China's Risk Equation

Using Military Forces in International Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Activities

Athol Yates

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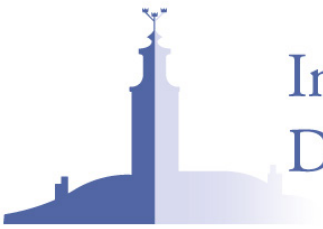

Institute for Security & Development Policy

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Västra Finnbodavägen 2, 131 30 Stockholm-Nacka, Sweden
www.isdp.eu

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The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute
Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies
1619 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036
Tel. +1-202-663-7723; Fax. +1-202-663-7785
E-mail: caci2@jhuadig.admin.jhu.edu

Editor: Elliot Brennan

Editorial correspondence should be addressed to Elliot Brennan at: ebrennan@isdp.eu

Contents

Executive Summary

China's first use of its military forces to undertake international humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) mission was in 2002. Since then it has been involved in 12 missions involving several hundred personnel.

Given that HADR missions are usually viewed as a benign use of military forces and generate benefits for both the assisting state as well as the affected state, it would seem self evident that it is in China's best interest to rapidly expand its HADR involvement. However, this simple analysis fails to consider that military involvement in HADR can have significant downside risks. For example, tensions could increase if Chinese HADR efforts become characterized as cynical advancement of its maritime power projection agenda, or seen as camouflage for acquiring more expeditionary capabilities. The use of its military forces for HADR also poses domestic risks for China for if its disaster contributions are viewed as having significant failings, this will undermine confidence by the Chinese people in the People's Liberation Army, and by association the Chinese Communist Party.

By appreciating both the risks as well as the potential benefits to China of its involvement in HADR, a more nuanced understanding of why it does or does not become engaged in HADR activities can be developed. This in turn will enable a more accurate assessment to be made of future HADR involvement by China. This paper identifies the potential benefits and risks to China of its involvement in HADR, with the next stage of the research project seeking to quantify the likelihood and magnitude of both.

Abbreviations

ADMM+	ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus
ADPC	Asian Disaster Reduction Center
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CBM	Confidence-building measures
CCP	Chinese Community Party
CISAR	China International Search and Rescue
CMC	Central Military Commission
COSCO	China Ocean Shipping Co.
CRF	Central Readiness Force
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)
DR	Disaster relief
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EWG HADR	Expert Working Group on HADR
HA	Humanitarian assistance
HADR	Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief
ISR	Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance
LHD	Landing Helicopter Dock
LPD	Landing Platform Dock
LSM	Landing Ship Medium
LST	Landing Ship Tank
MAC	Military area command
MOFCOM	Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce
MOOTW	Military Operations Other Than War
NBC	nuclear biological and chemical
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
PAPF	People's Armed Police Force
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLAAF	People's Liberation Army Air Force
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy
ROK	Republic of Korea (South Korea)
RoRo	Roll-on/roll-off (ships)
UAS	Unmanned aerial system

UN	United Nations
USAR	Urban search and rescue
USPACOM	United States Pacific Command

Terminology

HADR Activities

HADR activities mean both HADR deployments and HADR CBMs (i.e. training-related CBMs and military / diplomatic-related CBMs).

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)

HADR operations are those undertaken by military forces, conducted in a benign posture, to assist in a humanitarian emergency or disaster relief in a foreign country, and in a military permissive environment.[1] This definition excludes:

- Operations which involve the provision of humanitarian relief by military forces deployed for the conduct of combat or security-related operations.
- Non-combatant evacuation operations.
- Medical diplomacy missions.
- Disaster risk reduction activities.

Humanitarian Assistance (HA)

HA activities are actions conducted to save lives, relieve suffering, and maintain human dignity. HA is defined to be in response to human-caused disasters (e.g. nuclear accident and chemical release) and chronic natural disasters (e.g. droughts and famine). HA is not aimed at addressing the underlying socioeconomic factors which may have led to a crisis or emergency as this is defined as development aid.

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[1] This definition is based on the British HADR definition. Ministry of Defence, *Joint Warfare Publication 3-52 Humanitarian/Disaster Relief Operations* (Shrivenham, Swindon, 2002), 1-2.

Disaster Relief (DR)

DR activities are actions taken during and immediately after a disaster to ensure that the effects of a natural disaster are minimised, and that those people affected are given immediate relief and support. While some DR activities may occur before a disaster (e.g. public warnings), for the purposes of this paper those activities are not deemed to be DR activities. The terms 'disaster response' and 'disaster relief' are synonymous. DR activities are divided into three broad categories:

- Direct assistance—face-to-face distribution of goods and services.
- Indirect assistance—assistance that is at least one step removed from the population, including activities such as the transport of relief goods or relief personnel.
- Infrastructure support—assistance that involves providing services, such as road repair, airspace management and power generation, that facilitate relief but are not necessarily visible to or solely for the benefit of the affected population (emergency rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction of infrastructure, such as road clearing, temporary bridge construction, stabilising damaged bridges, cleaning drains, construction of drainage channels to remove accumulated seawater, port clearance, debris removal from harbours and runways, and producing potable water).

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

DRR activities aim to mitigate the impacts of natural hazards. They include measures that reduce a community's or an individual's exposure to hazards and reduce the vulnerability of property to hazards. DRR activities include disaster prevention and mitigation, as well as preparedness activities. The activities often involve building capacity in the disaster-affected country's emergency, health and disaster organisations, and building relationships with them (these forms of capacity building are the most common DRR activities undertaken by defence forces). DRR activities can be divided into the following categories:

- Disaster preparedness activities which involve improving processes, education, training, information sharing mechanisms, legislation, policies, planning and legal frameworks.
- Risk reduction activities which involve physical infrastructure and material capabilities such as risk identification, constructing levees, hardening communications networks, building disaster shelters, and urban planning based on flood zones.

While militaries do undertake DRR activities, such as the US,[2] these are not the focus of this study.

Chinese Military/People's Liberation Army

The terms 'Chinese military' and 'People's Liberation Army' (PLA) are used interchangeably, and encompass the four main service branches:

- Ground Force
- The Navy (PLAN)
- The Air Force (PLAAF)
- The Second Artillery (strategic missile force)

People's Armed Police Force

The People's Armed Police Force (PAPF) is a paramilitary force primarily responsible for internal security and stability, including disaster response. It comes under the dual-leadership system of the Central Military Commission and the Ministry of Public Security.

Chinese Government

The term 'Chinese Government' refers to the ministries, administrations and offices accountable to the State Council. It represents China in state-to-state relations.

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[2] For example, the US Civil-Military Emergency Preparedness (CMEP) Program, run out of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), focuses on building partners' emergency management skills so that they can respond to their own emergencies without outside assistance.

The Risk Equation

The risk equation is defined as the sum of the benefits and risks (i.e. likelihood and magnitude of negative impacts) arising from China's engagement in HADR activities.

Introduction

Background

Despite China using its military forces to undertake 12 significant international humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) missions since the early 2000s, to date the study of China's HADR activities has attracted little scholarly study. This stands in contrast to the substantial body of knowledge on China's other Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) activities, notably peacekeeping and anti-piracy operations.[3] This paper seeks to address this gap.

To date, most analysis of Chinese MOOTW foreign operations examine them from an international relations and military perspective, such as military capability, military diplomacy, and China's intentions as a global power. However, this overlooks the domestic importance of undertaking these international missions. Specifically, without considering domestic factors for being involved in HADR activities, a skewed understanding of China's rationales and intentions can arise. This increases the likelihood that assessments of future Chinese activities in HADR areas are inaccurate.

This paper takes the unusual approach of adopting a Chinese perspective, and focuses on the benefits and risks that accrue to China for participating in HADR activities, rather than ones that accrue to all stakeholders. By adopting a Chinese perspective, a greater insight is built on the risk-benefit equation used by the Chinese in engaging in HADR.

The risks facing the Chinese are rarely mentioned in Western analysis or policy discussions. The main reason for this is that because Western political leaders see HADR as a low risk activity for their militaries,[4] it is assumed

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[3] Examples are M. Taylor Fravela, "Economic Growth, Regime Insecurity, and Military Strategy: Explaining the Rise of Noncombat Operations in China," *Asian Security*, Volume 7, Issue 3 (2011); International Crisis Group, *China's Growing Role In Un Peacekeeping* (Asia Report 166, 2009); Bates Gill and Chin-Hao Huang, *China's Expanding Role In Peacekeeping: Prospects and Policy Implications* (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2009); Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies and China Policy Institute, University of Nottingham and the Royal United Services Institute, *China's Engagement in Non-Traditional Security* (Roundtable Report, 2012); J.V. Singh, "PLA: Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)," *Air Power Journal*, Vol. 7 No. 3, (2012).

[4] Western military officers on the other hand may consider HADR as carrying more

that the same would apply for the Chinese. However this is not the case for China as increased HADR activities, like other military developments, carries with it risks because of international concern over its military and strategic intentions.

This paper is the first step in analysing the risks to China arising from its involvement in HADR activities. It uses the common approach of Western analysts which involves a literature review, and discussions with Western analysts and practitioners. It has not benefited from substantial input from Chinese scholars, military personnel or political leaders, except for those who are involved at the Institute for Security and Development Policy. Instead it has relied on official Chinese documents, secondary analysis, and forecasting and envisaging what Chinese leadership views would be.

Consequently a second paper will be produced in 2013 which will involve substantial fieldwork in China. This research will focus on expanding this paper's factual information relating to China's HADR capabilities, as well as assembling views on the risks for China in being involved in HADR activities (see *Chapter 7: Conclusions* for key issues to be examined in the second paper). This information will be obtained from structured and unstructured interviews with key groups of Chinese policymakers from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the Chinese Government and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) as well as think tank personnel, academics, business leaders, journalists and social media actors. These findings will be compared with those in this paper, thus confirming or invalidating the views advanced here. A critical outcome of this comparative analysis will be in identifying assumptions and views that are not shared between the developed powers and China. Addressing these misunderstandings can make a significant contribution to better understanding of Chinese motives, intents and actions, which in turn can lead to greater trust and confidence between countries. Thus these findings can make a small contribution to improving relations between existing powers and China.

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risks. The risks commonly raised by them are that being involved in HADR activities distracts them from the primary purpose, and conducting HADR operations reduces readiness to perform combat operations.

Formal and Unstated Justifications for HADR Activities

Humanitarian reasons are invariably the formal justification for HADR deployments, as all nations like to frame their HADR contributions in terms of the worthy aim of saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity.

However, there are other instrumental reasons for using military forces in this role. For example, "for Australia, Japan and the US, there are several other drivers behind their defence forces' role in relief efforts: reinforcing alliances and partnerships, advancing foreign policy agendas and providing knowledge of operational military capabilities".[5] Like these other countries, China seeks to advance international agendas through humanitarian efforts. Integrating humanitarian and international objectives is not unusual as many developed countries also place humanitarian aid within their foreign policy portfolios. This is seen in the formal linking of the country's aid agency agenda with advancing national interest. For example, mission statements of USAID state that "U.S. foreign assistance has always had the twofold purpose of furthering America's interests while improving lives in the developing world... (and) the Agency carries out U.S. foreign policy by promoting broad-scale human progress at the same time it expands stable, free societies, creates markets and trade partners for the United States, and fosters good will abroad".[6] Serving the national interest is recognised in the section of the AusAID mission statement which is "We will administer an aid program that the Australian people can be proud of, which serves Australia's national interests, and which is renowned for its effectiveness."[7]

As well as advancing international agendas, the provision of HADR has a domestic context. Providing humanitarian aid is likely to resonate with the Chinese people due to their personal experience, and the State's priority to reduce disaster risks. Natural disasters are not uncommon in China with their occurrence costing the country yearly about 2.4 percent of its GDP.[8]

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5 Athol Yates and Anthony Bergin, *More than good deeds Disaster risk management and Australian, Japanese and US Defence forces* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2011), 1.

6 United States Agency for International Development, "About USAID," http://transition.usaid.gov/about_usaid/ (accessed December 17, 2012).

7 Australian AID, "Our Mission, Our Values," http://www.ausaid.gov.au/about/pages/our-mission-our-values.aspx (accessed December 17, 2012).

8 "Plan Seeks Better Disaster Coping," *China Daily*, May 11, 2011, http://www.china.

The Chinese White Paper on disasters highlights the widespread distribution of disasters.

> Natural disasters cause damages in different degrees to all of China's provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the Central Government). More than 70 percent of Chinese cities and more than 50 percent of the Chinese population are located in areas vulnerable to serious earthquakes, or meteorological, geological or marine disasters. Two-thirds of China's land are [sic] threatened by floods. Tropical cyclones often batter the eastern and southern coasts, and some inland places. Droughts often occur in the northeast, northwest and north, with particularly serious ones common in southwest and south China. Destructive earthquakes with a magnitude of 5 or more on the Richter Scale have struck all the country's provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities). The mountainous and plateau areas, accounting for 69 percent of China's total land territory, suffer frequent landslides, mud-rock flows and cliff collapses due to complicated geological conditions.[9]

The need to reduce disaster risk was a key driver in China's systematic engagement in disaster management in the 1990s. This was the United Nation's International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. Since Beijing's hosting of the 1993 International Conference on Disaster Management, China has continued its international engagement. Binder and Conrad note recent strategic developments and practical ones of being involved in international disaster relief.

