



The Obama Administration's Approach to Asia: Early Signals

By Gary J. Schmitt

This is the first of two Outlooks on the Obama administration's foreign policy approach to Asia. It examines where the United States' policy toward Asia currently stands under the direction of the new president, how President Barack Obama's policies are both similar and different to previous administrations' policies, and the challenges that are likely to arise as a result.

Presidents may come into office with very specific programs in mind, but circumstances beyond their control often modify or alter their plans. This is hardly news to those who study American foreign policy or the U.S. presidency. In 1992, Bill Clinton ran a campaign for the White House with the unofficial slogan, "It's the economy, stupid." But the combination of events in Haiti, Somalia, North Korea, China/Taiwan, Iraq, and the Balkans caused Clinton to develop a foreign policy agenda far more interventionist and assertive than he and his campaign team ever expected. Indeed, his presidency began with some senior officials openly arguing for a reduced U.S. global strategic posture, but ended with the claim that the United States was the "indispensable nation."¹

And, of course, George W. Bush ran a campaign in which he called for the United States to have a more modest role in the world—a policy prescription he believed possible because he and his team of advisers judged that the United States would be living through an era of "strategic pause."² Needless to say, that expectation radically changed after the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

Such changes in presidential policies are not just a recent phenomenon. Henry Adams, a

Harvard historian in the nineteenth century (and grandson and great-grandson of two American presidents), wrote the *History of the United States of America: 1801–1817*, an account of the administrations of America's third and fourth presidents, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.³ In some ways the first modern "objective" American history of its kind, the underlying theme of the volume is that both Jefferson and Madison came into office determined to conduct a foreign policy that was distinctly different from the previous Federalist administrations of George Washington and John Adams, but, because of the force of events, wound up duplicating and reinforcing many of their policies.

Key points in this Outlook:

- Presidents' foreign policy strategies before and after their election can differ greatly due to circumstances and unforeseen challenges.
- Early signs are that the Obama administration's policy toward Asia does not appear to be radically different from the two previous administrations.
- Despite the similarities, there are emerging differences on trade, security, and democracy that, in time, could be significant and problematic.

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So if history is any guide, it is a precarious business to say now what the Obama administration's policies will be toward the Asia-Pacific region and to be confident they will remain the same in the years ahead. As the stanza from the Robert Burns poem cautions, "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men. . . ."

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Obama the Candidate

It is also the case that the new administration has only recently put in place its East Asia policy team. Accordingly, and to the degree that personnel is policy, it is still a bit early to discern exactly what the administration's game plan will be when it comes to Asia and the Pacific as we move forward. Nevertheless, like all candidates for president these days, then-Senator Obama was asked to provide details about the policies he would follow in every major policy area during the course of his campaign. And while candidates' campaign statements and pledges are often bound by the need to secure a nomination or win an election, they are also free of the realities and constraints imposed by the actual practices of governing. Moreover, comparing those statements with those of an opposing candidate has advantages, highlighting sometimes subtle but important policy differences. Hence, they are as good a place to start as any when determining in what direction a candidate will try to take the nation.

Candidate Obama's approach to the East Asia region as a whole was to reiterate the need for America's presence to be "enduring."⁴ It is the sustained presence of the United States that has played the key role in preserving peace in Asia, and it is that peace, in turn, which has been the foundation upon which the region's remarkable economic development has taken place. And while the American alliance structure remains crucial to maintaining that peace, Obama, the candidate, noted that new ideas were afoot in the region and he intended to augment these bilateral relations. He supported "forg[ing] a more effective framework in Asia that goes beyond bilateral agreements, occasional summits, and ad hoc arrangements, such as the Six Party Talks."⁵

Breaking down then-Senator Obama's policies for specific countries, Obama noted that the Japanese alliance plays a "vital" role in helping the U.S. maintain regional security.⁶ Here, Obama was a bit less forward leaning than his opponent, Senator John McCain. McCain not only emphasized Japan's "key" role both in keeping the peace in the past, but also his expectations that Japan might play an even greater role in the future.⁷ Accordingly, McCain supported the Japanese government's efforts to win a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

On North Korea, Obama's position was to maintain the U.S. goal of achieving a complete and verifiable elimination of the North's nuclear weapons program.⁸ Should the leadership in Pyongyang balk at fulfilling its promise of dismantling the program, then, under an Obama administration, Washington would call on the members of the six-party talks to stop providing assistance to North Korea, reimpose previously existing sanctions, and consider new ones, if required.

