



Transformation



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The Implications of Defense Transformation for Governments in the Asia-Pacific Region

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U.S. Broad Strategy



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- Political leaders in the USA intend to remain involved in Asian affairs despite the “tyranny of distance,” language obstacles, and the differences among cultures.



Overcoming Distance



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- Through technology—aircraft, satellite communications, the internet
- Because shared modern culture can overcome cultural differences rooted in history
 - Science
 - Business and finance
 - Engineering and technology
 - Market economies and “consumerism”
 - Education, especially at the university level



What Is Transformation?



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- Dramatically changing how US forces fight
- Altering the business practices of the Department of Defense
- Revising how US forces plan and work with interagency and multinational partners
- Transformation is a combination of new ideas and new technology



Defense Transformation Threatens to Widen the Gap



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- Especially in the case of traditional partners and allies
- In striving to come to grips faster and more effectively with its enemies, the USA may unintentionally “run away” from its friends



Transformation May also Narrow the Gap



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- Like the global economy, transformation—as a social phenomenon—is international
- But much of the technology of defense transformation is not—the cost is too high
- Yet nations need to “link to it” because working with the USA is a means to protect the trade and communication that supports the global economy
- “Linking to it” does not mean duplicating the US effort or approach



Needed: Strategic Approaches to Transformation



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- US government is recognizing that defense transformation should not be unilateral
 - US government has already accepted the shift from alliances to coalitions
- Asian nations must search for contributions within their means & in their interests
 - No one model, just as there is no one model for participating successfully in the global economy