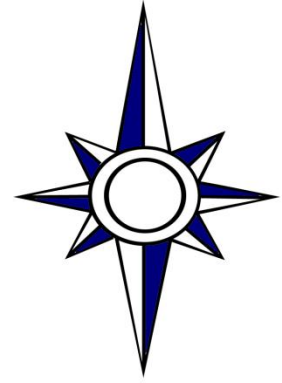


Comparative Connections

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China-Russia Relations: Coping with Korea

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Tensions on the Korean Peninsula preoccupied both Russia and China as the two Koreas edged toward war at the end of 2010. Unlike 60 years ago when both Beijing and Moscow backed Pyongyang in the bloody three-year war, their efforts focused on keeping the delicate peace. The worsening security situation in Northeast Asia, however, was not China's only concern as Russia was dancing closer with NATO while its "reset" with the US appeared to have yielded some substance. Against this backdrop, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao traveled to Moscow in late November for the 15th Prime Ministers Meeting with his counterpart Vladimir Putin. This was followed by the ninth SCO Prime Ministers Meeting in Dushanbe Tajikistan. By yearend, Russia's oil finally started flowing to China through the 900-km Daqing-Skovorodino branch pipeline, 15 years after President Yeltsin first raised the idea.

Korea: fog of war 60 years later

The situation on the Korean Peninsula, which has been tense ever since the March 26 sinking of the South Korean naval vessel *Cheonan*, took a drastic turn for the worse on Nov. 23 when North and South Korea exchanged artillery fire. The skirmish started when Seoul ignored North Korea's warning to halt South's military drills near the disputed Northern Limit Line (NLL) and proceeded with artillery firing exercise at 10:00 local time. At 14:38, the North, for the first time since the 1953 ceasefire, attacked the South's territory by firing nearly 100 artillery rounds at Yeonpyeong Island, killing 4 and injuring 19 South Koreans. The shelling was followed by a series of high-profile joint naval exercises around the Korean coast by the US and its Asian allies (US-ROK on Nov. 28-Dec. 1 and US-Japan on Dec. 3-10). Separately, South Korea carried out several of its own live-fire drills on Dec. 6-20 both on land and along the coast. The North surprisingly chose not to respond.

Immediately after the Yeonpyeong incident, both Chinese and Russian governments tried to defuse the crisis. Their specific rhetoric and actions, nonetheless, indicated quite obvious differences. Beijing expressed concern over the exchange of fire and urged both sides to preserve stability and peace. It also proposed that the six nations involved in the long-stalled Six-Party Talks hold an emergency meeting on the crisis. The Russian Foreign Ministry stated shortly after the shelling that "the use of force is an unacceptable path" and "disputes in relations between the North and the South must be settled politically and diplomatically." While China's response did not explicitly condemn North Korea's actions, Russia's foreign minister warned of a "colossal danger" and said those behind the attack carried a huge responsibility.

The shelling of Yeonpyeong occurred while Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao was in St. Petersburg for the 15th regular Sino-Russian Prime Ministers Meeting with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin (Nov. 22-24). Economic relations dominated the agenda. The two sides were putting final touches on 19 trade agreements worth \$8.6 billion and other documents when the Korean crisis apparently caught the Russian and Chinese leaders off guard as the long joint communiqué (more than 6,000 Chinese characters) did not even mention the shelling and ensuing escalation.

When he met Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on Dec. 24, Wen Jiabao reportedly brought up the Korean crisis. According to China's *Xinhua News Agency*, Wen reiterated China's long-held policy of safeguarding the Korean Peninsula's peace and stability and opposing any military provocations. The premier called on the relevant parties to exercise maximum restraint and for the international community to do something favorable to ease the tense situation. Wen stated that "resuming the Six-Party Talks was a fundamental way to safeguard the stability and to achieve denuclearization of the peninsula. The Chinese and Russian sides *should* [emphasis added] continue to make incessant efforts toward this end."