As for South Korea, Obama noted the need to reaffirm the alliance but enlarge its focus on issues that reached beyond those specifically tied to security on the peninsula.⁹ He was, however, less than specific about what that might mean, as was his position vis-à-vis South Korean president Lee's more comprehensive approach to dealing with North Korea, which included keeping on the table such issues as human rights and abductees. And candidate Obama opposed ratification of the newly completed U.S.–Korea Free Trade Agreement. Much further south, Obama's comments about Australia were sparse and largely conventional: U.S.–Australian ties were important, and Washington would look for ways to strengthen them.

Obama also called for strengthening ties with a country of growing importance, India, but he was not nearly as effusive as the Bush administration or Senator McCain about the potential of a U.S.–Indian strategic partnership.¹⁰ Although Senator Obama voted for the U.S.–Indian nuclear agreement, he appeared to do so reluctantly, given his concerns—expressed during the Senate debate—about the accord's import on non-proliferation policy. Also noteworthy was Obama's statement, in the days preceding November's election, on the centrality of the conflict between Pakistan and India over Kashmir for securing peace for the region. For some, this suggested that Obama's views about India reflected more about what New Delhi could contribute to stabilizing Pakistan and Afghanistan than the need to move forward with a broader, U.S.–Indian strategic agenda.

As for the other rising power in Asia, China, Obama's policy positions reflected the current complexity of U.S.–Chinese ties. On the one hand, candidate Obama argued that only when political liberalization had taken hold in China would China reach its full potential as a nation. Obama also noted the need for the United States both to monitor China's growing military capabilities and to press its leadership to end its support for authoritarian regimes such as those in Burma, Sudan, Iran, and Zimbabwe. Along the same lines, Obama's campaign statements strongly condemned the Chinese government's March 2008 crackdown on Tibetan protestors and suggested his administration would be tougher in negotiations with Beijing than the Bush administration had been, especially in the area of currency exchange rates. And, indeed, not unlike presidential candidates before him, Obama declared that China is neither a friend nor an enemy but a "competitor."¹¹

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At the same time, however, Obama also said the United States should welcome China's continuing emergence as a world power and work to have a constructive relationship with the country. Although there were differences to be sure, these differences "should not prevent progress in areas where our interests intersect," such as (candidate Obama hoped) in an area like climate change.¹² While noting the growth in Chinese military capabilities, he also remarked that China still spends only a fraction of what the United States does on defense, implying it was not an immediate security concern.

During his presidential campaign and then following Taiwan's own presidential election in spring 2008, Obama was quick to issue a statement praising the country's democratic consolidation. In addition, Senator Obama indicated that his administration would continue to provide Taiwan with necessary military equipment, would seek to strengthen "channels of communication" between Taipei and Washington,¹³ and he called on the People's Republic of China (PRC) to ease Taiwan's international isolation—the last two points edging beyond what Senator McCain's campaign had said following Taiwan's presidential election. As for cross-Strait matters, the Obama

team played it straight down the middle, repeating the long-standing U.S. policy mantra that neither Taiwan nor China should do anything to upset the "status quo"¹⁴ and that his administration would continue to support policies grounded in "One China, Three Communiqués"¹⁵ and observance of the Taiwan Relations Act.

