



# U.S.-East Asian Options: some thoughts

Cynthia Watson, PhD

Dean of Faculty & Academic Programs, The National War College, NDU

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personal assessment rather than U.S. Government or NDU policy

## Asia





# discussion

- Current context in Indo-Asia-Pacific
- Challenges facing the United States
- Options for addressing these challenges
- Indo-Asia-Pacific within U.S. strategic priorities

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# Strategic context

- ▶ Aisen China: the role of 'respect'
  - ▶ 40 year transformation unparalleled in world history
  - ▶ CCP increasingly re-consolidating power
  - ▶ CCP terrified of its own citizens for lots of domestic reasons
- ▶ Declining Japan? or is Abe reversing it?
- ▶ The Korean peninsula—wowza with the DPRK and ROK-Japan deterioration
- ▶ ASEAN?
- ▶ India
- ▶ Danger of Muslim extremism regrowing across region—Uighur 're-education'
- ▶ What do they *think* we are doing?

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# Challenges for U.S. strategy in Asia

- ▶ What are we trying to accomplish?
- ▶ The Korean peninsula: can Mr. Kim really be our buddy?
- ▶ An expanding centrality of China
  - ▶ Trade dominance *which is indisputable*
  - ▶ Maritime disputes
  - ▶ Hegemony or merely a member state?
  - ▶ What instruments do we have versus them?
  - ▶ Increasingly active globally—a really new twist
- ▶ U.S. alliances-dead, on lifelines, or vibrant?
- ▶ Expanding Asia to include India good or futile aspiration?



# Instruments and options

- ▶ Trade war with Beijing which reverses 70 years of expanding free trade
- ▶ TPP gone so will 20+ bilateral trade agreements be possible for Washington?
- ▶ Any lasting effects from the 'rebalance to Asia'?
- ▶ What is the role for diplomacy in Asia—does it matter?
- ▶ How vibrant are the alliances or are they strictly military?
- ▶ Instruments for the United States beyond Indo-Pacom's role?
- ▶ What are the effects of domestic trends
  - ▶ Budget deficits
  - ▶ 'Model' concerns for democracy
  - ▶ Indo-PACOM's capabilities versus responsibilities



# Indo-Asia-Pacific within national priorities

- ▶ North Korea
- ▶ China China China: obvious priority for budget and approach to region
- ▶ Will India be important for us within Indo-Pacom or as adjunct to Pakistan issues?
- ▶ Global center of economic gravity moving to Asia but what about Europe?
- ▶ Should we increase military spending or worry about our huge budget deficit?
- ▶ BOTTOM LINE: do we see this region as our top priority or are we merely accustomed to seeing any competitor's action as threatening?



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