

# Denkwürdigkeiten



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## LEADOFF

### Liebe Mitglieder,

Asien ist eine Region im Aufbruch. In dieser Ausgabe der Denkwürdigkeiten beleuchten die Beiträge mit Fokus auf China, Japan und die beiden Koreas schlaglichtartig, mit welcher Dynamik sich Berührungsflächen und Kooperationsintensität vergrößern. Es gibt viele und gute Gründe genau hinzuschauen – für Deutschland, die Europäische Union und auch das Nordatlantische Bündnis.

*Ralph Thiele, Vorstandsvorsitzender*

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## THEMEN

### Ostasien im Wandel

Geopolitische Trends aus der Perspektive Seouls

Im ostasiatischen Wachstumsraum ist die Republik Korea (Südkorea) mit 48 Mio. Einwohnern auf der Fläche Bayerns ein kleines Land. Ein wiedervereinigtes Korea hätte knapp 70 Mio. Einwohner auf etwa 50% der Fläche der alten Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Korea kann sich mit Japan und China nicht messen. Allerdings gehört die Großregion Seoul, das wirtschaftliche und politische Zentrum der koreanischen Halbinsel, mit rund 22 Mio. Menschen zu den größten und modernsten Metropolregionen der Welt. Als "Republic of Seoul" oder "Seoul – The Soul of Asia" international vermarktet, sieht die Elite des Landes ihre Hauptstadt als Teil einer zukünftigen Welt, die

von Megacities und nicht von Flächenstaaten geprägt sein wird.

Dabei ist sich die politische und wirtschaftliche Führung des Landes bewusst: Das geteilte Korea befindet sich in einem hochsensiblen geopolitischen Umfeld zwischen den Mächten China, Japan und den USA. Dagegen ist Russland, das seit dem späten 19. Jahrhundert ebenfalls eine dominierende Macht in Ostasien war, seit dem Zerfall der Sowjetunion für Seoul aus der ostasiatischen Mächtelkalkulation verschwunden.

Das Jahr 2010 hat für Seoul hohen symbolischen Wert: Vor 60 Jahren, im Sommer 1950, begann der Korea-Krieg. Am 29. August 2010 jährt sich die traumatische Annektion (Kolonisierung) durch Japan zum 100. Mal. Kurz darauf wird Seoul im November 2010 Gastgeber des fünften G20-Gipfels sein und Korea als eine der modernsten und erfolgreichsten Volkswirtschaften der Welt präsentieren. In dieser Konstellation setzt Seoul weniger auf regionalpolitische Zusammenarbeit mit den übermächtigen Nachbarn China und Japan. Vielmehr verfolgt Seoul eine konsequent globale Politik. Ihre Kennzeichen sind: Freihandel, Wettbewerb und Spitzentechnologie sowie die politische Anlehnung an die USA.

Ernüchternd ist allerdings: Die Europäische Union wird in Seoul lediglich als interessanter Markt und attraktives Reiseziel, nicht aber als handlungsfähiger politischer Akteur wahrgenommen. Prozedere und Ergebnisse des Lissabon-Prozesses stoßen auf Unverständnis. Gleichwohl wird Deutschland weiterhin als wichtigster politischer und ökonomischer Faktor im kontinentalen EU-Raum angesehen und bleibt daher ein bevorzugter Partner Seouls, vor allem auch nach der für 2010 erwarteten Unterzeichnung des EU-Korea Freihandelsabkommens.

### Misstrauen gegenüber Japan

Korea wird von seiner geografischen Lage zwischen historischen Großmächten geprägt. Am Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts sah es sich dem übermächtigen imperialistischen Druck von Japan und

Russland ausgesetzt. Die japanische Kolonialzeit 1910 bis 1945 war mit Demütigungen und der Gefahr des Verlusts der nationalen Identität verbunden. Nach 1945 prägte der Protektor USA Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft und Politik des südlichen Teils der Halbinsel und vor allem des Ballungsraums Seoul.

Viele Koreaner pflegen gegenüber Japan ein tiefsitzendes Misstrauen. Dieses wird genährt durch Themen wie den Territorialkonflikt um die kleine Felseninsel Dokdo, die seit 1945 unter der de facto Kontrolle Koreas steht und dort als Symbol der Unabhängigkeit und territorialen Integrität betrachtet wird. Der japanische Anspruch auf die Insel wird in Seoul als kolonialer Anachronismus angesehen, der das koreanische historische Gedächtnis tief berührt. Wehe dem Ausländer, der von der "Japanischen See" und nicht vom "Ostmeer" spricht!

Das Misstrauen wird durch die als unzureichend empfundene Entschuldigung Japans für die Kolonialisierung inkl. schwerwiegender Menschenrechtsverletzungen genährt. Seoul vergleicht Japan gern mit Deutschland, das seine Geschichte aus koreanischer Sicht in vorbildlicher Weise aufgearbeitet hat. Ein Besuch des Tenno gerade im Jahr 2010 ist aus der Perspektive Seouls unwahrscheinlich.