Medvedev's response seemed reserved: Chinese media quoted him as saying that he agreed to "resume the Six-Party Talks as soon as possible" and was willing to "maintain communication with the Chinese side under bilateral and multilateral frameworks, coordinate their stands, and safeguard the Korean Peninsula's peace and stability." An official English-language press release on Medvedev's presidential website on the same day (Nov. 24), however, did not mention the Korea crisis as a topic of the Medvedev-Wen meeting. The title of the release was "Dmitri Medvedev and Wen Jiabao discussed Russian-Chinese economic cooperation and its prospects."

Russia's relative lack of response to the Chinese effort regarding Korea continued the following day when the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) prime ministers held their ninth annual meeting in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. *Itar-Tass* quoted Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexei Borodavkin as providing two reasons why the Korea issue was not on the agenda: (1) it was a "purely political issue" while the Council of Prime Ministers focuses on economic cooperation and (2) it would be "wrong" to discuss problems of the Korean Peninsula without the parties to the conflict." Borodavkin was correct in describing that the SCO's prime ministerial meetings focus on economic issues. It was not clear how the Korean issue was brought up in the first place. Wen Jiabao did not touch the issue in his official speech and the joint communiqué does not mention Korea.

Two days after the SCO meeting in Dushanbe and four days after the shelling, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi initiated separate telephone conversations with Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov and Japanese Foreign Minister Maehara Seiji. *Xinhua News Agency* described the responses: Lavrov said Russia agreed with China on the latest situation and was ready to keep close contact with China to help defuse the tensions and create conditions for a restart of the Six-Party Talks. Maehara said that Japan was willing to work with China to jointly safeguard peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and push forward the denuclearization process on the Korean Peninsula. Both responses seemed diplomatic in echoing China's concerns. Russia, however, is China's "strategic partner."

For the remainder of the year, Beijing and Moscow seemed to pursue two parallel but separate strategies in the midst of rising tension and the non-stop show of force by Seoul, Tokyo, and Washington. After China's call for an emergency meeting of the Six-Party Talks was rejected first by Seoul on Nov. 27 during Dai Bingguo's visit to Seoul and then deflected collectively at the US-Japan-ROK trilateral meeting in Washington on Dec. 6 China tried to maintain its diplomatic momentum while gradually increasing the level and intensity of its actions. On Dec. 3, when the US-Japan *Keen Sword* military exercise kicked off, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu warned the US, Japan, and South Korea not to "intensify confrontation" in the upcoming trilateral meeting in Washington. When the trilateral talk began, Chinese President Hu Jintao called US President Barack Obama, urging a calm and rational response from all sides to prevent deterioration of the fragile security situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Two days after this, Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo visited North Korea and "reached consensus" with North Korean leader Kim Jong Il regarding bilateral relations and the situation on the Korean Peninsula. On Dec. 14, Chinese Foreign Ministry officials stated that North Korea agreed with China's proposal to resume Six-Party Talks and was "hoping that such a meeting will help mitigate the situation. North Korea went a step further for diplomacy by telling New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, who made a "private" visit to Pyongyang from Dec. 16-19, it would allow IAEA inspectors to return. Partly because of the North's demonstrated flexibility, China did not agree to denounce North Korea in the 8-hour UN Security Council meeting on the Korean crisis on Dec. 19. Shortly after South Korea's scheduled live-fire exercise not far from Yeonpyeong Island on the afternoon of Dec. 20, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai warned that "no one has any right to preach or promote conflict or war, and no one has any right to cause bloodshed between the peoples in the north and south of the peninsula." Cui neither directly criticized the South nor warned Pyongyang against retaliation. North Korea responded, in the evening of Dec. 20, that South's "provocation" was not worth North's "retaliation."