> The 11th Five-Year-Plan [National 11th Five-year Plan on Comprehensive Disaster Reduction], providing national political guidelines for the years 2006-2010, features a section on disaster relief explicitly highlighting the trans-border nature of disasters and the importance of multilateral cooperation. China has progressively increased its involvement in regional frameworks of humanitarian assistance like the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADPC) or the Hyogo framework. It also intensified its engagement in respective UN agencies. For

org.cn/environment/2011-05/11/content_22538497.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[9] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, "China's Actions for Disaster Prevention and Reduction," *Chinese Government's Official Webportal*, http://english.gov.cn/official/2009-05/11/content_1310629.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

> example, in 2005, China more than doubled its contributions to the World Food Programme and for the first time actively participated in the OCHA donor support group's annual partnership meeting in Seoul 2007. China also continued to gradually step up its engagement in international disaster response.[10]

A key source of domestic disaster relief is the PLA, the Chinese have continued to improve its contribution. For example, the Chinese Government has implemented more than 30 laws and regulations relating to disasters.[11] One in 2005 was the first legislative document in China's history that defined the PLA's participation in emergency rescue and disaster relief.[12] [13] The PLA's involvement in domestic disasters appears to have developed a positive image of the military, and its engagement in international HADR activity is logically expected to also generate support.[14]

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[10] Andrea Binder and Bjorn Conrad, *China's Potential Role in Humanitarian Assistance* (Berlin: Global Public Policy Institute, 2009): 10.

[11] Sheo Nandan Pandey, "The Chinese Disaster Management Mechanism," *Journal of Defence Studies* (2012, January Vol: 6, Issue: 1): 45.

[12] "Memorandum of PLA's Military Operations Other than War," *People's Daily Online*, September 7, 2012, http://english.people.com.cn/90786/7940049.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

[13] This regulation outlined how the PLA can be tasked or respond to a disaster. According to the regulations, if the PLA is needed in emergency rescue and disaster relief operations organized by the State Council, the department of the State Council in charge of the operations may file a request to the General Staff Headquarters. If the PLA is needed in such operations organized by the people's governments at or above the county level, the latter may file a request via local military organs at the corresponding level. However, in case of emergency the local people's governments may directly request PLA units stationed in the area to provide assistance, and the latter must take immediate action and simultaneously report to the higher authorities, according to the regulations. Upon detecting any hazard or disaster, local PLA units must also take immediate action and simultaneously report to the higher authorities. PLA units come under the unified leadership of the people's government when participating in local emergency rescue and disaster relief operations. Their specific tasks are assigned by the headquarters for the operations, while their actions are directed through the military chain of command." "China's National Defense in 2008," *Chinese Government's Official Web Portal*, http://english.gov.cn/official/2009-01/20/content_1210227_12.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[14] Tania M. Chacho, *Lending a Helping Hand: People's Liberation Army and Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief* (Research Paper: USAF Institute For National Security Studies): 5.

PLA Strategic HADR Guidance

China's enunciated foreign policy in the late 20th Century was based on independence and pursuing peace. Formally, it is described as being independent of any power bloc and not aligned, with a focus on peace so as to advance its domestic development. China references the following Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, first advanced by Premier Zhou Enlai, to provide the ideological basis for its foreign positions:

- Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity
- Mutual non-aggression
- Non-interference in each other's internal affairs
- Equality and mutual benefit
- Peaceful coexistence.

The focus of the Principles in the second half of the last century was on protecting China's national security by defending Chinese territory and resisting external pressures. This was seen as necessary to provide the room and stability for the economy to grow while maintaining the dominance of the CCP.[15] By the early 1990s, as China became more involved in the global economy coupled with domestic tensions and the collapse of the Soviet Union, it shifted its focus from protecting its national security to advancing its national interests. This shift was reflected in the 'New Security Concept' advanced in 1996. This concept recognised that with the collapse of the Cold War, the two-sided security paradigm based on military security was no longer relevant. Instead security was being sought across a range of domains including politically, economically, environmentally and culturally, in addition to militarily. To address these new security areas, regional cooperation was critical and pursuing confidence-building measures (CBM) was one of several tools used to advance them.

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[15] This reflects Deng Xiaoping's ideas of 'taoguang yanghui' (literally, 'hiding one's capacity while biding one's time') and 'budangtou' ('not seeking to lead'), creating the impression of China as a passive participant in world affairs.

The organisations used to advance CBMs were State Council bodies, notably the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) for aid, and the PLA. Of these, the PLA has the unique advantage of having the systems and people to undertake overseas operational activities. The 1998 China's National Defense White Paper gave prominence to the PLA involvement in building regional collaboration, with specific reference to peacekeeping, maritime search and rescue, the handling of emergencies and disaster relief, preventative diplomacy and non-proliferation.[16] Further support for these operations came in the following years under Central Military Commission (CMC) Chairman Jiang Zemin. These included in August 2001 a document that introduced the term 'non-combat operations', and in September 2002 a document which identified the scope of non-combat operations to include disaster relief and social stability maintenance.[17]

Complementary to this was the redefinition of the missions of the PLA in 2004 by the then Chairman of the CMC Hu Jintao. His defined ´New Historic Missions of the PLA´ were reflected in the 2006 White Paper and consisted of:

- Providing an important source of strength for consolidating the ruling position of the CCP.
- Providing a solid security guarantee for sustaining the important period of strategic opportunity for national development.
- Providing a strong strategic support for safeguarding national interests.
- Playing a major role in maintaining world peace and promoting common development.[18]

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16 China's National Defence White Papers are published every second year, with the first in 1998.

17 Austin Strange, *The Non-Combat Operations of China's Armed Forces in the 21st Century: Historical Development, Current Drivers and Implications for Military Projection* (Williamsburg: Bachelor of Arts thesis, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, The College of William and Mary, 2012), 21-22.

18 A consequence of this has been the elevation of the PLAN to a strategic service due to its ability to project power, undertake large scale HADR activities, and carry out other tasks to advance national interest far from China. It could do this by being a comprehensive service with joint-type capabilities including sea, littoral, air, land and cyber.

The inclusion of the last mission was significant as it provided the guidance to the PLA to actually build new types of capabilities for international missions. Importantly, it elevated these external missions to being central to the rationale for the previously inwardly looking PLA, thus providing institutional acceptance of this mission. Until this statement, the PLA's missions were principally defence of the CCP, protection of the territory of China, international stability and internal disaster response.[19]

HADR received more attention in strategic guidance as reflected in the following extract from the 2006 Defense White Paper.

> The PLA has actively participated in the international disaster relief operations conducted by the Chinese government. It has set up an emergency command mechanism, sent personnel to join specialized rescue teams, provided equipment, and assisted in mission-oriented training. In the past two years, PLA personnel have joined China's international rescue teams in international rescue operations after the Indian Ocean tsunami and the earthquakes in Pakistan and Indonesia. They have conducted search and rescue operations for people in distress, treatment of the sick and injured and prevention of epidemics, and assisted the Chinese government in providing relief materials to disaster-stricken countries.[20]

The 2008 White Paper defined a broader range of military missions, referred to as diversified military tasks, to be undertaken by the PLA in addition to historical missions. The term military operations other than war (MOOTW) was introduced and MOOTW missions specifically mentioned included counter-terrorism, stability maintenance, emergency rescue and international peacekeeping.[21] To drive the strategic guidance, the CMC issued in January 2009 a document on PLA MOOTW capacity building, and

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[19] Article 29 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China states that the tasks of the armed forces are "to strengthen national defense, resist aggression, defend the motherland, safeguard the people's peaceful labor, participate in national reconstruction, and do their best to serve the people", which provides the Chinese leadership with the constitutional basis for deploying the military for any internal task.

[20] China Internet Information Center, "X. International Security Cooperation," *China.org.cn*, http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194468.htm

[21] "China's National Defense in 2008," *Chinese Government's Official Web Portal*, http://english.gov.cn/official/2009-01/20/content_1210227_12.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

in March 2009 one entitled *Opinions on Strengthening Political Work in Military Operations other than War*.[22]

While these contributed to increased attention to HADR, it should be noted that they had a far greater impact on the use of the PLA for domestic disaster and humanitarian activities. For example, MOOTW policy was a contributing factor to the announcement on 20 April 2010 that the PLA would establish state-level, domestically focused emergency rescue troop units, each specialising in one of eight different types of disasters.[23] These units would have a total strength of 50,000 persons, and were to be operational by the end of 2010. In November 2010, the CMC released the domestically focused *Regulations on PLA's Emergency-response Command in Dealing with Unexpected Events*. These provided regulations on issues including organization and command, force use, and military-civilian coordination relating to the PLA's participation in maintaining social stability and dealing with various unexpected events.[24]

In the 2010 White Paper, seven sets of diversified military missions were defined and the identification of both internal disaster response and HADR in them reflects their continual importance for the PLA. The mission sets are:

1. Safeguarding Border, Coastal and Territorial Air Security
2. Maintaining Social Stability
3. Participating in National Construction, Emergency Rescue and Disaster Relief
4. Participating in UN Peacekeeping Operations
5. Conducting Escort Operations off the coast of Somalia/Gulf of Aden

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[22] This document, which goes by various names including Military Operational Other Than War Capacity Building Plan, and the Planning on Capability Building of PLA's Military Operations Other Than War, provided guidelines, principles, objectives, force scales as well as measures and requirements on the PLA. "Memorandum of PLA's Military Operations Other than War," *People's Daily Online*, September 7, 2012, http://english.people.com.cn/90786/7940049.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

[23] The categories include engineering, medicine, transportation, nuclear biological and chemical (NBC), emergency communication, maritime search and rescue, urban search and rescue.

[24] "Memorandum of PLA's Military Operations Other than War," *People's Daily Online*, September 7, 2012, http://english.people.com.cn/90786/7940049.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

6. Holding Joint Military Exercises and Training with Other Countries
7. Participating in International Disaster Relief Operations

As a further indication of the growing importance of HADR, the 2010 White Paper included for the first time an appendix listing the PLA's involvement in disaster relief activities.[25]

[25] "China's National Defense in 2010," *Chinese Government's Official Web Portal*, http://english.gov.cn/official/2011-03/31/content_1835499.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

HADR Capabilities of the PLA

Theoretically the PLA has enormous assets that could be used for HADR activities. These include significant strategic sealift and airlift capabilities, huge numbers of disaster trained personnel, and large holdings of disaster relief supplies. Domestically, the military forces are designed as the:

> … shock force in emergency rescue and disaster relief operations. Their main tasks are to rescue and evacuate disaster victims and people in danger; ensure the security of important facilities and areas; rescue and transport important materials and goods; participate in specialized operations such as rush repairs of roads, bridges and tunnels, maritime search and rescue, NBC rescue operations, epidemic control, and medical aid; eliminate or control other major dangers and disasters; and assist local governments in post-disaster reconstruction if necessary.[26]

Within China when disasters occur, PLA deployments can be very large. For example, between 2009 and June 2010, close to 1 million army soldiers and armed police, together with 4.5 million militiamen, were mobilised following floods, earthquakes, droughts, typhoons and forest fires in China.[27]

The 2010 Defense White Paper provides an insight into the disaster-specific military resources that exist.

> In January 2009, with the armed forces as the mainstay, China formed eight state-level emergency-response professional units, boasting a total of 50,000 personnel, specializing in flood control and emergency rescue, earthquake rescue, nuclear, biological and chemical emergency rescue, urgent air transportation, rapid road repair, maritime emergency search and rescue, emergency mobile communication support, and medical aid and epidemic prevention.[28]

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[26] "China's National Defense in 2008," *Chinese Government's Official Web Portal*, http://english.gov.cn/official/2009-01/20/content_1210227_12.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[27] "China to Enhance International Cooperation in Disaster Relief," *Xinhua*, July 30, 2010, http://www.china.org.cn/china/2010-07/30/content_20608438.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[28] "China's National Defense in 2010," *Chinese Government's Official Web Portal*, http://

Despite the huge capabilities of the domestic military, the current approach by the Chinese is to restrict HADR deployments to a small, select group of the PLA. The approach is also shared by Japan but not used by US or Australian militaries. The Japan Self-Defense Forces also have extensive experience with domestic disaster response as illustrated by the fact that between 2004 and 2009, the military averaged more than 800 domestic disaster relief operations annually, assisting local responders with flood control, emergency patient transportation, search and rescue, and fire fighting.[29] However, for HADR operations, deployments are restricted to personnel from the Central Readiness Force (CRF). The CRF was established in 2007 to improve the country's ability to carry out international peacekeeping operations, disaster and humanitarian relief missions, counterterrorism and special operations. The CRF consists of around 4,200 personnel but has a deployable strength of about 1,100, with only a certain proportion available for HADR operations.[30]

Below are the key physical HADR capabilities used for deployments, with suggestions of the ones likely to be also used in the future based on their use for other Chinese non-HADR operations, and the use of comparable assets by other militaries in HADR operations.

A notable omission in the below discussion of capabilities is an identification of the PLA's 'soft' capabilities. Examples are the PLA's ability to perform civil-military coordination, to meet the *ARF General Guidelines for Disaster Relief Cooperation*, and to integrate with multiple humanitarian responders during a disaster. The reason for the lack of information in this paper is because no substantive material was located discussing them. As such, obtaining information on them will be a focus of the field research to be undertaken as part of the second paper.