More generally, both the Obama and McCain campaigns shared the view that the Bush administration had paid too little attention to the Asia-Pacific region post-9/11. One can question whether that was a totally fair assessment of the Bush administration's efforts; nevertheless, both Obama and McCain made it clear that they expected to have a more engaged policy toward the region once in office. In many respects, there was not much distance between them on most issues. The differences, however, while sometimes slight, were not unimportant. For example, when Senator McCain spoke or wrote about the region, he would typically begin by emphasizing working with treaty allies. Obama, of course, did not ignore alliance relationships, but he did tend to lump them in with other partnerships and multilateral forums. Whereas McCain's multilateralism focused on institutionalizing, to the degree possible, the nascent security partnership between the democratic states of Australia, Japan, India, and the United States, Obama's campaign expressed an interest in the United States becoming a more integral part of the expanding set of regional forums and summits.¹⁶

On the military balance in the region, Obama's stated position was that the United States should and would maintain American military preeminence.¹⁷ On this, he and McCain were on the same page. What was different, however, was that Senator McCain was more likely to talk about China's military build-up and focus on the link between that build-up and the still autocratic character of the Chinese regime. So while it is fair to characterize both candidates' positions toward China as "engage but balance," Obama's program for doing so put more emphasis on the softer tools of statecraft, less on the "hard power" elements, and less on the possibility of reading relations through the lens of whether a country was a democracy, or not.

But finally, perhaps the most clear-cut difference between the two candidates was their positions on free trade. Senator McCain unabashedly supported expanding free trade agreements, while Senator Obama, reflecting his party's and its supporters' worries about job losses in what they believed were key sectors of the American economy, made clear his opposition to agreements that he thought were not fair trade accords.¹⁸

Obama the President

Presidential candidates' pronouncements on policy issues are intended to give the voting public a sense of what the candidate stands for on any given issue, but typically they are also broad enough to allow flexibility in the manner and timeline of execution. Hence, it is rare for a newly elected president simply to disavow a campaign position but also no surprise to find a newly elected president not carrying out a policy pledge in a way the voting public might have expected. This is probably as it should be: sudden changes from past policies are not always helpful diplomatically, and an administration quickly realizes that it must set policy priorities; an administration cannot do everything at once. In addition, factors such as limited resources, tools, and international partners—factors that can be ignored while campaigning—are inevitably important for shaping what is possible once one is actually in office. On the whole, Obama's first few months as president fit this pattern. He has done nothing wildly inconsistent with his campaign policies, but there are differences worth noting.

As for China, Obama has already largely dropped whatever tough-minded rhetoric he had in the campaign toward the People's Republic of China (PRC).

To start, the administration has not been sitting on its hands when it comes to the Asia-Pacific region. Senator Obama's pledge to have the United States re-engage with the region has been met. The first head of state the White House invited was Japan's prime minister, Taro Aso. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton put a lot of frequent flyer miles in her account in February by focusing her first overseas trip on Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, and China, and she returned to the region in July with state visits to India and Thailand when she attended the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) regional forum. In Washington, meanwhile, there has been a U.S.–Australian ministerial meeting, a high-level U.S.–Chinese economic and strategic meeting, and a state visit by Philippine president Gloria Arroyo. This brief list does not, of course, include the visits to the region by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and any number of other senior administration officials. As Secretary Clinton touted at the end of the U.S.–Australian ministerial

meeting in early April, "the United States is back engaged more fully in Asia."¹⁹

For a president committed to change, however, his administration's initial direction with Asian foreign policy is nevertheless generally within the framework of previous administrations: reaffirming solidarity with treaty-defined allies, reaching out to new regional powers (such as Indonesia and India), and continuing a policy of engagement with China. As for China in particular, Obama, like his two predecessors in the Oval Office, has already largely dropped whatever tough-minded rhetoric he had in the campaign toward the PRC; his statements about China being a competitor or the need to force currency revaluations have disappeared. If anything, the change back to full-throated engagement has come more quickly than with either Presidents Bush or Clinton, and has even been given a slightly higher priority, with Secretary Clinton taking the lead in the effort as opposed to Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson or Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick in the prior administration. Certainly, Beijing was quite pleased to hear President Obama declare at the start of U.S.–China Strategic and Economic Dialogue in late July that "the relationship between the United States and China will shape the 21st century, which makes it as important as any bilateral relationship in the world."²⁰ And, of course, no one in the administration is saying anything remotely close to suggesting that there will be new thinking regarding America's "one China" policy or cross-strait relations.

