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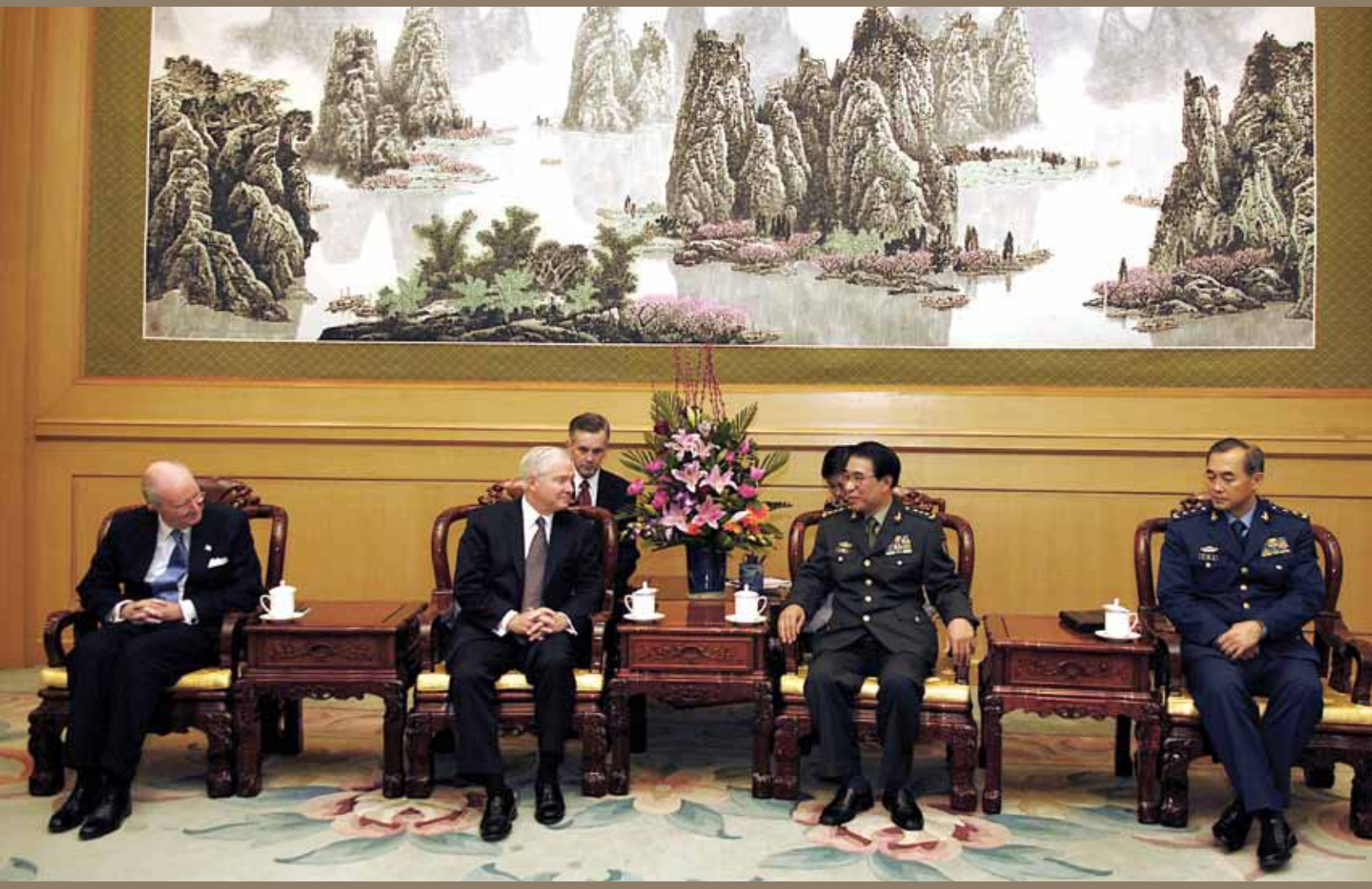
Assessing Chinese Military Transparency

by Michael Kiselycznyk and Phillip C. Saunders



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Cover: Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates meets with Vice Chairman of the CPC Central Military Commission General Xu Caihou as U.S. Ambassador to China Clark T. Randt, Jr., left, and Chinese Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Ma Xiaotian, right, look on in Beijing, November 5, 2007.

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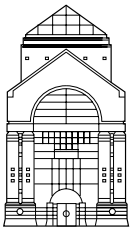

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Executive Summary

The United States and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region have expressed concerns about China's expanding military capabilities and called on Beijing to increase transparency on military issues. Chinese officials and military officers argue that Chinese transparency has increased over time and that weaker countries should not be expected to meet U.S. standards of transparency. Lack of an objective method for assessing military transparency has made it difficult to assess these Chinese claims and has inhibited productive dialogues about transparency.

This paper presents a methodology for assessing military transparency that aims to confront the question of China's military transparency from a comparative perspective. Drawing upon research done by Korean defense expert Dr. Choi Kang as part of a Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific working group, it focuses on defense white papers as a readily available and comparable source of official defense information. The paper develops an objective methodology for comparing the relative transparency of defense white papers by employing standardized definitions and a four-tiered set of criteria to evaluate transparency across 19 categories. This approach can be used to evaluate changes in transparency over time and to compare China's transparency with that of other Asia-Pacific countries.

We use this methodology to evaluate changes in transparency in China's six defense white papers (from 1998 through 2008) and to compare its 2008 white paper with 13 other recent Asia-Pacific defense white papers. We find that there has been a gradual but modest increase in the transparency of China's defense white papers over time. China's degree of transparency is roughly comparable to that of most Southeast Asian countries and to India, but significantly less than Asia-Pacific democracies such as Japan and South Korea. We argue that China's growing economic and military power makes major countries such as Japan, South Korea, India, and Australia a more appropriate basis of comparison.

Despite some limitations in the methodology (most notably omitting information published in other government documents when assessing transparency), we believe that it provides a reasonably objective and comparable way to evaluate relative military transparency. Although a full assessment would require considering a country's unique context and using all available information, the methodology employed in this study provides a useful starting point to compare how different countries within the Asia-Pacific region approach military transparency. We argue that this methodology could be used as the basis for broader comparative studies of transparency and as a way to support regional dialogues about military transparency.

Introduction

In recent years, China has significantly accelerated its military modernization. This effort has been underpinned by double-digit increases in China's official military budgets beginning in the mid-1990s. China's military, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), has also developed or acquired a range of new weapons systems that significantly improve its capabilities. These include the acquisition of advanced Russian systems such as SU–27 and SU–35 advanced fighters, S–300 surface-to-air missiles, *Soveremenny*-class destroyers equipped with advanced antiship cruise missiles, and Kilo-class advanced diesel submarines. China has greatly expanded its force of conventionally armed short-range and medium-range ballistic missiles, has begun to deploy antiship and land-attack cruise missiles that can be launched from ground, air, and naval platforms, and is reportedly developing an antiship ballistic missile that could be used to attack aircraft carriers. It has begun to deploy second-generation nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) including mobile DF–31 and DF–31A systems and has produced a new *Jin* (Type 094) class ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) that will carry a second-generation submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM).[1]

The United States and a number of China's neighbors in the Asia-Pacific region have expressed concerns about these new capabilities and the motivations behind China's military buildup. These concerns are heightened by a closed political system and culture of secrecy which places many aspects of Chinese military capabilities and national security decisionmaking processes off-limits. Even relatively innocuous information about military capabilities is often protected, classified, or censored by the government. Public debates about defense issues are rare, and often rely on Western estimates of Chinese military capabilities because official information is not available from government sources. As a result of these concerns, United States and other Asia-Pacific officials have regularly called on China to display greater transparency about its military capabilities, activities, and intentions. These calls began in the mid-1990s, when regional concerns were stoked by Chinese efforts to expand its military position in disputed areas of the South China Sea and by its use of ballistic missile tests to intimidate Taiwan in 1995 and 1996.

The international relations literature highlights the importance of the security dilemma—where one country's efforts to make itself more secure can decrease the security of others. Countries assess both capabilities and intentions when deciding whether a neighboring state's military modernization may constitute a threat to their security. Misperceptions about military capabilities and intentions can heighten the intensity of security dilemma dynamics and raise military

tensions. Greater transparency about military capabilities and intentions can therefore be an important tool in building confidence and reducing unwarranted security concerns. Within the Asia-Pacific region, efforts to increase regional military transparency have been focused on the official Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) and its track two counterpart, the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP).[2] Both organizations have sponsored regional meetings and working groups on ways to increase military transparency and build mutual confidence.

The Chinese government and the People's Liberation Army initially resisted foreign calls for greater military transparency, citing China's military weakness and arguing that transparency benefits stronger countries at the expense of weaker states.[3] However, China gradually began to respond to regional concerns with modest efforts to improve its military transparency. One important step was the release of a white paper on arms control and disarmament policies in 1995, followed by China's first defense white paper in 1998.[4] These documents were praised by both Asian and Western officials as welcome steps in the direction of greater transparency. This praise, and the implicit demand for greater transparency, led China to adopt a formalized process of producing new defense white papers every two years.

China's most recent defense white paper, covering developments in 2007 and 2008, was released in January 2009. China's defense white papers are drafted by multiple authors in a process that has been coordinated in recent years by Senior Colonel Chen Zhou of the Academy of Military Science. Interviews and internal evidence from past white papers suggest that different chapters are drafted by different organizations (each service probably drafts its own chapter, with the Foreign Ministry's Department of Arms Control and Disarmament drafting the arms control chapter). The final product is carefully vetted to address security and policy issues, probably via an interagency process. Like other Chinese white papers, the defense white paper is released by the State Council's Information Office. However, this year the newly-established Ministry of National Defense Information Office held a press conference to publicize the white paper's release.

Biannual white papers have not fully addressed foreign concerns about a lack of Chinese military transparency. U.S. Government officials continue to complain that China is not sufficiently transparent about military matters. Other Asia-Pacific officials and commentators sometimes also complain about a lack of transparency. For its part, China has distinguished between transparency about intentions and transparency about military capabilities, claiming that transparency about intentions is more important and that China is completely transparent about its peaceful intentions.[5] Disputes about the degree of Chinese military transparency have become

a regular part of U.S.-China diplomatic and military interactions. Partly in response to these concerns, Congress mandated that the Office of Secretary of Defense produce an annual report on Chinese military power. Constructive bilateral or multilateral discussions over China's level of military transparency have been hindered by disputes about an appropriate basis for comparison. The United States holds itself up as an example of transparency, noting that a plethora of information about U.S. military capabilities, strategies, and budgets is available in official government reports and testimony to Congress.[6] Chinese officials and military officers typically respond that China's transparency has increased over time and that weaker countries such as itself should not be expected to meet U.S. standards of transparency. Lack of objective standards for assessing military transparency that could be used to track trends over time and make comparisons between countries make it difficult for the two sides to reconcile their differences and inhibit productive dialogues about military transparency.[7]

Overview

This paper presents a methodology for assessing military transparency that can be used to assess changes in Chinese transparency over time and to compare China's transparency relative to other Asia-Pacific countries. It attempts to develop an objective basis for comparison by developing and employing a standard and consistent set of criteria. This methodology could potentially be used as the basis for a broader comparative study of transparency in the Asia-Pacific region and as a way to support regional dialogues about military transparency.