China International Search and Rescue Teams

China International Search and Rescue (CISAR) teams are the most commonly deployed capability by the Chinese. The teams are made up of

english.gov.cn/official/2011-03/31/content_1835499.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[29] Athol Yates and Anthony Bergin, *More than good deeds Disaster risk management and Australian, Japanese and US Defence forces* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2011), 45.

[30] Athol Yates and Anthony Bergin, *More than good deeds Disaster risk management and Australian, Japanese and US Defence forces* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2011), 45.

people trained and equipped to undertake search and rescue tasks, and other disaster-related tasks. The CISAR capability was officially established on 27 April 2001 as both a national and international rescue team. It appears that its capability was limited in the early and mid 2000s and its capabilities improved significantly following initial Swiss training in 2002, and again after 2006 when international accreditation was sought for the capability.[31]

Between 2001 and 2011 the CISAR has undertaken 16 post-disaster search and rescue operations, including seven domestic deployments and nine overseas missions in Algeria, Iran, Indonesia, Pakistan, Haiti, New Zealand and Japan.[32] It draws personnel principally from an engineer regiment of the Beijing Military Area Command, the PAPF General Hospital, and the China Earthquake Administration. In 2011 it had 480 members,[33] more than 20 dogs, 20 vehicles and a range of devices for searching, sensing, rescuing, and treating victims.[34]

The CISAR capability makes China one of approximately 25[35] countries worldwide that have urban search and rescue (USAR) teams which have passed the INSARAG External Classification requirements endorsed by OCHA. This occurred in 2009. This means these teams meet minimum international standards for USAR including for expertise, methods and coordination systems. This allows them to be deployed rapidly with the disaster-affected country confident in their quality. When classified, the CISAR became the world's 12th and heavy urban search and rescue team. Heavy teams must be able to arrive within 48 hours to at disaster-stricken areas, as well as be able to operate at two different sites for several days.

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31 "Chinese Teams Set Up to Save Lives – Switzerland's Contribution," *Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*, November 9, 2009, http://www.deza.admin.ch/en/Home/News/Close_up?itemID=183791 (accessed December 17, 2012).

32 Tang Yuankai, "Rising to the Challenge," *Beijing Review*, August 15, 2011, http://www.bjreview.com.cn/Cover_Stories_Series_2011/2011-08/15/content_383682.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

33 Tang Yuankai, "Rising to the Challenge," *Beijing Review*, August 15, 2011, http://www.bjreview.com.cn/Cover_Stories_Series_2011/2011-08/15/content_383682.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

34 "Chinese Medical Team in Haiti Back Home," *Chinese Rescue Team in Haiti Earthquake Relief*, Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China, February 10, 2010, http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/special-reports/CRTinHaiti/index.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

35 "Insarag External Classification (IEC)," *International Search and Rescue Advisory Group*, http://www.insarag.org/en/iec/iec-leftmenu.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

PLA Professional Emergency Rescue Forces

Since the early 2000s, non-CISAR PLA personnel have also been deployed to HADR operations. These have undertaken missions both in conjunction with CISAR teams and separately. Examples include participating in the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and the 2010 Haiti earthquake. Their missions have included providing search and rescue functions, medical care, epidemic prevention, and transportation and distribution of relief materials.[36] They are likely to be drawn from the PLA's domestically focused, state-level 19 professional emergency rescue forces (specialising in eight different types of disasters)[37] or the military area commands (MACs) of the PLA which have set up provincial emergency response teams of 45,000 people focusing on nine different types of disasters. The categories include engineering, medicine, transportation, nuclear biological and chemical (NBC), emergency communication, maritime search and rescue, urban search and rescue. The forces are claimed to be equipped with helicopters, large-scale engineering machinery, field medical equipment and life detection devices, making them self-sufficient and deployable. They can be used in a host of other roles including force projection, command and coordination, and supporting political work.[38] [39]

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[36] China's National Defense in 2006, " *Chinese Government's Official Web Portal*, http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194421.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[37] Sheo Nandan Pandey, "The Chinese Disaster Management Mechanism," *Journal of Defence Studies* (2012, January Vol: 6, Issue: 1): 54.

[38] "China's Military Operations Other than War Since 2007," *China Military Online*, September 5, 2012, http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-09/05/content_4667435.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[39] Details of these forces were provided in a May 2009 article on the preliminarily arms force system for MOOTW. It consisted of the 5 specialized forces consisting of the flood and disaster relief force, post-earthquake rescue force, rescue force for NBC disasters, relief force for transportation facilities and international peacekeeping force. The flood and disaster relief force, of which there were 19 troop units, were mostly soured from PLA engineering units. The post-earthquake emergent rescue force consisting of the engineering troops from relevant military area commands and the medical workers from the Armed Police Force shoulders the emergent rescue task for key earthquake disasters in and out the country. The rescue force for NBC disasters consisting of the chemical defence troops from relevant military area commands and arms of services and the medical rescue workers from the Academy of Military Medical Sciences under the General Logistics Department of the PLA shoulders the emergent rescue task on the land, at sea and in seriously-radiated and polluted zones. The risk relief groups for transportation facilities focused on assisting local governments in ensuring railway and highway transportation and consisted of engineering troops from the engineering force and

Air Assets

In most HADR operations, chartered aircraft are used to transfer CISAR personnel and carry relief supplies. There have been a few instances of using PLAAF assets. The first was the use of two PLAAF transport aircraft delivering medicines, medical equipment and other relief supplies to Afghanistan in 2002. During the 2010 Pakistan floods response, Chinese military helicopters (Mi-17 twin-turbine transport helicopter) were used. Although it was not a HADR operation, the evacuation of Chinese citizens in Libya in February 2011 involved four PLAAF Il-76s strategic airlifters.

Strategic and tactical airlifters, as well as maritime patrol aircraft for search and rescue support have been used by other militaries for disaster response work. Another less frequent potential aviation capability that may be used is unmanned aerial systems (UASs). These are used for gathering intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance information on disaster affected areas. Most likely to be used initially by the Chinese due to their less controversial nature and small support requirements are light, low-altitude, non-weapon carrying, man-portable mini-UAVs with short flight endurance, such as the ASN-15. Larger UASs have been used by other militaries, such as the high-altitude, long-duration Global Hawk UAS that overflew the Fukushima Dai-1 nuclear reactor following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake disaster.

Sea Assets

To date, no PLAN vessels have participated in HADR operations.[40] However, the new hospital ship was offered following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake disaster but was not taken up by the Japanese. Based on vessels

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the engineering troops from the Second Artillery Force. The international peacekeeping force consisting of engineering troops, transportation and medical personnel and are designed to undertake international peacekeeping under the UN framework. Huang Wenfeng and Liu Feng'an, "PLA Constructs MOOTW Arms Force System," Ministry of National Defense of the Peoples Republic of China, May 17, 2009, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/MOOTW/2009-05/14/content_3100858.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[40] Although it was not a HADR operation, the evacuation of Chinese citizens in Libya in February 2011 involved the missile frigate Xuzhou escorting ships carrying Chinese citizens from Libya to safety across the Mediterranean Sea. This operation was a milestone for the PLAN as it was the first such humanitarian escort mission.

used by other militaries in HADR operations, PLAN assets that could be used are amphibious vessels, hospital ships and aircraft carriers. Other vessels may also be used but their use is likely to be opportunistic due to their presence near the country when a disaster strikes, rather than being sent there as part of the organized disaster response.[41]

Amphibious vessels

The PLAN has a range of military amphibious vessels that could be used for HADR. These include the largest Yuzhao class (Type 071) Landing Platform Docks (LPD), the Yukan class (Type 072) Landing Ship Tank (LST), and Yudeng/Yudao/Yunshu/Yuhai/Yuliang/Yuling classes of Landing Ship Medium (LSM). Of these, one class that has considerable utility is the Yuzhou class LPD of which the PLAN has three. The military capability of this vessel includes carrying 500-800 troops, 15-20 amphibious armoured vehicles, and four Z-8 (locally produced version of the Aérospatiale SA 321 Super Frelon) three-engine heavy transport helicopters. This large capacity makes it potentially useful for carrying large numbers of personnel and equipment to a disaster site, and allowing deployed personnel to have a small on-shore footprint. In 2010, the first Yuzhao class LPD was deployed for anti-piracy duties off Somalia and this went generally unremarked.[42]

While the physical size of the Yuzhou class LPD is large, it is not as imposing as the new Landing Helicopter Docks (LHD) that the Australian military are intending to use for HADR operations. The Yuzhou class is 210m long and has a weight of 18,000 tonnes compared with the Canberra class LHDs ships which are 230.8m long and 28,000 tonnes. Australia is planning on having two Canberra class vessels entering service around 2015, and these can each carry around 1,000 soldiers and between 16 and 24 helicopters.

A larger LHD is reported under planning. Called the Type 081 LHD, it might be the largest LHD, displacing 22,000 tons and be 211m long. It is

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[41] Although it was not a HADR operations, the evacuation of Chinese citizens in Libya in February 2011 involved a PLAN Type 054 Jiangkai-II class missile frigate (*Xuzho9*) to escort a passenger ferry carrying Chinese evacuees.

[42] Craig Hooper and David M. Slayton, "The Real Game-Changers of the Pacific Basin," *Proceedings Magazine* 137, no. 4 (April 2011), http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2011-04/real-game-changers-pacific-basin (accessed December 17, 2012).

uncertain if the vessel class will be built, although reports consider that four could be built with the first being launched in 2014.[43]

The PLA also received in August 2012 one of four planned large, civilian roll-on/roll-off (RoRo) ships specifically designed to meet national defence requirements in its design and construction to carry troops and heavy equipment. The first ship, the "Bohai emerald bead", is a 36,000 tonne, 178 meter long and 28 meter wide ship, and can carry over 2,000 persons and 300 vehicles. The vessels have been identified by the PLA as "ensuring troop units to fulfil diversified missions."[44] The PLAN also has access to other smaller RoRo ships. In 2009, the first Chinese RoRo ship (the 14,000 tonne Spirit) was built. The owner of the Spirit is COSCO (China Ocean Shipping Co.), which is owned by the Chinese government. The COSCO fleet includes over 700 cargo, tanker, and RoRo ships, and operates ship repair facilities and port operations worldwide. COSCO assets are available for use by the military.[45] [46] Other vessels that could be used as part of amphibious support operations include the newly launched troop ship, Fisheries Law Enforcement Command ships, and the blue-water civilian ships.[47]

Hospital ship

The PLAN currently has one hospital ship, the Type 920 vessel Daishandao, also known as the Peace Ark. Introduced into service in 2009, its primary functions according to the Chinese military are to "provide medical treatment to the wounded on sea during wartime and offer medical service to

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43 J. Michael Cole, "New Chinese Ship Causes Alarm," *Taipei Times*, 31 May, 2012, http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2012/05/31/2003534139 (accessed December 17, 2012).

44 Hu Haijun and Yang Zurong, "Launch of New Civilian Ship Helps PLA Enhance Strategic Projection Capability," *China Military Online*, August 9, 2012, http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2012-08/09/content_4987597.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

45 "China Goes RoRo," *Strategy Page*, August 28, 2012, http://www.strategypage.com/htmw/htamph/articles/20120828.aspx (accessed December 17, 2012).

46 Using COSCO has significant benefits over building port facilities or formalising military access arrangements as it ensures the Chinese keep a low profile, cannot be accused of expansion as seen by imperialist powers in the past, and are able to avoid being entangled in other countries' domestic politics, thus avoiding China being labelled inconsistent with its professed non-intervention principle.

47 The comfort and reliability of these vessels are not to a similar standard as Western vessels but this does not diminish their effectiveness for the HADR mission.

the PLA troops stationed in remote islets in peacetime".[48] This military function is similar to the primary mission of the USNS COMFORT hospital ship which is "to provide a mobile, flexible, and rapidly responsive afloat medical capability for acute medical and surgical care in support of amphibious task forces, Marine Corps, Army and Air Force elements, forward deployed Navy elements of the fleet and fleet activities located in areas where hostilities may be imminent".[49] Other nations also use their military for medical missions. For example, in 2012 the Republic of Singapore Navy using its containerised surgical system onboard one of the Landing Ship Tanks worked with the Indonesian military to provide social assistance, primary health, dental and surgical care at Muara Sabak, Jambi, Indonesia.[50]

The first operational training event of the Daishandao occurred in May 2009, and since then it has conducted a number of overseas medical missions including in the Gulf of Aden, along the east African coast and in the Caribbean. Its medical facilities include 300 beds, 20 intensive care units and eight surgical operating units. It also has a helicopter hangar and landing platform which can accommodate 8 helicopters. By comparison, the Daishandao at 178m, 14,000 tonnes, is significantly smaller than the USNS COMFORT at 272m, 62,000 tonnes.

Aircraft carriers

In September 2012, the PLAN took delivery of China's first aircraft carrier, the Liaoning. This 54,000 tonne ship can theoretically accommodate 33 fixed wing aircraft. The carrier is expected to serve as a training platform for fixed-wing aircraft as the PLAN develops a sea-based fixed wing air regiment. It can also be used as a base for helicopter-borne HADR operations. Aircraft carriers have been deployed by the US during disasters including the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

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48 "Chinese Navy Hospital Ship "Peace Ark"," *China Military Online*, September 20, 2011, http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/special-reports/2011-09/20/content_4680990.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

49 USNS Comfort, "About the USNS Comfort," *Navy Medicine Official Website*, United States Navy, http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/usnscomfort/Pages/default.aspx (accessed December 17, 2012).

