
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITUATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

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I am very pleased to have the opportunity to visit your Institute and deliver a speech here today. It is my honour to pay this visit to your country upon invitation. Furthermore, it is another embodiment of the friendly relations between our two countries and two armies. Please allow me to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to you for your kind invitation and warm reception.

I was asked to give a speech on the world security situation and the development of the situation in the Asia-Pacific region. Obviously it is difficult for me to answer this important and complex question in a short time. However, I would like to put forth briefly some of my views on this question as a beginning of the continued academic exchanges between our two sides in the future.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORLD SECURITY SITUATION

The post-Cold War world is now in a period of transition from the old to the new strategic structure. All contradictions are developing in an in-depth way and all forces areas realigning. The overall situation is characterized by complexity and volatility. On the one hand, some positive trends have emerged in international relations, the process of the world development in the direction of multipolarization is being accelerated, and relaxation and co-operation have become the universal demand of the people all over the world. On the other hand, the world is still not tranquil. In some regions, contradictions have intensified, the situation has been turbulent, and chaos caused by war has continued incessantly. Hegemonism and power politics remain a major obstacle to normal international relations, and the world peace and development are confronted with serious challenges.

ges. In analyzing the world situation in terms of security, I want to stress the following points:

1. Changes have taken place in the balance of international forces and some countries are making adjustments to their policies and the relations among them. With the end of the bipolar structure, one of the original two superpowers disintegrated eventually and the other has been weakened relatively. Today Russia is still in the difficult period in which its domestic political crisis is interwoven with economic crisis with an uncertainty in the orientation of the development of its policy. As the sole superpower which has kept its global influence, the United States has tried hard to «maintain its leading position» and play its predominant role in the world. In the meantime, Japan and the European Union nations (Germany in particular) have risen rapidly and are seeking a greater say in international affairs. It should also be pointed out that some developing countries have possessed quite powerful economic strength step by step and are playing an increasingly important role on the international arena. The changes in the balance of forces among nations as well as the related different strategic interests and policy objectives have inevitably led to the emergence of new contradictions in the economic and political relations among these nations and new adjustments have to be made. It has been noted that in recent years the economic frictions among the United States, Japan and West European countries have become more intense and their contention for world or regional political leadership have come into the open. The original contradictions, especially the economic contradictions, between developed and developing countries are further intensifying as well. The great changes in international relations and their possible impacts merit our close attention.

2. The economic factor is playing an increasingly important role in national security and international relations, but military power remains an important means of all countries for safeguarding their own interests. In face of the new situation after the end of the Cold War, more and more countries have learned from the historical lesson of the protracted arms race between the United States and the former Soviet Union that relying on military power alone cannot necessarily ensure their security

and that only when they enhance their comprehensive national strength based on economy and science and technology can they be in a favourable position in the fierce international competition. To give top priority of national security to economic security is a change in the concept of security of all nations. At present, quite a few countries have shifted their attention mainly to domestic economic development and have, at the same time, given more consideration to their economic interests in handling relations between states. Therefore, the importance of military factor in international affairs has been on a relative decline. But this does not mean that the military means is unimportant. Some big powers have, in effect, continued to strengthen the modernization of their nuclear and conventional forces at a time when they make a limited reduction in their military expenditures and the size of their armies. To defend their own interests, many small and medium-sized countries are building up their military strength constantly as well.

3. The danger of a world war has been further reduced and regional conflict has become a conspicuous problem affecting international security today. As a result of the loss of balance of international forces, the ethnic, territorial and religious contradictions which were converged up during the period of the Cold War have become pronounced, thus bringing about new bloodsheds and local wars. Since the beginning of the 1990s, armed conflicts and local wars on different scales have occurred one after another in different parts of the world, numbering over 30 each year. Particularly noticeable is the fact that a series of regional armed conflicts have broken out in the area extending from Southern Europe to Central Asia, thereby forming a new zone where hotspots are concentrated. The flames of war in the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union are still spreading today, and the overt or covert intervention by outside forces has made the situation there more complex. Although these armed conflicts are constrained by various factors and are limited in scope, they have given rise to a seriously turbulent regional situation and have produced an important impact on the international security as well. As all contradictions which have led to regional conflicts persist, the phenomenon of regional armed conflicts will not disappear in a short period of time to come, and new hotspots may possibly emerge.