Russia's initial reaction to the unfolding Korean crisis was relatively low-key, aside from its call for diplomatic solutions. It was not until Dec. 2 that Prime Minister Putin appeared on *CNN* and said that he hoped "reason will prevail, that emotions will take the back seat and that a dialogue will begin." Putin also noted that China "has levers of influence, above all, of economic nature." He also pointed out that "the Russian president is in charge of the foreign policy." Starting Dec. 9, Moscow unfolded a series of diplomatic activities. On Dec. 9, Saiki Akitaka, chief Japanese delegate to the Six-Party Talks and director general of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, visited Moscow; North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Ui Chun's visited Moscow Dec. 12-15; and on Dec. 15, Wi Sung-lac, chief South Korean delegate to the Six-Party Talks and deputy head of the Foreign Ministry, visited Moscow. Meanwhile, Russia's ambassador-at-large Grigoriy Logvinov, who oversees the Six-Party Talks, headed for Washington for consultations with US officials. Russia's invitation to the North Korean top diplomat for an official visit was issued several months earlier. Russia's "re-invitation," Pyongyang's acceptance, and the timing of the visit – between the visits to Moscow by Japanese and South Korean diplomats – were critical when China's call for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks were turned down by the US, Japan, and South Korea; when the UNSC emergency session failed to resolve the crisis; and given the "tough talk" by all parties. Beyond diplomacy, on Dec. 14 Russia announced its troops in the Far East were put on alert because of the Korean

crisis. On Dec. 17, the Russian Foreign Ministry urged South Korea to skip military drills in the Yellow Sea scheduled for Dec. 18-21 (later postponed to Dec. 20 due to “bad weather”).

For this burst of activities, a Russian media outlet (the pro-Kremlin and Gazprom-linked *Kommersant Online*) used the headline: “Korean Peninsula Being Compelled to Make Peace. Russia and United States Will Undertake Concerted Diplomatic Efforts.” The article noted that “Moscow will have a solo role” in dealing with the crisis. “[N]ext, Washington will join in tackling the Korean problem.” “[B]y all accounts, Moscow and Washington decided to use their joint efforts to keep the Korean Peninsula from sliding toward armed conflict ... as ... China today is not exerting a strong influence on DPRK affairs, as it seems to many people.” The piece did cite Aleksandr Vorontsov, head of the Korea and Mongolia Department of the Institute of Oriental Studies, who disagreed with the assessment of China’s diminished role and that “Russia and China are the only countries that have good relations with both Koreas.”

It was only after this week of diplomatic efforts that Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexei Borodavkin met Chinese Ambassador Li Hui on Dec. 16, at the latter’s request. On Dec. 18, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, while visiting Islamabad, initiated a phone conversation with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov regarding Korea. On Dec. 28, Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Cheng Guoping visited Moscow for talks with Russian Deputy Minister Borodavkin. All these official meetings and actions were apparently initiated by the Chinese side.

Moscow and Beijing were quite independent in their assessment and handling of the crisis. Their interests in this crisis and the region overlapped to a certain degree but were not completely congruent. For Beijing, stability and peace on the peninsula are paramount, if not life-and-death. Any conflict there will have a far more direct impact on China than on Russia, whose political, economic, and cultural centers are thousands of kilometers away. This may partly explain how and why Russia’s reaction was relatively low-key at the beginning of the crisis in November. The ongoing Korean situation presented Russia with an opportunity to assert itself as a significant player. As the tension escalated in December and China’s effort to mediate seemed to stall, Russia stepped in.

To certain degree, Russia’s relatively weaker ability to influence North Korea (in comparison to that of China) became its strength in that it has been able to avoid direct criticism from South Korea and its allies whenever North Korea has “misbehaved.” Largely because of this, Russia enjoyed considerably more “strategic space” and flexibility than China in the later stage of the crisis. When China failed to convene an emergency session of the Six-Party Talks, diplomats from Japan and the two Koreas lined up to get to Moscow. For the same reason, Moscow even assumed a posture of showing its “authority” to relevant parties in the crisis. On Dec. 17, Russia asked South Korea to skip its planned military drills in the Yellow Sea. In the UNSC emergency meeting called by Russia on Dec. 19, Moscow initially circulated a draft statement that did not include a denunciation of North Korea for the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island. According to South Korean media, Russia later agreed to denounce North Korea.

