foreign policy.

These intervening factors in New Delhi's strategic calculus help explain its visible ambivalence toward maritime counterproliferation. PSI participation clearly carries implications for India far beyond the realm of WMD proliferation. The benefits of combined counterproliferation simply might not justify the larger political costs.

National Interests Matter in Regime-Building

Numerous factors exist, then, to discourage India from participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative. What factors might prompt the Indian government to set aside its ambivalence, aligning itself with the initiative's purposes and activities? Vital security interests would clearly play a role. If Indian intelligence determined that weapons shipments were bound for Pakistan, for example, that situation would engage vital Indian interests, nudging its inclinations in favor of forceful counterproliferation measures. The *Kuwolsan* precedent would apply, with far graver implications for Indian national security. Or, some event underscoring the potential of sea-borne proliferation to damage Indian energy security or economic development—say, a case in which maritime proliferation demonstrably contributed to a terrorist act involving WMD—could furnish the necessary political impetus. Such an event would likely impel governments to shut down the maritime trade system until all shipping could be certified free of weapons; at a minimum they would impose cumbersome new inspections, raising costs and impeding trade worldwide.⁴⁵ The PSI would represent a low-cost way to reduce the chances of economic cataclysm.

If New Delhi came to see the PSI as a way to forge closer defense ties with Washington—without, at the same, time jeopardizing its claim to pre-eminence in the Indian Ocean region—its skepticism toward the PSI might also subside. If U.S. officials convincingly portrayed the PSI as a vehicle for combined training and exercises, Indian decision-makers would probably become biased in favor of PSI participation. This outcome would be especially likely if Washington clearly conveyed that it not only accepted but also welcomed Indian leadership in the Indian Ocean basin, that it hoped to see a durable order emerge in the region under Indian stewardship, and that it was prepared to accord New Delhi the lead role in policing South Asian waters and skies.

What is possible, of course, is that India will never openly choose to become a PSI participant.⁴⁶ Indian legal objections to the PSI will be difficult to answer, as the Bush administration seems ill inclined to relinquish authority over counterproliferation to the United Nations. At the same time, China, a veto-wielding member of the Security Council, will reject any resolution backing the PSI unless it grants the council some control over interdiction operations. Without UN sanction, the initiative will remain a tough sell with the Indian electorate and their leaders.

As in the case of China, however, India might collaborate with the initiative as its needs and interests warrant, while keeping its involvement in the U.S.-led initiative out of public view. It might also quietly agree to expand Indo-U.S. military-to-military endeavors to include tactics for combating the traffic in WMD-related materiel. An incremental, low-key step

of this sort would allow New Delhi to harvest many of the benefits it could expect to gain from the PSI while avoiding the semblance of subordinate status or a formal Indo–U.S. alliance. Such an outcome would leave the global prohibition regime against trafficking in WMD incomplete for the foreseeable future, and, if so, would leave Washington cold. But U.S. leaders ought to know better than to allow the best to become the enemy of the good.

Notes

The views presented in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily constitute the views of the U.S. Navy, the Department of Defense, or any other U.S. Government agency.

¹White House, “Proliferation Security Initiative: Statement of Interdiction Principles,” Fact Sheet, September 4, 2003, U.S. State Department Web site, <http://www.state.gov/t/us/rm/23801.htm> (accessed July 7, 2007). The United States worked with the following ten countries to draft the Statement: Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Only in late 2006 did the PSI finally disclose which states are “participants” (there are no “members”) in its counter-proliferation efforts.

²Robert G. Joseph, “Broadening and Deepening Our Proliferation Security Initiative Cooperation,” remarks in Warsaw, Poland, June 23, 2006, U.S. State Department Web site, <http://www.state.gov/t/us/rm/68269.htm> (accessed July 7, 2007).

³White House, “Statement of Interdiction Principles.”

⁴See, for example, Wade Boese, “The Proliferation Security Initiative: An Interview with John Bolton,” *Arms Control Today*, December 2003, http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003_12/PSI.asp (accessed March 17, 2004).

⁵Ethan A. Nadelmann, “Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society,” *International Organization* 44, no. 4 (1990): 479–526.