Our approach to assessing military transparency in the Asia-Pacific focuses on defense white papers. We adapted a template for defense white papers originally devised by Dr. Choi Kang of the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses (KIDA). Dr. Choi developed his template as part of a Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) working group in order to promote the adoption of a standard white paper format as a way to increase regional military transparency. In adapting the template, we developed standardized definitions and a four-tiered set of criteria to evaluate transparency in 19 categories. We used this methodology to evaluate China's six defense white papers from 1998 through 2008 to assess changes in transparency over time. We also employed the same definitions and criteria to evaluate 13 other recent Asia-Pacific defense white papers and compare the transparency of China's 2008 white paper relative to the others.[8] Our key findings are that although each of China's defense white papers contains some new information, there has been only a modest increase in transparency over time. China's degree of transparency is roughly comparable to that of most Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries and to India, but significantly less than Asia-Pacific democracies such as Japan and South Korea.

The paper begins with a description of the methodology employed in evaluating transparency, followed by a discussion of the 2008 Chinese defense white paper and a review of best practices from other Asia-Pacific white papers. Next, we present our analysis of how China's defense white papers have changed over time and areas in which transparency has improved. We then present a comparative analysis of China's 2008 defense white paper with other recent Asian-Pacific white papers. We conclude by highlighting lingering questions about Chinese transparency and discussing their implications for both foreign and domestic Chinese audiences.

Methodology

One challenge in designing this study was finding a widely accepted definition of transparency. The term *transparency* or *military transparency* appears frequently in the arms control and nonproliferation literature, as well as the wider international security literature. However, *transparency* is rarely defined explicitly. Even in cases where definitions are offered, they are usually couched in terms of the process through which transparency is achieved or in reference to the benefits of greater transparency. Discussing transparency in a general political context, Ann Florini defines it as "the opposite of secrecy," placing the two concepts on opposite ends of a continuum.[9] The United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution 60/40 loosely suggests "objective information on military matters" as a definition of transparency. The UN Center for Disarmament Affairs describes transparency as "systemic provision of information under informal and formal agreements."[10] Keeping in mind the consensus view that transparency is intended to reduce the risk of misunderstanding and conflict, we define *military transparency* as providing information about military capabilities and policies that allows other countries to assess the compatibility of those capabilities with a country's stated security goals.

The challenge in assessing military transparency is finding sources of information that can serve as a basis for comparison. After careful consideration, we decided that defense white papers were an appropriate source of official information about defense policies and that a comparison of the most recent defense white papers released by Asia-Pacific countries would be a good starting point for assessing transparency.

White papers are authoritative and publicly available documents that constitute official statements about a country's defense policies, goals, and capabilities. Most governments in the Asia-Pacific region now produce a defense white paper on at least an occasional basis. Although these white papers are not exactly the same in form and content, they share sufficient similarities to allow for comparison. In addition to China's defense white papers, we evaluated 13 recent white papers from the Asia-Pacific region. The oldest paper we examined was the Philippine

Table 1. Asia-Pacific White Papers

Country	Title	Year
Australia	*Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century 2030*	2009
Brunei	*Defense White Paper 2004 Defending the Nation's Sovereignty Shaping the Force Today: Defence White Paper Update 2007*	2007
Cambodia	*Defending the Kingdom of Cambodia 2006: Security, Development and International Cooperation*	2007
China	*White Paper on National Defense in 2008*	2009
India	*Annual Report 2007–2008*	2008
Indonesia	*Indonesian's White Paper of Defense of 2008*	2008
Japan	*Defense of Japan 2008*	2008
Laos	*National Defense Policy*	2005
Philippines	*Defense Policy Paper 1998*	1998
Singapore	*Defending Singapore in the 21st Century*	2000
South Korea	*Defense White Paper 2006*	2006
Taiwan	*2008 National Defense Report*	2008
Thailand	*The Defense of Thailand 2005*	2005
Vietnam	*Vietnam National Defence*	2009
Note: We were unable to locate defense white papers for Burma, Malaysia, and North Korea		

defense white paper from 1998, and the newest was Vietnam's white paper from 2009. Most of the papers examined were produced in the last 3 or 4 years. Table 1 contains information on the white papers used in this study.

Using defense white papers as a basis for assessing transparency raises a few methodological issues. Countries have different motivations for producing defense white papers, and the papers themselves are often aimed at multiple audiences (including both domestic and foreign readers). Although broadly similar in form and content, white papers from the Asia-Pacific region do not follow a standard organizational format. Each paper contains different information organized in its own fashion.

Table 2. Comparison of Dr. Choi's Template with Study Categories

	Dr. Choi Kang's Template, 1996	Current Study Template
Part I	**Threat Perception and Analysis of Security Environment**	**Security Environment**
	International	International
	Regional	Regional
	National	Internal
Part II	**National Security Goals and Objectives**	**National Security Goals**
	Strategic	Strategic
	Tactical	Tactical
Part III	**General Defense Policy Lines**	**General Defense Policy**
	Strategic	Doctrine
	Tactical	Missions
Part IV	**Major Areas of Concern**	**Major Areas of Concern**
	International	International
	Regional	Regional
	National	Internal
Part V	**Current Defense Posture**	**Current Defense Posture**
	Size of Force	Total Personnel
	Structure of Force	Structure of Force
	Military Holdings	Command Structure
	Strategic Weapons	Armaments
	Major Offensive Conventional Weapons	
Part VI	**Defense Management**	**Defense Management**
	Defense Budget	Overall Budget
	Organization	Budget Trends
		Planned Acquisitions or Procurement
Part VII	**Conclusion (Overall evaluation)**	**International Activity**
		Relationships, Exchanges, and Joint Exercises
		PKO/Humanitarian Missions
Appendices	Reference Material and Statistical Data	
	Record of Compliance with and Participation in UN Activities	

White papers range in size from the relatively slim booklets produced by Thailand and Vietnam to the full-size books produced annually by Japan and South Korea.[11] White papers do not include all publicly available information on a country's defense policies and military capabilities. In some cases, significant additional information is available in other defense publications and budget documents, testimony by defense ministers or senior military officers, or reports to a country's legislature. In order to bound the research and have a consistent basis for comparison, our analysis was limited to the information contained in each country's defense white paper, and did not seek or incorporate additional publicly available information. In his study, Dr. Choi proposed five criteria to assess the transparency of white papers: *comprehensiveness of contents*, *balance and mutual supportiveness among different sections of the report*, *precision and reliability of information*, *consistency and standardization*, and *availability*.[12] Our study focuses largely on the first two categories, with brief discussion of the final two.[13] We did not attempt to verify the accuracy of the information presented in the white papers against other sources. This would have greatly expanded the research task and introduced a large element of subjectivity into the assessment. Despite these caveats, we found that defense white papers contain sufficient and comparable information to allow for an assessment of relative transparency.

Dr. Choi developed a proposed template for defense white papers that could be employed by Asia-Pacific countries.[14] He presented his proposed template to a CSCAP working group on confidence- and security-building mechanisms in 1996, and subsequently published a study in the *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*.[15] Because Dr. Choi's template was produced by an Asian security expert and discussed in regional security meetings, it presented an ideal starting point for assessing transparency in defense white papers within the Asia-Pacific region. Dr. Choi originally proposed 18 categories divided into seven major sections. We adapted the categories in his template, ending up with 19 categories in all. The changes were intended to clarify the differences between categories and to add a forward-looking element by including categories on defense budget trends and planned acquisitions/procurement. (See table 2 for comparison of Dr. Choi's template and the categories employed in this study.) After finalizing these categories, we devised standardized definitions for each and developed a four-tiered set of criteria to evaluate transparency in each category.

The four possible ratings are represented as a color-coded system. Each color captures the general level of transparency in any one of the 19 categories. A red rating indicates a complete absence of relevant information, and thus no transparency. An orange rating indicates the white paper provides some relevant information that addresses the category, but only provides

Figure 1. Transparency Rating System

No Transparency	No Information
Low Transparency	Listings or Identification
Medium Transparency	Description
High Transparency	Analysis

a cursory overview and a very low level of transparency. A yellow rating indicates that the white paper provides some level of detail and a medium degree of transparency. A green rating indicates that the white paper provides a high degree of detail, explanation, and analysis, and thus provides a high degree of transparency.

For each of the 19 categories we developed specific definitions and stipulations for each of the four levels. The definitions and the rating criteria were developed independently and before reviewing the content of the white papers involved in the study.[16] We tried to use consistent language in the rating criteria to ensure some degree of comparability across categories. For example, an orange rating (in any category) usually indicates that the white paper listed or identified relevant information, but did include the description or analysis required for a yellow or green rating, respectively. Definitions and rating criteria are included in the Appendix.

In order to test the rating criteria, two raters independently evaluated all the Asia-Pacific defense white papers in our initial sample.[17] In this preliminary test, both raters came to similar conclusions about the appropriate rating each white paper deserved in each category. Where discrepancies in ratings existed, they generally lay in questions about whether a particular white paper deserved an orange or yellow rating, or a yellow or green rating. In most cases, the raters found that reference to the specific wording of the rating criteria produced agreement on the final rating. For consistency, the raters adopted a strict interpretation of the rating criteria.[18]

Based on this preliminary rating, we made minor adjustments in the rating criteria for a few categories to highlight the distinctions between ratings more clearly (see next paragraph). Once the rating criteria were finalized, the two raters finalized their evaluations of all the white papers. As in the preliminary rating attempt, differences were resolved by reviewing the rating criteria and discussing the basis of each reviewer's rating in terms of the specific text of the white paper. Differences could usually be explained on the basis of a strict or liberal application of the rating criteria. In all cases we favored a strict interpretation in order to maintain consistency.

In the course of developing and testing the rating criteria several methodological issues arose. We found that our original criteria for total personnel and overall defense budget often produced binary results despite nominally incorporating four levels of transparency: defense white papers typically either provided exact numbers or no numbers at all. We eliminated one personnel category and modified the criteria to require a greater degree of detail within the remaining personnel and budget categories to attain a yellow or green rating. We had difficulty distinguishing between descriptions of the *Security Environment* and *Major Areas of Concern* in Choi Kang's original white paper template. We resolved this issue by having the *Security Environment* categories focus on general trends, and the *Major Areas of Concern* focus on analysis of concrete issues, situations, and the positions or policies adopted to address them. At times these proved difficult to distinguish. However, a number of white papers that received high transparency ratings provide examples of how this can be accomplished (discussed below).

Another issue was expectations about what information ought to be included in a country's white paper. At times this required reconciling the rater's assumptions and expectations of what should be included with the information that is actually presented. The rater's familiarity with the country can affect this evaluation. The rater must also consider individual circumstances. Countries like South Korea and Australia do not face major internal security challenges, while a country like Vietnam is not currently involved in international peacekeeping. In some cases, a red rating may not indicate a lack of transparency, but rather that the issue is not applicable to a particular country. Some white papers contain useful information not captured by our template and categories. Our template does not necessarily consider all information in each white paper. Information on topics such as human resources and legal developments are generally aimed at a domestic rather than foreign audience, and thus are not especially relevant to external military transparency. If a white paper's organization did not conform to our template, we sought to locate relevant information for each category and consider it in the appropriate category when determining the rating.