50 Ministry of Defence, "Singapore and Indonesian Navies Participate in 52nd Surya Bhaskara Jaya," http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/news_and_events/nr/2002/apr/17apr02_nr.html (accessed December 10, 2012).

Evaluation of the Capabilities

While China has potentially significant capabilities to undertake HADR activities, it appears to also have many limitations and weaknesses.[51] Those relevant to the PLA include:

- Shortages of trained and equipped military personnel that have the technical capabilities required for each type of disaster.
- Shortage of personnel with the necessary language skills and civil-military coordination skills.[52]
- Shortage of short-notice deployable airlift and sealift assets.
- Compartmentalising of HADR capabilities meaning that the nearest PLA assets invariably cannot be deployed as they are not HADR trained or equipped.
- Limited civil-military coordination skills and networks, meaning that mechanisms of information exchange have to be developed post disaster, thus slowing the response and impeding its efficiency and effectiveness.

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[51] For summaries on domestic weaknesses which are also likely to be reflected in the Chinese approach to international disaster efforts, see Kamlesh K. Agnihotri, "2008 Sichuan Earthquake and Role of the Chinese Defence Forces in Disaster Relief," Journal of Defence Studies, IDSA, Vol.6 No1, January (2012), 36; Han Feng, "Disaster Management in China", presentation at the Second Annual Convention of the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia, Conference Hall, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China, November 10-11, 2008, http://www.rsis-ntsasia.org/activities/conventions/convention-beijing1.htm (accessed December 1, 2012); and Sheo Nandan Pandey, "The Chinese Disaster Management Mechanism," *Journal of Defence Studies* (2012, January Vol: 6, Issue: 1); Ministry of Civil Affairs, *National progress report on the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2011-2013) - Interim* (Beijing, 2012), http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/asia/chn/ (accessed December 1, 2012); Nirav Patel, "Chinese Disaster Relief Operations Identifying Critical Capability Gaps," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Issue 52, 1st quarter (2009).

[52] The lack of civil-military coordination is probably the most significant deficiency. This is because in China there appears to be a general lack of interagency coordination between military and civil structures. For example, it has been noted that community partnership, cooperation, and coordination in relation to disaster management is largely absent. (Sheo Nandan Pandey, "The Chinese Disaster Management Mechanism," *Journal of Defence Studies* (2012, January Vol: 6, Issue: 1): 55.) The lack of civil-military coordination was also noted during the Sichuan earthquake response. It is likely that civil-military issues will be under emphasised in the preparation for PLA people to be deployed on HADR missions.

More strategic limitations and weakness include:

- Limited existing on the ground presence in potential recipient countries of Chinese personnel who have familiarity with HADR operations, meaning greater reliance is placed on non-Chinese groups establishing needs and coordinating the supply of disaster relief. This is likely to slow China obtaining needs assessment and coordination information.
- A preference for UN or recipient government coordination rather than other ad-hoc multilateral leadership. Slow UN or recipient government response will result in delayed Chinese response.
- Reluctance to be involved in HADR in deployments which may transgress the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference.

Chinese Military Involvement in HADR

The Chinese military involvement in HADR can be divided into two categories:

- Deployments, which consist of the arrival into, operations in and the departure from a disaster-affected country of military personnel and materiel, and/or military carried disaster goods.
- Confidence building measures, which are instruments used by nations to promote mutual trust.

The Chinese military also plays a role in the provision of financial aid and donated disaster-relief goods. For example, disaster supplies such as first aid kits, water purifiers, plastic sheets, blankets, medicine and tents, are often supplied from PLA stockholdings. PLA aviation assets may fly these and other donated supplies to their points of international departure from where they are carried on a chartered aircraft. This was the case in the provision of disaster supplies to Jakarta, Bangkok, Colombo and Male in the Maldives.[53] The PLA has also been involved in collecting funds. These actions are better considered as part of China's international humanitarian efforts rather than HADR so are not considered further in this paper.

HADR Deployments

The Chinese military's first identified international HADR deployment was in 2002. It involved two PLAAF transport aircraft delivering medicines, medical equipment and other relief supplies to Afghanistan. Between 2002 and 2010, the PLA carried out 28 urgent international humanitarian aid missions, and provided 22 disaster-affected countries with relief materials including tents, blankets, medicine, medical appliances, food and generators

[53] Drew Thompson, "Tsunami Relief Reflects China's Regional Aspirations," *China Brief*, Jamestown Foundation, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=3708&tx_ttnews[backPid]=195&no_cache=1 (accessed December 17, 2012).

according to the 2010 edition of China's national defence strategy.[54] The 2011 US Department of Defense's report to Congress on China's military development identifies that the PLA actually contributed to 11 emergency relief operations in fourteen countries.[55] This paper considers there have been 12 HADR operations carried out by China. These are listed in Table 1. The difference in the number of missions (i.e. the Chinese identify 28 mission and this paper identifies 12) is likely to be because the Chinese include medical diplomacy missions in their counting (principally the Peace Ark hospital ship missions), and because China count each port call by the Peace Ark and each phase of a mission within a country as a separate HADR mission.

Common HADR missions undertaken by militaries are:

- Logistic support (helicopter lift, port opening and regional air mobility coordination)
- Emergency medical care (casevac and trauma care)
- Search and rescue
- General manpower (sandbagging, evacuation, assisting in cleaning up, and recovering and moving corpses)
- DR supplies (water, emergency shelter, rations, generators)
- Communications
- Critical engineering (expeditionary bridging, road clearing, temporary shelter, port opening of harbours and airports)
- Security (government asset security and distribution security)
- Imagery
- Temporary shelter construction
- Expert personnel (civil-military coordination and liaison, needs assessments, damage assessments and logistics)[56]

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54 "China's National Defense in 2010," *Chinese Government's Official Web Portal*, http://english.gov.cn/official/2011-03/31/content_1835499.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

55 Office of the Secretary of Defense, Annual Report To Congress - Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China (Washington, 2011), 67.

56 The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute identified that in the period 1997–2006 the military assets that were most commonly contributed to international disaster relief operations were: (a) air transport, including aeroplanes used for the transport of relief items and personnel; (b) medical assistance (field hospitals and personnel); and (c) expert personnel (in civil–military coordination and liaison, needs assessment and logistics). Sharon Wiharta, Hassan Ahmad, Jean-Yves Haine, Josefina Löfgren and Tim Randall, *The Effectiveness of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response*,

Instances of all of the above missions have been identified in Chinese HADR operations with the exception of imagery provision.

Table 1. Chinese International HADR operations

2002	**Afghanistan** On 25 March, two PLAAF transport delivered medicines, medical equipment and other supplies to Afghanistan in accordance with a UN resolution.[57]
2003	**Algeria** On 21 May 2003, an earthquake hit Algeria. A 30-member China International Search and Rescue (CISAR) team was sent along with three sniffer dogs and supported by special equipment. It was the first time that a CISAR team was sent to a foreign country hit by natural disasters.[58]
2003	**Iran** On 26 December 2003, an earthquake hit southeast Iran (the BAM earthquake). A 43-member CISAR team arrived on 28 December.[59]
2004	**Indonesia** On 26 December 2004, an earthquake and tsunami hit the Sumatra island of Indonesia (2004 Indian Ocean tsunami). A 70-member CISAR team arrived in the Aceh Province of Indonesia for a 30 day humanitarian relief operation.[60]
2005	**Pakistan** On 8 October 2005, an earthquake hit Pakistan (the Kashmir Earthquake). Two CISAR teams of 90-members undertook an operation which lasted until 17 November. For the first time, a Chinese

Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008), x.

57 "Top Ten firsts of Chinese Military Diplomacy from 2002 to 2012," People's Daily Online, September 26, 2012, http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90786/7960693.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

58 "Backgrounder: Major International rescue operations carried out by CISAR," Xinhua, March 13, 2011, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2011-03/13/c_13776466.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

deployed hospital (PAPF General Hospital) performed general anaesthesia operations.[61]

2006 Indonesia

On 27 May 2006, an earthquake struck Indonesia (the Java earthquake). A 44-member CISAR team was deployed in addition to a team of other Chinese medical workers, professional rescuers and seismologists.[62]

2008 Myanmar

In May 2008, Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar. A medical team was sent. A 50-member medical team was sent that undertook 14 days of relief work.[63] [64]

2010 Haiti

On 12 January 2010, an earthquake hit Haiti. A 50-member CISAR team arrived in Haiti on 14 January.[65] This team was supplemented with a 40-member PLA medical care and epidemic prevention team which arrived on 25 January 2010.[66] [67] Safety and security to the teams were provided by Chinese riot police who were currently serving on a peacekeeping mission in Haiti prior to the earthquake.[68]

2010 Pakistan

From late July to mid-September 2010, Pakistan experienced massive flooding. Two successive 55-member CISAR teams were sent

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61 Ibid.

62 Ibid.

63 The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, "China's Actions for Disaster Prevention and Reduction," Chinese Government's Official Web-portal, http://english.gov.cn/official/2009-05/11/content_1310629.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

64 "China Donates Earth-Moving Equipment for Post-Nargis Reconstruction," People's Daily Online, March 16, 2009, http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/6615344.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

65 Backgrounder: Major International rescue operations carried out by CISAR, 13 March 2011

66 "China's National Defense in 2010," Chinese Government's Official Web Portal, http://english.gov.cn/official/2011-03/31/content_1835499.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

67 "Chinese Medical Team Leaves Haiti After Succesful Mission," Xinhua, February 9, 2010, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-02/09/c_13169184.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

68 All Chinese peacekeepers were withdrawn on about 25 March 2010.

to southern Pakistan.[69] Each had 36 medical staff (from 19 fields of medical care ranging from infectious diseases and skin disorders to gynaecological and paediatric illnesses) and 19 rescuers and support technicians. [70] These were carried by chartered aircraft into Islamabad. The PLA also sent a 68-member medical team to the city of Sehwan in Sindh and a 64-member rescue team with four helicopters to Hyderabad.[71] It was also the first time that Chinese military helicopters carried out an HADR mission. It involved four Chinese military helicopters Mi-17 taking off from northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.[72] The helicopters in country carried 60 tons of airdropped goods and materials.[73]

2011 Thailand

During October and November 2011, major flooding occurred in Thailand. The PLAAF flew multiple flights carrying disaster goods. China donated to the disaster 259 hovercrafts, 150 water pumps, 210 water filters and 1,300 tents.[74]

2011 New Zealand

On 22 February 2011, an earthquake hit Christchurch, New Zealand. A 10-member rescue team was sent.[75]

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69 The location was Thatta district in southern Sindh province.

70 Qin Jize, "Chinese Rescue Team Reaches Pakistan," China Daily, August 27, 2010, http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/2010-08/27/content_11214321.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

71 "China Pledges $250m Flood Aid to Pakistan," China Daily, December 18, 2010, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010wenindia/2010-12/18/content_11721909.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

72 "China Dispatches Military Helicopters to Pakistan to Aid in Flood Relief Work," People's Daily Online, September 21, 2010, http:// http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/7147625.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

73 "China's National Defense in 2010," Chinese Government's Official Web Portal, http://english.gov.cn/official/2011-03/31/content_1835499.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

74 COV.cn, "China airlifts third batch of flood relief goods to Bangkok", October 22, 2011, http://www.gov.cn/misc/2011-10/22/content_1976023.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

75 Xinhua News Agency, "Backgrounder: Major International rescue operations carried out by CISAR", March 13, 2011, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2011-03/13/c_13776466.htm (accessed December 17, 2012), and BBC Monitoring International Reports, "Programme summary of CCTV-7 channel military news 1130 gmt 21 Mar 11," March 22, 2011, http://www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-252186423/programme-summary-cctv-7.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

2011 Japan

On 11 March 2011, an earthquake and resulting tsunami (Great East Japan Earthquake) hit Japan. A 15-member[76] CISAR team carried out operations in Ofunato city in Japan's Iwate Prefecture.

The 12 operations that the Chinese have been involved in between 2002 and 2012 are comparable in number with those performed by developed powers in the region. For example, the Australian Defence Force undertook 16 operations between 2003 and 2011; the Japan Self-Defense Forces undertook 9 operations between 2001 and 2010. This information is presented in Table 2.

Figures for the US are not included in this table as its military undertakes disaster relief operations worldwide, while the other countries restrict their HADR operations mostly to the Asia-Pacific region. In this region, United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) is the United States' armed forces combatant command responsible for the Pacific and East Asian areas. It undertook 9 operations between 2004 and 2011.[77] Other combatant commands responded to disasters in other regions such as the Haiti earthquake, the flooding in Pakistan, the earthquakes in Turkey.

In terms of personnel numbers, between 2001 and 2011 covering 10 different natural disasters in foreign countries, the total number of personnel involved was fewer than 1,000.[78] Between 2008 and September 2011, 291 officers and men to took part in disaster rescue in Indonesia and other countries. In comparison, during this time the PLA dispatched 7,735 officers and men to participate in international peacekeeping operations.[79]

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[76] "Backgrounder: Major International Rescue Operations Carried Out by CISAR," Xinhua, March 13, 2011, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2011-03/13/c_13776466.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[77] Athol Yates and Anthony Bergin, *More than good deeds Disaster risk management and Australian, Japanese and US Defence forces* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2011), 10 plus information from Table 1 above.