⁶*Ibid.*, 481.

⁷See my “‘Soft Power’ at Sea: Zheng He and China’s Maritime Diplomacy,” *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 28 (2006): 95–106. See also Vincent Wei-cheng Wang’s article on China’s security environment in this issue, p. 134, n. 4.

⁸UN Security Council Resolution 1540, April 28, 2004.

⁹Colum Lynch, “U.S. Urges Curb on Arms Traffic: U.N. Is Given Draft Resolution to Ban Transfers to Terrorists,” *Washington Post*, March 25, 2004. See also Bill Varner, “Pakistan Leads Opposition at UN to Terrorism Measure (Update 1),” Bloomberg.com, April 5, 2004.

¹⁰Andrew K. Semmel, “The U.S. Perspective on UN Security Council Resolution 1540,” remarks to the Asia–Pacific Nuclear Safeguards and Security Conference, Sydney, Australia, November 8, 2004, U.S. State Department Web site, <http://www.state.gov/t/isn/rls/rm/38256.htm> (accessed July 7, 2007).

¹¹Daniel H. Joyner, “The PSI and International Law,” *The Monitor: International Perspectives on Nonproliferation* 10, no. 1 (2004): 7–9.

¹²“China has always taken a responsible attitude toward international affairs, stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all kinds of WMD, including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and resolutely opposed the proliferation of

such weapons and their means of delivery,” declares Beijing’s most recent white paper on nonproliferation. “China does not support, encourage or assist any country to develop WMD and their means of delivery.” Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, *China’s Non-proliferation Policy and Measures*, December 3, 2003, Federation of American Scientists Web site, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/wpnp1203.html> (accessed July 19, 2007).

¹³Author discussions, Beijing, April 2004; and Ye Ru’an and Zhao Qinghai, “The PSI: Chinese Thinking and Concern,” *The Monitor: International Perspectives on Nonproliferation* 10, no. 1 (2004): 22–24. Statements from China’s Foreign Ministry closely parallel Ye’s indictment of the PSI. See, for example, Sun Yuting, “Ministry of Foreign Affairs Says That China Will Not Participate in ‘Proliferation Security Initiative,’” *Zhongguo Xinwen She*, October 26, 2004; and Liao Lei and Huang Fuhui, “Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Gives an Account of US Deputy Secretary of State John Bolton’s Visit to China,” Xinhua Domestic Service, February 17, 2004.

¹⁴For more on the *Yinhe* incident, see “Chemicals on Chinese Ship Usable for Arms, US Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 10, 1993; Chris Dobson, “‘Blockade’ Ship’s Cash Call,” *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), August 15, 1993; Lena H. Sun, “China: No Suspect Cargo Found; Official Says Iran-Bound Shipment Carried No Chemicals,” *Washington Post*, September 3, 1993; and Patrick E. Tyler, “China Says Saudis Found No Arms Cargo on Ship,” *New York Times*, September 3, 1993.

¹⁵The U.S. State Department has concluded boarding agreements with major flag states accounting for over half of the world’s total shipping by tonnage. These agreements do not grant automatic permission to board flag vessels, but they do expedite consideration of boarding requests. See U.S. State Department, “The United States and Panama Proliferation Security Initiative Ship Boarding Agreement,” May 12, 2004, U.S. State Department Web site, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2004/32414.htm> (accessed July 19, 2007).

¹⁶UN Security Council Resolution 1718, October 14, 2006; and UN Security Council, Department of Public Information, “Security Council Condemns Nuclear Test by Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1718,” October 14, 2006, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sc8853.doc.htm> (accessed July 11, 2007).

¹⁷Attempts to bring China into the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Nuclear Suppliers Group were sparked in part by concerns that Beijing had transferred missile parts and nuclear technology to Pakistan, its ally in South Asia. See “US Open to Dialogue with China on MTCR Related Sanctions,” TV interview of Under Secretary of State Lynn Davis regarding the imposition of sanctions against China for its violation of the Missile Technology Control Regime, *McNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, August 25, 1993, Federation of American Scientists Web site, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/mtcr/news/930826-300844.htm> (accessed July 19, 2007).