Because our study focuses solely on defense white papers as a standardized basis for comparisons of transparency, we did not include information from other publicly available official documents. Some countries such as Japan and Australia provide significant additional information on military capabilities and defense budgets in other government documents. We also did not attempt to verify the validity and reliability of the information presented in defense white papers. Such an effort would have greatly expanded the scope of the study, and introduced a considerable element of subjective judgment into the rating and

Figure 2. Ratings for China's 2008 Defense White Paper

Chinese Defense White Paper	2008
Security Environment	
International	
Regional	
Internal	
National Security Goals	
Strategic	
Tactical	
General Defense Policy	
Doctrine	
Missions	
Major areas of Concern	
International	
Regional	
Internal	
Current Defense Posture	
Total Personnel	
Structure of Force	
Command Structure	
Armaments	
Defense Management	
Overall Budget	
Budget Trends	
Planned Acquisitions or Procurement	
International Activity	
Relationships, Exchanges, and Joint Exercises	
PKO/Humanitarian Missions	

comparison process. We felt it was best to focus on the information presented in the white papers to assess transparency. However, the accuracy of the information in a white paper is important if the paper is to serve the larger purpose of reassuring neighboring countries about one's benign intentions. Publishing false or misleading information in a white paper could foster increased suspicions.

Ratings for China's 2008 Defense White Paper

Security Environment—This section addresses current or developing international, regional, and internal trends that threaten or have the potential to threaten the country. The section consists of international, regional, and internal categories.

Security Environment	
International	
Regional	
Internal	

The discussion of China's security environment in the 2008 defense white paper generally receives a medium transparency rating. The first chapter on *The Security Environment* is not explicitly divided into international, regional, or internal categories, but the delineation between the three levels of analysis is apparent within the section. The section identifies and describes a number of international and regional trends, including globalization, multi-polarization, international strategic forces, risk of "worldwide, all-out and large scale wars," resource competition, hegemonism, and the revolution in military affairs (RMA). The chapter lists but does not describe the existence of terrorism, environmental disasters, climate change, serious epidemics, transnational crime, and piracy. The Asia-Pacific security environment is described as stable with increasing cooperation and dialogue while fluctuations in the world economy, political turbulence, and a variety of maladies remain ongoing concerns. Although the discussion of Taiwan—which the Chinese consider an internal issue—is detailed, the paper only states that "China's security situation has improved steadily" while highlighting the importance of economic factors. A lack of detail and information on other internal trends is readily apparent.

As an example of best practices, the 2003 Indonesian white paper breaks down the *Strategic Context* chapter into *Global*, *Regional*, and *National* sections. Trends are identified and analyzed in depth in each section. For example, the *Regional* section analyzes the role of actors involved in Southeast Asia including the United States, China, Japan, and the European Union. The section also analyzes the issue of "regional waters security" and borders—including a discussion of trends concerning each of Indonesia's border relationships. This represents both a broader and deeper treatment of trends relevant to the region and to

Indonesia's security environment. Compared with other countries in this study, the Indonesian paper provides one of the most comprehensive discussions of the country's internal security. This includes the identification and discussion of two separatist groups, terrorism, issues of communal conflict, radical group movements, social unrest, and maritime security disturbances. This chapter's complete description and analysis of the trends affecting Indonesia's security environment place the subsequent discussion of Indonesia's defense policy into full perspective. The 2008 Indonesian white paper contains similar information, but is organized in a slightly different manner. Although the 2008 Indonesian white paper received transparency ratings comparable to the 2003 white paper, it received a slightly lower rating on the *Regional* section.

National Security Goals—This section addresses the economic, political, social, and security objectives that are critical to the country's development and security and the policy approaches the country pursues to ensure national security objectives are fulfilled. The section consists of strategic and tactical sections.

National Security Goals	
Strategic	
Tactical	

The discussion of China's national security goals receives a medium transparency rating. The *National Defense Policy* chapter identifies broad "strategic" level national security goals of protecting national sovereignty, security, territorial integrity, and safeguarding the interests of national development and of the Chinese people as important "above all else." The chapter continues by including the building of a "fortified national defense" and "strong military forces compatible with national security and development interest…while building a moderately prosperous society in all aspects." The chapter prioritizes these goals generally using the term "above all else" in the first paragraph and when discussing the development of the armed forces "while building a moderately prosperous society in all aspects." However, beyond this general suggestion of priorities, most national security goals are listed without further detail, discussion, or prioritization. The exception is the discussion of China's twin goals of developing national defense and modernizing the armed forces, which is the focus of the remainder of the *National Defense Policy* chapter. The *Arms Control and Disarmament* chapter contains similarly

descriptive information and explanations about why arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation are important to China's national security.

The "tactical" means designed to achieve many of the "strategic" level goals are listed in *The Security Situation* chapter. These tactical means include the concepts of peaceful development, the opening-up strategy of mutual benefit, promoting a harmonious world, and implementing the scientific outlook on development. Perfecting China's national emergency management system, pursuing the new security concept, encouraging dialogue and cooperation, and never seeking hegemony or engaging in military expansion are discussed in somewhat greater detail in this chapter and in the following *National Defense Policy* chapter. The *International Security Cooperation* and *Arms Control and Disarmament* chapters clearly list and in many cases describe China's recent involvement in international cooperation, arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation. The tactical category does not receive a green rating because in many cases the paper does not define expansive terms like "new security concept" or explain how these concepts relate to and advance China's national security. Discussion of the three-step development strategy to modernize national defense and the armed forces in *The National Defense Policy* chapter is again the most detailed, and is the exception in this category. (The scattering of information relevant to national security goals throughout multiple chapters within the white paper has the effect of obscuring the links between the strategic and tactical levels of national security.)

As an example of best practices, the 1998 Philippines white paper addresses national security goals through a series of chapters that build on each other. The *Defense Objectives and Approach* chapter presents a comprehensive description of overall national security goals, discusses why they are important to national security, and shows how specific policies are intended to address these goals. The Philippines white paper also links the goals discussed in this chapter with the major areas of concern discussed in a previous chapter on *Internal Policy Environment*. This chapter describes how certain issues threaten national security and then provides a "holistic approach" listing policy efforts intended to address these issues. The white paper goes further in a later *Defense Challenges and Opportunities* chapter. This chapter links these national security goals, policies, and major areas of concern together in order to identify eight specific national security goals and opportunities confronting the Department of National Defense. More than most white papers, the Philippines white paper uses a format that connects and comprehensively discusses Manila's most important and crucial national security goals and the policies intended to ensure national security.

General Defense Policy—This section address the approaches, framework, or principles that guide a country's defense policy and the primary missions, responsibilities, or roles assigned to the armed forces in pursuit of this defense policy. The section consists of doctrine and mission categories.

General Defense Policy	
Doctrine	
Missions	

The discussion of China's *General Defense Policy* receives a mix of medium and high transparency ratings. The *National Defense Policy* chapter details elements of China's doctrine such as defensive doctrine, active defense, "winning local wars in conditions of informationization," taking "integrated joint operations as the basic approach," and China's self-defensive nuclear strategy. Emphasis is placed on deterring crises and wars and the importance of close coordination of military, political, diplomatic, economic, cultural, and legal endeavors. Nuclear strategy and deterrence and integrated joint operations are detailed and connected to China's overall defense policy. The historical missions, people's war, the subordination of the PLA's development to the overall national construction, and emphasis on military operations other than war (MOOTW) are included but not described in detail. This information is presented in a clear and concise manner and provides a comprehensive description of the principles underlying China's defense policy. Despite meeting the criteria for a green rating, some important details are still absent. For example, the white paper could go further in discussing how "the flexible use of different means of deterrence" should be used "to effectively control war situations," and what these means are. As written, these relationships remain somewhat ambiguous.

The *National Defense Policy* chapter also outlines the PLA's fundamental missions including performing the historical missions and winning local wars in conditions of informationization while also increasing the capability to "maintain maritime, space and electromagnetic space security and to carry out the tasks of counterterrorism, stability maintenance, emergency rescue and international peacekeeping." MOOTW and international exchanges are identified as important PLA missions, as well. The missions of the PLA (Army), Navy (PLAN), Air Force (PLAAF), Second Artillery Corps, People's Armed Police Force (PAPF), Militia, and border and coastal area defense forces are discussed in individual chapters (an innovation in the 2008 white paper). In some cases the missions of branches within services are also specified. The chapter detailing PLA Army missions is vaguer than those detailing the missions of the PLAN,

PLAAF, and Second Artillery. The *Force Building* subsection in each service chapter presents information on efforts designed to help each service perform these missions. A green rating would require further discussion of service-specific mission guidelines, including discussion of how the services function in joint operations. For example the PLAAF chapter states that the air force is responsible for "safeguarding the country's territorial air space and territorial sovereignty and maintaining a stable air defense posture nationwide" and is transitioning from "territorial air defense to both offensive and defensive operations." This provides a clear statement of the PLAAF's general mission, resulting in a yellow rating. However, these terms do not describe the types of actions and operations tactical units will carry out to fulfill these missions or the type of actions neighboring countries should reasonably expect PLAAF aircraft to conduct on a regular basis.

Several Asia-Pacific white papers (including those of Australia, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan) offer best case examples, although through different formats. The Australian paper clearly describes Canberra's "military strategy" and the importance of joint operations to the overall doctrine. The paper defines this strategy as neither "purely defensive" nor "reactive." Instead the paper makes clear the "proactive nature" of Australia's strategy and relates this strategy to national interests and national security goals. Chapter seven provides a discussion and prioritization of the four main missions of the Australian Defense Force. These include defending Australia from attack, contributing to stability and security in the South Pacific and East Timor, contributing to military contingencies in the Asia-Pacific region, and contributing to military contingencies in support of global security. In each case the white paper lays out the reasoning behind these missions and why they are prioritized as they are. The following chapter is partly devoted to identifying the specific roles and missions assigned to the maritime, land, air force, and other services. More specific information detailing how these missions will be carried out is presented in chapters nine and ten.

The discussion of general defense policy in the white papers of South Korea and Taiwan is largely devoted to detailing doctrine and missions as related to armed conflict with North Korea and China, respectively. In both cases the white papers present a full and detailed description and discussion of both doctrine and missions. Japan takes a slightly different approach. Part III, Section 2 of the white paper (*Measures for Defense of Japan*) presents Japan's doctrine and the missions of the different services of the Self-Defense Force (SDF) through the lens of "new threats and diverse contingencies." For each threat or contingency the white paper details Japan's doctrine and the role of each service of the SDF. The variety of different approaches that countries employ to describe general defense policy highlights the point that there is no one correct template in designing a white paper or providing military transparency.

Major Areas of Concern—This section addresses specific international, regional, or internal situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots that concern or threaten the country. This section differs from the Security Environment category by focusing on concrete issues and situations and the policies the country employs to confront them. The section consists of international, regional, and internal categories.