Bislang weiß die koreanische Führung nicht, wie sie die neue japanische Regierung Hatoyama einschätzen soll. Es überwiegt Skepsis hinsichtlich der Außen- und Finanzpolitik. Den Vorschlag einer Ostasiatischen Gemeinschaft hat Seoul offiziell wohlwollend aufgenommen. Inoffiziell wird jedoch die Frage gestellt, was eigentlich die Substanz sein soll. Eine ostasiatische Wirtschaftssphäre unter japanischer und chinesischer Ägide kommt für Seoul nicht in Frage. Entscheidend für Korea ist, welche Rolle die USA als ausgleichender, balancierender Faktor spielen sollen. Deshalb wird auch die japanische Debatte über den US-

Stützpunkt Okinawa mit größter Aufmerksamkeit verfolgt.

Dennoch: Japan bleibt als zweitgrößter Wirtschaftspartner Koreas und als benachbarte, von den USA geprägte Demokratie trotz der historischen Belastung und des fortdauernden Misstrauens ein unerlässlicher Partner. Präsident Lee Myung-bak hat daher seit Amtsantritt einen engen Austausch mit den Regierungschefs Japans gesucht, auch mit dem neuen Regierungschef Hatoyama.

### **China: "Don't expect too much from us"**

China ist Koreas wichtigster Handelspartner, wird aber immer mehr zum Konkurrenten, denn es wird in Seoul als die aufstrebende Weltmacht ("the rising star") gesehen. Von China will Korea lernen, wie man die Diaspora an das Vaterland binden und politisch-ökonomisch nutzen kann.

Allerdings: Im Vergleich zu den ethnisch weitgehend homogenen Staaten Korea und Japan sieht Seoul die Realität des Vielvölkerstaates China. Sollte es zu einer echten Demokratisierung kommen, befürchten Beobachter größere Verwerfungen entlang ethnischen Grenzen, insbesondere in Tibet und in Sinkiang. Auch rechte politische Randgruppen in Korea melden historisch begründete Ansprüche auf südliche Teile der Mandschurei an.

Mit Aufmerksamkeit wird in Seoul registriert, dass China neuerdings ebenso wie Korea Umweltgesichtspunkte und die Klimaproblematik ernst nimmt.

Sachkundige Gesprächspartner zeigten sich überrascht, in welchem Umfang in jüngster Zeit Umweltgesichtspunkte in die urbanistische und industrielle Raumplanung Chinas einfließen. Aber: Seoul sieht ganz klar, dass sich auch Peking international nicht binden will. China kann und will die hohen Erwartungen der internationalen Gemeinschaft an die aufstrebende Weltmacht aus der Sicht Seouls nicht erfüllen, weder hinsichtlich der Demokratisierung noch des Klima-

schutzes. Eine hohe chinesische Diplomatin hat dies gegenüber einer führenden koreanischen Geschäftsfrau unlängst wie folgt formuliert: "*Don't expect too much from us*".

### **USA als pazifische Macht:**

Die USA werden von Seoul als pazifische und als Weltmacht anerkannt und respektiert, gelten aber nicht als asiatische Macht. Für die große Mehrheit der Koreaner bleiben die USA raum- und kulturfremd, eine Ausnahme machen lediglich die im politischen und wirtschaftlichen Leben Seouls einflussreichen Presbyterianer, die von US-Missionaren religiös und politisch geprägt wurden und enge Kontakte in die USA pflegen. Zu diesem Personenkreis gehören auch Präsident Lee Myong Bak und sein engerer Zirkel.

Grundsätzlich aber gilt: Am Protektor USA führt für Seoul kein Weg vorbei. Der Verbündete USA ist der Garant für Unabhängigkeit und Handlungsspielraum zwischen China und Japan. Die Abhängigkeit von den USA beeinflusst außenpolitische Entscheidungen unmittelbar, wie der jüngste Beschluss zum Aufbau eines PRT in Afghanistan zeigte. Die Allianz mit den USA, aber auch der Versuch sicherheitspolitischer Multilateralisierung ist ein wesentliches Motiv für die angestrebte engere Kooperation mit der NATO. In diesem Rahmen soll auch die bewährte Zusammenarbeit mit der Bundeswehr und der deutschen wehrtechnischen Industrie fortgesetzt und wenn möglich vertieft werden.

### **Ausblick**

Präsident Lee hat es sich seit seinem Amtsantritt zum Ziel gemacht, Korea aus der geografischen Beschränkung auf den ostasiatischen Raum zu lösen und in Anlehnung an die USA zusätzlichen politischen Handlungsspielraum und neue Märkte zu gewinnen. Seoul ist dabei, Korea global auszurichten und neue Regionen für die koreanische Wirtschaft zu erschließen: Lateinamerika, Zentralasien, Golfregion, Afrika. Integrationsformate wie

ASEAN plus 3 oder APEC betrachtet Seoul nicht als politisches Ziel, sondern lediglich als Mittel, um die wirtschaftliche Erschließung neuer Regionalmärkte vorantreiben zu können.

Der Wille zu einer politisch-institutionellen Integration bleibt dabei gering. Das trilaterale Gipfelformat China-Japan-Korea ist für Seoul von symbolischer Bedeutung, weil es formell gleichberechtigt mit zwei übermächtigen Partnern auftreten kann. Der nächste trilaterale Gipfel soll noch in der ersten Hälfte des Jahres 2010 in Korea stattfinden.

Dies ändert aber nichts an der globalen Ausrichtung Seouls, das sich weltweit auf freien Handel, Investitionen und Hochtechnologie konzentriert und dabei Deutschland als stärksten Faktor in der Europäischen Union und als wichtigen ökonomischen Partner ohne politische Ambitionen betrachtet.

