

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE REPORT**

**International Relations Theory and the Sino-Russian Relationship  
after the Cold War**

3 August, 2017



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## Organisers



The Centre on Asia and Globalisation (CAG) was established in 2006 at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. Since 2011, CAG has developed widespread collaborative networks and relationships with major think tanks, research centers and policy institutions in the European Union, China, India, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the United States. From 2013 to 2017, CAG co-founded a consortium of leading research institutions from six countries and led them in one of its major projects titled *Fostering International Cooperation in the Development of the Russia's Far East and Siberia*. Through such collaborations, CAG establishes a platform with a global reach for meaningful and constructive exchanges among leading scholars and experts on important issues in world affairs.

CAG combines rigorous academic enquiry on governance, public goods, security, and economic development with expert collaboration, high-level policy dialogues, public outreach, and capacity building and training. CAG's cutting-edge research focuses both on the internal and external dynamics of international relations and development in the Asia-Pacific, and explores the role that the Asia-Pacific plays in an increasingly interconnected world. Since 2012, CAG published seven special issues and 40 research articles in top tier peer-reviewed journals, authored and edited 11 books, built a network of almost 50 international partners, organized and hosted almost 200 events, contributed almost 50 policy papers, over 80 op-eds and commentaries and received almost 5,000 media mentions. Through this research excellence, commitment to quality and collaborations, CAG establishes a platform with a global reach for meaningful and constructive exchanges among leading scholars and experts on important issues in world affairs.



The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy is an autonomous graduate school, established in strategic partnership with the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, of the National University of Singapore – leading global research university and number one ranked university in Asia. Its mission is to educate and train policymakers and leaders, with the objective of raising the standards of governance throughout the region, improving the lives of its people, and, in so doing, contributing to the transformation of Asia and beyond.

## List of Abbreviations

APR	Asia Pacific Region
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and (the Republic of) South Africa
CAG	Centre on Asia and Globalisation
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EU	European Union
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
LKYSPP, NUS	Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore
OBOR	The <i>One Belt, One Road</i> initiative, in this report it also refers to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); it includes SREB, MSR as well as it is closely related to Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) and China-Pakistan Economic Corridors (CPEC)
RFE	Russia's Far Eastern Federal District, used interchangeably with the Russia's Far East
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SREB	Silk Road Economic Belt, part of OBOR-BRI
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
WTO	World Trade Organization

## About the International Conference

### International Relations Theory and the Sino-Russian Relationship after the Cold War

It has been widely noted that China and Russia have grown progressively closer over the last two decades with some going so far as to suggest that the two are already informal allies, and/or that formal alliance is imminent. President Putin pointed out on 26 Oct 2016 that the Russo-China relationship has gone “beyond strategic partnership,” echoing President Xi Jinping’s remarks on 25 June 2016 that “with a solid foundation of strategic partnership, there is no limitation on [the development] of the Sino-Russian relationship.”

Although the scholarly literature has offered various descriptive or *ad hoc* explanations of this trend of growing Sino-Russian amity, the bilateral relationship has been the subject of very little scrutiny using rigorous theory. Indeed, not only will theoretical analysis help us to better understand recent Sino-Russian relations, it may also shed light on ongoing theoretical debates and yield important theoretical advances. The cooperative post-Cold War trend in the bilateral relationship seems puzzling for each of the major paradigms of international relations theory: realism, constructivism and liberal institutionalism. For realists, China’s rising power, coupled with its geographic proximity and longstanding border disputes with Russia, made it a present and growing threat to Russian security at the end of the Cold War. Why did China’s rise not incur balancing from Russia and increasing bilateral hostility, rather than reconciliation? For constructivists, the stark differences in political ideologies and national cultures, as well as a long history of antagonism, presaged continued post-Cold War animosity. How have these historical animosities and ideological rifts been mitigated or overcome? Finally, both countries saw increasing economic interdependence with the West and integration into the US-led international order immediately following the Cold War, in contrast to the relatively shallow economic cooperation and thin institutionalization in their bilateral relationship. From a liberal perspective, why did this not prompt the two countries to improve political relations with the West while holding each other at arm’s length?