Major Areas of Concern	
International	
Regional	
Internal	

The discussion of China's *Major Areas of Concern* generally receives low to medium transparency ratings. Most of the discussion in this section overlaps closely with the trends described above in the *Security Environment* section. In most cases, the white paper does not detail specific situations or crises that concern China in the international environment or discuss how China is responding. For example, the paper mentions trends in the RMA, arms races, nuclear proliferation, and changes in the global economy, but does not elaborate on specific issues within these larger trends. Similarly, regional areas of concern including territorial disputes and the internal stability of some nations are briefly mentioned, but the paper offers few details or specific examples. The white paper does express concern over some specific situations such as realignment between the United States and Japan and the North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs, but it presents few details or depictions of China's positions on or preferred solutions to these issues.

As opposed to the above "traditional" security issues, the Chinese white paper offers greater detail on "nontraditional" security issues and MOOTW. If the *Major Areas of Concern—Regional* category were divided in this manner, the section on traditional security would receive an orange rating while the nontraditional section would receive a yellow rating. As the study is constructed, however, the category receives an orange rating due to the lack of detail about traditional security concerns. On internal areas of concern the white paper presents a full description of the situation regarding Taiwan, including China's policy approaches and desired outcomes. If this were the only Chinese internal security concern, the subcategory would receive a green rating. However, the paper contains only a vague mention of "strategic maneuvers and containment from the outside" and "disruption and sabotage by separatist and hostile

forces from the inside." The paper acknowledges that China "is encountering many new circumstances and new issues in maintaining stability" and lists the separatist forces of "Taiwan independence," "East Turkistan independence," and "Tibet independence." Although this is the first white paper to explicitly identify separatist forces, there is no discussion of these concerns, no mention of 2008 incidents and attacks in Tibet and Xinjiang, and no description of China's approaches or policies designed to confront these issues. Even a cursory discussion of these issues would have resulted in the higher yellow rating.

No white papers in this study received a green rating in all three categories of the *Major Areas of Concern* section. In part this is due to the methodological issue raised above. The separation of trends and issues is somewhat artificial and few countries structure white papers in this manner. Some countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia received a yellow rating in all three categories. These white papers both openly list and discuss specific areas of concern that are separate from the trends detailed in early chapters on the security environment or strategic context. However, even in these cases, neither offers more than a cursory description of approaches or policies designed. Interestingly the 2003 (but not the 2008) Indonesian white paper received a green rating in all three categories. For example, on the question of Indonesia's border situations and disputes, the 2003 version discusses the state of each and then discusses Indonesia's current efforts to resolve remaining disputes. This earlier version includes separate chapters on *Threat Prediction* and *The Strategic Defense Interest*. These chapters integrate Indonesia's major areas of concern and security policy into the context of ongoing security trends, providing a comprehensive picture.

One final observation is that many countries receive high transparency marks in two of three categories, but very low transparency ratings on the third category. For example, the Australian white paper received a green rating on *Major Areas of Concern—International* and *Regional*, but a red on *Internal*. On the other hand, the Indian and Cambodian white papers showed greater transparency in *Major Areas of Concern—Regional* and *Internal*, but not *International*. As mentioned above, this could be attributed to each country's specific circumstances and security situations. Australia does not have serious internal concerns that would receive much attention in a defense white paper. Cambodia, on the other hand, is more likely to detail internal areas of concern because of its unique security situation.

Current Defense Posture—This section addresses the details and composition of a country's armed forces. This includes total number of personnel serving in the defense forces of the country, the organization of the armed forces and the "order of battle," the chain of command and the structure of

decisionmaking, and the weapons systems and equipment of the armed forces. The section is broken down into total personnel, structure of force, command structure, and armaments categories.

Current Defense Posture	
Total Personnel	
Structure of Force	
Command Structure	
Armaments	

The ratings of categories within the *Current Defense Posture* section vary but generally receive a low transparency rating. In previous white papers, the overall size of the PLA was presented in relation to the downsizing of the PLA. The 2008 white paper is the first version of China's white paper that does not include an overall figure for the size of the PLA. A discussion similar to the one found in the 2006 version on the relative change in size among the services is also not included in the 2008 version. The only discussion of total personnel is found in the *Militia* chapter which states that the size of the militia will decrease from 10 million to 8 million in the period of 2006–2010. This represents a surprising drop in the rating of this category for the 2008 defense white paper.[19]

Chapters on the PLA Army, PLAN, PLAAF, Second Artillery Corps, and the PAPF, Reserves, and Militia provide some information on their respective force structures. The paper identifies the number of army combined corps (18), the number of fleets and their names, and the division of the air commands and headquarters into specific geographic commands with subordinate aviation divisions and regiments of various types. While this provides a basic overview of how each service is structured, it does not identify or provide the number of such units within this structure. For example, the paper does not present details on the number of flotillas that comprise the North Sea (*Beihai*) fleet or give the number of ships within each flotilla.

The individual service chapters and *The Armed Forces and the People* chapter provide a description of the division of responsibilities, authority, and decisionmaking among central and local authorities and within each of the services. A chart found in the 2006 version illustrating command authority (Appendix I in the 2006 white paper) is not included in the 2008 white paper. However, the details found in the text remain sufficient in describing the basic command structure for a yellow rating. This section does not receive a green rating because it does not

describe how these separate chains of command (for example in the Central Military Commission, between the services, or between political and military personnel) interact during operations or in wartime.

Each of the service chapters contains general descriptions of the types of armaments and hardware the services operate or are beginning to deploy. For example, the air force chapter says that the PLAAF "has in the main established a major battle weaponry and equipment system with third-generation aircraft and ground-to-air missiles as the mainstay, and modified second-generation aircraft and ground-to-air missiles as the supplement." The navy chapter states the PLAN is equipped with "nuclear-powered strategic missile submarines, nuclear-powered attack submarines and conventional submarines…destroyers, frigates, missile boats, mine sweepers, landing ships and services ships." The description of Second Artillery armaments is especially lacking in any details about platforms or armaments (discussed below). Overall, the 2008 defense white paper does not identify or discuss any specific weapons systems, which is necessary for a yellow rating. It also does not provide the number of such platforms currently in service, necessary for a green rating. Finally, the white paper is somewhat ambiguous in identifying the platforms that are currently in service as opposed to those that are scheduled to enter service in the near future.

Japan has easily the most transparent white paper in discussing current defense posture and is the only country to receive a green rating in all four categories. Part II, Chapter 2 and the reference section contain an assortment of charts, figures, maps, and detailed descriptions covering all four categories. There is a clear discussion of the number of personnel in the SDF, and Reference Chart 60 in the appendix contains figures on the personnel within each service. The paper presents multiple maps that detail the deployment of divisions, brigades, air force squadrons, and fleets throughout Japanese territory. A variety of charts present details on the structure of the ground self-defense force (GSDF), maritime self-defense force (MSDF), and air self-defense force (ASDF), breaking down each into tactical components. The reference appendix also contains an organizational diagram of the SDF that fully identifies and names individual units and lists their locations.

Part II, Chapter 1 discusses civilian control of the military and the role of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, and the Minister of Defense in defense policy. Part III, Chapter 1 details the legislative process and response in the case of an armed attack, the role of specific officials, the responsibilities of the federal and local institutions, the joint operations structure, and the role of intelligence collectors. This section also contains a description of the basic chain of command and the process used to formulate responses to previously discussed traditional and

nontraditional security contingencies and scenarios and an organizational chart of the Ministry of Defense. Although descriptions of joint operations during a crisis or wartime could be more detailed, they satisfy the criteria for a green rating. One aspect that separates the Japanese white paper from other white papers is the inclusion of information on how political and military command structures interact during an actual crisis.

Finally, the Japanese white paper offers full and descriptive details on armaments. Part II, Chapter 2 discusses the number of vehicles, artillery pieces, aircraft, ships, submarines, helicopters, and other major systems in the SDF. References 14 through17 detail the specifications of individual weapons platforms, the number possessed, and even identification and specifications of individual MSDF vessels.

Defense Management—This section addresses a country's defense budget and future procurement plans. This includes overall spending on the armed forces and defense, budget figures that provide historical context for current defense spending or information on future spending plans, and planned weapons systems or capabilities procurements. The section consists of overall budget, budget trends, and planned acquisitions or procurement categories.

Defense Management	
Overall Budget	
Budget Trends	
Planned Acquisitions or Procurement	

Defense Management is one of the least transparent areas of the Chinese white paper. The chapter *Defense Expenditure* includes a figure for China's 2008 defense budget (RMB 417.769 billion). The paper presents a comparison of China's budget to other countries and as a percentage of China's GDP and state expenditure. Chart 1 divides China's 2007 defense expenditures into three categories: Personnel, Training and Maintenance, and Equipment. The caption briefly explains what is covered within these three components. For the first time these figures are further divided by active and reserve force (this information is derived directly from the PRC's September 2008 submission to the UN Military Budget Transparency Mechanism general categories.)[20] However, the Chinese white paper does not detail what portion of the equipment category is devoted to procurement, what portion is devoted to research and development, or the level of spending within these categories. The section does

not discuss any defense-related expenditure not included in the official defense budget, even though a significant amount of Chinese defense-related expenditure (including procurement of foreign weapons systems) is not included in the official budget.[21] No information is provided on the budgets of individual services.

The 2008 white paper includes a more detailed discussion on the rationales behind defense expenditure increases and a chart of China's defense spending from 1978 to 2008 (Appendix V). The chapter presents year-to-year percentage increases in defense expenditure in the period of 2006–2008 and provides the average percentage increase in defense expenditure in the periods of 1978–1987 (3.5 percent), 1988–1997 (14.5 percent), and 1998–2007 (15.9 percent). This information places China's past defense expenditures into historical context, but the white paper does not provide an estimated or projected size of the defense budget beyond 2008 (necessary for a green rating).

The white paper offers a general description of some capabilities China plans to acquire in order to fulfill modernization benchmarks in 2010, 2020, and the mid-21st century. The information here overlaps with the discussion of China's capabilities as described above; the difference between current and future capabilities often remains ambiguous. There is some description of recently developed or developing PLA Army and PLAN capabilities and of capabilities the PLAAF desires. There is markedly less discussion on the Second Artillery's planned acquisitions or procurement. At no point does the white paper discuss any specific weapons platforms, quantities, or timelines for procurement or purchases.

Japan again provides the best case example.[22] Part II, Chapter II, Section 5: *Defense-Related Expenditures* and Reference 20 provide the necessary information for a green rating in the budget and budget trends category. It includes a total defense budget figure, division of spending into functional categories with detailed discussion of procurement and R&D, and costs outside the defense budget including those associated with the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) and the U.S. forces realignment-related expenses. This section also displays historical budget figures and a forecast of procurement expenses. Part II, Chapter II, Section 3: *Mid-Term Defense Program* discusses defense funding for the past several years (FY2005–2009) detailing major procurement and development projects for the SDF under the Mid-Term Defense Program. This includes a chart detailing these plans and projects. Additional charts and figures detail more specific spending such as *Necessary Expenses and Contract Amounts of Material Expenses* over the previous mid-term defense program (FY2001–2005) and current mid-term defense program, respectively. Section 4 of the same chapter offers further detail on recent and ongoing procurements under the title *Build-up of Defense Capability for FY 2008*. Supplemental information in References 18–21 provides more detailed and

full historical budget information. Although the 2008 Japanese white paper does not include budget projections past 2009, this is due to the timing of its release (at the end of Japan's five-year mid-term defense program).[23] Finally, throughout these chapters and in References 9, 12, and 13, the paper presents a comprehensive description of the major weapons platforms Japan plans to procure in the near term, in many cases including a procurement schedule.