*pacificus*

## THEMEN

### Chinese Crisis in the Gulf of Aden

In October 2009, a small crisis in the Gulf of Aden presented the Chinese government with a dilemma. The Somalia deployment had been played up in the media, celebrating "naval nationalism," in a way that made the Peoples Liberation Army – Navy (PLA-N) appear to manage its long-distance deployment with ease although, in fact, it was struggling to sustain a long-distance maritime presence.

The crisis was the hijacking of a Chinese ship, the De Xin Hai, on October 19, 2009 by Somali pirates. The Chinese by themselves could not mount a rescue and were facing a long stand-off that would be a definite loss of face and loss of legitimacy domestically. Chinese media, under the influence of "naval national-

ism" called for the PLA-N to quickly respond but the PLA-N ships were far from the De Xin Hai. The crisis presented an empirical lesson on the importance of maritime cooperation.<sup>1</sup>

After a few days, Major General Qian Lihua, Director of the Foreign Affairs Office, Chinese Ministry of Defense, announced that a successful rescue would be possible if all the nations involved in the anti-piracy operations off of Somali worked in concert. Qian stated that China would organize a meeting of all nations operating off Somalia in order to clarify areas of responsibility and arrange better coordination.<sup>1</sup>

The extent of US-China cooperation began to unfold on CCTV which first mentioned that the PLA-N was guarding non-Chinese ships. On October 28, CCTV revealed to its audience that the US and China were cooperating off the coast of Somalia.<sup>2</sup> On November 2, 2009, CCTV's Dialogue discussed Gen Xu Caihou's visit to Washington DC and statements on increasingly positive US-China military relations. The show's host, Yang Rui, asked how, amidst serious chronic differences on the legal status of China's EEZ and US military sales to Taiwan, how should Chinese look at the increasingly important non-combative nature of Chinese-US military relations in peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. He also stressed that "the two navies have cooperated in anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia."<sup>3</sup> *People's Daily* reported that General Xu and U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates had achieved a consensus over cooperation in seven issue areas. This included several non-traditional security areas: humanitarian rescue, disaster relief, the war on terrorism, officer ex-

change and training, and joint maritime search and rescue exercises.<sup>4</sup>

On November 2, 2009, US-China operational-level, tactical cooperation evolved to something akin to sharing strategies. PLA-N Admiral Wang Zhiguo, the commander of TF-529, invited the US commander of CTF-151, Scott Sanders, and four other coalition members of CTF-151, as guests aboard his ship. Commander Sanders, mentioning that China is a reliable partner, stated

*As a partner in maritime security, we have worked with China on a tactical level in order to prevent piracy and maritime criminal activity off the coast of Somalia. Having the opportunity to sit down and share views on counter-piracy with Adm. Wang was an invaluable experience. The cooperation between our nations continues to pay big dividends. Face to face visits at the tactical level are a tremendous opportunity to share lessons learned and coordinate future counter-piracy efforts.<sup>5</sup>*

This kind of meeting did not mean China would join CTF-151 or that there was a fully functioning US-China Maritime Partnership. Nevertheless, the tactical working relationship became better coordinated.

On November 5, 2009 the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced that China would host an international conference to better coordinate anti-piracy naval escorts in the Gulf of Aden, and that it would, in fact, begin the following day.<sup>6</sup> The purpose was to coordinate escort missions of Russia,

<sup>4</sup> "Sino-US military ties progress with trust, regress with suspicion," *People's Daily*, November 1, 2009, [eng.lich.people.com.cn/90001/90780/91343/6801077.html](http://eng.lich.people.com.cn/90001/90780/91343/6801077.html)

<sup>5</sup> "CTF 151 commander visits Chinese counter-piracy flagship," United States Central Command, November 2, 2009, [www.centcom.mil/en/news/ctf-151-commander-visits-chinese-counter-piracy-flagship.html](http://www.centcom.mil/en/news/ctf-151-commander-visits-chinese-counter-piracy-flagship.html)

<sup>6</sup> "China to host int'l conference on anti-piracy in Gulf of Aden," *Xinhua*, November 5, 2009, [news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-11/05/content\\_12394398.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-11/05/content_12394398.htm)

<sup>1</sup> Chris Buckley, "China mulls military options over hijacked ship," *Reuters*, October 22, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> "Recent US-China military ties," [eng.lich.cctv.com/program/chinatoday/20091028/02183.shtml](http://eng.lich.cctv.com/program/chinatoday/20091028/02183.shtml)

<sup>3</sup> "China and the US seek Mutual Military Trust," Dialogue, November 2, 2009, [eng.lich.cctv.com/program/e\\_dialogue/20091102/04569.shtml](http://eng.lich.cctv.com/program/e_dialogue/20091102/04569.shtml)

Japan, the EU and NATO to assign them responsibility for different geographic areas in the Gulf of Aden, rather than each nation only escorting its own ships, and also to consider the possibility of having joint patrols. Greater coordination would require a sharing of intelligence codes which was too sensitive a political/military issue.