4. The military strategies of major countries in the world have undergone great changes, and the tendency of military interventionism of some Western countries has apparently intensified. Under the conditions that there is no general war but small wars are increasing, especially after the Gulf War, the United States has put forward the «regional defence strategy» and the strategic concept of «coping with two local wars simultaneously». The NATO has established the new strategy of «crisis response». Many other countries have also advanced their strategic concepts with emphasis placed on coping with regional conflicts. Although the intentions and contest of the adjustments made by all countries to their strategies vary, their common tendency is to shift their focus from making preparations for fighting a large-scale war to coping mainly with regional armed conflicts and local wars. Accordingly, all countries have devoted their efforts to building up smaller but highly effective military forces. In so doing, they have laid emphasis on the development of hi-tech weapons and equipment, the acceleration of the organization of rapid response forces and the further improvement of the capabilities of rapid response, long-distance manoeuvre and assault operations of their troops. It is noteworthy that with the above-mentioned adjustments of strategy some Western countries have shown their stronger intention of carrying out military intervention in other countries on various pretexts and such acts have increased evidently. This is an expression of hegemonism and power politics in the military field.

The above-mentioned views can be boiled down to two points. First, the world situation continues to move towards relaxation by and large, and the people of all countries may have a comparatively long period of international peace. Second, the world is still in the process of turbulent and uncertain change and the international community should show its grave concern over the hegemonism practised by some countries and the armed conflicts in some regions.

THE CHANGES IN THE SITUATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

The Asia-Pacific region is the region with the vastest territory and largest population in the world and with abundant natural resources. It has

great potentialities of development. In this region there are both economically highly developed countries and countries at different stages of development; there are both Oriental and Western civilizations. The Asia-Pacific nations have diverse social systems, models of development and cultural traditions. This is a general picture unique to the Asia-Pacific region.

We are glad to see that in recent years thanks to the concerted efforts made by all countries concerned, when the overall international situation moves in the direction of relaxation, positive changes of far-reaching importance have taken and will continue to take place in the political and economic situation in the Asia-Pacific region, and peace and development have already become the mainstream of the regional situation. This region which made outstanding contributions to the civilization of mankind in the past has now been the region with the most dynamic economy in the world. Therefore it has drawn universal attention from the international community and its standing world politics and economy has been improved constantly.

Politically, the situation in the Asia-Pacific region is relatively stable. This stability is determined by various factors of history and reality. One of the important reasons is that the bipolar structure in the Asia-Pacific region in the postwar years has not been so secure as that in Europe. Politically and economically, Asia actually began to move towards multipolarization as early as the second half of the 1960s. Particularly since the beginning of the 1980s, a relative balance of interests and forces has come into being step by step among some big powers or groups. This has played an important role in maintaining the relative stability of the Asia-Pacific region. Therefore, the shock caused by the end of the bipolar structure to the Asia-Pacific region has not been so great as that to Europe. Another reason of equal importance is that the relations among many Asia-Pacific nations have been improved to varying degrees, thus creating favourable conditions for the development of their national economies and their mutual economic co-operation. The increasing economic interdependence has impelled these countries to pursue the policy of good-neighbourliness and friendship, to strengthen dialogues and coordination, and to promote regional peace and stability. This virtuous circle is the secure foundation for maintaining the stability of the Asia-Pacific region. At present, all Asia-Pacific nations have enhanced their dialogues on the establishment of a security mechanism of the Asia-Pacific region in the hope of further safeguarding regional peace. Quite

a few countries have put forth their concepts. The conference of ASEAN foreign ministers and the meeting between ASEAN foreign ministers and their counterparts of the nations participating in the dialogue which were held in Singapore in July 1993 conducted formal consultations on the question of regional security co-operation and agreed unanimously to establish the ASEAN regional forum. The first meeting of the ASEAN regional forum will be held in Bangkok next year. In the meantime, other bilateral or multilateral security consultations are under way. Because of the complex situation in the Asia-Pacific region, there still exist many differences of opinion and difficulties on the road of advance, but the gradual establishment of multilevelled and multi-channelled security consultation mechanisms in diverse forms will be an important trend of development.