[78] M. Taylor Fravela, "Economic Growth, Regime Insecurity, and Military Strategy: Explaining the Rise of Noncombat Operations in China," *Asian Security*, Volume 7, Issue 3 (2011): 192.

[79] Wu Tianmin, Han Guoxian and Li Yan, "PLA Details Chinese Military Operations Other than War Since 2008," *PLA Daily*, Defence Professionals, September 5, 2011, http://www.defpro.com/news/details/27417/?SID=080d2eae313abf028fedb775e7d28c2d (accessed December 17, 2012).

Table 2: The number of HADR missions undertaken by the ADF, JSDF, PLA[80]

Year	Australia ADF	Japan JSDF	Chinese PLA
2001/02	0	0	1
2002/03	0	0	1
2003/04	4	1	1
2004/05	1	1	1
2005/06	1	3	2
2006/07	1	0	0
2007/08	2	0	1
2008/09	1	0	0
2009/10	3	2	1
2010/11	3	1	4
2011/12	1	0	0
Total	**13**	**7**	**9**

In terms of the total number of military personnel deployed, it appears that Chinese numbers over the last decade are roughly similar to Japan Self-Defense Forces and Australian Defence Force deployments. For example, for the 2010 Pakistan flood disaster, the Australian Defence Force provided 36 medical personnel (along with a number of engineering support and Air Logistics personnel)[81] while the Chinese supplied over 100 medical personnel.[82] However Chinese, Australian and Japanese deployment numbers are all dwarfed by US militaries contributions. For example, the US military response to the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake disaster involved 22

[80] Athol Yates and Anthony Bergin, *More than good deeds Disaster risk management and Australian, Japanese and US Defence forces* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2011), 10 plus information from Table 1 above.

[81] Department of Defence, *Annual Report 2010–11*, Volume 1, (Canberra, 2012), 171.

[82] It should be noted that the Australian Defence Force contribution was part of a combined civil-military 180 personnel Australian Medical Task Force that responded to the disaster. This contrasts with the Chinese response which consisted only of military personnel.

ships and 19,000 personnel,[83] and for the November/December 2011 Thailand floods involved 600 personnel.[84]

In terms of the time taken to deploy, Chinese HADR response has been as rapid as other developed powers. For example, within two days of the 12 January 2010 Haiti earthquake, Chinese HADR personnel had deployed to the country.[85] The speed of deployment contrasts with the Japan Self-Defense Forces. The first part of its Disaster Relief Medical Assistance Team arrived in the Haitian's capital of Port-au-Prince on 23 January, 11 days after the disaster.[86]

While the above characteristics of HADR response (i.e. number of operations, the number of personnel deployed, and the speed of arrival) provides an indication of their quality, it is recognized that the best measures would be those that determine actual humanitarian outcomes, and the contribution to the advancing the national interest of the providing country. While there is a framework to measure humanitarian outcomes of military HADR operations,[87] unfortunately no comprehensive data sets have been identified that could actually generate such an assessment of the humanitarian effectiveness of Chinese HADR operations.[88] No frameworks or data sets

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[83] The scale of this response was possible because most of the responding US troops and assets were already stationed in Japan. The response also involved some 250,000 JSDF troops making it the largest deployment of Japanese troops since the end of WWII.

[84] *Stares and Strips*, "U.S. military ends relief mission in Thailand ... for now," http://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/thailand/u-s-military-ends-relief-mission-in-thailand-for-now-1.163412, accessed December 15, 2012.

[85] A contributing factor to the rapid response was the presence of Chinese peacekeepers in Haiti prior to the earthquake.

[86] Athol Yates and Anthony Bergin, *More than good deeds Disaster risk management and Australian, Japanese and US Defence forces* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2011), 50.

[87] This is based on assessing the six interrelated elements of timeliness, appropriateness and competence, efficiency, absorptive capacity, coordination and costs. Sharon Wiharta, Hassan Ahmad, Jean-Yves Haine, Josefina Löfgren and Tim Randall, *The Effectiveness of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response*, Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008), 31.

[88] The only Chinese disaster relief operation for which there is an open source body of knowledge that evaluates the Chinese military response is the 2008 Sichuan earthquake in Sichuan County, China. Being a domestic operation that involved PLA troops that would not be deployed internationally, means that any assessment of the PLA response may not be relevant. Other evaluation reports of Chinese involvement in international disaster relief operations do exist, such as the UN China report on the 2004 Asian Tsunami, however these do not evaluate the military contribution. Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in China, *Tsunami response – A review of China's contribution*

were identified that could enable an assessment to be made of the national interest outcomes of Chinese HADR operations.

Confidence-Building Measures

Confidence-building measures (CBMs) are instruments used by nations to promote mutual trust. CBMs seek to reduce misunderstanding, fear and suspicion, and make behaviour more predictable. These are based on building mutual understanding through sharing information, and working on collaborative projects not only on security-military issues but also on political and cultural dimensions. They are commonly used to build trust between militaries where there is already existing tension, as well as to provide a springboard from which to begin tackling more challenging security issues. Other uses are to increase transparency, increase the level of formal communication between parties, and constraining military activities through requiring advanced notice or prohibition. While the actual outcome of the CBM is important, so too is the process as the interaction allows mutual understanding of participants' concerns, motives and rationales, as well as identifying areas of common interest.

CBMs related to HADR can be divided into two groups – training-related CBMs and military / diplomatic-related CBMs. While they are different in focus, one being principally bottom-up and the other top-down, both are interrelated and complementary.

HADR training-related CBMs

HADR CBMs involving military forces at a training level seek to advance trust through military to military activities involving China and other countries, both bilaterally and multilaterally. These activities can take a number of forms. For example, in October 2009, General Xu Caihou, Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission on a visit to the US agreed with US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates on seven key activities for building trust and cooperation. Enhancing cooperation in the area of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief was one of the seven.[89] Examples of HADR-specific

to the United Nations response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami (China, 2007).

[89] The so-called 7-point consensus consisted of "Promoting high-level visits; enhancing cooperation in the area of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; deepening military medical cooperation; expanding exchanges between armies of the two nations;

CBMs are exercises, training exchanges, and high-level defence related visits. Those in 2011 and 2012 include:

- Exercise Cooperation Spirit 2011: This HADR activity involved the Australian Defence Force and PLA personnel, running from 28 November to 1 December at the PLA´s Comprehensive Emergency Response Training Base at Chongyi in Sichuan Province, China. Some 15 Australian military personnel were involved, and the PLA contingent comprised planners and other personnel involved in field training and static displays during the exercise.[90]
- Exercise Cooperation Spirit 2012: This 3-day HADR activity involved 54 personnel from New Zealand Defence Force, PLA and the Australian Defence Force at the Enoggera Barracks, Brisbane, Australia. It involved discussion based table top planning activity, a Multinational Medical Unit capability demonstration, and a tour of flood-affected areas of Brisbane.[91]
- A November 2012 2-day HADR drill in China's Sichuan Province undertaken by US and Chinese military forces. [92] It involved work on task initiation, force projection, joint rescue and relief operation, and task handover and evacuation. It

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enhancing the program of mid-grade and junior officer exchanges; promoting cultural and sports exchanges between the two militaries; invigorating the existing diplomatic and consultative mechanisms to improve maritime operational safety." Carlyle Thayer, *Enhancing Transparency: Military to Military Cooperation and Strategic Dialogues* (Presentation at the 6th Berlin Conference on Asian Security, June 18-19, 2012).

90 "Forces from Australia and China Join in Humanitarian Exercise," *Defence* News, Australian Government, Department of Defence, December 2, 2011, http://www.defence.gov.au/defencenews/stories/2011/dec/1201.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

91 Stephen Smith, "Minister for Defence – Australia Cooperates with China and New Zealand on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief," Australian Government, Department of Defence, October 26, 2012, http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/2012/10/26/minister-for-defence-australia-cooperates-with-china-and-new-zealand-on-humanitarian-assistance-and-disaster-relief/ (accessed December 17, 2012); "Exercise Cooperation Spirit 2012 Ends," *CCTV News*, November 21, 2012, http://english.cntv.cn/program/newsupdate/20121101/100013.shtml (accessed December 17, 2012).

92 "Senior Chinese Army Officer to Visit US," *China Daily*, November 30, 2012, http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-11/30/content_15972897.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

was the 8th HADR exchange activity held by the Chinese and American armed forces since 1997.[93]

HADR military/diplomatic-related CBMs

HADR CBMs involving negotiation working on military-diplomatic issues are designed to influence norms governing military issues, but with an intention of spill-over benefits into advancing other political, diplomatic, and economic priorities. Typically these CBMs are part of a package of related activities. For example, at the China-ASEAN Summit and the ASEAN Plus Three Summit, held respectively in January and November 2007, China put forward a series of initiatives for strengthening cooperation in non-traditional security fields, and emphasized the importance of conducting institutionalized defence cooperation and military exchanges. Below is a description of significant CBMs of this type.

ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting-Plus

The ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting-Plus (ADMM+) consists of the ten Southeast Asian countries and eight dialogue partners including China and the United States. In the inaugural meeting of ADMM+ in October 2010, the Defense Ministers agreed to focus on the five areas of maritime security, counter-terrorism, disaster management, peacekeeping operations and military medicine. To advance each area, an Experts' Working Group was established.

The first meeting of the Expert Working Group on HADR (EWG HADR) was held in November 2011 in China, and was co-chaired by China. On the agenda of EWG HADR is to develop practical cooperation including through discussing the legal aspects of using military capabilities and assets in HADR operations. The first ADMM+ HADR exercise, which will be combined with military medicine, is scheduled for Brunei Darussalam from 16-20 June 2013. It follows the holding of two ASEAN militaries HADR field exercises, one each in 2011 and 2012.

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[93] "China-US Joint Disaster Relief Tabletop Exercise Held," *China Military Online*, November 30, 2011, http://www.ecns.cn/military/2012/11-30/38197.shtml (accessed December 17, 2012).

ASEAN Regional Forum

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was established in 1994 and has become a key forum for security dialogue in Asia. Its 27 members come from 10 ASEAN member states (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) the 10 ASEAN dialogue partners (Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, New Zealand, ROK, Russia and the United States), one ASEAN observer (Papua New Guinea) as well as the DPRK, Mongolia, Pakistan, Timor-Leste, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. At the 14th ARF Ministerial Meeting in August 2007, the Chinese drafted *ARF General Guidelines for Disaster Relief Cooperation* were adopted.

The Risk Equation

China's defence and foreign policy decision making processes are largely unknown. However, like any other country, China's decision making will substantially reflect the anticipated benefits and risks as perceived by the decision makers. In this context, risk is defined as the possibility of an event occurring that will have a negative impact. It is calculated by assessing the likelihood and its magnitude of the impact. To determine when, how and why China becomes involved in HADR activities requires understanding the benefits and risks of such involvement as perceived by decision makers. The key decision makers on international military deployments are very senior level CCP leaders (i.e. those who serve on CMC, State Council and CCP Politburo Standing Committee).

Many factors will influence their perceptions including core values, foreign perceptions of Chinese actions, and CCP priorities. Below is a brief summary of these three factors. The second phase of this project as described in *Chapter 1: Introduction* will treat the issue of perceptions rigorously as well as seeking to quantify the benefits or risks.

Examples of China's core values are sovereignty and territorial integrity. These resonate because of Chinese experience of colonial rule, and ideologically because it reinforces the argument for single state control. Another value is giving greater weight to the longer-term perspective compared with the West. These and other core values will influence HADR assessments.

Another factor affecting Chinese perception is how their nation is viewed by foreign countries. China appears to consider that there is a strong anti-China bias of many foreign countries as seen in the following common Chinese complaints about the attitudes of the West:

Unfair treatment, e.g. While both China and India expands its strategic airlift capability, only China gets criticised for it.

Lack of recognition, e.g. While China increasingly works to advance security and peace around the world through global peacekeeping, HADR and anti-piracy work, such efforts are not recognised in critiques about China's role as a responsible international partner.

Lack of trust, e.g. China states that its military modernisation seeks to close the gap with existing powers yet it is characterised as building hegemonic power projection.

The Chinese views of the bias of foreign countries are likely to influence how Chinese perceive the benefits and risks to it from HADR activities.

A final factor influencing decisions being involved in HADR activities is how this will impact on CCP priorities. This paper identifies three levels of CCP priorities. The most important and paramount priority is preserving the supremacy of the CCP. The paramount priority is advanced through pursuing a set of enduring domestic priorities.[94] These second level priorities are:

- Domestic popular support of the CCP
- Domestic stability
- Territorial integrity
- Economic growth
- Balancing economic growth with social and environmental pressures[95]

The third level contains enduring international priorities, which reinforce domestic priorities. These priorities are predicated on the assumption that overseas national interests are considered by the Chinese as a continuation of domestic policy. For example, the foreign policy objective to advance a peaceful external environment both facilitates and consolidates domestic stability and economic growth. Enduring international priorities are:

- A peaceful external environment
- Access to resources
- Status, respect and influence of a major power.