The Ministry of Defense noted that “*China always takes a positive and open attitude toward international cooperation on shipping escorts and is willing to cooperate under related UN resolutions.*”<sup>7</sup> The *China Daily* claimed there was skepticism as to whether China’s idea would be accepted by other naval powers because the “*major powers have already established their codes of practice at sea, it’s hard for China to restructure the existing naval presence and lead the coordination.*”<sup>8</sup>

The Commander of the EU naval forces said other nations were pleased with this “unprecedented” Chinese cooperation, and would be happy to talk with Chinese, but weren’t sure what further coordination was needed since existing cooperation, among the nations that were cooperating, was extensive.<sup>9</sup> The Chinese noted that the hijacking of the *De Xin Hai* indicated that a higher level of international cooperation was needed since the navies were not under a centralized command structure.

At the meeting, Chinese proposed that China take a more active role in SHADE meetings, and that in fact China should be allowed to lead or co-chair a future monthly SHADE (shared awareness and deployments) meeting. SHADE coordinates NATO, EU and CTF-151 naval forces. SHADE meetings share information and coordinate areas of responsibility. Previously, EU NAVFOR and the Combined

Maritime Forces had co-chaired the meeting, i.e., the EU and the US. China asked that it take the lead role of the anti-piracy forces in the Gulf of Aden, a surprising request given its independent stance in the Gulf of Aden and its very cautious initial approach.<sup>10</sup> The US and EU agreed, hoping Chinese cooperation on anti-piracy would spill over into other areas of security cooperation. China will have an opportunity to co-chair the meetings starting in 2010.

In December 2009, after a visit by Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie to Japan, Japan and China agreed to their first joint naval training exercises. Maritime cooperation would begin with joint search and rescue exercises with expectations that maritime cooperation would expand along humanitarian missions.

On December 28, 2009, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced that the hijacked Chinese ship, the *De Xin Hai*, had been rescued by “relevant departments and enterprises” and that it was now under the protection of Chinese warships.<sup>11</sup> Chinese media did not clarify who had rescued the ship. One of the captured pirates told the international media that a ransom of \$4 million had been paid.<sup>12</sup> The *Shanghai Daily*, however, did claim that the ship was rescued by the Chinese navy.<sup>13</sup> This ended the crisis of the hijacked ship.

The Chinese Ministry of Defense, summing up the year 2009 that distinguished it from previous years, claimed four achievements: improved military diplomacy increased joint military exercises, multilateral military activi-

ties, and expansion of military cooperation such as off the Somali coast.<sup>14</sup> All these achievements were related to maritime cooperative security.

China’s deployment of PLA-N to the Gulf of Aden is unprecedented on many levels. Cooperation between the US, Chinese, Japanese and Russian navies in the Gulf of Aden is unprecedented. These navies were trained to go to war with each other rather than cooperate. There are better prospects for cooperative maritime security among Coast Guards, as demonstrated by the US and Chinese Coast Guards.<sup>15</sup> And by the functioning of ReCAAP.<sup>16</sup>

Empirical experience of maritime security cooperation was necessary for the PLA-N to absorb and accept the logic of cooperative security arrangements. Chinese scholarly debate alone, without empirical experience, would not have led the PLA-N to embrace the logic of the New Security Concept applied to the Gulf of Aden.

It is often, in fact, the empirical experience of a crisis that acts as a driver requiring Chinese rethinking of previous policies. The Gulf of Aden mini-crisis fits the pattern of previous crises - the financial crisis of 1997 and the 2004 coordinated tsunami relief that China was not part of - that had an impact on Chinese acceptance of the logic of cooperative security. One empirical indicator of Chinese acceptance was China contributing to rule formation and volunteering for a leadership role within the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. An additional indication was Chinese realization that the PLA-N could not by itself rescue the hijacked Chinese ship which led to requests for greater cooperation.

<sup>10</sup> “China eyes lead naval role against Somalia pirates,” Reuters, November 10, 2009; Greg Torode, “Beijing seeks lead role in piracy fight,” *South China Morning Post*, Nov. 10, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> [www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t648433.htm](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t648433.htm)

<sup>12</sup> “Somali Pirates Release Chinese Ship After Payment,” *VOA News*, December 28, 2009, [www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/east/Somali-Pirates-Release-Chinese-Ship-After-Payment-80202317.html](http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/east/Somali-Pirates-Release-Chinese-Ship-After-Payment-80202317.html)

<sup>13</sup> “Hijacked China vessel rescued by naval fleet,”

[www.shanghaidaily.com/sp/article/2009/200912/20091229/article\\_424163.htm](http://www.shanghaidaily.com/sp/article/2009/200912/20091229/article_424163.htm)

<sup>14</sup> “Four major characteristics of China’s military diplomacy in 2009,” *China Military Online*, November 20, 2009, [eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-11/20/content\\_4083116.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-11/20/content_4083116.htm)

<sup>15</sup> Goldstein, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Christoffersen, *Japan and the East Asian Maritime Order*.

<sup>7</sup> “Navies seek better ways to fight pirates,” *China Daily*, November 6, 2009, [www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-11/06/content\\_8921032.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-11/06/content_8921032.htm)

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*



The Somali antipiracy operation illustrates how the U.S., Japan and China, and other nations, working loosely together can create an international public good of SLOC security, based on the premise of cooperative security, i.e., military cooperation among a mix of allies and non-allies. At the operational-level something akin to cooperation has emerged among the navies operating in close proximity in the Gulf of Aden.

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Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

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## THEMEN

### No role in Asian Security?

EU Relations with China, Japan and North Korea

Scholars and analysts largely agree that the EU will in the years ahead continue to remain reluctant to develop a security profile in Asia in accordance with its business and economic interests and influence in the region.