Russia in the final quarter seemed to enjoy poking Japan when President Medvedev disregarded Japan’s warnings and visited one of the southern Kurile Islands, (“Northern Territories” for Japan) on Nov. 1; when Russian patrol planes unexpectedly interrupted the largest-ever US-

Japan exercise in the Sea of Japan on Dec. 7; and when Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov visited all four southern Kurile Islands on Dec. 13.

Some Chinese commentators were rather amused by Russia's "flanking" actions at a time when relations between Beijing and Tokyo dropped to the lowest point since the normalization of their diplomatic relations in the early 1970s as a result of the dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Others questioned if Medvedev, who is in charge of foreign policy, tried to maneuver himself for the 2012 presidential election. Few, if any, thought that these Russian moves were peripheral in Russia's geopolitical radar. Northeast Asia was perhaps not even an important agenda for Russian foreign policy makers. According to the ranking of "Major Policy Events of 2010" by Russian Foreign Ministry, Korea was numbered 20 out of 24 items. When Prime Minister Putin met Premier Wen in St. Petersburg on Nov. 22, President Medvedev had just returned from the NATO Summit in Lisbon (Nov. 20-21): Russia's "Westpolitik" was entering a critical stage and with potentially more opportunities for Moscow.

Moscow's "fresh start" with NATO and reset with US

Russia's strategic maneuvering space in Northeast Asia was a function of its geostrategic gravity as a Eurasian power between the West and East. It may well be that 2010 is the beginning of Russia's reconnecting itself with the West (Europe and the US) after nearly a century of hot and cold war of the Soviet era and 20 years of "cold peace" after the Soviet collapse. On Nov. 3, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen paid a one-day visit to Moscow where he promised President Medvedev that the upcoming NATO conference in Lisbon on Nov. 19-20 would become "a real opportunity to turn a new page, to bury the ghosts of the past, and boldly look into the future."

On Dec. 22, the US Senate approved the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) by a 71-26 vote, which represented significant progress in the US-Russian "reset." Already, Moscow had taken steps to open a fresh logistics route for US troops to Afghanistan through Russia and shown more willingness to support the US on sanctions against Iran. These Russian moves reciprocated Obama's "three strikes in 2009 – resuming talks on nuclear disarmament, suspending NATO's enlargement to Eastern Europe, and most importantly, adjusting its missile defense plans in Eastern Europe.

The US ratification of the New START treaty, though expected, was by no means guaranteed, given the loss of the House majority by the Democratic Party in early November. But even before approval of the treaty, Medvedev pushed for "broader cooperation" with US. "The mechanisms of Russian-American partnership must be used to run full-scale economic cooperation, to improve the investment climate, and to interact in the high-technology sector," Medvedev said in his State of the Nation address to the Russian Federal Assembly on Nov. 30. A week before, the Russian president even had an unscheduled "casual" meeting with President Obama while attending the NATO-Russian Council session in Lisbon.

Medvedev's attendance at the Lisbon meeting represented the highest level of Russian participation since the August 2008 Georgian-Russian war. While the 28-member military alliance struggled to reach consensus regarding when and how to end the Afghan war, a separate

meeting with President Medvedev seemed to yield substance with a new cooperation deal on Afghanistan and a new missile defense shield – both were essential for a more globalized “NATO version 3.0” (a new strategic concept for the next decade) after the Cold War and the post-Cold War Versions 1.0 and 2.0.

Specifically, Moscow agreed to explore cooperation with NATO on the network of radar bases and interceptor missiles. On Afghanistan, Russia agreed to broaden NATO’s transit via its territory and to step up training of Afghan anti-drug officials. For Russia, the Lisbon meeting with NATO members made it “possible to outline the guidelines to build a partnership based on the principles of indivisible security, mutual trust, transparency and predictability.” Still, Medvedev warned there was no firm agreement on how Russia would take part beyond studying the European offer, and that Moscow would only take part if it is treated as an equal partner. Both sides were aware of the much harder bargaining that lay ahead, and it remains to be seen if NATO is willing to trade its independent decision-making power for Russian tactical cooperation on Afghanistan. What was clear, according to Medvedev, was that a “period of very difficult tense relations has been overcome ... We have ambitious plans, we will work across all directions including European missile defense. Everyone believes the atmosphere is different. Everything we wanted to tell each other but were afraid to, today we said it and this makes me an optimist. After this summit I am a bigger optimist than I was before.”