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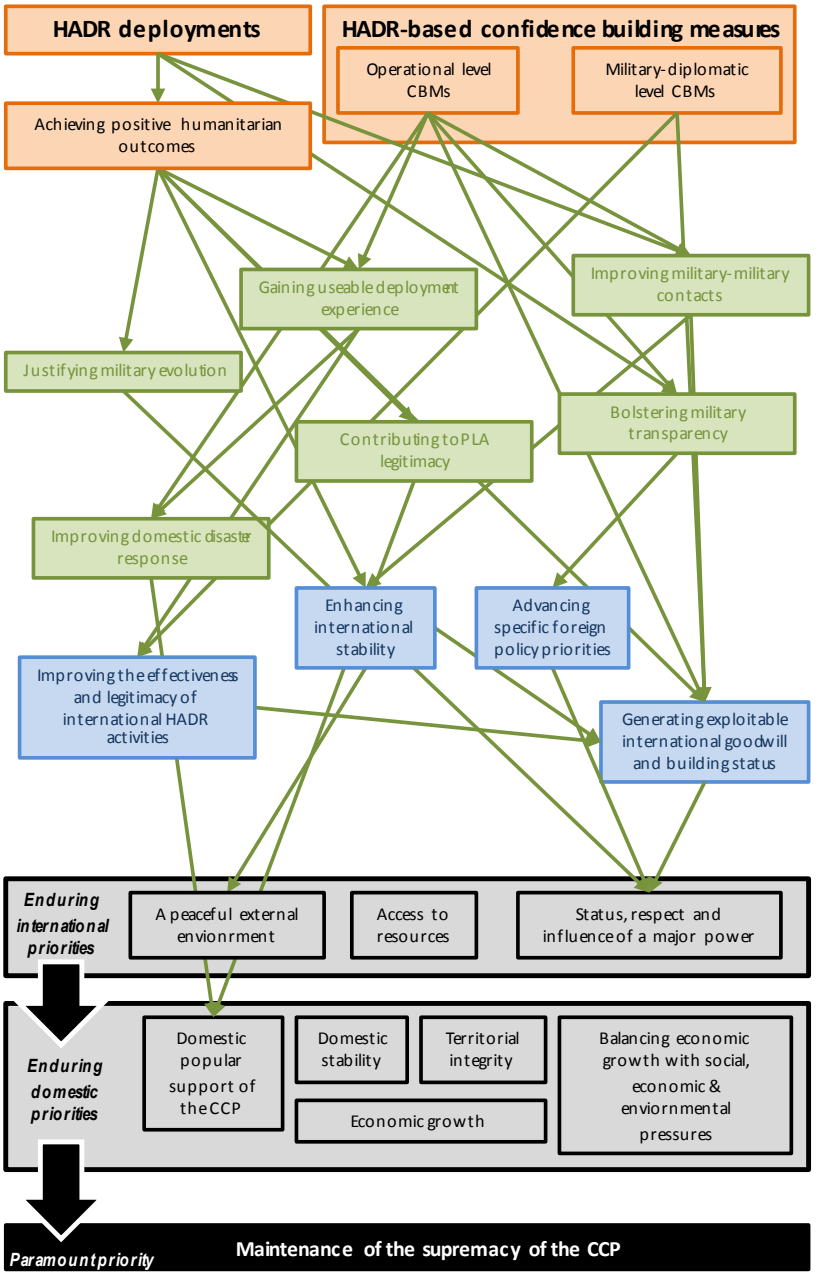
[94] These priorities, frequently referred to as core national interests, are promulgated in the Constitution of the CCP, and are referenced to as being developed through Marxism-Leninism ideology, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, Three Represents (advanced by Jiang Zemin) and Scientific Outlook on Development (advanced by Hu Jintao).

[95] This refers to the Chinese construct better known as "comprehensive, balanced and sustainable development" which is not used due to its lack of clarity in meaning.

The linking of HADR benefits to CCP priorities encourages a systematic method of identifying them from a CCP perspective. The linkage can be draw graphically through a causal diagram (Figure 1). An advantage of this diagram is that the reader can rapidly see and appreciate the inter-relationships between HADR actions, benefit/risks and CCP priorities.[96] This encourages the reader to consider how the CCP leadership views them.

[96] The common approach used to explain these benefits is through a list. The limitation of this approach is that it fails to show the inter-relationships between different benefits, nor highlight cascading chains of benefits that link the HADR activity with intermediate benefits and finally, to advancing national objectives.

Figure 1: Causal diagram linking HADR actions, benefit/risks and CCP priorities



Potential Benefits and Risks to China of its Involvement in HADR Activities

This chapter identifies for China the potential benefits and the associated risks of being involved in HADR activities. It does not examine the likelihood or magnitude of the benefits and risks as this will be done in the next phase of this project.

The benefits and risks have been grouped together into two areas – military and soft power – based on which area they most closely impact. As benefits are often interrelated and span both groups, rather than identifying this in the text the linkages are shown in the causal diagram (Figure 1). The diagram also shows the links to CCP priorities as these priorities are likely to be a central factor in shaping the perception of decision makers about benefits and risks.

Military Benefits

The military benefits and risks are those likely to be carried mostly by military decision makers, principally senior leaders of the PLA and the military-civil leadership (e.g. CMC).

Achieving positive humanitarian outcomes

HADR deployments aim to generate positive humanitarian outcomes, notably to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity. As such, a deployment will be judged to some degree on the basis of it actually, or being perceived to be, achieving these outcomes. Successful HADR outcomes are the foundation for virtually all other benefits identified below.

Risk factors. A risk is that the HADR deployment is considered by foreign and/or Chinese stakeholders to not have resulted in the effective delivery of humanitarian aid. There are numerous causes why this could occur but commonly it is because it did not meet standards in one or more of the six key measures that define the effectiveness of HADR activities - timeliness, appropriateness and competence, efficiency, absorptive capacity,

coordination and costs.[97] Below are examples of likely causes that may be relevant for China.

Deployed forces do not have the essential equipment and training. For example, an identified problem with the Chinese PLA response to the 2008 Sichuan earthquake was that most of the soldiers sent to the disaster were only equipped with their field engineering tools, notably spades and picks. There was a lack of heavy lifting equipment which is essential to removing collapsed concrete slabs or shifting the thousands of tonnes of earth and rock that blocked mountain roadways. Due to the lack of such equipment, lives were lost because people could not be rescued quickly enough. [98]

Deployed forces acted recklessly due to poor leadership and training. Disaster responders need to undertake operations safely, and not contribute to the disaster's injury count. Individual bravery is accepted as an injury cause but reckless behaviour reflects poorly on the military unit as it shows it is badly led and trained. An example of such behaviour occurred during the Sichuan earthquake. The response to the earthquake was initially under the command of Wen Jiabao, senior member of the Politburo. He ordered the PLA to send helicopters or air-drop troops into Sichuan due to the inaccessibility of roads into the damaged areas. Below is a description of the risk this entailed and although no-one was injured, it could have easily turned into a mass tragedy.

> To the PLA commanders, however, because of the rain, quakes, four-thousand-meter-high mountains, and a visibility of less than twenty meters, such an order amounted to a reckless risking of the lives of their soldiers … A PLA helicopter attempted six times to reach Sichuan but failed. As the sky cleared on 14 May, one hundred paratroopers were airborne; fifteen of them, having left wills behind, jumped at a height of five thousand meters, with no ground command or guidance, no ground signposts, and no meteorological information. The plan to air-drop the rest of the paratroopers was aborted when the

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[97] Sharon Wiharta, Hassan Ahmad, Jean-Yves Haine, Josefina Löfgren and Tim Randall, *The Effectiveness of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response*, Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2008), 31.

[98] Nan Li, *Chinese Civil-Military Relations in the Post-Deng Era - Implications for Crisis Management and Naval Modernization* (Newport: U.S. Naval War College,China Maritime Studies Institute, 2010), 29.

> fifteen, who landed safely, reported that the terrain was too treacherous for a massive airdrop.[99]

Deployed forces cause injury and distress to the local community. Military forces through their behaviour or inaction can cause injury and distress to the local community. This has been seen in peacekeeping missions. For example, peacekeepers on the African continent have abused civilians, including rape and child prostitution,[100] and peacekeepers have introduced a strain of cholera into Haiti following the 2010 earthquake.[101] One response, observed in Chinese peacekeeping behaviour, is to segregate its military from local populations. While this minimises the chances of negative outcomes, such separation may impede their effectiveness and efforts in building local relations and goodwill. Inappropriate behaviour by PLA personnel involved in domestic disaster relief operations has been noted by Kamlesh K. Agnihotri, Research Fellow of the National Maritime Foundation, New Delhi. He stated that in the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, "personnel of some military units allegedly took away livestock belonging to local people in the earthquake-affected villages by force…and some members of a military unit diverted the relief material for sale in the market for personal gains. This reportedly led to angry protests by the local people who surrounded and attacked such personnel."[102]

Civil-military coordination is inadequate. To be effective, deployed forces require extensive and continued interaction with other stakeholders involved in providing relief. These include military and humanitarian organizations, international coordination bodies, recipient country governments and authorities, development organisations and local populations. If through language, cultural, policy or procedural issues there is a failure

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99 Nan Li, *Chinese Civil-Military Relations in the Post-Deng Era – Implications for Crisis Management and Naval Modernization* (Newport: U.S. Naval War College, China Maritime Studies Institute, 2010), 28.

100 Max du Plessis and Stephen Peté, Who Guards the Guards? The International Criminal Court and Serious Crimes Committed by Peacekeepers in Africa (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2006).

101 Piarroux R, Barrais R, Faucher B, Haus R, Piarroux M, Gaudart J, et al. "Understanding the cholera epidemic, Haiti," *Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal* [serial on the Internet]. 2011 July.

102 Kamlesh K. Agnihotri, "2008 Sichuan Earthquake and Role of the Chinese Defence Forces in Disaster Relief," Journal of Defence Studies, IDSA, Vol.6 No1, January (2012), 36.

to coordinate, the results are likely to be ineffective planning, overlapping actions, and pursuit of contradictory goals. In other words, PLA HADR activities will not be effective unless they can integrate into the larger network of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Gaining useable deployment experience

The Chinese have had no significant conflict experience in recent decades, with the last international conflict being the Sino-Vietnamese War in 1979. Consequently, the Chinese have been increasingly using MOOTW deployments as a way of gaining experience. Outside of China these include peacekeeping operations, anti-piracy operations and international HADR activities, and internally they include disaster relief and crises operations. Chinese military writings support disaster response work as a substitute for battle exposure.[103] [104]

Involvement in HADR deployments and HADR CBMs can provide valuable avenues for gaining individual, tactical and strategic experience. Individuals benefit as the experience tests their ability to work under pressure and conditions of uncertainty and risk, as well as their leadership skills in an evolving environment, and their ability to build relationships which are essential for civil-military coordination. Given that the vast majority of PLA personnel, including those at the most senior levels, have had no significant exposure to foreign militaries, HADR activities can also provide unique military-military experience.

HADR activities provide insights to the strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement of tactical operations. HADR activities can provide a test bed for a range of increasingly important operations such as information operations, civil-military relations, joint taskforce operations and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) activities. For example, using ISR to identify stranded people, produce maps defining scale and location

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[103] Sheo Nandan Pandey, "The Chinese Disaster Management Mechanism," *Journal of Defence Studies* (2012, January Vol: 6, Issue: 1): 54.

[104] However as significant force-wide benefits are only likely to accrue if HADR activities are undertaken on a large scale, frequently and involve multiple unites, and given that to date Chinese deployments are small scale, infrequent and mostly involve just the CISAR and medical teams, it is reasonable to question if the PLA actually consider that these deployments provide using experience. And even if they do, it is important to investigate why they are not more frequent.

of infrastructure damage, and locate contaminated industrial sites is experience that is highly relevant to conducting military operations.

HADR activities can generate strategically important experience such as expeditionary operations. As the PLAN expands its blue-water fleets, it needs to obtain more opportunities to practice deploying away from its mainland bases. While anti-piracy operations and hospital ship goodwill tours provide useful lessons, HADR operations can provide a set of unique experience opportunities. These include generating deployments quickly in response to a disaster, in integrating maritime, ground and air elements during amphibious deployments, and in operating expeditionary groups if a number of vessels are sent on the HADR activity.

Through operating in foreign countries, military intelligence functions can be exercised and useful intelligence gathered. This could include debarkation points, critical infrastructure location, and command and control sites. If working alongside other militaries, intelligence can also be gathered on their key personnel, levels of training, the quality of equipment/systems, and the effectiveness of doctrine.

The individual, operations and strategic experience obtained through participating in HADR activities can be leveraged to reshape capabilities. The experience can be formally captured through commanders' post-action reports, or through systematic collection by operation research analysts during the activity. This information can lead to changes in collective training, organisational arrangements, command arrangements and supply chains. It can also lead to the purchase of new systems.

A 2012 U.S. Army War College report also identified the link between MOOTW activities and PLA learnings. "The lessons learned from counter-piracy missions in the Gulf of Aden as well as internal, trans-regional deployment exercises are impacting the way China responds to issues ranging from domestic natural disasters to cooperative security efforts requiring the projection and sustainment of military power beyond China's borders".[105]

An example of how disaster experience can drive major changes was seen following the 2008 Sichuan earthquake. Problems identified included a

[105] Roy Kamphausen, David Lai, and Travis Tanner (eds), *Learning By Doing: The PLA Trains at Home and Abroad* (Strategic Studies Institute Book, U.S. Army War College, 2012), vi

lack of heavy lift helicopters and earthmoving equipment, coordination and medical evacuations. This led to changes in equipment and organisations, and was a major driver in improving the PLA's professional emergency-response units.

Risk factors. A risk is that the HADR deployment is characterized as China undertaking activities not for humanitarian purposes but for obtaining experience. This characterization is more likely to occur when China undertakes for the first time HADR amphibious operations or undertakes specialized military activities such as ISR missions.