This conference is designed to address the theoretical lacuna in the literature on China-Russia relations by bringing together top scholars of international relations theory, who also have substantive expertise in Chinese and/or Russian foreign policy. The conference has two related core aims. The first is to draw on various theoretical perspectives to help explain empirical puzzles in China-Russia relations and predict future developments in the bilateral relationship and each country’s relations with other actors. The second is to generalize explanations of recent puzzles in China-Russia relations in order to advance new developments in IR theory.

## List of Participants

**Alexander Korolev**, Research Fellow, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, LKYSPP, NUS

**Alexander Lukin**, Head, Department of International Relations, National Research University – Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia

**Andrew Kydd**, Professor of Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Brandon Yoder**, Research Fellow, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, LKYSPP, NUS

**Chin-Hao Huang**, Assistant Professor, Yale-NUS College

**Deborah Larson**, Professor of Political Science, UCLA

**Elizabeth Wishnick**, Professor, Political Science and Law, Montclair State University

**Huang Jing**, former Lee Foundation Professor on US-China Relations, LKYSPP, NUS

**Ja Ian Chong**, Associate Professor, NUS

**John Owen**, Ambassador Henry J. and Mrs. Marion R. Taylor Professor of Politics, University of Virginia

**Kanti Prasad Bajpai**, Director, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, and Wilmar Professor on Asian Studies, LKYSPP, NUS

**Kyle Haynes**, Assistant Professor, Purdue University

**Mike Glosny**, Assistant Professor, Naval Postgraduate School

**Paul Fritz**, Associate Professor, Hofstra University

**Robert Ross**, Professor of Political Science, Boston College

**Robert Sutter**, Professor of Practice of International Affairs, Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University

**Selina Ho**, Senior Research Fellow, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, LKYSPP, NUS

**Sun Xuefeng**, Professor of International Relations, Tsinghua University

**Tao Wenzhao**, Senior Research Fellow, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

**Ted Hopf**, Professor of Political Science, NUS

**Thomas B. Gold**, Professor of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley

# Conference Programme and Agenda

**8:30 Registration**

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**8:45-9:00 Opening remarks**

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**9:00-10:30 Descriptive Theory: Defining and Operationalizing China-Russia Relations**

**Chair:** *Huang Jing, Lee Foundation Professor on US-China Relations, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore*

- **On the Verge of an Alliance: Contemporary China-Russia Military Cooperation**  
*Alexander Korolev, Research Fellow, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore*
- **Security Dependence, Strategic Threat and the Variations on Great Power Partnership**  
*Sun Xuefeng, Professor of International Relations, Tsinghua University*
- **The US Factor in Post-Cold War China-Russian Relations**  
*Tao Wenzhao, Senior Research Fellow, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*

**Discussant:** *Thomas B. Gold, Professor of Sociology, University of California, Berkeley*

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**10:30-11:00 Coffee Break**

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**11:00-12:45 Deductive Applications of Theory: Explaining China-Russia Relations**

**Chair:** *Brandon Yoder, Research Fellow, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore*

- **From Balancing to Backscratching: Sino-Russian Logrolling During US Decline**  
*Kyle Haynes, Assistant Professor, Purdue University*
- **From Rivalry to Accommodation: China's and Russia's New Status Relationship**  
*Deborah Larson, Professor of Political Science, UCLA*
- **Sino-Russian Cooperation against Liberal Hegemony**

*John Owen, Ambassador Henry J. and Mrs. Marion R. Taylor Professor of Politics,  
University of Virginia*

- **From Enemy to Friend: Evolving Roles and Relations between Moscow and Beijing**  
*Elizabeth Wishnick, Professor, Political Science and Law, Montclair State University*

**Discussant:** *Ted Hopf, Professor of Political Science, National University of Singapore*

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12:45-14:00 Lunch Break

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**14:00-15:30 Inductive Theory-Building: Generalizing from China-Russia Relations**

**Chair:** *Kanti Prasad Bajpai, Director, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, and Wilmar Professor on Asian Studies, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore*