The Obama administration's policy approach to North Korea is not particularly new either. The goal is the same: denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and the approach—six-party talks, along with the promise of bilaterals with the United States on the side—follows generally along the lines of the second George W. Bush term. The new team does not appear to have had many new insights to offer on this difficult problem, and accordingly, North Korea did not receive the kind of intense, high-profile policy review that U.S. policy toward Iran did. If there was a difference, it was the Obama team's intention to devote more attention to the multilateral forum than direct talks with Pyongyang. So, instead of a full-time negotiator in the person of then-assistant secretary of state for Asia Christopher Hill, the North Koreans were given a part-time former diplomat Stephen Bosworth to deal with. Predictably, being put on the back burner did not sit well with the leadership in Pyongyang. With nuclear and missile tests, possibly new initiatives on the proliferation front with Burma, and the arrest and

detention of two American reporters, the Dear Leader, Kim Jong Il, moved North Korea into a position of higher priority on the administration's agenda. Indeed, one is tempted to say that when it comes to U.S.–North Korean relations, “'twas ever thus.”

What is new, when compared with the two previous administrations, is the Obama administration's approach to free trade—although hardly surprising given Obama's statements during the campaign and the fact that Congress is controlled by the Democratic Party. With the exception of the administration's recent decision to put punitive tariffs on Chinese automobile and light truck tires,²¹ the new administration has not been actively anti-free trade (having found language to get around, if it so desires, the “Buy America” provision Congress passed last winter.)²² But neither has it promoted a free trade agenda. As Craig VanGrasstek of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government has remarked, the White House “has shown that it will take action to avoid being labeled protectionist, but it has yet to demonstrate any eagerness to make trade liberalization an important part of its economic recovery program.”²³

What is also new and was suggested by campaign statements is the administration's decision to pursue American accession to ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), among whose core commitments is that states that sign the accord will not interfere in the internal affairs of other signatories.²⁴ Secretary Clinton's trip to ASEAN member Indonesia in February and her attendance at the ASEAN Regional Forum in July suggest strongly that the Obama team is determined to craft a new path for the United States in that region. On signing the TAC, this administration has broken with the policy of prior administrations, Republican and Democratic, not to.²⁵ As Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg said in remarks before a National Bureau of Asian Research conference in April, ASEAN is quite “important to the United States and at the core of the emerging regional structures of cooperation throughout Asia to which [the new administration is] deeply committed.”²⁶

Although there are certainly differences between the Bush and Obama policies, and they are not insignificant, there has not been a radical change in Asia-Pacific policy by the Obama administration from its predecessor. Broadly put, allied relations and engagement with China remain at the core of U.S. planning. This is not especially surprising. Often there is more continuity in U.S. foreign policy than our debates about foreign policy would lead casual observers to believe. America's role in the world is

not something that changes overnight, and, the world being what it is, there is less room for American presidents to change policies quickly or fundamentally than perhaps many in the United States or abroad would expect. This is of course not always the case—a good example being Nixon's overture to China—but it is so more often than not.

Looking Ahead

As noted at the beginning, predicting what the long-term strategies of the Obama administration might be or the impact of those strategies is something of a fool's game. Events can drive administrations in ways they never conceived beforehand. (For example, the administration wants to pursue a new course with Burma, moving away from isolating the country's leaders to engaging with them. But complicating that turn in policy will be speculations that Burma, too, has a secret nuclear program underway and the Burmese government's recent decision to keep democratic opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, under house arrest for eighteen more months).

Although the core policies may stay the same, there are subtle differences from administration to administration that can be significant individually and cumulatively. As any outdoorsman can attest, one step off the beaten path can lead quickly to another, then another, and before long, one can find oneself going in a very different direction than initially intended.