Another risk is that participating in HADR exercises and other activities may undermine China's geopolitical interests. The following extract from a Brookings Institution paper summaries the risk.

> China may fear that its participation, even in humanitarian and disaster relief exercises such as CARAT and BALIKATAN, would appear to signal acceptance of the territorial boundaries of each country participating in the exercise- something that China at present is diplomatically and economically unwilling to do on a multilateral basis. Nor is China willing to be lured into the diplomatically embarrassing corner of having to withdraw from an exercise prematurely or risk an international confrontation over access or denial to disputed waters.[106]

Justifying military evolution

Advancing PLA's Reform Priorities and Institutional Issues

A key reform for the PLA is to build capabilities for the new strategic priority of MOOTW. This reform has not been uncontroversial, just as it has also caused concern within the militaries of other countries. The issue is that by focusing on MOOTW it necessarily means diminished attention given to the traditional military task of fighting and winning wars. The concern appears to have had some traction within the PLA. It was one of the reasons that Hu Jintao in 2009 modified his earlier instruction to the PLA about the shift towards diversified military missions by emphasizing the critical need for enhancing core military capabilities and preparation to fight and win "local

[106] Audry Oxley, Dragon Training at Home: Exploring the Possibilities for Collaboration Between the U.S. and Chinese Navies in the Western Hemisphere (Brookings Institution 21st CENTURY DEFENSE INITIATIVE POLICY PAPER, 2012), 23.

war under informatized conditions".[107] A benefit of participating in HADR activities, and deployments in particular, is reinforcing to the military of the need to continually modernise its forces, and work towards building MOOTW as well as war fighting capabilities. Because HADR operations, unlike many stage managed military exercises, provide insights into real world operations, capability gaps compared to other forces or between the deployment goals and the actual outcomes are readily identified. Involvement in HADR missions can be a useful institutional impetus for building MOOTW and war fighting capabilities.

While the land forces of the PLA have benefited from the MOOTW focus through their participating in peacekeeping operations, the PLAN has also benefited through both its involvement in counter-piracy operations and military diplomacy activities. The last decade has seen a rapid growth in the PLAN's status as reflected in it gaining a permanent position on the CMC. Involvement in HADR missions can be useful for the PLAN in arguing for additional resources.

Risk factors. A risk is that a focus on HADR activities undermines conventional military capabilities.[108] This could occur through the permanent transfer of war fighting resources to MOOTW functions, the lack of additional budgetary allocations to fund MOOTW functions meaning budgets for conventional military tasks have to be reduced, and disruption in normal military activities caused by unpredictable HADR deployments.

Justifying Strategic Airlift and Amphibious Capabilities

Other militaries have justified the purchase of both strategic airlift and amphibious capabilities on the basis of enhancing their HADR capabilities.

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[107] Nan Li, *Chinese Civil-Military Relations in the Post-Deng Era - Implications for Crisis Management and*
Naval Modernization (Newport: U.S. Naval War College,China Maritime Studies Institute, 2010), 31.

[108] Austin Strange in *The Non-Combat Operations of China's Armed Forces in the 21st Century: Historical Development, Current Drivers and Implications for Military Projection* (Williamsburg: Bachelor of Arts thesis, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, The College of William and Mary, 2012) states that "… twenty-first century non-combat operations have the potential to impede outward Chinese military development…". Specifically he argues that increasing demand for domestic MOOTW may have an impact on China's external force projection, not that HADR activities undermine conventional capabilities. He explicitly states that MOOTW bolster combat (conventional) military capabilities.

The justification is usually couched in terms of dual-use military capabilities, meaning that the new capabilities will benefit both peaceful and defensive purposes. HADR capabilities fit this description. For example strategic airlift and sealift capabilities can be used to move forces into combat, as well as transporting combined civil and military units to assist in disaster relief.

An example of such a justification being used was when a sixth C-17A Globemaster III heavy-lift aircraft was purchased by Australia. The Australian Defence Minister in justifying the purchase stated that "The additional C-17A will greatly increase Australia's capacity to respond to natural disasters and provide humanitarian aid".[109] The Australians have also partially justified its new LHD amphibious vessels on this basis as have the Japanese with its support for its Kawasaki XC-2 strategic airlifter.[110]

Like other countries, China can justify its strategic airlift and amphibious capabilities stating that it is building up HADR capabilities.

Risk factors. A risk is that such a justification is described as crude camouflage for developing expeditionary capabilities.

Justifying Foreign Port, Training Facility and Base Access

Countries are building HADR capabilities as a justification for pre-positioning of stores in foreign countries, and obtaining access to foreign ports, training facilities and bases. For example, the recent increase in rotations of US Marines in Darwin, Australia and the potential access by the US military to Western Australia's Stirling naval base have both been linked to improving HADR capabilities in the region. Like other countries, China can justify its access to foreign ports, training facilities and bases as a mechanism to build up its HADR capabilities.

Risk factors. A risk is that such a justification is described as crude camouflage for expanding its strategic power. This accusation will particularly

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[109] Stephen Smith, "Letters to the Editor from the Minister for Defence and the Chief of Navy in Repsonse to an Article by David Ellery in the Canberra Times on 31 March 2012," Australian Government, Department of Defence, April 3, 2012, http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/2012/04/03/letters-to-the-editor-from-the-minister-for-defence-and-the-chief-of-navy-in-response-to-an-article-by-david-ellery-in-the-canberra-times-on-31-march-2012/ (accessed December 17, 2012).

[110] Athol Yates and Anthony Bergin, *More than good deeds Disaster risk management and Australian, Japanese and US Defence forces* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2011), 48.

resonate due to the narrative that China is expanding its geopolitical influence along the string of pearls, and in the first and second island chains.

Improving domestic disaster response

A key task of the PLA domestically is to make a significant contribution and even lead in domestic disaster relief. The experience gained in HADR operations may be transferred to domestic units to assist in improving their capabilities. Deployments and CBMs may identify new technology, processes and approaches that would benefit the PLA's professional emergency rescue forces.

Risk factors. A risk is that such a justification is described as crude camouflage for expanding its strategic power. Specifically, by linking such proposals with the development of special diplomatic relationships with certain regional countries plus its military modernisation, this will be claimed to mean that Chinese influence will spread over large areas of the Pacific and Indian Ocean zones.

A risk is that as if the HADR capabilities are overseas and a domestic disaster occurs, then these capabilities will not be available for local use. This is particularly the case for capabilities that are designated both national and international capabilities such as the CISAR.

Contributing to PLA legitimacy

The CCP has long been concerned over the PLA's legitimacy in the eyes of the Chinese public. This concern reached its peak following the PLA's involvement in the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989. The need for popular support of the PLA became more important when CCP General Secretary, Jiang Zemin, at the CCP Congress of 1992 replaced military control and ideological indoctrination with the new policy of the socialist market economy and the desire for economic growth. Not only is this of concern to the CCP because the PLA has been essential for it to maintain control, but because of the close connection between the CCP and the PLA due to it being the CCP's army. Questions about the PLA's legitimacy also bring into question the legitimacy of the CCP. Consequently, the CCP and the PLA itself has for the last two decades worked towards rebuilding its legitimacy with the people. One tool to do this has been increasing the PLA's involvement in domestic disaster activities which is popular with the Chinese

public. Another is to be involved in HADR activities. These are also likely to be popular as they align with Chinese values of generosity, goodwill generation and showing empathy. In addition, it seems logical that HADR activities would also generate pride in the PLA for undertaking these missions, showing that China is a growing power. The CCP also gains political and social legitimacy by the PLA conducting high-quality HADR operations, due to the tangible and direct link between the PLA and the CCP.

Risk factors. A risk is that if the HADR activity is seen as a failure by the public, it will undermine the PLA's legitimacy.

Bolstering military transparency

A perceived lack of Chinese military transparency is a major source of tension between China and other countries. Foreign countries want transparency in both the intentions of China and their capabilities including its funding. Demand for greater transparency has become more important in recent years as China modernises its military, and forecasts abound about it challenging the US's status as the world's sole superpower. China argues that transparency of intentions is more important as they are a better indicator of a country's potential as a threat. China considers that it is very transparent in its intentions as it continually states its intentions to be a peaceful power, and this is consistently reflected in defence strategy as seen in the publically available Defense White Papers.

In relation to military capabilities transparency, China is willing to be transparent on the conditions that such transparency promotes peace, security and stability. However, if being transparent undermines its security, it will not make information available. As China is weaker than its main competitors, it argues that by revealing all its military capabilities, its security will be undermined due to the ability of rivals to exploit their known advantages. This contrasts with the US which China considers uses its transparency as a tool for deterrence because of its overwhelming leadership in military capabilities. In recent years China claims to have made significant progress in enhancing its military transparency through measures such as releasing plans for the research and development of weapons, carrying out international peacekeeping and escorting missions, holding military exchanges with other countries, publishing Defense White Papers,

and establishing Ministry of National Defense spokespeople.[111] Thus, participating in HADR activities provides another example of Chinese growing military transparency.

Risk factors. A risk is that being transparent about HADR activities has no positive effect as foreign countries describe it as inadequate or generate demand for greater transparency. A consequence of this may be resentment within China that other countries fails to appreciate China's efforts. This perception was reflected in the following article:

> Regarding the issue of military transparency, the efforts made by China in recent years can be seen by all the people of the world. In July of 2011, Mike Mullen, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff visited China's army, navy, air force and Second Artillery Force, and he also went into the cockpit of a Su-27 fighter. Did it not reflect China's sincere wish to strengthen its military transparency? During the visit, Mike Mullen said with a sigh that the development of China's military technologies was quite transparent and natural. In fact, for any country, it is possible to exhibit some of its weapons, but impossible to exhibit all of its weapons. Can the United States reveal all its high-tech weapons to the world? The improvement of military transparency depends on the mutual trust between the two sides, and the United States should show its sincerity and actual practices in strengthening the China-U.S. mutual trust.[112]

Improving military-military contacts

Of all military related CBMs, involvement in HADR is seen as one of the least sensitive activities compared with more challenging issues such as humanitarian assistance under conflict situations, people smuggling, stopping the trafficking of weapons of mass destruction and countering narcotic flows. The challenging ones are problematic because they frequently involve challenging key Chinese priorities such as state sovereignty and non-interference. The usually uncontroversial nature of HADR means that it is an ideal training-related CBMs for international cooperation where existing trust

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[111] Chen Ce, "China Deserves Recognition for Sincerely Promoting Peace," *People's Daily Online*, July 6, 2011, http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90780/91342/7431668.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

[112] Wang Min, "US Urged to Halt Criticism of China's Military Buildup," *People's Daily Online*, August 31, 2011, http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90780/7584398.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

levels are low. Other similar low threatening candidates are peacekeeping operations, ship visits and joint search and rescue exercises. Thus, a benefit of being involved in HADR training-related CBMs is that it provides a more promising starting point from which to tackle more militarily and foreign policy contentious issues.

Risk factors. A risk is that such HADR training-related CBMs do little to build trust and advance more challenging issues. This is because the engagement in HADR training-related CBMs is often shallow due to the transient nature of the cooperation, and the lack of shared military objectives such as the pursuit of alliance objectives. In addition, training-related CBMs are susceptible to being disrupted due to changes in the broader diplomatic environment. Postponement or cancellation is likely to occur when a diplomatic issue arises that are of deep concern to China, such as arms supply to Taiwan, foreign military operations involved in the waters around China, and posturing over contested islands.

Soft Power Benefits

The soft power benefits and risks are those likely to be carried mostly by foreign policy decision makers, principally Politburo Standing Committee members, and those in the various organs of the CCP, PLA and Chinese Government involved in international relations.

Improving the effectiveness and legitimacy of international HADR activities

Involving China with its experience, cultural expertise and political relationships in HADR activities can enhance the effectiveness and the legitimacy of international HADR activities. The benefit China brings can be seen in its leadership at the ASEAN Regional Forum workshop on formulating legal rules for armed forces' participation in international disaster relief operations. The involvement of China in HADR deployments broadens the number of countries undertaking these missions. This in principal adds credibility to all HADR operations, and may make UN missions more accepted as seen with China's involvement in peacekeeping operations.[113]

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[113] Bates Gill and Chin-Hao Huang, *China's Expanding Role In Peacekeeping: Prospects and Policy Implications* (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2009), 27.

China can use its involvement in strategic CBMs to shape norms which are conducive to China's advancement. An illustration of this is the development of the *ARF General Guidelines for Disaster Relief Cooperation*. The Chinese drafted the guidelines for the 14th ARF Ministerial Meeting in August 2007. Key Chinese priorities of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs are explicitly reflected in the guidelines. For example, they state that "The Assisting Country ... shall respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Receiving Country …" and "The Assisting Country will provide disaster relief only with the consent of the Receiving Country. All disaster relief activities by the Assisting Country within the territory of the Receiving Country should be supportive of the guidance, coordination, and arrangements of the government of the Receiving Country."

If the shaping is seen as beneficial by other countries, it can be used by China to show that it can assume a leadership position without imposing its views on others.

