



## Special issue on Arms Race in Northeast Asia

Guest Editor: John Feffer

### [INTRODUCTION: AN ARMS RACE IN NORTHEAST ASIA?](#)

- John Feffer (pp. 5~15)

### [AN EMERGING TREND IN EAST ASIA: MILITARY BUDGET INCREASES AND THEIR IMPACT](#)

- Zhu Feng (pp. 17~45)

The recent military budget increases in East Asia are motivated by various factors—flash point-driven, hedging strategy-driven, or governance-driven—but they do not necessarily trigger an arms race in the region. Domestic politics within Japan, South Korea, China, and the United States have had a complicated impact on regional security. Furthermore, the potential crisis points on the Korean peninsula and in the Taiwan Strait are also driving factors that test the stability of the region. Despite competing interests and challenges, the U.S.-led system seems to be enduring and a great-power rivalry stemming from the increases in military spending between the United States and China appears unlikely. *Key words: East Asian security, China, Japan, South Korea, United States, military spending, arms race*

### [CHINA'S MILITARY SPENDING: SOFT RISE OR HARD THREAT?](#)

- Sean Chen and John Feffer (pp. 47~67)

Interpreting China's military expenditure has been a complicated issue with important regional implications. This article will first look at the various estimates of China's military budget and the discrepancies in the numbers as well as the geopolitical rationale driving Chinese military planning. Although China publishes its official defense budget and provides justifications for increases in its military spending, most observers remain skeptical of the accuracy of the official figures and wary of the military modernization efforts. This skepticism has shaped the responses of other Asia-Pacific nations toward China's military modernization. Ultimately, even if the Chinese leadership views the military buildup as a natural part of the country's ascension to great power status, the uncertainties surrounding its military expenditures actually undermine the contention that China's rise will be peaceful. *Key words: East Asian security, China, military spending, arms race*

### [MILITARY SPENDING AND THE ARMS RACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA - Chung-in Moon and Sangkeun Lee \(pp. 69~99\)](#)

The two Koreas have failed to produce any meaningful achievements in military confidence-building measures, arms control, and arms reduction. Moreover, South Korea's continued competitive edge over the North in conventional weapons capability has driven North Korea to mitigate its inferiority by pursuing the dangerous course of nuclear armament. This article attempts to understand the evolving nature of military spending and the arms race on the Korean peninsula. The first section analyzes and evaluates the dynamics of military spending and the arms race. The second section empirically compares patterns of military spending between the two Koreas, while the third compares their conventional defense capabilities. The article then traces how the arms race in conventional weapons has escalated into new dimensions of military confrontation involving North Korea's nuclearization and South Korea's countervailing measures. Finally, the determinants of military spending and the arms race on the Korean peninsula are examined and ways are suggested to manage them.

*Key words: East Asian security, South Korea, North Korea, military spending, arms race, nuclear weapons*

## **ALLIED TO RACE? THE U.S.-KOREA ALLIANCE AND ARMS RACE**

**- Jae-Jung Suh (pp. 101~127)**

The Republic of Korea has rapidly increased its defense budget in recent years. Last year's spending of 26.6 trillion won represents a twofold increase from ten years ago. Now the Ministry of National Defense projects an annual average increase of 7.6 percent to 53.3 trillion won by 2020, another doubling over the next decade. South Korea, notably, raised its defense spending at a higher rate than North Korea at a time when Seoul was taking a more conciliatory policy of engagement. While the Roh Moo-hyun administration increased defense spending ostensibly in response to its policy goal to build a more autonomous military, the U.S.-Korea alliance motivated and shaped South Korea's military transformation. This article examines the degree to which external threats, domestic interests, and the alliance have affected the South's military spending and transformation.

*Key words: East Asian security, South Korea, military spending, South Korea-U.S. relations, arms race*

## **JAPAN'S MILITARY SPENDING AT A CROSSROADS**

**- Akira Kawasaki (pp. 129~146)**

Japan's military budget has held steady at below one percent of its GDP. Japan spends heavily on personnel for its Self-Defense Forces, support of U.S. bases in Japan, and development of its ballistic missile defense and space development. Yet in recent times, the Japanese business community has also demanded an amendment to Article 9 of the constitution for the promotion of military-civil integrated space development and an end to the ban on arms exports. With the future of Japan's security policy still uncertain after the election of the new Hatoyama administration, innovative disarmament cooperation would better serve the stability of the region than Japan's development of high-tech, offensive military capabilities.

*Key words: East Asian security, Japan, military spending*

## **BUCKS FOR THE BANG: NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND NORTHEAST ASIAN MILITARY SPENDING**

**- Wade L. Huntley (pp. 147~182)**

Delineating the impact of North Korea's nuclear program on overall military spending among the other principal states of Northeast Asia is challenging. This article presents a foundation to address that challenge. After summarizing key elements of North Korea's nuclear program, the article introduces frameworks to examine the security consequences of the program for the Northeast Asian region and assess North Korea's motivations to pursue nuclear capabilities. The reviews indicate how these frameworks can be used to deduce hypotheses of more specific linkages of North Korea's activities to other states' military spending decisions, some strategically motivated and others more influenced by symbolism and domestic politics. The article concludes with observations on contemporary developments derived from the analysis.

*Key words: North Korea, nuclear weapons, East Asian security, Northeast Asia, military spending*