This, as EU policymakers usually point out, is not least due to the fact that the EU institutions' mandate and authority to implement foreign and security policies on behalf of EU 27 Member States are too limited to 'do' more with regards to global security, including in Asia. If that is true (and EU policymakers typically argue it is), then the EU Commission and EU Council do all they 'can' or all they are 'allowed' to do with regards to (hard) Asian security which translates into a very lim-

ited or even a 'non-role' in Asian hard security.

The nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula and the emerging and recently re-emerging intensifying ethnic conflicts in Southeast Asia are 'reminders' of the 'realist' character of Asia's security environment and the EU will continue to have a fairly limited role contributing to the resolution of these and other 'hard security' conflicts in Asia.

To be sure, the EU's so-called 'soft security' policies in Asia are a very different matter even if this sort of engagement does not make it to the front pages of the international press.

The EU is the biggest donor of global humanitarian, food and development (providing more than 50% of the total) and the EU's so-called 'capacity-building' policies (e.g. technical assistance, technology and know-how transfers etc.) in many Asian countries have without a doubt contributed to peace and stability in Asia in recent years and decades.

The shortcomings and problems (such as problems related monitoring and supervision of projects on the ground) aside, there is agreement amongst Asian policymakers and analysts that a more prominent and visible European engagement in Asian 'hard security' issues could never be as constructive and promoting security as Brussels' 'soft security' policies in Asia.

What does the EU 'do' or does not do in terms of politics, economics and security with Japan, China and North Korea? While seeking to provide an overview of the EU's political, economic and trade and security relations with Tokyo, Beijing and Pyongyang, it will at the same time be sought to draw conclusions on the EU's overall role and engagement in Asian security, or: What does and does not EU security co-operation with Japan, China and (to a lesser extent North Korea) say about the EU's overall role and engagement in Asian security?

Seeking to qualify and quantify the overall EU security involvement in Asia has its limits: The analysis of the EU's relations with three Asian countries in general and security ties in particular cannot provide results and conclusions regarding all issues and aspects of European security involvement in Asian security. In other words: The analysis of the EU's security relations with Tokyo, Beijing and Pyongyang is not necessarily representative of everything the EU 'is' and 'does' in terms of Asian security. It will also be sought to assess whether the EU's approach and policies towards Asian security relations point to the existence of a coherent and clear-cut overall strategy towards Asia in general and Asian security in particular.

The conclusions in this context drawn below are somewhat sobering: The EU's relations in general and security ties with Tokyo, Beijing and Pyongyang in particular do not necessarily enable the analyst and observer detect common and recurring patterns of EU security policies towards Asia. Instead, individual European governments will continue to formulate and implement their own national foreign, foreign economic and security policies towards Asia competing with or worse contradicting EU Commission Asia policies.

The controversy (or from an EU and European policymaking perspective the 'debacle') surrounding the EU and European policies and approaches towards the EU weapons embargo imposed on China in 1989 demonstrated this 'impressively.' The EU Commission's position on the lifting of non-lifting of the weapons embargo back in 2004 and 2005 lost much of its credibility when EU Member States chose (without consultation with the EU Commission) to advocate and implement their weapons embargo positions and policies individually (and there contradicting official EU positions).

**China**<sup>17</sup>

Leaving controversial areas like human rights, the EU weapons embargo imposed on China in 1989, the ever growing trade surplus in China's favor aside, the expansion of EU-China institutional links and bilateral cooperation (at least on paper) has been second to none in recent years. The 25 so-called EU-China 'sectoral dialogues' are part of this and take place on either working or ministerial levels covering areas such as energy, environmental protection, consumer product safety, civil aviation, competition policy, education and culture, employment and social affairs, intellectual property rights (IPR), consumer product safety, maritime transport, regulatory and industrial policy and others. Various stakeholders are involved in these dialogues, including officials, politicians and business. The dialogues take the form of working groups, conferences, annual formal meetings or regular informal meetings and representatives from nineteen Directorates General in the European Commission and their respective counterparts in China are involved in these dialogues.

Although not the same level of progress is being achieved in all dialogues yet (none in the one on human rights e.g.), some of them have in recent years produced concrete and relevant results, such as the one on the environment: EU-Chinese talks on car exhaust emission standards recently resulted in Beijing adopting EU rules and standards in this area.

To be sure, Chinese officials in both Beijing and Brussels continue to insist on the 'informal' (as opposed to 'legally-binding') character of those dialogues when refusing to meet European demands voiced e.g. in the sectoral dialogues dealing intellectual property rights and market access in China.

<sup>17</sup> For a very critical assessment on the EU's ties with China see Berkofsky, Axel, *The Great Beijing-Brussels Disconnect*, in: *The Asia Times* July 8, 2008 [www.atimes.com/atimes/China/JG08Ad01.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/JG08Ad01.html)

The EU-China Country Strategy Paper (2007-2013) sets out three main areas for cooperation and the multi-annual indicative program is allocating €128 million for the first four years (2007-2010).<sup>18</sup> These funds will be invested in areas covered by EU-China policy dialogues, including the ones dealing with trade, socio-economic development, support for China's internal reform process, climate change, the environment and energy. In addition to the EU's assistance and aid programs a number of EU Member States run individual assistance programs in the areas of poverty reduction, energy, health-care, rule of law, environment and others.