Risk factors. A risk is that by being engaged in multinational HADR agreements, China's freedom of manoeuvre may be reduced. China's commitment to the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference means that certain international disaster response operations that transgress these principles may be opposed. This will mainly be situations where international assistance wants to be provided without the consent and cooperation of the recipient country. China may also oppose missions that it considers a slight to the recipient country's national dignity. An example of China applying these principles was in 2008 when China "opposed any move by the Security Council to pressure the Burmese Government to accept emergency assistance in the wake of Cyclone Nargis".[114] Of concern to China are those missions that breach the state sovereignty and non-interference principals, and by participating in them, undermines logically their opposition to other countries doing the same to them. If China opposes intervention for another reason not specified in the multinational HADR agreement, it will be labelled as an unreliable and irresponsible international partner.

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[114] Bates Gill and Chin-Hao Huang, *China's Expanding Role In Peacekeeping: Prospects and Policy Implications* (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2009), 11.

A risk is that China's involvement in shaping HADR norms is considered to be overly domineering or obstructionist. This may undermine its claim that it is pursuing peaceful development and instead is behaving like an imperialist power.

A risk is that China's involvement in shaping HADR norms is characterized as trying to corrupt humanitarian principals. Given that China has historically targeted its humanitarian assistance to those countries which are strategically significant, such as Sudan for resources or North Korea for geopolitical reasons, not providing HADR to all countries may be characterised as China breaching the humanitarian principle of impartiality. This states that assistance must be based on need alone, and not based on nationality, race, religion, or political point of view.

Enhancing international stability

The provision of HADR, along with other disaster and development aid, can allow an affected country to more quickly recover and return to their pre-disaster development path. This assistance can also contribute to preventing the state from becoming a failed state or experiencing internal tensions arising from poverty, dissatisfaction, inequity etc.

International stability is important to China as decision makers consider that it provides the space for China to develop economically and maintain domestic stability. Stability of countries that are on China's periphery or which supply resources are of critical importance to China. For example, a disaster-induced collapse of a country on China's periphery could cascade into mass migration, international intervention and violence, all of which could severely impact on China. Also, a regional disaster could significantly affect the supply of resources needed by China, or reduce the buyers of Chinese goods and services, both of which would have internal impacts.

Advancing specific foreign policy priorities

HADR assistance can be tied to specific foreign policy priorities. This can been seen in development aid where it is commonly tied to purchasing inputs from the donor country, allowing the donor to determine what projects should be funded, and requiring the recipient country to implement a host of micro-economic reforms such as privatization.

Two types of specific foreign policy objectives may be advanced through the provision of HADR. The first is a narrow foreign policy objective. An example of this is claimed to be the Chinese HADR deployment to Haiti following the 2010 earthquake. A motive for this deployment, and the preceding peacekeeping deployment, has been attributed to a desire by China to encourage Haiti to build diplomatic ties with China as at that time it had ties with Taiwan.[115]

The second type of specific foreign policy objectives that may be advanced through the provision of HADR is a broad policy objective such as demonstrating commitment to international friendship. This can be seen in China's 2010 Pakistan flood response where Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Jiang Yu stated that "As Pakistan's close neighbour and all-weather friend, China empathizes with Pakistan for its severe natural disaster [and] the Chinese Government has offered several instalments of humanitarian relief supplies worth more than RMB 100 million."[116]

Risk factors. A risk of using the provision of HADR to advance specific foreign policy objectives is that it is characterized as exploiting another country's unfortunate situation. Such an accusation supports the narrative that China does not consider the views of other countries,[117] and that there is gulf between Chinese rhetoric and action.[118] This characterisation may have

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[115] For a discussion on the primacy of politics in providing aid by China, see Czeslaw Tubilewicz, "The politics of compassion: examining a divided China's humanitarian assistance to Haiti," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific,* Volume 12, Issue 3 (2012).

[116] "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Jiang Yu's Regular Press Conference on September 2, 2010," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, September 3, 2010, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/t737383.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

[117] A survey of the US public in 2010 found that only one third of respondents believe that China takes the interests of other countries around the world into account when making foreign policy decisions, compared with some solid majority of people believing that the U.S. considers the interests of other nations. Pew Research Center, *U.S. Public, Experts Differ on China Policies: Public Deeply Concerned About China's Economic Power* (Part of the U.S.–China Security Perceptions Project, 2012), 3.

[118] To subordinate HADR to national interests raises inconsistencies with public statements such as that made by Rear Admiral Li Ji, Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs Office, Ministry of National Defense of China at the 3rd ARF Seminar on Laws and Regulations on the Participation in International Disaster Relief by Armed Forces held in Beijing on 11 June 2012 when he said "underscored that HADR cooperation is about cooperation and mutual assistance among sovereign countries and not just to show favors to any one country." The Nineteenth ASEAN Regional Forum, 2011-2012, "Co-Chairs Summary Report of the Third ARF Seminar on Laws and Regulations on the Participation in

more traction in those countries where Chinese involvement is competing with other nations. It is often not helped by China's propensity to highlight the purpose of international support which is seen as crude diplomacy.

A risk is that HADR deployments have no influence in advancing specific foreign policy objectives. This may be because such contributions are often small in financial terms and apply for shorter time than development aid, so are less likely to be a critical factor in achieving a particular objective. In addition, many countries are likely to be providing assistance simultaneously, thus diminishing the comparative value of one contributor.

Generating exploitable international goodwill and building status

Undertaking HADR activities contributes to boosting China's reputation as a responsible power, and demonstrates that it is a major regional and international power. This in turn allows it to have greater respect in the international community allowing it to seek and obtain more influence in international matters. This helps China influence the behaviour of other countries so as to get the outcomes it desires.

Of the HADR capabilities, the CISAR has the potential to generate significant goodwill. The positive press that comes from pulling a seven year-old or an infant, 4 days after a hospital collapses, is huge. Having a highly trained search-and-rescue personnel conduct missions like that, wearing their country's flag on their shoulder, with the international media watching presents an incredibly positive message about what that country stands for. An Urban Search and Rescue Team is a capability that is commonly deployed by developed countries. For example, the US has two civilian USAR teams (Los Angeles County and Fairfax County) that are always on standby to deploy on US military aircraft at a moment's notice for disasters across the US for FEMA and internationally for USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance.

Currently there is strong international pressure on China to become a more responsible and sincere partner within the international system. This involves sharing the burden of global responsibilities, and participating in multilateral activities. Undertaking HADR activities allows a country

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Disaster Relief by Armed Forces, Beijing, China, 11-12 June 2012," *ASEAN Regional Forum*, ASEAN, http://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/library/arf-chairmans-statements-and-reports.html (accessed December 17, 2012).

to demonstrate that it shares the cost of international involvement and helps countries in times of need. China already shares global peacekeeping responsibilities, as it is now the largest provider of peacekeepers among the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.[119] It has received recognition for this involvement and HADR involvement is likely to generate similar benefits.

Currently China is careful and deliberate so as to be seen as non-threatening and non-interventionist. However, as it becomes more involved internationally it will also be more physically present in the region. The reaction to the PLA presence is relatively unknown. The use of PLA military for HADR deployments and CBMs can be used to gauge the reaction to the military presence. Assuming the presence is positively received, a potential benefit of HADR involvement is that the region may view the PLA as being a positive contributor to the region in the same way as other countries military are.

A potential benefit of the Chinese presence in the region undertaking HADR deployments is that it contributes to deterrence of activities in the region that undermine Chinese priorities. For example, dispatching personnel via amphibious or strategic airlifters for disaster relief may also encourage other countries to better protect their overseas Chinese populations and assets from civil unrest fearing that to do otherwise will result in the Chinese military entering under force. Chinese populations in Asia have long experienced major incidents of victimization, such as the burning down of much of Chinatown in the capital of the Solomon Islands in 2006. While the Chinese complained at that time that the response by the Solomon Island government was inadequate, it had very limited ability to apply greater pressure. Taking more forceful actions to protect overseas Chinese populations may also generate domestic popular support for the CCP and increase regional stability. An illustration of the positive domestic press coverage of intervention actions was observed following the PLAAF and PLAN's involvement in evacuating nationals from Libya in February 2011.

By participating in HADR activities, China can demonstrate that it is a benevolent power that seeks to aid other countries, and reinforces the

[119] David Gosset, "China a Trustworthy Peacekeeper," *China Daily USA*, October 27, 2012, http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2012-10/27/content_15851093.htm (accessed December 17, 2012).

international order. From a military perspective, HADR actions show the positive benefit of growing military capability, again undermining the China threat narrative. This narrative asserts that as China's economic and military strength grows, it will seek regional and international hegemony. The narrative does not accept the country's professed intentions embodied in the peaceful rise/development construct (e.g. China does not threaten the international order as it is focused on its own internal issues, improving the welfare of its own people, and creating a peaceful world so as to advance development). The use of MOOTW operations to counter the threat narrative has currency in China as seen in the following extract from a 2012 opinion article in the *China Daily* referring to the benefits of China being involved in peacekeeping operations.

> In the "China-threat" narrative, the People's Liberation Army, portrayed as an antagonistic force, is a source of fear, a sentiment which remains in the Cold War cliché of the Canadian statesman Lester Pearson, "the greatest enemy of peace", but when the Chinese military cooperates with other armies to protect life and to establish the conditions for socio-economic development, it not only contributes to easing of mutual suspicion, but also puts the parties on the path toward strategic trust.[120]

Risk factors. A risk is that HADR involvement does not actually contribute to China's ability to attract and co-opt others to advance its interests. Another risk is that the HADR involvement adds to the China threat narrative. This would be particularly the case if China were to use their PLAN assets in a unilateral amphibious operation to protect overseas Chinese populations.[121]

A final risk is that Chinese HADR assistance is offered but rejected, causing domestic resentment. An example of Chinese aid rejection occurred during the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. China offer the Peace Ark

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[120] David Gosset, " China a trustworthy peacekeeper," *China Daily* (2012), October 27, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2012-10/27/content_15851000.htm, accessed 1 December 2012.

[121] Concern about this type of operation has been noted by a number of US naval commentators such as Commander David Slayton and Craig Hooper, *China at Sea* (Hoover Institution: Hoover Digest, 2011 no. 2, March 29), accessed December 1, 2012, http://www.hoover.org/publications/hoover-digest/article/72751.

to assist in the rescue of victims of the Japanese earthquake but this was rejected by Japan. The official reason was the tsunami had damaged port facilities, meaning that the hospital ship could not dock.[122] The earthquake also provides an example of where a country's aid was viewed as unappreciated. South Korea provided considerable financial aid and offered technical aid. The Japanese government refused the proposed assistance from South Korean nuclear experts but requested similar assistance from the United States and France. This and other issues resulted in South Korean sympathy for Japan quickly shifting to anger and bitterness, and for the South Korean government, balancing the public anger with the need to continue to build strategic diplomatic relations.[123]

[122] "日本决定不接受中国海军医疗船协助救灾" (Japan decided not to accept the Chinese navy hospital ship to help with the relief), *Global Times* (2011) May 27, http://world.huanqiu.com/roll/2011-03/1590639.html (accessed 1 December 2012).

[123] Sangsoo Lee & Alexandre Autrand, *Japanese-Korean Relations: A Failure of Tsunami Diplomacy* (Institute for Security and Development Policy: Stockholm, 2011), Policy Brief No. 68.

Conclusion

Recommendations abound from foreign policy interests advocating that China should increase its involvement in HADR activities, and specifically use military-military engagement as a springboard for enhancing security relationships. However, from a Chinese perspective, these recommendations may not be seriously implemented simply because the benefits and risks to China of expanding HADR deployments and HADR CBMs do not justify the effort. If this is the case, then it is fruitless to place such weight on pursing increased HADR activities with China.

The second phase of this study aims to quantify from China's perspective the benefits and risks of HADR deployments and HADR CBMs as identified in this paper. This will then allow an assessment to be made of the merits of recommendations to pursue expanding HADR activities with China. This second paper will build on this paper and key issues to be examined will include:

- What is the priority being given to HADR within the context of MOOTW?
- Does the PLA consider that HADR activities provide useful experience relevant to other military activities? If so, at what scale and frequency, and in what context does it need to be undertaken to produce relevant experience?
- How is the experience gained through HADR activities transferred to non-HADR military functions?
- How currently does the experience from the domestic specialized emergency response units get transferred to non-HADR military functions?
- What is the PLA's current level and focus on civil-military coordination?
- How has the PLA trained and equipped to align with the *ARF General Guidelines for Disaster Relief Cooperation*?
- How does the PLA integrate into the wider international humanitarian community during a disaster? Specifically,
- How does the PLA interface with the UN Cluster system?

- How does it receive 'tasks' from the Host Nation?
- How does it interface with Host Nation military forces who are performing disaster relief in their country?
- How does the PLA work with NGOs, who do most of the 'retail distribution' of disaster relief supplies?
- Does the PLA rely on some civilian Chinese agency during disasters to interact with the recipient nation, or do they do that themselves?
- Who does CISAR team 'work for' when they arrive?
- How do the CISAR teams determine where they conduct their work and how do they determine when they are finished?
- Are PLA professional emergency rescue forces intended to be deployed internationally?
- What HADR-related preparations are being made for PLA professional emergency rescue forces, and PLAN forces?

Researchers interested in proposing additional research questions are encouraged to submit them to the author at athol.yates@securityresearch.org.au

About the Author

Dr. Athol Yates is the Executive Director of the Australian Security Research Centre. The Centre is a think tank examining security issues with a focus on both within Australia and the region. His national security areas of expertise include national and homeland security strategy, non-traditional security threats and responses, and the use of defence forces for non-traditional missions.

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