



Defense Orientation Conference Association

Live: Virtual Conference

# CONFERENCE READ AHEAD

Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021

12:00PM to 3:00PM PDT via Microsoft TEAMS

## Indo-Pacific Command

### *An Update on the Command and Regional Issues*

#### Regional Issues

B-1s Fly Through South China Sea Sending Message to Beijing

*Brian W. Everstine, Airforce Magazine (July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020)*

Two B-1B Lancers flew over a U.S. Navy carrier strike group and then over the South China Sea on July 21, about one week after the U.S. State Department issued a statement calling China's efforts to control resources in the contentious waters "completely unlawful."

China boosts defense budget again, exceeding \$208 billion

*Mike Yeo, Defense News (March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021)*

China has also continued its massive military modernization program throughout all branches of the PLA, and continued assertive actions in the East and South China seas with military and paramilitary forces, where China has mounted what some consider a pressure campaign against Taiwan. China is also embroiled in territorial disputes with other Asian nations.

The Biggest Threat to the US Indo-Pacific Strategy? Washington Itself.

*Derek Grossman, The Diplomat (August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019)*

The Indo-Pacific Strategy has certainly faced many challenges. However, the strategy on the whole has proven thus far successful. Speculation from the writer suggests that success has been achieved because allies do not have a better place to turn in order to balance China's growing military and economy.

Introduction to Indo-Pacific Security Challenges

*ADM Phil Davidson, US Navy (Spring 2019)*

The United States helped set the conditions for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific following World War II by setting other nations free. What's clear is the region has mainly benefited from that international rules-based order. Security challenges are evident with non-compliance. Security cooperation is more than fighting together in wars; it also means preventing war by presenting a credible deterrent to would-be adversaries. Security cooperation includes working together to respond to humanitarian crises and natural disasters. Security cooperation also means working together in areas like countering terrorism; illegal drugs; illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing; and human trafficking.

#### Words from Leadership

Defense secretary underscores PRC threat, highlights U.S. commitment during Indo-Pacific center's anniversary speech

*FORUM Staff, Indo-Pacific Defense Forum (August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020)*

The world is in an era of great power competition, and the Indo-Pacific is the epicenter of that competition with China

SECDEF Message to the Force

*The Secretary of Defense (March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021)*

Three priorities -defending the Nation, taking care of the American people, and succeeding through teamwork - will guide efforts.



What the Pentagon's top policy nominee thinks about nukes, Iran and other priorities

Aaron Mehta, Defense News (March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

Nominated Undersecretary of Defense elaborates on Iran, nuclear weapons, the National Defense Strategy, climate change, arms sales, and civilian control of the military.

## Proposed Solutions

Improving Guam's Defenses is Top Priority for INDOPACOM

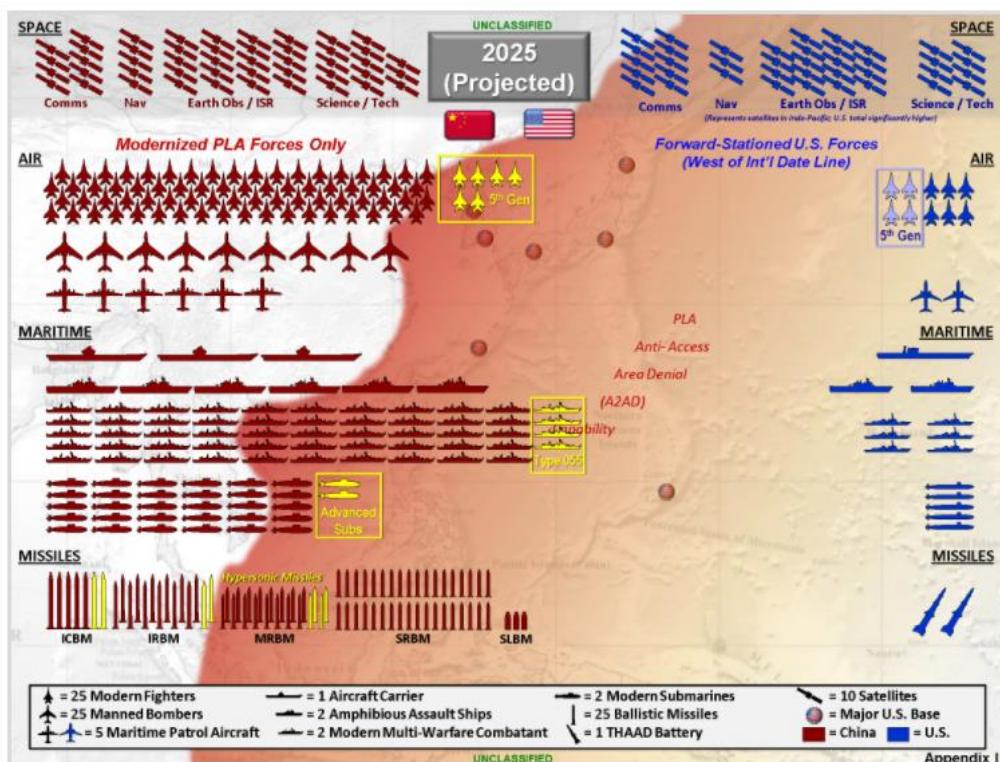
Brian W. Everstine, Airforce Magazine (March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

The island is a "critical nexus" for command and control, logistics, and power projection across the Indo-Pacific and the Defense Department must continue to expand its investment and increase its footprint.

U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Wants \$4.68B for New Pacific Deterrence Initiative

Mallory Shelbourne, USNI News (March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021)

Following the Pacific Deterrence Initiative report, INDOPACOM requested a large sum of allocations. Priorities were highlighted based on deterring potential adversaries and show that any preemptive military action would be too costly and likely to fail by projecting credible, combat power at the time of crisis. Some evidence for the requested budget can be found below with an INDOPACOM estimate of 2025 Chinese forces in the Western Pacific.



## In Depth Information

Form Versus Substance: Indo-Pacific Affairs

The Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs (Special Issue, 2020)

This document can be utilized as more in-depth reference material. Within the 300 pages of information, one could explore what an "Asian NATO" could look like, strategic competition, the age of war on the Coronavirus, etc.