The EU Commission's mandate and authority to implement one 'set' of European policies towards China on behalf of the Union's 27 Member States is limited and there is very little institutionalized coordination between the EU Commission (in charge of the Union's overall trade and economic policies) on the one and the EU Council (in charge of the EU's foreign and security policies) on the other hand.

In fact, there are no inner-EU mechanisms and fora coordinating respective Commission and Council policies towards China. Apart from the fact that the lack of inner-EU policy coordination slows down the Union's decision-making process, it has in the recent past resulted in at times inconsistent and contradictory EU China policies. The controversy and inner-European disagreements in 2004 and 2005 over the EU weapons embargo imposed on China after Tiananmen in 1989 is an 'infamous' example in this context.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> For details see European Commission, External Cooperation Programs-China; [ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/country-cooperation/china/china\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/country-cooperation/china/china_en.htm); the full version of the EU's China Strategy Paper is downloadable at: [www.asia-programming.eu/wcm/dmdocuments/draft\\_CSP\\_China.pdf](http://www.asia-programming.eu/wcm/dmdocuments/draft_CSP_China.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> The controversy surrounding the weapons embargo has led to the establishment of the so-called EU-US (2004) and EU-Japan (2005) so-called 'Strategic Dialogue on East Asian Security'.

European inconsistencies and contradictions on whether or whether not the weapons embargo should be lifted led Beijing to claim (and complain until the present day<sup>20</sup>) that the EU is not a credible foreign and security policy actor and consequently not 'worthy' and qualified to implement the so-called 'strategic partnership' with China.

To be sure, Beijing was (and still is) exploiting the inner-European disagreements and controversy on the weapons for its own purposes, EU and European weapons embargo policies were an example of how not to recommend itself as unified foreign and security policy actor. Beijing's policymakers and their Brussels-based diplomats are of course aware of and well-informed on the EU's problems and complexities with regards to decision-making and inner-EU policy coordination and are without a doubt taking advantage of them. Beijing and their representatives in Brussels have over recent years made it a habit pointing out and complaining about the inner-European policy inconsistencies.

For the time being, Beijing is very likely to continue to choose dealing with either EU institutions or individual EU Member States' governments according to what suits its interests best, as a European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) April 2009 paper authored by François Godement and John Fox argues in a very straightforward manner. EU Member States for their part will like in the past continue to implement their 'own' individual China policies as they see fit regardless of the fact that these policies are not necessarily in compliance or worse contradict the EU Commission's China policies.

The bilateral EU-China agenda will continue to be dominated by issues related to trade and investments, above the trade deficit

<sup>20</sup> Until today, Chinese officials and scholars likewise typically and persistently urge Brussels to lift the 1989 weapons embargo and end, as Beijing puts it, the 'political discrimination' against China at EU-China track (i.e. official) and track II (non-official) meetings.

in China's favor, intellectual property rights, market access obstacles for European business in China and most recently the controversy centered around the EU extension of additional tariffs on shoes made in China (with the EU accusing China of dumping Chinese-made on the European market, i.e. selling (supported by subsidies provided for by the Chinese government) Chinese-made shoes below the price of production in China).<sup>21</sup>

The EU's above mentioned position on the so-called 'Taiwan question' and Brussels' decision not to 'rock the boat' by e.g. urging Beijing to reduce the number of Chinese missiles directed at Taiwanese territory is an indication that Brussels is not willing to get further involved in Asian hard security, especially if one of the concerned parties is China. To be sure, Beijing will continue not to have to 'worry' about too much EU interest in the so-called 'Taiwan issue' with Brussels 'obeying' China declaring its commitment towards the so-called 'One-China-principle' (acknowledging Beijing as the sole of all Chinese people, including those in Taiwan) at some point during every official EU-China encounter.

The EU-China so-called 'strategic partnership' (proclaimed in 2003) will continue not to include the notion of 'strategic' in a security sense (even if the US and Japan initially thought and feared so, especially when the possible lift of the EU weapons embargo made it to the top of the EU-China agenda in 2004/2005). Instead, 'strategic' will continue to stand for 'comprehensive' in the context of bilateral relations, amongst others reflected by the number of the steadily increasing number of the above mentioned 'strategic dialogues.'

The so-called 'EU-China Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA)' is supposed to be the next

<sup>21</sup> A very controversially discussed issue inside of Europe, mostly because China is designated as 'non-market' economy meaning that the prices of Chinese shoes are compared with prices in a third country, in this case Brazil; see also Beattle, Alan, Q&A: Dumping Shoes; in: *The Financial Times* Nov. 18, 2009

'big bang' on the EU-China agenda, Brussels has been announcing for more than 3 years.<sup>22</sup> However, apart from reading on the official record that the PCA will take EU-China relations to the 'next level', there is very little information available on how bilateral relations will change in scope and quality once the PCA gets adopted.<sup>23</sup> As it has become increasingly clear in recent years, China remains very unlikely to sign the PCA unless the EU decides to lift the above mentioned weapons embargo, to which China refers to as 'political discrimination.' As the EU remains unlikely to lift the embargo any time soon, the PCA is unlikely to be signed any time soon either. When and if adopted, the PCA will not result in any additional EU-China security cooperation, due to the reason explained above.

