

U.S. Exploits Tensions For Military Containment Of China

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“Casting our eyes around we can see that the United States has been bolstering its five major military alliances in the Asia-Pacific region, and is adjusting the positioning of its five major military base clusters, while also seeking more military bases around China.”

BEIJING: The United States’ recent published Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG), which calls for a renewed focus on the Asia-Pacific, may contribute to regional instability, analysts said.

The DSG, released by the Obama administration on Jan 5 stated that “while the US military will continue to contribute to security globally, we will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region”.

The report, though not China-centered, said that “over the long term, China’s emergence as a regional power will have the potential to affect the US economy and our security in a variety of ways”.

Analysts said that strategic shift in US defense policy aims at stoking up regional tension and may accelerate the militarization of the region.

Yang Yi, a rear-admiral and former director of the Institute for Strategic Studies at the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) National Defense University, said the US had intensified its strategic input in the Asia-Pacific region after it raised the new strategic target in 2010 to revitalize its global leadership.

“In order to realize its target it is stirring up regional tensions,” Yang said, adding that China’s growing clout in the region has made it a target of the US.

By making countries in the region worried about China, the US can thus return to Asia as an “invitee”, according to Yang.

Yang said the US has rallied its East Asian allies, Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK), by successfully exploiting the sinking of the ROK naval corvette Cheonan and the shelling of the ROK’s Yeonpyeong Island in 2010, and also incited some countries, especially the Philippines, to confront China in the South China Sea.

“It announced that it (the US) is trying to maintain regional security to target China’s military modernization, but the logic itself is inverted,” he said.

The US declared in the DSG that it was a regional economic anchor and provider of security,

Yang explained, but has set up a foe in the region and undermined regional peace and stability.

While the US was busy with its war on terror, Asia, especially East Asia, was developing in peace and stability through regional cooperation, he said, mentioning that regional conflicts came only after the US started its “back to Asia” strategy in 2009.

“It’s clear who the real troublemaker is,” he added.

CNN quoted Andrew Biller, a senior program officer for the US Asia Society, as saying that the risk of conflict in the region had increased as a result of the stationing of US Marine Corps in Australia and due to Washington’s increased military cooperation with some nations in the region.

Washington’s defense strategic shift goes hand in hand with its economic and political re-engagement strategy in the region.

US President Barack Obama also attended the East Asia Summit in Indonesia for the first time in November and spent nine days touring the Asia-Pacific region.

The US is “laying out forces across the Asia-Pacific region in advance to contain the rise of China”, said a commentary in PLA Daily written by Major General Luo Yuan.

“Casting our eyes around we can see that the United States has been bolstering its five major military alliances in the Asia-Pacific region, and is adjusting the positioning of its five major military base clusters, while also seeking more military bases around China,” wrote Luo.

Instead, Luo advised that China must do a better job in courting friends in the region, charming countries away from the US’ orbit, he wrote.

“In the face of this adjustment in the US strategic focus, we must maintain a high degree of vigilance, but there is no need to be alarmed,” wrote Luo, “and we must be adept at maneuvering and use smart diplomacy, and the more friends we can make the better”.

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