One small step is the Obama team's desire to restore the six-party talks to a more central place in its handling of North Korea; this contrasted with the Bush administration's final disposition in which almost everything of note was done in bilateral talks between Assistant Secretary Christopher Hill and the North Koreans. But as the North Koreans recently showed (or believed they showed) with former president Clinton's trip to Pyongyang, they can force the United States back to one-on-one meetings. Moreover, the key to the success of the six-party talks was always the willingness of the Chinese to exert leverage over the North Koreans. In some ways, that leverage is even greater now than in the past, with North Korea dependent both on trade with China and on China's forbearance in allowing North Korean front companies to operate out of its country. It appears, however, that Beijing is even less inclined to weigh in decisively, believing that with the possible coming change of leadership in North Korea, to use those levers is to risk “regime change.” Hence, to the degree North Korea continues

to “act out,” the Obama administration might well face a fundamental fork in the road: make bilateral talks more central to American policy, with no more prospects for success than what the Bush team accomplished, or take a much harder line, one of serious containment. Both paths would lead in their own way to greater tensions and security concerns within the region.

For many in the Asia-Pacific region, the test is not whether the administration adopts protectionist policies—a path that does not seem particularly likely; rather, the issue for states in the region, most of whom have greatly benefited from globalization, is whether the United States will exercise leadership in expanding trade liberalization.

Another small step with potential longer-term consequences is the rhetoric surrounding the recent U.S.–Chinese dialogue. It verged, both in what the president and secretary of state said, toward something that has lately been called the G2 approach—an approach in which China is seen as a strategic interlocutor with the United States with something approaching equal status. This has the subtle implication of making the PRC a stakeholder before it has shown itself a responsible one. And while the administration can possibly justify this position in light of the immediate problems it is facing, especially on the economic front, there is little question that the expansive language toward China was noticed in other Asian-Pacific capitals and that in Beijing it reinforced its own growing sense of sway in Washington.

This of course will have an impact on U.S.–Taiwan relations. At a minimum, it will make the diplomatic hurdle of supplying needed, high-quality military systems and supplies—such as F-16s—even more difficult. (Remember, by this time in the Bush administration, the decision had already been made to make available \$30 billion worth of arms and services to Taiwan.) It will also probably mean that Taipei’s effort to engage Beijing and lower tensions will probably not be met by the Chinese leadership with offers to change its military stance toward Taiwan in any substantial way, or ease in any significant manner its policy of isolating Taiwan internationally. There are of course more fundamental reasons for believing there are limits to what the current

rapprochement between the island and the mainland can accomplish, but ratcheting up the centrality of U.S.–Chinese engagement will more than likely reinforce Beijing’s sense of entitlement. And, in the end, as Elizabeth Economy and Adam Segal of the Council on Foreign Relations wrote earlier this year, “it will raise expectations for the level of partnership that cannot be met and exacerbate the very real differences that still exist between Washington and Beijing.”²⁷

Of course, the Obama administration might counter this critique by pointing to its efforts to engage with the region more broadly. But what is equally problematic is that by downplaying interest in new free trade agreements, the Obama team has reduced its own ability to engage on a matter that for the past two decades has been a leading indicator in strategic interest for states in the region. For many in the Asia-Pacific region, the test is not whether the administration adopts protectionist policies—a path that does not seem particularly likely; rather, the issue for states in the region, most of whom have greatly benefited from globalization, is whether the United States will exercise leadership in expanding trade liberalization. It is all fine and good to sign accords on the environment and student exchanges, but most countries in Asia see increased economic ties as the key soft power tool for managing relations and moving them in a positive direction.

As for the matter of hard power, as mentioned earlier, candidate Obama promised to maintain a U.S. military second-to-none in the region. But as also noted, he was less likely to make a point of the Chinese military build-up than Senator McCain, confident that the balance was still decisively in the United States’ favor. Others, both in the United States and in the region, are less confident, especially if current trend lines continue.