¹⁸Center for Naval Analyses, *Assessing China’s 2004 Defense White Paper: A Workshop Report* (Alexandria, VA: CNA Corporation, 2005), 1, 5.

¹⁹People’s Republic of China, *China’s National Defense in 2004* and *China’s National Defense in 2006*, Federation of American Scientists Web site, <http://fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/> (accessed July 19, 2007).

²⁰Ibid.

²¹For commentary on the importance of command of the commons, see Barry R. Posen, “Command of the Commons: The Military Foundation of U.S. Hegemony,” *International Security* 28, no. 1 (2003): 5–10.

²²Writing in *China Military Science* on the imperative to safeguard vital seagoing traffic, for instance, Maj. Gen. Jiang Shiliang, director of the Military Communications and Transportation Department of the PLA’s General Logistics Department, observed

that, "in modern times, efforts aimed at securing the absolute control of communications are turning with each passing day into an indispensable essential factor in ensuring the realization of national interests." Economic development depended on "the command of communications on the sea," which is "vital for the future and destiny of the nation." Jiang Shiliang, "The Command of Communications," *China Military Science* (Beijing), October 2, 2002, 106–14.

²³David Hale, "China's Growing Appetites," *National Interest* 76 (summer 2004): 137–47.

²⁴See, for instance, Lyle Goldstein and William Murray, "Undersea Dragons: China's Maturing Submarine Force," *International Security* 28, no. 4 (2004): 161–96. For a broad overview of the PLA's capabilities, see Keith Crane, Roger Cliff, Evan S. Medeiros, James C. Mulvenon, and William H. Overholt, *Modernizing China's Military: Opportunities and Constraints* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005), <http://www.rand.org/publications/MG/MG260-1/> (accessed July 7, 2007).

²⁵Center for Naval Analyses, *Assessing China's 2004 Defense*, 1, 5.

²⁶Hu Jintao, in Bill Gertz, "Chinese Dragon Awakens," *Washington Times*, June 26, 2005.

²⁷Jon Davis and Anupam Srivastava, *Export Controls in the People's Republic of China, 2005* (Athens: Center for International Trade and Security, University of Georgia, 2005), esp. 3–12.

²⁸Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense, "Proliferation: Threat and Response," January 2001, Federation of American Scientists Web site, <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/prolif00.pdf> (accessed July 19, 2007).

²⁹Federation of American Scientists, "Saudi Arabia, Intelligence Resource Program," <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/missile/saudi.htm> (accessed July 19, 2007).

³⁰See Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, "China, a Unified Korea, and Geopolitics," *Issues & Studies* 41, no. 2 (2005): 119–70.

³¹For one among many statements evidencing Indian officials' desire to maintain order throughout the region, see Rajat Pandit, "Blue-Water Navy Is the Aim," *Times of India*, November 1, 2006, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/263611.cms>.

³²Patrick E. Tyler, "No Chemicals aboard China Ship," *New York Times*, September 6, 1993.

³³Author discussions with Chinese officials and scholars, Beijing, April 13–14, 2004.

³⁴Joby Warrick, "On North Korean Freighter, a Hidden Missile Factory," *Washington Post*, August 14, 2003. See also Gurpreet Khurana, "Maritime Non-proliferation Initiatives: India's Bulwarks against Nuclear Terrorism?" in *Emerging Nuclear Proliferation Challenges*, ed. C. Uday Bhaskar and C. Raja Mohan (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2005), 101–18.

³⁵"Detained Iran-Bound North Korea Ship Baffles India," *Washington Post*, November 9, 2006.

³⁶Sultan Shahin, "India Digests Bush's Second Coming," *Asia Times Online*, November 6, 2004; Donald L. Berlin, "India in the Indian Ocean," *Naval War College Review* 59, no. 2 (2006): 59; and Stephen J. Blank, *Natural Allies? Regional Security in Asia and Prospects for Indo-American Strategic Cooperation* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, September 2005), 15.

³⁷The precise wording of the clause and the precise circumstances under which it was attached (and presumably discarded) remain unclear. A recent report from the Council on Foreign Relations, however, indicates that the idea of mandating Indian PSI participation is not a novel one in the United States. See Michael A. Levi and Charles D. Ferguson, *U.S.-Indian Nuclear Cooperation: A Strategy for Moving Forward* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2006), 19.