#### Japan<sup>24</sup>

Joint European-Japanese global policies and policy initiatives go usually unnoticed and very rarely (i.e. almost never) get coverage by the international press. Put bluntly, EU-Japan relations and policies are not 'front page material.'

Back in 2001 Tokyo and Brussels had very ambitious (on paper) plans as regards international economic, political and security co-operation when adopting the so-called 'EU-Japan Action Plan for Co-operation' in 2001 (also 'EU-Japan Action Plan', for de-

<sup>22</sup> There is yet very limited (essentially none) information available on the new envisioned partnership agreement other than announcing that the new agreement will take EU-China relations to (a yet to be defined) 'new level'; for some limited information see [ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/china/dialogue\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/china/dialogue_en.htm)

<sup>23</sup> See also Berkofsky, Axel, The Great Brussels-Beijing Disconnect; in: *The Asia Times* July 8, 2008;

[www.atimes.com/atimes/China/JG08Ad01.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/JG08Ad01.html)

<sup>24</sup> See also Berkofsky, Axel, True Strategic Partnership or Rhetorical Window-Dressing-A Closer Look at the Relationship between the EU and Japan; in: *Japan Aktuell* 2/2008, Institut für Asienkunde (IFA) Hamburg, Germany, auch: Berkofsky, Axel, The EU and Japan: A Partnership in the Making; *Issue Paper European Policy Centre* (EPC) February 2007; [www.epc.eu/en/pub.asp?TYP=TEWN&LV=187&see=v&t=13&PG=TEWN/EN/detailpub&l=12&AI=555](http://www.epc.eu/en/pub.asp?TYP=TEWN&LV=187&see=v&t=13&PG=TEWN/EN/detailpub&l=12&AI=555)

tails see below). However, very few of the envisioned joint policies have actually been implemented and even if political rhetoric voiced during official EU-Japan encounters suggests otherwise, this is unlikely to change in the years ahead-not least in view of a lack of urgency to upgrade and intensify concrete EU-Japan co-operation in international politics and security.

Nonetheless, Brussels and Tokyo have over the last ten years established a framework for regular consultations and bilateral meetings, including regular consultations ahead of the annual session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. Furthermore, the EU and Japan are jointly supporting international initiatives to achieve global nuclear disarmament and efforts to limit the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). This was accompanied by jointly signing various international disarmament and non-proliferation protocols.<sup>25</sup>

To be sure, jointly signing nuclear disarmament protocols was one thing, following up on the signatures and implementing joint policies quite another as it turned out. In other words: The EU and Japan citing their joint signatures under international disarmament and non-proliferation protocols as achievements of bilateral policies in the areas of international politics and security have only so much credibility if these signatures do lead not and result in joint policies with a concrete and measurable impact on international security.

The EU's December 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS) envisioned a strategic partnership with Japan (as well as with China).<sup>26</sup> Until today, however, it

<sup>25</sup> See 'Japan-EU Joint Declaration on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation' [ec.europa.eu/comm/external\\_relations/japan/su\\_mmit\\_13\\_22\\_06\\_04/disarm.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/japan/su_mmit_13_22_06_04/disarm.htm)

<sup>26</sup> As well as with India, Russia and Canada; for details see Solana, Javier, 'A Secure Europe in a Better World-European Security Strategy; European Council Brussels 12 December 2003; [www.ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf](http://www.ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf)



is not entirely clear what exactly the 'strategic' dimension of bilateral ties is and why the EU and Japan are the 'natural allies' the EU Commission refers to Japan as when describing ties with Tokyo at official encounters. Not least because too little of what Brussels and Tokyo and Brussels were planning to do on paper over the last decade with regards to international politics, economics and security got actually done and the EU-Japan Action Plan envisioned much more of what Brussels were able and willing to do, particularly in the area of security.

EU-Japan security cooperation over the last decade is a decade of many lost opportunities. Very little of what was envisioned to take place in terms of bilateral 'soft' security cooperation in the framework of the EU-Japan action plan (beyond the signing of disarmament and non-proliferation protocols) has actually taken place. As regards the above mentioned EU-Japan 'Strategic Dialogue on East Asian Security, almost 5 years after its launch, the dialogue remains hardly known outside of Brussels and will very likely continue not to lead to joint EU-Japan Asian security policies. To be fair, European and Japanese officials counter criticism on the lack of results coming out of the dialogue by arguing that the dialogue was not supposed to produce joint EU-Japan policies, but is instead to be understood as an instrument and forum to inform each other on respective security policies in East Asia.

As regards EU-Japan cooperation in Afghanistan, Japanese Prime Minister has late last year announced to assign additional \$5 billion in civilian aid for Afghanistan and some of the funds are envisioned to be spent on joint projects with the EU. There is certainly scope for further EU-Japanese cooperation in Afghanistan, but it remains to be seen to put it bluntly- whether policymakers in Europe and Japan will put the money and cooperation where their mouth is, i.e. whether the envisioned civilian coopera-

tion in the months and years ahead will actually take place in 2010 and beyond.

Furthermore, the Japanese Prime Minister announced during his speech at the UN in New York shortly after taking office last September that Japan plans to increase cooperation with the EU on global environment and climate issues (which as it is now widely agreed amongst analysts and policymakers have at least indirect implications on global security).

However, the recent UN climate summit in Copenhagen did not experience a noteworthy increase on EU-Japan cooperation with regards to climate change and so far it must be concluded that intensification of EU-Japan cooperation on climate change issues as envisioned by Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama takes place on paper and paper only.