International Activity—This section addresses the international activities of a country's armed forces. This includes the country's defense relationships, military exchanges, and joint exercises with other nations, participation in international defense organizations, and participation in bilateral or multilateral peacekeeping or humanitarian missions. The section consists of Relationships, Exchanges, and Joint Exercises, and PKO/humanitarian missions categories.

International Activity	
Relationships/Exchanges/Joint Exercises	
PKO/Humanitarian Missions	

The white paper provides a description of China's international relationships, exchanges, and joint exercises in Chapter XIII: *International Security Cooperation*. It also provides a comprehensive chart listing *Major International Exchanges of the Chinese Military 2007–2008* (Appendix I), *Joint Exercises and Training with Foreign Armed Forces 2007–2008* (Appendix II), and *Imports and Exports of Seven Major Types of Conventional Arms 2007* (Appendix IV). Chapter XIII, *International Security Cooperation,* details China's participation in UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs). Appendix III provides further information in a chart detailing China's international peacekeeping and humanitarian missions from 1990 to November 2008. This includes the number of PLA personnel involved, types (observers, staff officers, or police), dates deployed, and their role in these missions.

A number of Asia-Pacific white papers offer best case examples, including Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and China. The Japanese and Korean white papers both devote full chapters to their relationships and exchanges and involvement in international peacekeeping operations. Both papers include appendices with charts, similar to the Chinese white paper, containing dates, locations, and brief descriptions of exchanges, joint exercises, and PKOs. Both the Japanese and Korean papers include specific chapters on their alliance with the United States. The Korean paper also includes a section and appendix (14) on engagement and exchanges with North Korea. Although the Singaporean white paper does not include an appendix or detailed

chart, it includes detailed descriptions of its exchanges, joint exercises, and involvement in PKOs within the text of the white paper.

China's Defense White Papers from 1998 to 2008

We used the rating criteria to evaluate the transparency of China's six defense white papers from the first in 1998 to the most recent in 2008. Figure 3 illustrates the findings, which indicate a gradual but modest increase in transparency over the 10-year period. With minor fluctuations, the *General Defense Policy* section has steadily increased in transparency. *Planned Acquisitions and Procurement* (2006), *Command Structure* (2006), and *Relationships, Exchanges, and Joint Exercises* (2000) improved to a greater level of transparency at a certain point and remained constant thereafter. Not all increases (or decreases) in transparency over this decade are captured in the color coding. Some categories show marginal improvement over time that does not meet the criteria for a higher rating. For example, the 2008 paper showed marginal improvements in *Security Environment—International* that were not sufficient to receive a higher rating. The white paper presents some analysis of trends but not in a deep or broad enough manner across all trends identified for a green rating.

Other categories have consistently remained at a low level of transparency. These include *Security Environment—Internal, Major Areas of Concern—Internal*, *Structure of Force*, *Armaments*, *Budget Trends*, and *Planned Acquisitions and Procurements*. The 2008 White Paper also was less transparent in a few categories. For example, *Major Areas of Concern—Regional* and *Internal* both presented slightly less information than in previous years. It is not apparent in figure 3, but within the *Major Areas of Concern—Regional* category the discussion of nontraditional security issues is much more detailed than discussion of traditional security concerns. On *Major Areas of Concern—Internal*, the 2008 white paper is more forthright than any previous paper about identifying specific separatist groups, but the actual discussion of separatism is less specific than in previous papers. Finally, the *Personnel* category drops to a red rating in the 2008 white paper, which contains no mention of the total number of PLA personnel. All previous white papers made some mention of total personnel, usually in the context of PLA downsizing.

The *Overall Budget* and *Budget Trends* categories present some interesting transparency issues. Although these categories consistently receive medium transparency ratings, there have been no significant improvements over the last 10 years. The 2008 version for the first time breaks down the budget into regular, reserve, and militia components and contains more complete historical figures. However, no version of the white paper contains more specific information on research

Figure 3. Comparison of China's Defense White Papers over Time

Chinese Defense White Paper	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
Security Environment						
International						
Regional						
Internal						
National Security Goals						
Strategic						
Tactical						
General Defense Policy						
Doctrine						
Missions						
Major Areas of Concern						
International						
Regional						
Internal						
Current Defense Posture						
Total Personnel						
Structure of Force						
Command Structure						
Armaments						
Defense Management						
Overall Budget						
Budget Trends						
Planned Acquisitions						
International Activity						
Exchanges						
PKO Missions						

and development, weapons procurement, spending outside of the regular defense budget, or projected future budgets. The *Overall Budget* and *Budget Trends* categories have maintained the most standardized content, presenting almost exactly the same limited information in every version.

Although Chinese defense white papers show a slight increase in overall transparency over time, there continue to be fluctuations in the rating for some individual categories. Each version of the white paper tends to emphasize a different aspect of China's defense policy, often at the expense of other sections. For example, information on *Current Defense Posture* is almost completely absent in the 2004 white paper, which is heavily focused on legal and personnel management issues. Earlier versions, such as 1998, 2000, and 2002, tended to spend more time defining basic terms and concepts associated with *National Security Goals* and *General Defense Policy*. Relative to other versions, the 2006 white paper presented increased information on the structure and missions of auxiliary forces such as the PAPF, Civil Air Defense, Militia, and Border Forces.

The existence of apparent themes in different versions of the white paper may indicate how Chinese officials view the relationship between each version of the white paper.[24] The Chinese perspective may be that each new version should be read as an "update" of previous white papers, rather than as an independent document. In many cases, the newest version of the white paper does not elaborate on concepts or terms already defined and discussed in previous versions. For example, the 1998 paper details the "New Security Concept" and "the five principles of peaceful coexistence." In the 2000 paper, however, the "New Security Concept" is referred to but not discussed. In other cases, specific numbers, figures, or details listed in one white paper do not reappear in subsequent versions. The 2002 white paper offers extensive detail on the structure of the PLAAF, while the 2006 version presents details on the structure of the PAPF. In both cases this information does not reappear in subsequent white papers. Comments by PLA officials have not helped resolve this ambiguity. In December 2008, Senior Colonel Chen Zhou highlighted the introduction of new information on the structure of the PLA and the services in 2000 and the inclusion of detailed information on the PLAAF in 2002. However, he did not resolve ambiguity on whether this information, presented only on one occasion, remains accurate and official.[25]

Some other countries such as Australia, Singapore, and Brunei have in the past or still employ an "update" format for defense white papers. These countries are direct and explicit in stating that this "update" must be read as a supplement to an original or base white paper. The update paper often directs the reader to refer back to the original for definitions and figures. In cases like this—where the connection between the original and update white papers was explicit—we considered both the original document and the update as one paper. However, as this update dynamic remains ambiguous in the Chinese case, our study considered each Chinese

White Paper Standardization and Format

Choi Kang's original paper emphasizes the importance of a standardized format and consistent content in increasing the transparency of a white paper over time. Chinese defense white papers do retain a fairly standardized format and consistent content in some areas, including *Security Environment*, *Budget*, *Arms Control and Proliferation*, and *International Activity*. However, other aspects of the white paper's structure and content are more variable. Information on the services, personnel, auxiliary services, and legal developments fluctuates from year to year.

Other white papers, such as the Japanese, follow a standard format from year to year, allowing easy comparison over time. Lack of standardization may be the product of China's apparent thematic or updating tendency. Other countries that use an update format (Brunei and previously Australia) align the chapters of the update with the original white paper. China does not do this in a consistent manner.

There are some indications that the drafters of the Chinese defense white paper are developing a more standardized format and content. In past versions there has been an obvious imbalance in information on each individual service. For the first time, the 2008 version included separate chapters on each service with more standardized content. Chen Zhou seemed to acknowledge this effort prior to the release of the 2008 white paper. He stated, "Based on maintaining the stability of policy elaboration and style continuity, there are significant changes in both the structure and content of the new white paper."[26] The latest Chinese format is comparable with some of the more transparent white papers in the region. It will be worth watching whether this format is maintained in the next release of the white paper.

white paper as an independent document. The appearance and then disappearance of information and issues often leads to ambiguity and confusion. A discussion about this issue with the authors of the Chinese white paper would provide clarity and possibly help foreign analysts avoid making erroneous assumptions.

Comparison: China and ASEAN Member States

We compared China's 2008 White Paper with the most recent white papers from eight Southeast Asian countries that are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In general, we concluded that China's degree of transparency was roughly comparable with that of the ASEAN countries. Only Indonesia and the Philippines—both with demo-

cratic governments—offered a generally greater level of overall transparency. Figure 4 indicates some differences in the degree of transparency in Southeast Asia. For example, Indonesia and the Philippines are very thorough in their discussion of the *Security Environment* compared to other countries. China and Singapore provide many details on their *International Activity* and engagement with other countries. China and ASEAN countries all tend to lack transparency in their descriptions of specific military capabilities in *Current Defense Posture* and details on budgets in *Defense Management*. If countries in ASEAN are considered as China's peer group, the Chinese white paper offers comparable or slightly greater transparency than its neighbors.