Of the two Russian “resets” – with the US and NATO – the latter is more worrisome for Beijing for several reasons. First, the US-Russian tango has been a recurring phenomenon with a mixed record. Second, it won’t necessarily alter the international system. Third, improvement in US-Russian relations, particularly the reduction of nuclear weapons, is also in the interest of Beijing. Fourth, START is one of many areas of Russian-US interaction, which includes both elements of cooperation and conflict. Fifth, at the level of the international system, China has adequate experience in the game of major powers and is therefore not intimidated by a general improvement in Washington-Moscow relations.

The prospect of Russian-NATO relations, however, is less clear and has more space to evolve with the potential of Russia being “lost” to an overarching security umbrella. China has no experience with a bloc of powerful European powers including the US and Russia. For months, Beijing has kept its eyes on Russia’s dance with NATO. Even if Russia’s NATO membership is still up to hard bargaining, the subject has unleashed a debate among Russian politicians and pundits. Not just those “Westernizers” among the Kremlin-linked intelligentsia are driving the debate. Even an ultra-nationalist politician like Vladimir Zhirinovskiy spoke favorably about the prospect of Russia’s NATO membership.

Michael Bohm, opinion page editor of the liberal *The Moscow Times*, warned that such a prospect meant that NATO would have a 4,000-km border with China and this would upset the tripolar global security balance between NATO, Russia, and China. It would cause China to believe that Russia and NATO are joining forces to “contain,” or even weaken, China. It was clearly not in the interests of Russia or the US to heighten tensions or provoke China. In the case of another US/NATO “reckless military venture,” Russia, as a NATO member, would automatically become a target for a Chinese counterattack. To avoid this scenario, Russia should insist on strict military neutrality from NATO.

Bohm's concern about China's reaction was well-reasoned. It was a rather minority opinion in Russia's mainstream media and was against the momentum within the Russian foreign policy establishment. In his response to Bohm, Alexander Kramarenko, director of the Policy Planning Department at the Foreign Ministry, argued that Russia's membership in NATO would not be a threat to China. In a tripolar security cooperation structure among US, the European Union, and Russia, NATO's nature would radically change. It would be difficult to imagine a NATO, which operates on the basis of consensus, that is inherently anti-Chinese if Russia joins NATO. An analogy is drawn with the SCO, which is not necessarily anti-Western.

Beijing is watching this historical moment when "NATO and Russia will be cooperating to defend themselves" for the first time in history. A few assessments in the Chinese media noted previous interactions between NATO and Russia, which yielded mixed results and even setbacks (such as the 2008 Georgian-Russian war). According to a *Xinhua* analysis, "There is notable potential for more intensive cooperation between NATO and Russia, but the partners, with their long history of distrust, cannot transfer themselves into a loving couple swiftly." A *Xinhua* yearend analysis pointed to the division within NATO on European defense issues. In early 2010, Germany publicly demanded the US withdraw its tactical nuclear weapons deployed in Europe, triggering a heated argument within the alliance. Meanwhile, Paris and Berlin were pushing for the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), in a bid to reduce reliance on the US to defend Europe. France and Germany also sought to involve Russia in European defense, while keeping sound economic and trade ties with Moscow. This was clearly shown at a trilateral summit on Oct. 19 in Deauville, France, where French President Sarkozy, German Chancellor Merkel and President Medvedev called on the EU to launch a "modernization partnership" with Russia and to embark on "institutional and operational cooperation between Russia and the EU" on European security. The three leaders also pledged to "jointly work on security issues in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian zones."