In terms of the economic situation, the Asia-Pacific region has maintained the momentum of high-speed development. Most of the Asia-Pacific nations have attached importance to the development of their economy and science and technology and have taken the paths of development which suit their own specific conditions comparatively. Over the past ten years, Asia has all along maintained a higher economic growth rate than other regions in the world. In 1993, the world economic growth rate was about 1.5 per cent while that of Asia was around 7 per cent and that of East Asia 8 per cent. Today, in this region economic co-operation is expanded continuously, trade is very brisk and investment momentum is very powerful. This region is full of vitality and hope. It is precisely because of this that the United States and some European countries have paid closer attention to and shown greater interest in Asia. They are making adjustments to their policies in Asia in the hope of sharing the economic prosperity of Asia. At the informal meeting held in Seattle last November, the APEC leaders exchanged views on the prospects of the 21st century and the priority areas of economic co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region as well as the means and mechanism for promoting co-operation and reached common understanding on some important questions. This will be conducive to the promotion of a more extensive economic co-operation in this region. Of course regional economic co-operation is accompanied by economic competition, and the nationalist feeling and the tendency of trade protectionism of some countries have intensified. However, the general trend is that all Asia-Pacific coun-

tries will surely further advance towards economic prosperity amid co-operation and competition and make their contributions to the development of world economy.

Certainly there are also latent factors for instability in the Asia-Pacific region. For instance, the situation on the Korean peninsula is still tense to some extent. The posture of confrontation with massive troops between the North and the South remains unchanged by and large, and some more time is still needed for the settlement of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. China's mainland and Taiwan are still divided. Some Western nations sell advanced weapons to Taiwan, thus creating a new obstacle to the peaceful reunification of China. There still exist disputes over territorial or maritime rights and interests between some Asian nations. But we believe that so long as the parties concerned follow a wise policy, such problems can be solved through negotiations and regional peace and stability can be maintained.

As an Asia-Pacific nation, China has always cherished an ardent love for peace worked for the development of good-neighbourly and friendly relations with other states and made its own contributions to the peace and development of this region. Over the past fifteen years, under the guidance of Deng Xiaoping's theory of building socialism with Chinese Characteristics, China has persisted in making economic development the central task and has adhered to the policy of reform and opening to the outside world, thus making achievements which have attracted worldwide attention. At present, the political situation in China is stable, the society is tranquil, and the national economy develops at a high speed. In 1994 China's GNP growth rate reached 11.8 per cent and the total trade volume of import and export reached US\$ 236.7 billion. At present, enterprises with exclusive foreign investment, joint ventures and co-operative enterprises have exceeded 200 000. The big market of China has an increasingly strong appeal to the Western countries. The road we have chosen is correct, and our national policy of making economic development the central task and conducting reform and opening to the outside world will be adhered to for a long time to come and will not be changed. China's development needs a long-term international environment of peace. China pursues an independent foreign policy of peace and does not seek hegemony. Even when China becomes a powerful country in the future, it will never seek hegemony. We are ready to work

hard to maintain and develop friendly relations and co-operations with all countries in the world, our neighbours in particular, on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Militarily, China has carried out a defensive strategy. It does not conduct arms race, does not join any military bloc, and does not station a single soldier abroad, thus constituting no threat to any other country. In 1995, China's military expenditures budget is US\$ 7.51 billion, with a growth rate of 14 percent, the capital of per-person is only US\$ 6.26. Concerning the forecast inflation rate of this year (15%) actually this year's military expenditures didn't increase over the last year. More and more nations have realized through their own immediate interests that a peaceful, stable and prosperous China is an important factor for the stability of the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

Before concluding my speech, I want to make a few more remarks. In recent years, satisfactory progress has been made in the friendly relations and co-operation between China and Portugal, and the exchanges and co-operation in all fields have been increased constantly. This is the result of the joint efforts made by our two sides. The governments of China and Portugal signed the joint declaration on the question of Macao in 1987. Our two sides have cooperated effectively in carrying out the joint declaration so as to ensure a smooth transfer of Macao. The visit paid by the Chinese leader President Jiang Zemin to your country last November was an important milestone of the further development of the friendly relations and co-operation between our two countries. Although China and Portugal are far apart from each other, our two countries have both common interests in safeguarding world peace and stability and common needs for developing bilateral co-operation. These common grounds have constituted the basis of the friendly co-operation between our two countries and two armies. I am ready to make joint efforts with all of you present here to raise the relations between our two countries and two armies to a new level:

Zhu Dunfa