Although the United States is spending considerably more on military matters today than when George W. Bush entered office in 2001, the vast majority of that new spending has gone to fight two wars and increased personnel costs; the underlying core defense budget, as a percentage of GDP, has risen little more than a half percent from when President Clinton left office. In contrast, China’s core defense budget rises each year and, at least, publicly does so at a double-digit rate. If Obama’s budget projections hold true through eight years, then the core U.S. defense burden will slip back to that of 2000, or possibly even lower. As Andrew Shearer, former national security adviser to Australia’s prime minister and director of studies at the Lowy Institute for International Policy,

has written, such budget projections risk “unsettling America’s longstanding democratic allies in Asia by skimping on defense. The administration’s first defense budget and subsequent statements by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates have downplayed the capabilities needed to fight a future conventional adversary. They can only put further on edge a region where unresolved historical and territorial legacies, new transnational threats and rapidly shifting power balances are swirling together in an increasingly volatile cocktail.”²⁸

Looking at projected U.S. defense spending, Asian strategists will be asking, will it be enough?

Of course, even at 3 percent of GDP, the United States will still be spending a massive amount of money on its military. And there are indications from within the Pentagon that some readjustments in our military posture will produce an uptick in capabilities for the region. The question Asian strategists will be asking, however, is whether such an adjustment will be enough. Militaries look at scenario-specific contingencies to make net assessments and judge deterrent capabilities, not at total global spending. For example, if one looks carefully at the Australian government’s Defence White Paper 2009, released this past spring, it is clear that there are doubts creeping in among some in the region that the United States will not be spending enough to keep up with the Chinese and continue to be the unquestioned and preeminent security provider for the region in the years ahead. The fact that the white paper was released by a center-left government headed by a prime minister with a special expertise toward China only makes its underlying point more telling.

Finally, perhaps one of the most interesting initiatives taken by the new administration is the decision to sign the ASEAN treaty.²⁹ On the one hand, it shows the Obama team’s inclination to accept the region’s own push toward creating ever-widening multilateral forums and opens up the possibility of U.S. participation in the East Asia Summit. On the other hand, no previous administration has wanted to go down this road, believing that by signing the treaty, the signatories commit themselves to the principle of noninterference in other countries’ domestic affairs—a principle which, of course, the United States has ignored in countless cases, such as with Burma

and Kosovo. In short, there are pluses and minuses to be considered in the United States’ accepting the accord’s terms.

But, interestingly, it is not clear that the 1976 treaty, which undoubtedly served a useful and stabilizing purpose for the countries in the region following the U.S. pullout of South Vietnam, remains the gold standard for defining state-to-state relations. For instance, there was a desire among key ASEAN members, especially Indonesia and the Philippines, in the run-up to the 2007 ASEAN summit to enact an ASEAN charter that would make democratic rule and support for human rights more central as guiding norms for states in the region, while at the same time proscribing nondemocratic changes in government. The charter’s drafters believed that for the region to truly prosper in the years ahead there would be a need to consolidate and encourage political liberalization among the member states to ensure that new regional initiatives to harmonize economic and security policies would be implemented effectively and in good faith—a goal, they thought, less likely to be reached by nations with different governing philosophies. As a result of disagreements between ASEAN member states and the ASEAN way of requiring unanimity among members on major decisions, the charter the summit produced fell considerably short of what the drafters had hoped for. It was, as Ralph Cossa has pithily but accurately described, “one (very) small step forward” for ASEAN.³⁰ Nevertheless, the question to be asked is whether in moving toward TAC accession, the Obama administration is inadvertently giving legitimacy to a model for state-to-state relations in the region that key friends in the region themselves are no longer satisfied with.

Conclusion

Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg has described the Asia-Pacific region as having over the past two decades something of a “back to the future”³¹ quality as the Cold War ended and we have encountered issues and behaviors that resemble “more of the nineteenth than the twenty-first century.”³² There are rising powers—India and China; there are allies like South Korea and Japan that are seeking more normal status on the international scene; and there are other Asian countries trying to make their way in a world that presents immense opportunities, as well as problems.

The fact that this has been an unfolding scene for some twenty years of course helps account for the general

continuity between Obama administration policies and those of its predecessors when it comes to highlighting the need to sustain relations with long-standing allies and extend engagement with China. And, of course, it helps that many of the senior officials in the new administration are, in fact, “old hands” when it comes to the region.