Prime Minister Putin joined the effort to promote a pan-European community. In a long article in the German magazine *Sueddeutsche Zeitung (Electronic Edition)* titled, "An Economic Community from Lisbon to Vladivostok: The Lessons of the Financial Crisis: How Russia and the European Union can Create a Common Continental Market," Putin never mentioned the US. Instead, he called for a "wide-ranging strategic partnership" with EU for five reasons: a large and integrated market, a marriage of high tech and resources, an integrated energy mechanism, exchange in education and research, and free flow of people.

Chinese analysts and media tend to dismiss Western reports that the rivalry between Putin and Medvedev was tearing Russian foreign policy apart. It remains to be seen how the liberal/Westernizing Lavrov-Medvedev group (Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and President Dmitry Medvedev) and the statist/Eurasianist Putin-Patrushev approach (Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and Secretary of the Security Council Nikolay Patrushev) will drive Russian domestic and foreign policy toward the critical year of 2012. The Lavrov-Medvedev and Putin-Patrushev "rivalry" may well be a necessary and convenient division of labor between the Russian president and prime minister, which is in the geostrategic interests of Russia as a Eurasian power.

Wen's business trip: through Russia to Central Asia

While Russian leaders focused on resetting “high politics” (strategic issues), Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao hurtled through Russian and Central Asia pursuing “low politics” (economics). In three short days, Wen attended almost 20 meetings, delivered many speeches, and signed almost 50 bilateral and multilateral cooperation deals in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Dushanbe.

The purpose of Wen's Russia visit was business and it was rather a fruitful trip. It started with the 15th regular meeting between the Chinese and Russian prime ministers on Nov. 23 in St. Petersburg, where Wen also attended the International Forum on Tiger Conservation – a pet project for Putin. He then traveled to Moscow and met President Medvedev on Nov. 24. In Moscow, Wen joined the opening of the fifth China-Russia Economic and Trade Forum, co-chaired by Vice Premier Wang Qishan and Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Zhukov. In his speech, Wen proposed to further broaden China-Russia economic and trade cooperation and take it to an even higher level, which elicited a positive response from Russia's business and industrial communities. Wen also joined the closing ceremony of the 2010 Chinese Language Year in Russia while in Moscow.

During the visit, the two sides signed a total of 19 commercial agreements worth \$8.5 billion. Six of these commercial deals related to the energy sector, including joint exploration and development of three land and one sea oil/gas blocks; a North Pole oil tanker route; tanker construction for Russia; coal production, transportation infrastructure, and liquidization, which were said to be the largest Chinese investment in Russia; power supply to China; and the third and fourth nuclear power units in Tianwan to begin construction in early 2011. The two sides also reached agreements to start laying part of a new gas line even without agreeing on the gas price, a significantly more flexible posture by Russia than in the past. All of this was against the backdrop of Russia's oil finally flowing to China through one of the longest pipelines (the 2,757km Taishet-Skovorodino line for the ESPO and then the 1,056km Skovorodino-Daqing line), after a long negotiation/construction period (15 years), and over three generations of Russian leaders (Yeltsin, Putin, and Medvedev).

Wen's talks with Putin at the 15th Prime Ministers Meeting were described by Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi as covering a wide range of topics “in a frank, in-depth, and pragmatic manner about the Sino-Russian relationship, about strategic issues and other issues that affect the whole situation, and reached important consensuses.” Much of this consensus was reflected in a joint communiqué, which covered nine broad areas of bilateral relations. Part 1 expressed satisfaction with the strategic partnership and noted that the two heads of governments had in-depth exchanges on issues of politics, economic and trade, energy, science and technology, humanity, and major world and regional issues. The steady and rapidly developing and deepening bilateral relations not only brought concrete benefit to the Chinese and Russian peoples, but also contributed to world peace and stability. It was therefore important to continue deepening the Sino-Russian strategic partnership relationship, particularly in supporting each other's core interests including safeguarding national sovereignty, independence, security, and territorial integrity.