Comparison: China and Other East Asian and Asia-Pacific White Papers

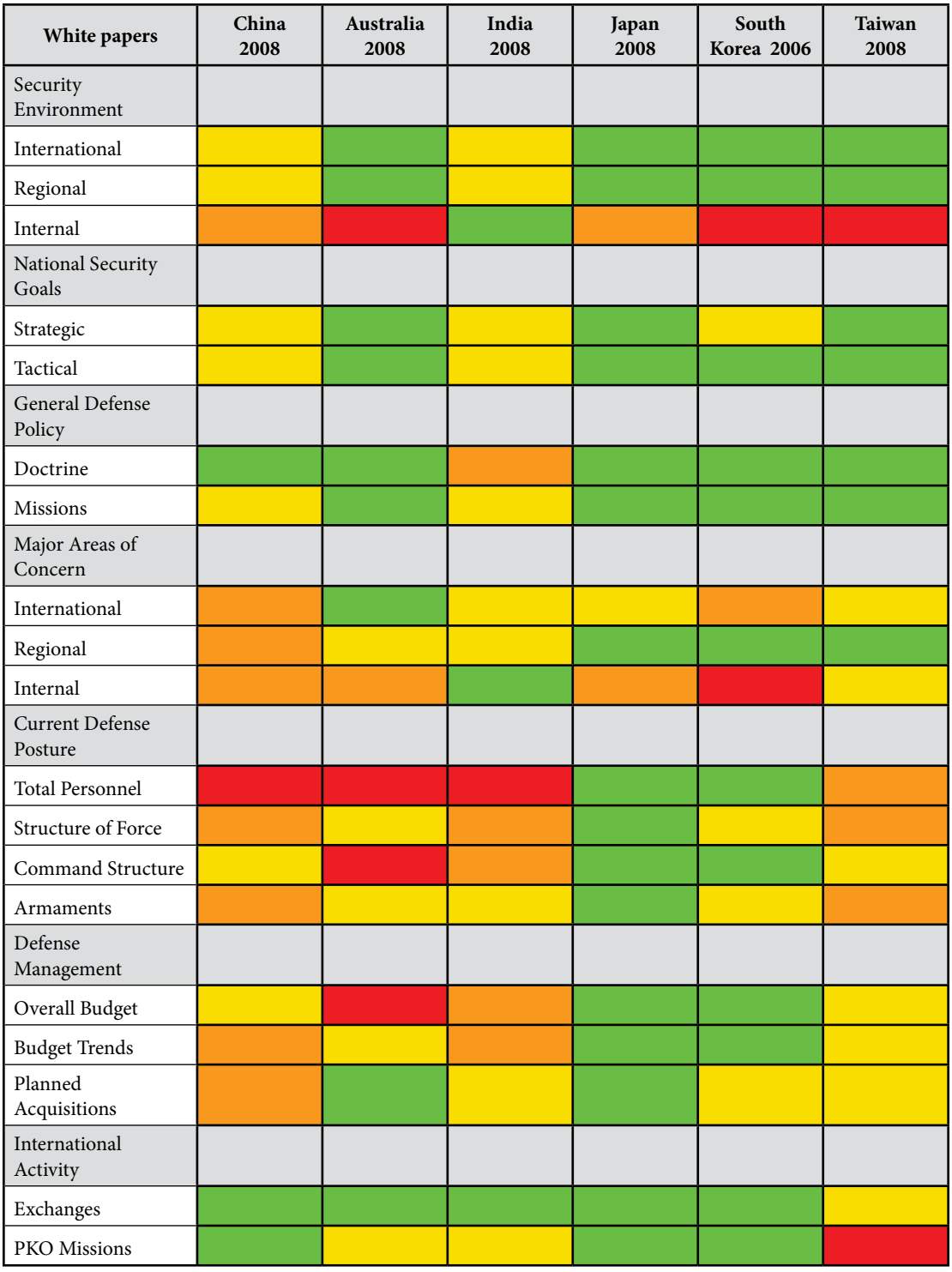
We also compared China's 2008 defense white paper with five other Northeast Asian and Asia-Pacific white papers. China does not compare as favorably with this group in terms of transparency. They generally possess greater military power, are more economically developed, and are more democratic than the members of the ASEAN group. China's overall transparency is roughly comparable with India's, although not necessarily in the same categories. China also matches well with this group in *International Activity*. However, Australia, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan all consistently offer greater transparency in five of the seven sections. Japan and South Korea represent the most transparent of all white papers surveyed. Not only do they offer the most detailed information and analysis, but they are also the most standardized in form and content over time.

China compared more closely than expected with Australia and India on *Current Defense Posture* and *Defense Management*. Two factors help explain this. First, the criterion for a green rating in the budget category is a breakdown of defense spending into functional components. The Indian white paper contains a breakdown by service, but does not break down the budget by functional category. Although this information is very relevant for military transparency, it does not meet requirements for a yellow rating under a strict interpretation of the criteria. Second, Australia and India publish official budget reports that are easily available on their respective ministry of defense Web sites. (This is true for many of the countries within this grouping.) We did not include information from other government documents in our assessments for this study. However, they do contain official and publicly available information intended to be read alongside the white paper. Many of these supplemental documents fill in the areas of low transparency in the Australian white paper. It is worth noting that the Chinese government does not publish this type of additional official information in areas like defense budget or military force structure. In these cases, the limited amount of information in the Chinese defense white paper represents the extent of officially available information.

Figure 4. Comparison of China's Transparency Ratings with Those of ASEAN Member States

White papers	China 2008	Brunei 2004/07	Cambodia 2006	Indonesia 2008	Laos 2005	Philippines 1998	Singapore 2000	Thailand 2005	Vietnam 2009
Security Environment									
International									
Regional									
Internal									
National Security Goals									
Strategic									
Tactical									
General Defense Policy									
Doctrine									
Missions									
Major Areas of Concern									
International									
Regional									
Internal									
Current Defense Posture									
Total Personnel									
Structure of Force									
Command Structure									
Armaments									
Defense Management									
Overall Budget									
Budget Trends									
Planned Acquisitions									
International Activity									
Exchanges									
PKO Missions									

Figure 5. Comparison of China's Transparency Ratings with Those of Other East Asian and Asia-Pacific White Papers



White papers	China 2008	Australia 2008	India 2008	Japan 2008	South Korea 2006	Taiwan 2008
Security Environment						
International						
Regional						
Internal						
National Security Goals						
Strategic						
Tactical						
General Defense Policy						
Doctrine						
Missions						
Major Areas of Concern						
International						
Regional						
Internal						
Current Defense Posture						
Total Personnel						
Structure of Force						
Command Structure						
Armaments						
Defense Management						
Overall Budget						
Budget Trends						
Planned Acquisitions						
International Activity						
Exchanges						
PKO Missions						

Australia's 2008 White Paper

One anomaly in our study is the relatively low transparency rating Australia's 2008 defense white paper received in a number of categories. This is especially notable because the Australian white paper is a remarkably candid strategic document. It clearly defines Australia's strategic environment and identifies potential threats. National security goals and strategic interests are clearly articulated and linked to a well-defined defense posture. The white paper systematically focuses on how Australia's strategic priorities, interests, and objectives should affect and shape the strategic posture, missions, and capabilities of the Australian Defense Force.

The low rating is an artifact of strict application of the methodology employed in the study along with the nature of the 2008 Australian white paper, which is designed as a vision statement rather than a full detailing of Australian defense policy, force structure, and organization. Australia produces numerous other official documents, including a series of annual papers detailing the defense budget (www.defence.gov.au/budget/), a *Capability Fact Book*, a *Defense Capability Development Manual and Plan*, *Force 2020*, and *Joint Operations for the 21st Century*. However, our emphasis on a comparable, objective methodology meant that we did not consider any documents beyond the defense white paper we were evaluating. In Australia's case, this methodology produces a rating significantly lower than our subjective judgment of Australian transparency on defense issues.

Finally, for both the ASEAN and Asia-Pacific group it is worth considering the individual context and environment under which governments produced their defense white papers. Many white papers rated in figure 5 receive low transparency ratings in *Security Environment—Internal* and *Major Areas of Concern—Internal*. Most include brief listings or discussions of natural disasters and economic factors, but otherwise do not discuss internal issues. Considering their relative domestic stability, an absence of detail beyond natural disasters should not be surprising. This dynamic holds true in other cases where countries received low transparency ratings, as well. For example, Vietnam and Taiwan contain little or no information on peacekeeping operations.[27] A lack of international activity rather than an exclusion of relevant information helps explain this omission. Similarly, while some ASEAN countries like Cambodia are very transparent on internal security issues, they present very little information regarding international security issues. This could indicate an overriding focus on internal issues rather than a deliberate ambiguity or lack of transparency.

Conclusions

China's advances in military modernization and sustained double-digit increases in defense spending have raised concerns in the United States and in the Asia-Pacific region about the purposes behind the modernization and what this may indicate about China's future intentions. These concerns initially emerged in the aftermath of Chinese efforts to expand its military position in disputed areas of the South China Sea in the mid-1990s and its use of ballistic missile tests to intimidate Taiwan in 1995 and 1996. The decision to begin issuing defense white papers was partly intended to address what the Chinese government calls the "China threat theory" by showing a greater degree of transparency on military issues. Our analysis of the six Chinese defense white papers suggests that there has been a gradual but modest increase in Chinese military transparency over the last decade.

Of course, white papers are not the only source of official information on China's military and its defense policy. China releases defense information that goes well beyond the white paper in some areas. PLA official publications (*PLA Daily*, books published by the Academy of Military Science and China's National Defense University Press, and military journals), briefings from the newly established MND Information Office, and official Chinese media outlets provide valuable information on Chinese military doctrine, organizational issues, training, and some exercises and operational deployments such as the PLA Navy's counterpiracy deployment to the Gulf of Aden. A sophisticated reader with good Chinese language skills can learn a lot about the PLA from examining publicly available sources. However, on other issues such as defense budgets, force structure, and military modernization, the white paper defines the official PRC position and additional information is not available from any other official sources. Moreover, some important issues are not addressed adequately in any official PRC documents. For example, there have been no detailed public statements explaining the rationale for China's January 2007 test of a direct ascent antisatellite (ASAT) weapon or outlining China's efforts to develop counterspace capabilities. Similarly, China has not provided public information about its ongoing nuclear modernization (including the development of two new ICBMs and one new SLBM) or made any public statements about its planned future nuclear force structure.

When compared with the white papers of Southeast Asian countries, China's 2008 defense white paper is at roughly the same level of transparency. However, it is worth highlighting that several Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines provide much more detailed assessments about international, regional, and internal security challenges and the policies they are pursuing to address these challenges.

If China's 2008 defense white paper is compared with others from Northeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region, it is clear that China lags significantly in transparency. These white papers provide more detailed assessments of the security environment, descriptions of the policies being pursued to address security challenges, and much more detail about current military capabilities, force structure, budgets, and future modernization efforts. This conclusion is strengthened if one also considers that many of these countries release a great deal of information about budgets, force structure, and defense policies in other official documents that were not considered in our study.

If China decided to increase the transparency in its defense white papers, what areas should it focus on?

- Defense Budget: China's white paper provides some basic information, but lacks specific figures for important categories such as service budgets, research and development spending, and procurement. One major issue is that a significant amount of defense-related spending—including procurement of foreign weapons systems—is not included in Chinese official figures for defense expenditure (and the cost of such spending is not provided in other publicly available documents). Unlike many East Asian countries, China provides no information about future defense spending plans. It could follow the example of other Asia-Pacific countries by releasing more detailed budget information or even a separate report on defense expenditure.

- Nuclear Weapons: China's white paper provides no information about specific delivery systems, modernization programs, or future nuclear force structure. Given the fact that China is upgrading and expanding its nuclear arsenal, a clearer sense of approximate future force levels would ease international concerns, even if information is provided in round numbers or discussed in terms of conditions that would affect future force levels.

- Current and Future Weapons Systems: China's white paper is notable for its lack of any specific information on the types and numbers of weapons systems in service, under development, or being considered for acquisition. Some other East Asian countries provide detailed information about current inventory and future procurement plans in their white papers. Lack of official information fuels speculation and exaggerated projections about future Chinese capabilities.

- Connecting security objectives with military capabilities: China's white paper provides a reasonably good discussion of military doctrine and the generic types of capabilities needed to execute doctrinal requirements. However, it falls short compared to some other Asia-Pacific white papers in discussing how current and projected military capabilities will help China attain its national security objectives. This raises questions about whether China's stated objectives are congruent with increasing defense spending and expanding military capabilities, potentially undermining the credibility of peaceful development rhetoric.

In trying to develop an objective methodology for evaluating and comparing military transparency, we have emphasized specific criteria that can be assessed in a comparable and replicatable manner. However, subjective criteria also contribute to assessments of a country's overall degree of transparency. In China's case, the consistent emphasis on tight message control on security issues, the reluctance of Chinese officials, military officers, and experts to answer questions frankly, and the limited availability of information on military capabilities all create doubts about the degree to which China is really being transparent. Some of these factors are artifacts of China's political system, but others could be addressed via policies that provide more information and a greater degree of openness.