Assessing whether those policies will be adequate is a different matter. To its credit, the administration has been serious about maintaining a level of engagement with the nations of the region that is, on its face, impressive. But how much of this engagement is governed by an overarching strategic rationale is far from clear and how much it will be driven by events, such as has been the case with North Korea, also remains unclear. It is quite nice to have your door knocked on, but capitals, just like individuals, still want to know what “housewarming” present you are bringing. And here the jury is still out. Will downplaying the role of hard power in maintaining security in the region remain viable? Will the absence of a trade policy for a region that thinks about trade night and day leave the administration trailing behind other countries? And, finally, with a region of the world in which there are more people living under democratic rule than any other part of the globe, will the administration overlook the opportunity to consolidate and deepen democratic attachments more formally?

With the rise of China and India, there is a shift of global power to Asia that makes the U.S. role in the region more important, not less. U.S. allies and friends will need reassurance. Increased diplomatic attention is part of that of reassurance effort and, undoubtedly, welcome. But it is only a part. Economic, military, and moral leadership remains essential if the region is to remain stable, peaceful, and prosperous over time.

Notes

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3. Henry Adams, *History of the United States of America, 1801-1817*, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1891).

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7. *Ibid.*

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13. Charles Snyder, “Obama to Retain Taiwan Policy,” *Taipei Times*, November 6, 2008.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. John McCain and Joseph Lieberman, “Renewing America’s Asia Policy,” *Wall Street Journal*, May 27, 2008.

17. *Visit of Vice Premier Wu Yi*, 110th Cong., 1st sess., Congressional Record—Senate.

18. Council on Foreign Relations, “Barack Obama: Campaign Issues 2008.”

19. Australia Office of Foreign Affairs, “Joint Press Conference with Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs Stephen Smith, Australian Minister for Defence Joel Fitzgibbon, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates – Washington DC,” Australia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 9, 2009, available at http://foreignminister.gov.au/transcripts/2009/090410_ausmin_pc.html (accessed October 5, 2009).

20. “U.S.-China Relationship Will Shape 21st Century, Obama Says,” Fox News.com, July 27, 2009, available at www.foxnews.com/politics/2009/07/27/clinton-china-building-stronger-relationship-brick-brick/ (accessed October 5, 2009).

21. Edmund L. Andrews, "U.S. Adds Tariffs on Chinese Tires," *New York Times*, September 11, 2009.

22. As part of the economic stimulus package, Congress added language to the act which would have required all manufactured goods bought under the bill to be bought domestically. At the urging of the White House, discretionary language was added to the act to the affect that the "Buy America" provision would be read "in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements." See David E. Sanger, "Senate Agrees to Dilute 'Buy America' Provisions," *New York Times*, February 4, 2009.

23. Craig VanGrasstek, "Building without BRICs: Lessons from the 'Buy American' Debate," *International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, News and Analysis* 13, no. 1 (March 2009): 3-4 <http://ictsd.net/i/news/bridges/44271> (accessed October 5, 2009).

24. U.S. Department of State Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of the Spokesman, "United States Accedes to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia," U.S. Department of State, www.state.gov/t/pa/prs/ps/2009/july/126294.htm (accessed October 5, 2009). See also Mark E. Manyin, Michael John Garcia, and Wayne M. Morrison, "U.S. Accession to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC)," Congressional Research Service, available at assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40583_20090713.pdf (accessed October 5, 2009).

25. It should be noted that allied states, such as Japan and Australia, have signed the treaty, as well as China and Russia.

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28. Andrew Shearer, "Australia Bulks Up: One Result of a Smaller U.S. Military Budget," *Wall Street Journal*, May 6, 2009.

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30. Ralph Cossa, "One (Very) Small Step Forward for ASEAN," *Japan Times Online*, November 26, 2007, available at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/ea20071126rc.html> (accessed October 5, 2009).

31. James B. Steinberg, "Engaging Asia 2009: Strategies for Success: Remarks at National Bureau of Asia Research Conference."

32. *Ibid.*