Economic relations were addressed in Part 2. The document noted the improved trade structure, meaning some increase in manufactured and high-tech components in bilateral trade. To further improve ties, the two sides agreed to make joint efforts to diversify trade, expand cooperation in high-tech areas, and improve the investment climate. Particular attention needed to be paid in timber processing, agricultural product trade, labor management, trade regulation, business centers set up by Chinese enterprises in Russia, anti-protectionism, border trade and port facilities, custom cooperation, intellectual property rights protection, *ruble* and *yuan* direct exchange, anti-trust regulation, etc.

Part 3 dealt with energy cooperation in the areas of pipeline operation and security, further work on gas deals, a joint-venture refinery in China, power and coal export to China, liquidization of coal in Russia, renewable energy, and nuclear energy.

Part 4 focused on high-tech cooperation in the field of large-scale and long-term cooperation, venture capital, science park development and management, space technology, and civil aviation.

Parts 5-7 covered environmental protection, border management, and cultural-educational exchanges.

Part 8 discussed global issues including the lingering effect of the financial crisis, traditional and non-conventional threats, the UN, G20, SCO, BRIC, climate change, energy, food security, sustainable development, nonproliferation, Korea and Iran nuclear issue, Afghanistan, etc.

From Moscow, Wen Jiabao paid an official visit to Tajikistan where he met President Rahmon, held talks with Prime Minister Oqilov, and signed agreements in the areas of agriculture, finance, electricity, transportation, etc.

At the ninth SCO Prime Ministers Meeting in Dushanbe, Wen urged SCO members to continue to strengthen its political, security, economic, and diplomatic functions. He also proposed the creation of a SCO food security cooperation mechanism and a SCO development bank.

Prime Minister Putin called on SCO member states to draft a roadmap for the next 10 years for “collective development.” He suggested SCO tap the potential in transportation infrastructure in the format of the “North-South and Asia-Europe continental corridors” and the creation of a special SCO account, which would provide financial support to SCO projects and accumulate state and private funds. In the security area, Putin suggested that SCO jointly set up “anti-terrorist, anti-drug and financial security belts” with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

As usual, the SCO heads of government signed a joint communiqué, which included some of Wen and Putin’s proposals such as the SCO special account (article 6), banking cooperation (article 7), transportation development (article 8), agricultural and food cooperation (article 9). The next SCO Prime Ministers Meeting will be held in Russia.

Into 2011: A “reset” for the two Koreas?

As 2010 came to an end, the month-long fog of war on the Korean Peninsula was switching back to its “normal” fragile “peace.” The current talk of peace may turn out to be an intermission before another storm however.

All relevant parties are talking about talks, which are what Beijing and Moscow proposed at the outset. Despite the nuance in their approaches to resolving the crisis, both China and Russia understand that there were no real winners in the Korean War 60 years ago. All future participants in a second Korean war would be losers. This understanding was in sharp contrast to the most recent claim of victory by US President Barack Obama, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, when he told the US troops and veterans at the Yongsan Garrison in South Korea on Nov. 10 that “This was no tie. This was a victory ... It was a victory then, and it is a victory today.” For many in China and Russia, the war simply halted where it began (the 38th parallel) and after millions of military and civilian casualties; talking about victory is like looking for victors, instead of survivors, in the 2010 Haiti earthquake. Conversely, the post war “peace,” or non-war, since 1953 has yet to produce real losers.

Chronology of China-Russia Relations October – December 2010

Oct. 1, 2010: President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin send congratulatory messages to President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao in recognition of the 61st anniversary of the People’s Republic of China.

Oct. 5-6, 2010: Chinese State Councilor and Public Security Minister Meng Jianzhu attend the International Conference for Senior Representatives of National Security Affairs in Sochi, Russia at the invitation of Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev. More than 40 countries join the forum.

Oct. 12, 2010: Senior officials of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Eurasian Economic Community and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) gather for their first working meeting in Moscow on the initiative of CSTO. Participants include CSTO Secretary-General Nikolai Bordyuzha, CIS Executive Committee Chairman and Executive Secretary Sergei Lebedev, EurAsEC Secretary General Tair Mansurov and SCO Secretary-General Muratbek Imanaliyev.