- **Limitations of a Partnership between the Rising and the Resentful**  
*Paul Fritz, Associate Professor, Hofstra University*
- **The Balance of Power, Regime Security, and the Nuclear Revolution: The Realist Case for Russian-Chinese Alignment**  
*Andrew Kydd, Professor of Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison*
- **Rising Powers, Third-Party Threats and Reassurance: Explaining Russia's Post-Cold War Foreign Policy Toward China**  
*Mike Glosny, Assistant Professor, Naval Postgraduate School and Brandon Yoder, Research Fellow, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, National University of Singapore*

**Discussant:** *Ja Ian Chong, Associate Professor, National University of Singapore*

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15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

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**16:00-17:30 Predictive and Prescriptive Applications of Theory to US-China-Russia Relations**

**Chair:** *Selina Ho, Senior Research Fellow, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore*

- **Russian-Chinese Rapprochement and the Changing International System**  
*Alexander Lukin, Professor, National Research University Higher School of Economics*
- **Sino-Russian Relations: The False Promise of Russian Balancing**  
*Robert Ross, Professor of Political Science, Boston College*

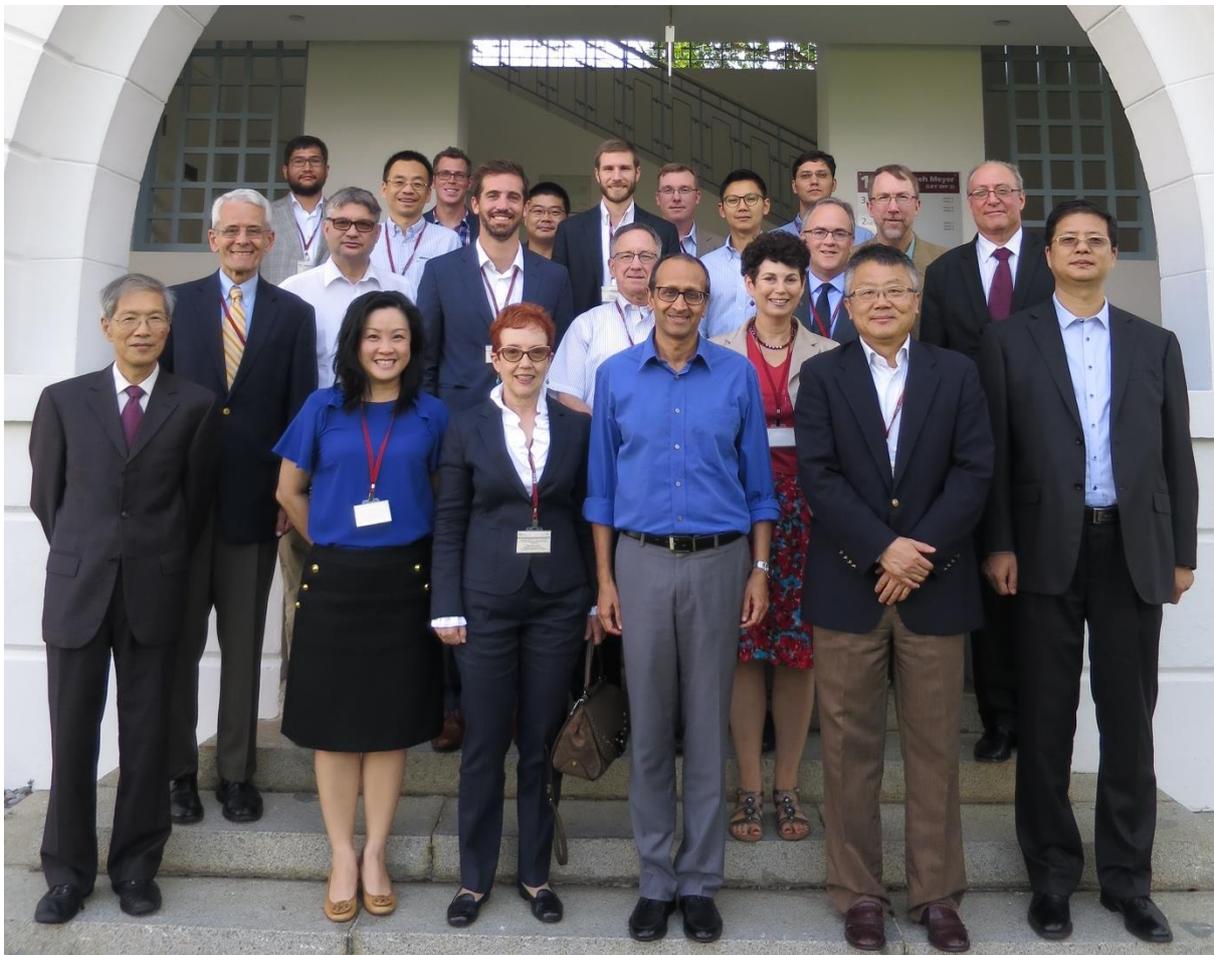
- **Contemporary Russian-Chinese Relations and American Foreign Policy**  
*Robert Sutter, Professor of Practice of International Affairs, Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University*