Chinese officials and military officers frequently argue that there is no such thing as perfect transparency and that greater transparency benefits stronger countries at the expense of the weak. However, China's growing economic and military power makes major countries such as Japan, South Korea, India, and Australia a much more appropriate basis of comparison than smaller and weaker countries in Southeast Asia. Judged against this yardstick, China is significantly less transparent than its peers, especially in the areas of defense budget, force structure, and future modernization plans. Because China's military capabilities are growing and its defense budget is now the largest in the Asia-Pacific region, lack of transparency about future capabilities is likely to increase regional concerns and aggravate security dilemma dynamics. It may also reinforce the tendency for others to exaggerate or overstate PRC capabilities due to a lack of reliable information.

China's relative lack of transparency compared to other major Asia-Pacific states not only affects its external relations, but also has a negative effect on internal PRC discussions about foreign-policy, defense, and international security issues. Lack of detailed information about Chinese military capabilities, defense spending, and modernization plans inhibits domestic debates and objective analysis from outside military circles. When Chinese academics discuss

China's military modernization or its nuclear capabilities, they invariably refer to Western estimates because their own government does not release official information. Although Chinese government officials and military officers criticize the U.S. Department of Defense's annual report on Chinese military power, that report provides more detailed and up-to-date information about Chinese military capabilities than any official Chinese government documents.[28] Greater transparency about military budgets and military capabilities would not only help ease foreign concerns about China's growing military capabilities, but also support higher quality analysis of defense issues by its own analysts and a better informed domestic debate about military issues and spending priorities.

We believe the basic methodology developed and employed in this study provides a reasonably objective way to evaluate transparency in a comparative fashion. Although a full assessment of transparency requires considering a country's unique context and using all publicly available information, the methodology employed in this study provides a useful starting point to explore how different countries within the Asia-Pacific region approach military transparency. It offers a comparison of relative military transparency across the Asia-Pacific region and an analysis of trends in transparency throughout the region. The methodology and findings can help serve as a basis for discussion about transparency in regional security dialogues.[29] Any region or group of countries, including those outside the Asia-Pacific region, could use this study to identify areas where countries could improve transparency by providing more information, and highlight "best practices" that others could emulate. Our hope is that this analysis can be a starting point for a useful discussion about transparency among Asia-Pacific countries and contribute to a more stable and peaceful Asia-Pacific security environment.

Appendix: Definitions and Rating Criteria

Security Environment—International: *A discussion of current or developing trends in the international community that threaten or have the potential to threaten international peace and security or destabilize the international system.*

- No section or discussion on any current or developing trends that threaten the international community.
- Contains a section that includes a list of current or developing trends in the international security environment but does not describe or analyze these trends.
- Contains a section that lists and describes current or developing trends in the international security environment but does not analyze their significance.
- Contains a section that lists, describes, and also analyzes the significance of current and developing trends in the international security environment.

Security Environment—Regional: *A discussion of current or developing trends in the Asia-Pacific region that threaten or have the potential to threaten Asia-Pacific security or destabilize the region.*

- No section or discussion on any current or developing trends that threaten the region.
- Contains a section that includes a list of current or developing trends in the Asia-Pacific region but does not describe or analyze these trends.
- Contains a section that lists and describes current or developing trends in the Asia-Pacific region but does not analyze their significance.
- Contains a section that lists, describes, and also analyzes the significance of current and developing trends in the Asia-Pacific region.

Security Environment—Internal: *A discussion of current or developing trends within the country that threaten or have the potential to threaten internal security, destabilize the government, or otherwise require use of the armed forces.*

- No section or discussion of any current or developing trends that threaten the country internally.
- Contains a section that includes a list of current or developing trends within the country but does not describe or analyze these trends.

- Contains a section that lists and describes current or developing trends within the country but does not analyze their significance.
- Contains a section that lists, describes, and also analyzes the significance of current and developing trends within the country.

National Security Goals—Strategic: *A description of the full array of economic, political, social, and security objectives that are critical to the country and its national security (for example: economic growth; maintaining democratic governance; preventing single power dominance in the region; preserving sovereignty).*

- No section or discussion on national security objectives.
- Contains a section listing aspects of national security but does not describe specific objectives which are critical to national security.
- Contains a section describing national security objectives but the section does not prioritize these objectives or explain how they are important for national security.
- Contains a section that not only describes national security objectives but also prioritizes these objectives or explains how they are important for national security.

National Security Goals—Tactical: *A description of the policy approaches the country pursues to ensure strategic national security objectives are fulfilled (for example: strengthening the role of ASEAN; preventing barriers to trade; preserving freedom of navigation at sea; engaging in international exchanges; developing infrastructure).*

- No section or discussion on the policy approaches of the country.
- Contains a section that lists vague policy approaches the country follows in order to secure national security objectives but does not specifically describe these approaches (for example: "enhancing regional cooperation" but not "enhancing regional cooperation through strengthening ASEAN").
- Contains a section that describes specific policy approaches the country follows in order to secure national security objectives but does not define a comprehensive approach explaining how these approaches will support national security objectives (for example: "enhancing regional cooperation through strengthening ASEAN" but not "strengthening ASEAN in order to discourage single power dominance and promote multilateral cooperation").

- Contains a section that describes specific policy approaches the country follows in order to secure national security objectives and explains how these are important in ensuring strategic national security objectives.

General Defense Policy—Doctrine: *A description of the approach, framework, or principles that guide defense policy.*

- No section or discussion of the country's doctrine.
- Contains a section that identifies the country's doctrine or the principles and approaches that comprise the country's doctrine but does not describe these or their role in general defense policy.
- Contains a section that describes the country's doctrine or the principles and approaches that comprise the country's doctrine but does not describe their role in defense policy.
- Contains a section that defines and describes the country's doctrine and its role in defense policy.

General Defense Policy—Missions: *A description of the primary internal and external missions, responsibilities, or roles assigned to the armed forces (for example: preventing invasion; ensuring party control; protecting maritime territory; preventing terrorist attacks; developing infrastructure; promoting social cohesion).*

- No section or discussion on the missions, responsibilities, or roles of the armed forces, the role of each service (army, navy, air force, etc.), or the strategies/tactics the armed forces will employ to accomplish these missions.
- Contains a section that identifies the general missions, responsibilities, or roles of the armed forces but does not identify the individual missions or roles of each service (army, navy, air force, etc.), or describe how the armed forces or services will conduct these missions.
- Contains a section that describes the general missions, responsibilities, or roles of the armed forces and identifies the individual missions, responsibilities, or roles of each service (army, navy, air force, etc.), but does not describe how the armed forces or services will conduct these missions.
- Contains a section that describes the general missions, responsibilities, or roles of the armed forces; describes the specific missions, responsibilities, or roles of each service

(army, navy, air force, etc.); and describes the types of actions and operations tactical units will carry out to fulfill these missions.

Major Areas of Concern—International: *A discussion of specific international situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots that may concern or threaten the country.*

- No section or discussion of specific international situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots.
- Contains a section that includes a list of international situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots but does not include a description or analysis of concerns and does not discuss the country's national strategies, plans, or positions on how to respond.
- Contains a section that includes a listing and description of international situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots but does not include a detailed analysis of concerns or discuss the country's position or policies.
- Contains a section that includes a listing and detailed analysis of international situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots and a discussion of the country's position or policies.

Major Areas of Concern—Regional: *A discussion of specific issues, conflicts, or problem spots in the Asia-Pacific region that may concern or threaten the country.*

- No section or discussion of specific issues, conflicts, or problem spots in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Contains a section that includes a list of situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots in the Asia-Pacific region but does not include a description or analysis of concerns and does not discuss the country's national strategies, plans, or positions on how to respond.
- Contains a section that includes a listing and description of situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots in the Asia-Pacific region but does not include a detailed analysis of concerns or discuss the country's position or policies.
- Contains a section that includes a listing and detailed analysis of situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots in the Asia-Pacific region and a discussion of the country's position or policies.

Major Areas of Concern—Internal: *A discussion of specific issues, conflicts, or problem spots within the country that may concern or threaten the country.*

- No section or discussion of specific issues, conflicts, or problem spots within the country.
- Contains a section that includes a list of situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots within the country but does not include a description or analysis of concerns and does not discuss the country's national strategies, plans, or positions on how to respond.
- Contains a section that includes a listing and descriptions of situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots within the country but does not include a detailed analysis of concerns or discuss the country's position or policies.
- Contains a section that includes a listing and detailed analysis of situations, issues, conflicts, or problem spots within the country and a discussion of the country's position or policies.

Current Defense Posture—Total Personnel: *A statement of the total number of personnel serving in the defense forces of the country.*

- No figure or mention of any kind on the size of the country's armed forces.
- Contains a figure indicating the total number of personnel serving on active duty in the regular armed forces. However, there is no breakdown of the number of personnel in each service or discussion of the number of personnel serving in reserve forces, National Guard, civil defense, or paramilitary forces.
- Contains a figure indicating the total number of personnel serving on active duty in the regular armed forces, and a breakdown of the number of personnel in each service. However, does not include detailed figures on the number of personnel serving in reserve forces, National Guard, civil defense, or paramilitary forces.
- Contains a figure indicating the total number of personnel serving on active duty in the regular armed forces, a breakdown of the number of personnel in each service, and figures on the number of personnel serving in reserve forces, National Guard, civil defense, or paramilitary forces.

Current Defense Posture—Structure of Force: *A description of the organization of the armed forces and the "order of battle." (Naval fleets and flotillas; Army groups, corps, divisions, and brigades/regiments; Air Wings and squadrons; etc.)*

- There is no breakdown of personnel or services into specific units or "order of battle."

- Contains information on the types of units that compose the structure of the armed forces but does not list the number of such units or identify specific units. (For example: this may include a statement that armies are broken down into corps, divisions, and regiments but does not include the quantity or identity of such units.)
- Contains information on the types of units that compose the structure of the armed forces and lists the number of such units but does not include a comprehensive organizational chart or identify specific units. (For example, this may include the total number of army divisions, naval flotillas, and air wings, but would not include a description like "18th armored division.")
- Contains a full description, organizational chart, or regional breakdown of the military force structure including types, quantities, and identities of major types of units.

Current Defense Posture—Command Structure: *A description of the chain of command and the structure of decisionmaking throughout the armed forces.*

- There is no description of the command structure.
- Contains a general description of national command authority and the chain of command between political and military organizations and leaders but does not mention the specific geographic or service command structures or the chain of command during wartime or in joint operations.
- Contains a description of the national command authority and chain of command at the highest political-military levels as well as a listing of leadership structures at specific geographic or service command structures, but there is no description of how the chain of command functions during wartime or in joint operations.
- Contains a comprehensive description of the national command authority and the chain of command from the highest command levels down to specific geographic commands and service command structures, and describes how the chain of command functions during wartime or in joint operations.

Current Defense Posture—Armaments: *A description of the weapons systems and equipment the armed forces use to conduct national security missions.*

- No section or discussion of the weapons systems and equipment employed by the armed forces.