In conclusion, from a European perspective security cooperation with Tokyo has yet not turned out to be Europe 'entry ticket' into Asian security as it was hoped in European policymaking circles after the signing of the EU-Japan Action Plan back in 2001.

Tokyo for its part remains relatively disinterested in including Europe and the EU in its regional security policy thinking and strategies, unless EU Asian security policies towards Asia have a potentially direct impact on Japanese security as it could have been the case if the EU had decided to lift its weapons embargo imposed on China in 1989.

### North Korea

North Korea's second nuclear test in May 2009<sup>27</sup> (the first one took place in October 2006) confirmed that the EU's role to denuclearize North Korea will be the same as the in the years before: Providing

<sup>27</sup> Which led to the reinforcement of existing EU sanctions against North Korea; see e.g. EU urges tough response to North Korea's 'irresponsible acts'; *EU Business* 25 May 2009; [www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/1243250640.71](http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/1243250640.71); EU adopts North Korea sanctions; *EU Business* 26 May 2009; [www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/1248700622.95/view](http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/1248700622.95/view)

however-shaped 'political support' for the so-called 6-Party Talks while continuing a very limited engagement course towards North Korea through equally limited and sporadic humanitarian and food and economic engagement activities.

The EU's current relative inactivity on the Korean Peninsula stands in contrast to the Union's economic and political engagement policies towards North Korea of the early 2000s. In May 2001, the EU established diplomatic relations with Pyongyang and many EU Member States followed the EU example in 2001 and 2002.

Today, 26 out of 27 EU Member States (except France which cites North Korea's human rights situation as obstacle to the establishment of diplomatic relations with Pyongyang) maintain bilateral diplomatic relations with Pyongyang.<sup>28</sup>

The establishment of EU-North Korea diplomatic relations, however, has not led to increased EU influence on politics and security in North Korea (as it was hoped in Brussels in the early 2000s), not least because Brussels did not turn into a 'counterweight' of US policies towards North Korea as it was initially hoped in Pyongyang.<sup>29</sup>

After the detection in 2002 of what was believed to be a clandestine North Korean nuclear program, Brussels instead followed almost immediately (and without spending much time to verify whether what US spy satellites have detected was indeed a secret North Korean nuclear program) Washington's lead to interrupt economic and political engagement with Pyongyang. The

<sup>28</sup> While seven EU Member States (Germany, Bulgaria, Sweden, Romania, Great Britain, Poland and Hungary) maintain embassies in Pyongyang, the other Member States have themselves represented by either their embassies in Seoul or Beijing. The EU itself does not maintain an embassy in Pyongyang and is (depending on the issue and the political circumstances) represented by its ambassador in Seoul.

<sup>29</sup> Various conversations with North Korean officials in 2003, 2004, 2007 and 2008 confirm this.



EU could have continued its economic engagement towards North Korea in spite of the nuclear revelations offering North Korea and the international community an alternative approach of how to deal with a failing state on the brink of going nuclear.

It did not do so and has instead chosen to follow the US lead back in 2002 and suspending its originally ambitious and comprehensive economic engagement programs towards North Korea as soon as Washington announced that its reconnaissance satellites have detected a clandestine North Korean nuclear programme.

Brussels' initial willingness to engage North Korea politically and economically as well as its contributions to the Korean Energy Development Organization (KEDO) in the mid-1990s have not convinced interested parties (US, South Korea, Japan) that the EU is 'qualified' for a role in solving 'hard security' issues on the Korean Peninsula. To be sure, Brussels has not sought such a role and has never requested (at least not officially) to become a member of the 6-Party Talks, thereby probably confirming its (and its Member States') disinterest in investing resources and energies into a forum dominated by US and Chinese influence. Accordingly, limiting itself offering to the above mentioned 'political support' for the 6-Party Talks stands for the EU's de-facto decision to exclude itself from solving the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula.

### Engagement?

Obviously the EU's role and engagement in Asian security is bound to remain very limited and will continue to take place on an ad-hoc basis in the years ahead. This trend will continue, not least probably above all in terms of day-to-day-politics-because Brussels is faced with the task of seeking to initiate and implement security cooperation with states and governments with different political cultures, political systems and different levels of preparedness to cooperate on (sensitive or

controversial) security issues with others, including the EU.

While security cooperation with democracies (e.g. Japan, South Korea, India) should be (at least on paper) comparatively unproblematic (or at least possible), the same cooperation with authoritarian regimes and non-democracies is inevitably more difficult or more often than not often impossible, especially (as this is e.g. the case with Beijing on the above discussed so-called 'Taiwan question' and with North Korea on the nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula) if the partner envisioned for security cooperation is part of a security conflict or contingency in question.

The above mentioned inner-European conflicts and problems with regards to the formulation and implementation of European foreign and security policies towards Asia aside, Asian security (as opposed to security closer to 'home' such as in Eastern and Central Europe and Russia) will continue not to be a priority on the EU's external relations agenda in the years ahead, despite of strong European trade and business ties in and with Asia. Nonetheless and concluding on a positive note, the EU will continue to remain Asia's main provider of 'soft security' such as food, humanitarian, economic and financial aid thereby contributing more to Asian regional peace and stability than involvement in Asian security ever could.

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