**Discussant:** *Chin-Hao Huang, Assistant Professor, Yale-NUS College*

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**17:30-18:00 Concluding remarks**

18:00 End of Conference



*Group photo of the conference participants*

## Panel Session Summaries

### *Session 1. Descriptive Theory: Defining and Operationalizing China-Russia Relations*

**Alexander Korolev**, Research Fellow at CAG LKYSPP NUS, opened the conference with a paper in which he argued that Russia and China were virtually on the verge of alliance, especially from the angle of military cooperation, and that the cooperation was stronger than strategic partnership at a number of levels. This presentation was rich in data and graphs that presented qualitative analysis of narratives and statements, cultural, educational and policy cooperation frameworks, as well as statistics on joint, unit-level foreign policy and military diplomacy activities, such as the joint patrols and military exercises. Korolev argued that Russia's high-profile "turn to the East," the deterioration of Russia-US relations following the Ukraine crisis, and China's "new assertiveness" in the South and East China Seas gave rise to the perception that China and Russia were now "aligned" together in opposition to US-led unipolarity. However, alignment remains an inchoate term that has never been systematically defined in the IR literature. This makes it difficult to assess the degree to which China and Russia are aligned, as well as the extent to which their strategic cooperation has increased over time. Therefore he used a set of objective criteria for alignment across military, economic, institutional, and normative dimensions. Korolev then applied these criteria to measure the degree of strategic cooperation in post-Cold War China-Russia relations. Drawing on multiple Chinese and Russian sources, he opined that the research demonstrated that China and Russia developed strong military relations approaching a full-fledged alliance, and that cooperation on each of the other three dimensions, while not yet as strong, steadily increased since the end of the Cold War.

**Sun Xuefeng**, Professor of International Relation at Tsinghua University, delivered a paper co-authored with his colleague Ding Lu from the same university, describing various stages, levels, and statuses ascribed to partnerships formed by great powers, particularly China. Sun argued that since the end of the Cold War, establishing partnerships has been part and parcel of the grand strategy of great powers. The partners that great powers seek can be divided into the two categories of pivot partners, which support great powers' vital security interests in the partnership statements or declarations and broker partners, which enhance great powers' economic or political trans-regional cooperation and international initiatives in the partnership statements or declarations. He presented statistics and tabulated graphs that showed significant variations in the proportions of great powers' pivot partners. Sun then argued that these variations were mainly determined by two factors, namely, the great powers' strategic threats and their ways to maintain national security (other-help or self-help). Although these findings would not only deepen the general understanding of great powers' grand strategies in the context of US primacy and China's rise, Sun added, they would still help to refine the current theories of US unipolarity and that phenomenon's evolution.