- Contains a section that mentions some of the general means (for example, patrol vessels, transport helicopters, tanks, and fighters) employed to fulfill national security missions but does not list or describe any specific weapons systems or equipment.
- Contains a description of the primary weapons systems and equipment (for example, F-16 fighters) employed to fulfill national security missions but does not include a comprehensive listing or table of the primary types and quantities of these systems.
- Contains a description of the primary weapons systems and equipment and includes a comprehensive listing of the primary types and quantities of these systems (for example, 150 F-16 fighters).

Defense Management—Overall Budget: *A statement of the overall spending on the armed forces and defense.*

- There is no mention of the overall size of the defense budget in any form.
- Contains a total defense budget figure expressed in dollars or as a percentage of GDP. However, there is no discussion of the breakdown of the budget into different functional categories (for example, personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, research and development) or discussion of defense-related spending not included in the overall defense budget.
- Contains a total defense budget figure that is further divided into general categories such as personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, and research and development. However, no specific budget figures are provided for procurement and research and development and there is no discussion of defense-related spending not included in the official defense budget.
- Contains a total defense budget figure that is divided into general spending categories such as personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, and research and development. Includes specific budget figures for procurement and research and development and some discussion or estimates of defense-related spending not included in the official defense budget.

Defense Management—Budget Trends: *Budget figures and/or projections that provide historical context for current defense spending and information on future spending plans.*

- No historical, current, or future budget information that could be used to evaluate the size of the current defense budget relative to past defense budgets, or any estimates of future defense budget size.
- Contains sufficient historical information to determine whether current defense spending is increasing, decreasing, or remaining the same in relation to past defense spending.
- Contains a projection of defense budget trends sufficient to indicate whether near-term defense budgets are expected to increase, decrease, or remain about the same. (For example, this might include a statement that defense spending should reach a certain percentage of GDP.) However, this projection does not include specific dollar estimates/projections or provide a detailed defense budget plan into the near to medium term.
- Contains a detailed defense budget projection in dollar amounts or outlines an official budget plan for the near to medium term.

Defense Management—Planned Acquisitions or Procurement: *A description or listing of weapons systems or capabilities that the armed forces are scheduled or plan to acquire in the near to medium term.*

- No discussion of what capabilities or weapons systems the country is looking to acquire or is already scheduled to acquire.
- Contains a general description of the types of military capabilities (for example, patrol vessels, transport helicopters, tanks, fighters) the country seeks to acquire in the near to medium term but does not detail specific systems, sources of procurement, procurement time lines, or quantity of units the country plans to acquire.
- Contains a description of the specific systems (for example, F-16 fighters) the country seeks to acquire but does not detail sources of procurement, procurement time lines, or quantity of units the country plans to acquire.
- Contains a detailed description of the military capabilities the country seeks to acquire in the near to medium term. Offers a comprehensive description or table listing specific systems, sources of procurement, procurement time lines, and quantity of units the country plans to acquire.

International Activity—Relationships, Exchanges, and Joint Exercises: *A listing or description of the country's defense relationships, military exchanges, and joint exercises with other nations or participation in international defense organizations.*

- No discussion of the armed forces' involvement abroad.
- Contains a vague listing of the type of international activities the armed forces are involved in but does not include details of these activities, offer examples of these activities, or contain a comprehensive listing of specific relationships, exchanges, and joint exercises in which the armed forces participate.
- Contains a description of the types of relationships, exchanges, and joint exercises the armed forces participate in, possibly including illustrative examples, but does not include a comprehensive list or description of specific international activities.
- Contains a detailed discussion or list of the armed forces' current international relationships and exchange programs, including detailed information such as partners, dates, extent of the relationship, or content of joint exercises.

International Activity—PKO/Humanitarian Missions: *A listing or description of recent or current participation in bilateral or multilateral peacekeeping or humanitarian missions where personnel, equipment, or resources are committed.*

- No discussion of the armed forces presence abroad in actual international missions.
- Contains a vague listing of the type of international missions the armed forces are involved in but does not include details of these missions, offer examples of these missions, or contain a comprehensive listing of specific missions in which the armed forces participate.
- Contains a description of the type of missions the armed forces participate in, possibly including illustrative examples, but does not include a comprehensive list or description of specific international missions.
- Contains a detailed discussion or list of the armed forces' recent and current international missions, including specific information such as types and number of personnel, equipment and capabilities employed, or the specific role(s) the armed forces play(ed) in these missions.

Notes

[1] For a summary of China's military modernization that discusses these developments, see Office of Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2009*. Available at <http:// www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/China_Military_Power_Report_2009.pdf>.

[2] See <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/> and <http://www.cscap.org/>.

[3] For a summary of Chinese views, see Ho Zhitong (head of delegation) letter to the Chairman of the UN Disarmament Commission, April 25, 1991. A/CN.10/146. For a more recent discussion, see Luo Yuan, "China to Increase Military Transparency," *China Daily*, October 25, 2007.

[4] *China: Arms Control and Disarmament*, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, November 1995, Beijing; *China's National Defense*, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, July 1998, Beijing; *China's National Defense in 2000*, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, October 2000, Beijing; *China's National Defense in 2002*, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, December 2002, Beijing; *China's National Defense in 2004*, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, December 2004, Beijing; *China's National Defense in 2006*, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, December 2006, Beijing; *China's National Defense in 2008*, Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, January 20, 2009, Beijing. China's defense white papers are available for download at <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/index.htm>.

[5] Luo Yuan, "China to Increase Military Transparency," *China Daily*, October 25, 2007.

[6] The United States does not produce a white paper but does produce a range of publications that collectively provide comparable information. See the *2008 National Defense Strategy*, June 2008, available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/>; *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February 6, 2006, available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/>; *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006*; *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 2004*; The Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller) annual budget figures, available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/comptroller/>.

[7] For a discussion of Chinese views on transparency, see Gregory Kulacki, "Chinese Perspectives on Transparency and Security," Union of Concerned Scientists, January 13, 2003. Available at <http://www.ucsusa.org/>.

[8] Countries in this study continue to produce updated white papers. Our research concluded in early 2009. Since that time countries such as Japan and Taiwan have released new white papers.

[9] Ann Florini, "The End of Secrecy," *Foreign Policy* 98, no. 111 (Summer 1998), 50–63.

[10] Center for Disarmament Affairs, UN Disarmament Yearbook, vol. 17, 1992.

[11] We worked with the English versions of the white papers that were published by each country. The quality of the English translation varied, which sometimes raised issues of clarity, but did not prevent an assessment of transparency.

[12] Kang Choi, "An Approach to a Common Form of Defense White Paper," *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 8, no. 1 (1996). Sibylle Bauer offers five similar criteria that can be used to assess transparency: availability, reliability, comprehensiveness, comparability, and disaggregation. Sibylle

Bauer, "The Europeanisation of Arms Export Policies and Its Impact on Democractic Accountability," unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Universite libre de Bruxelles and Freie Universitat Berlin, May 2003. Cited in Petter Stalenheim and Eamon Surry, "Transparency in Military Expenditure and Arms Production," presented at the Xiangshan Forum, October 22–24, 2006. Available at <http://sipro.org>.

[13] Regarding *availability,* a number of white papers used in this study, (e.g., Thailand and Vietnam) proved difficult to obtain. As Dr. Choi highlights, making white papers easily available to other countries is an important way to increase transparency. Establishing a regional repository for defense white papers that is freely accessible could be a useful function for a regional security organization.

[14] Mongolia used Dr. Choi's template as a starting point for producing its defense white paper.

[15] Choi, "An Approach to a Common Form of Defense White Paper." See also Ralph Cossa, ed., *Promoting Regional Transparency: Defense Policy Papers and the UN Register of Conventional Arms* (Pacific Forum CSIS Occasional Papers, Honolulu, 1996) and Choi Kang and Panitan Wattanayaogorn, "Development of Defense White Papers in the Asia-Pacific Region" in *Arms, Transparency, and Security in South-East Asia*, ed. Bates Gill and J.N. Mak, SIPRI Research Report No. 13, Oxford University Press, 1997.

[16] After initial experiments with a three-tiered rating system, we decided to use four tiers to capture gradations in transparency with more precision.

[17] Michael Kiselycznyk and INSS intern Anne Meng evaluated the initial set of white papers. Updated white papers from five countries were obtained while finalizing the project, which were evaluated by Michael Kiselycznyk and Major Luke Donohue to develop up-to-date ratings. Michael Kiselycznyk and Phillip Saunders evaluated the Chinese and Vietnamese defense white papers.

[18] By a "strict interpretation" we mean that in cases where supplemental information relevant to but not matching the rating criteria was presented in the white paper, the raters selected the lower rating. For example, the Indian white paper includes a breakdown of the defense budget into service categories but not functional categories. Although information on service budgets is valuable and should be encouraged, it did not fit the rating criteria for a yellow rating and therefore India still received an orange rating. Although in some cases this results in an artificially low rating, it allows greater comparability among the different white papers.

[19] This omission might be the result of a rumored additional round of reductions in the total number of PLA personnel that has not yet been finalized.

[20] China began participating in this UN mechanism in 2007. Xinhua News Agency, "China Submits 2007 Military Expenditure Report to UN," September 4, 2008, available at <http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-09/04/content_9771257.htm>.

[21] Dennis J. Blasko, Chas W. Freeman, Jr., Stanley A. Horowitz, Evan S. Medeiros, and James C. Mulvenon, "Defense-Related Spending in China: A Preliminary Analysis and Comparison with American Equivalents," United States-China Policy Foundation, 2007.

[22] On the overall budget category, the Australia and India white papers are almost a best case example but do not include a functional breakdown. Instead each breaks the budget down by services.

[23] We expected the 2009 Japanese defense white paper (not assessed in this study) to include budget projections through 2014. However, the newly-elected Japanese government (led by the Democratic Party of Japan) decided to postpone creation of a new five-year mid-term defense program for a

year. We expect the 2010 white paper to include defense budget projections based on a new five-year defense program.

[24] See David M. Finkelstein, "Defense White Paper 'Themes,' 1998–2008," in Dr. Alison A. Kaufman, *China's National Defense in 2008—Panel Discussion Report*, CNA China Studies and National Defense University/Institute for National Strategic Studies joint report, May 2009, 13–14.

[25] "China's 'White Paper' Opens Mind to World," *Jiefangjun Bao Online*, December 15, 2008.

[26] Luo Zheng, "Jiandingbuyi de fengxing fangyuxing guofang zhengce: (2008 nianzhong de guofang) baipishu zhuanfang junshi kexueyuan yanjiuyuan Chen Zhou" [Steadfastly Pursue Defensive National Defense Policy—An Exclusive Interview with Chen Zhou, Research Fellow with the Academy of Military Sciences, on the White Paper "China's National Defense 2008"] *Jiefangjun Bao* [*PLA Daily*], January 21, 2009, 8.

[27] Vietnam's 2009 defense white paper discusses the future possibility of Vietnamese participation in PKOs and humanitarian missions. Vietnam received an orange rating because the paper addressed Vietnam's position on participation but did not receive a higher rating because no details about what Vietnam is considering were offered.

[28] The white papers from Japan and Taiwan also include more information about Chinese military capabilities than China's own defense white papers.

[29] Past efforts include the CSCAP working group on Asia Pacific Confidence and Security Building Measures that met in the mid-1990s and ASEAN Regional Forum efforts to establish regional agreement on the concept and principles of preventive diplomacy.

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