³⁸Stephen Blank upbraids the U.S. State Department for holding the overall Indo-U.S. relationship hostage to nonproliferation, pointing to bureaucratic politics between the State Department and the Pentagon, which pushed to ease the 1998 sanctions. Blank, *Natural Allies?* 3–6.

³⁹Seema Gahlaut and Anupam Srivastava, *Export Controls in India: Update 2005* (Athens: Center for International Trade and Security, University of Georgia, 2005), esp. vii–xi.

⁴⁰See, for instance, C. Raja Mohan, “Border Crossings,” *South Asia Monitor*, May 2006, <http://www.southasiamonitor.org/2006/may/news/17view2.shtml> (accessed July 7, 2007); “Dimensions of National Security: The Maritime Aspect,” *Sainik Samachar*, December 15, 2001, Indian Ministry of Defence Web site, <http://www.mod.nic.in/samachar/dec15-01/html/ch2.htm> (accessed July 7, 2007); Jyotirmoy Banerjee, “Power on the Sea: India’s Power Projection in the Indian Ocean,” in *India and Indian Ocean: In the Twilight of the Millennium*, ed. P. V. Rao (Hyderabad: Center for Indian Ocean Studies, 2003), 54–55; Devin T. Hagerty, “India’s Regional Security Doctrine,” *Asian Survey* 31, no. 4 (1991): 351–63; Manjeet Singh Pardesi, *Deducing India’s Grand Strategy of Regional Hegemony from Historical and Cultural Perspectives* (Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, April 2005), esp. ii, 46–55; and Berlin, “India in the Indian Ocean,” 59–61.

⁴¹Andrew C. Winner, “India as a Maritime Power?” (paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Conference, San Diego, CA, March 25, 2006).

⁴²For a sampling of commentary on India’s desire for a “Monroe Doctrine,” see Banerjee, “Power on the Sea,” 54; C. Raja Mohan, “Beyond India’s Monroe Doctrine,” *The Hindu* (Chennai), January 2, 2003, <http://meaindia.nic.in/opinion/2003/01/02o02.htm> (accessed July 7, 2007); Hagerty, “India’s Regional Security Doctrine,” 351, 362–63; and Pardesi, *Deducing India’s Grand Strategy*, 46. K. M. Panikkar, the “father” of Indian maritime history, laid the groundwork for this mode of maritime thought, which garnered support from the highest levels, including from Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964), India’s first prime minister. See K. M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1945); and Satyindra Singh, *Blueprint to Bluewater: The Indian Navy 1951–65* (New Delhi: Lancer International, 1992), 1.

⁴³Indian Navy, Integrated Headquarters, Ministry of Defence, INBR 8, *Indian Maritime Doctrine*, April 25, 2004; and author discussions with scholars from the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, November 6–16, 2006. See also Rahul Roy-Chaudhury, *India’s Maritime Security* (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2000), 125; and Rahul Roy-Chaudhury, “Maritime and Naval Dimensions of India’s Security,” in Rao, *India and Indian Ocean*, 36–50.

⁴⁴Here, the case of the United States in the late nineteenth and particularly the early twentieth centuries is instructive. Among the many commentaries on American imperialism, Richard Collin documents the suspicions and resentments the predominant power in a region tends to arouse unless careful, while David Healy paints a (somewhat conspiratorial) picture of a bipartisan American “drive to hegemony” in the Western Hemisphere. See Richard H. Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt, Culture, Diplomacy, and Expansion: A New View of American Imperialism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985); and David Healy, *Drive to Hegemony: The United States in the Caribbean, 1898–1917* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).

⁴⁵Stephen P. Flynn, an expert on U.S. homeland security strategy, has advanced such an argument. See his *America the Vulnerable: How Our Government Is Failing to Protect Us from Terrorism* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004).

⁴⁶On the other hand, Indian advocate Gurpreet Khurana, of the Delhi-based Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, argues that India should use high-profile participation in the PSI to burnish its reputation as a leader in nonproliferation efforts.