Oct. 17-19, 2010: Russian Federation Council (Upper House of Parliament) Speaker Sergei Mironov visits China. In Beijing, he co-chairs the fourth meeting of the Sino-Russian Inter-parliamentary Commission with China’s top legislator Wu Bangguo. He also meets President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao.

Oct. 22, 2010: The eighth SCO Attorney Generals Meeting is held in Xiamen with the goal of increasing exchanges and improving the ability to handle transnational crimes. The delegates

sign a protocol pledging further joint response to terrorism, separatism, extremism, transnational economic crime, drug trafficking, human trafficking and illegal migration.

Oct. 22, 2010: SCO's economy and trade ministers hold their annual meeting in Moscow and pledge to expand regional economic cooperation and development.

Oct. 26, 2010: The SCO agriculture ministers hold their regular meeting in Beijing. Chinese Vice Premier Hui Liangyu makes an opening address.

Nov. 1, 2010: Russia-China oil pipeline is switched into test-run mode as Russia's crude oil starts flowing into China through the East Siberia-Pacific Ocean Pipeline (ESPO) from Taishet in Eastern Siberia to the Pacific port of Kozminoyars.

Nov. 9, 2010: Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov visits Beijing to take part in the 15th meeting of the Russian-Chinese Intergovernmental Commission for Military-Technical Cooperation. He meets Chinese counterpart Liang Guanglie to discuss prospects for military interaction between the two states. Serdyukov also meets Guo Boxiong, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission.

Nov. 11, 2010: Presidents Hu and Medvedev meet in Seoul on the sidelines of the G20 Summit to discuss bilateral issues and exchange views on global and regional issues of common concern.

Nov. 13-18, 2010: A Chinese defense delegation led by PLA Navy Commander Adm. Wu Shengli visits Russia and meets Navy Chief Commander Adm. Vladimir Vystotsky. They discuss prospects for collaboration in ensuring security in the world's oceans. The delegation also visits the N.G.Kuznetsov Naval Academy and the facilities of Russia's North Fleet in St Petersburg, including the *Adm. Kuznetsov* cruiser and a nuclear-powered submarine.

Nov. 14-15, 2010: The 10th Meeting of Foreign Ministers of China, Russia, and India is held in Wuhan, China. Foreign Ministers Yang Jiechi, Sergei Lavrov, External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna, and Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao exchange views on issues, including collaboration in emergency response, agriculture, and public health; the creation of a new security and cooperation architecture in the Asia-Pacific Region; and cooperation of the three countries within regional multilateral organizations.

Nov. 22-24, 2010: Premier Wen Jiabao visits Russia for the 15th regular Sino-Russian Prime Ministers meetings in Moscow.

Nov. 25, 2010: SCO holds its ninth Prime Ministers Meeting in Dushanbe. Economic cooperation is the key theme for the annual meeting.

Nov. 27, 2010: Foreign Ministers Lavrov and Yang Jiechi talk over the phone and discuss the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

Dec. 15, 2010: Moscow Interbank Currency Exchange (MICEX) launches *ruble-yuan* trading.

Dec. 16, 2010: Deputy Foreign Minister Alexei Borodavkin meets Chinese Ambassador Li Hui, at Li's request. They discuss ways to reduce military and political tension in Northeast Asia.

Dec. 17-18, 2010: Russian Minister of Internal Affairs Rashid Nurgaliyev visits China and meets his counterpart Meng Jianzhu, China's state councilor and public security minister. The two ministries sign a cooperative agreement for 2011 to 2012

Dec. 18, 2010: Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, while visiting Islamabad, speaks by phone with Foreign Minister Lavrov to exchange views and coordinate positions on de-escalating military and political tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

Dec. 18, 2010: Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Cheng Guoping visits Moscow and meets Deputy Foreign Minister Borodavkin. They pledge further cooperation and coordination while pushing for direct dialogue between the ROK and the DPRK.