**Tao Wenzhao**, Senior Research Fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences presented a paper in which he argued that the US drew Russia and China closer after the Cold-War. According to Tao, China-US-Russian relations in the post-Cold War period constitutes a scalene triangle. China-Russian relations are the strongest, steadily developing towards a strategic coordinating partnership. China-US relations are moving forward with remarkable resilience, despite some differences and troubles, even occasional ups and downs. US-Russian relations are the weakest, with constant conflicts of interests, leading eventually to intense geopolitical rivalry. The three bilateral relationships are no longer like those during the Cold War, and they are no more "zero sum game". But the behaviour of one side inevitably affects the interactions of the other two, albeit unevenly. The US policy and action was a contributing factor to drive China and Russia closer. After a thorough and details-rich analysis

of narratives, speeches, statements, and some facts, Tao concluded that China did not gloat over deterioration of the US-Russian relations. China would rather see normal relations between them from its vision of community for shared future, shared destiny. And if their relations are going to be worse off further, China would be compelled to take side. China, of course, has no willingness to do so. China will continue to strengthen its relations with both US and Russia, without offending either one. Having strategic coordinating partnership with Russia, China also develops its relations with Ukraine.

## ***Session 2. Deductive Applications of Theory: Explaining China-Russia Relations***

**Kyle Haynes**, Assistant Professor at Purdue University, presented his work on global and geopolitical cooperation and competition between Russia and China in what he termed “logrolling”. In what ways will American decline and retrenchment impact security cooperation between Russia and China? According to Haynes, the conventional wisdom holds that the Sino-Russian “strategic partnership” is at best a “marriage of convenience” held together by a shared antipathy toward the US-led liberal international order. From a traditional balance of power perspective, we should then expect cooperation between China and Russia to deteriorate as US power declines. Haynes suggested, to the contrary, that Sino-Russian cooperation could remain quite durable throughout a period of American decline and retrenchment. To investigate this, he presented the application of theories of bureaucratic and legislative “logrolling” to demonstrate how China and Russia each had incentives to support one another’s revisionist actions in their respective home regions. An underlying asymmetry of regional importance – China’s prioritization of East Asia, and Russia’s prioritization of Europe – enables this logrolling dynamic, according to Haynes. Thus, he concluded, that while Russia and China have few shared positive interests, they could very well maintain a limited but highly consequential cooperative relationship over the short to medium term. As such, Haynes opined that the Sino-Russian threat to US-led order came not from a coordinated balancing effort, but from a reciprocal acquiescence to one another’s region-specific revisionist actions.

**Deborah Larson**, Professor of Political Science at the University of California – Los Angeles, presented her research paper that was aimed to investigate China-Russia relations from the lenses of identity-seeking and status restoration. She described that according to realism, China and Russia should be geopolitical rivals based on their relative military parity, their history of competition in Central Asia, and a long shared border in Siberia where population and development on each side are highly unequal. Instead, China’s and Russia’s relations have become much warmer since the end of the Cold War. What accounts for the positive change in their relationship? While some scholars argue that China and Russia are balancing against the United States, this overlooks fundamental differences in the two states’ foreign policies toward the West, which for Russia has been far more confrontational than for China. Based on social identity theory (SIT), I argue that China and Russia are trying to restore their great power status in the eyes of the West, while also maintaining their own distinctive identities. Each has used the other to bolster its status with the West in a mutual support society, while avoiding status competition with each other. Therefore, in SIT terms, Larson opined that China and Russia are engaged in social cooperation, whereby each recognizes the other’s superiority in a different area— economic wealth for China, military power projection for Russia. Larson concluded that this allowed China to assuage Russian fears of being treated as a “junior partner” by deferring to Russia in its near abroad on security issues, including in Central Asia.

**John Owen**, Ambassador Henry J. and Mrs. Marion R. Taylor Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia, presented a research paper on Sino-Russian cooperation against liberal hegemony. He argued

that the Sino-Russian security and economic cooperation has broadened and deepened progressively since relations were normalized in 1989. Contra realism, it is not simply American or “Western” material power that is driving this increasing cooperation. Rather, it is the interaction of that power with the West’s liberal ideas (multi-party democracy and a broad set of individual rights) – i.e., liberal hegemony – which threatens the Chinese and Russian regimes. The spread of liberal hegemony threatens the governments of China and Russia in two ways. First, by attracting adherents within each country, liberal hegemony undermines the legitimacy of each regime. Second, the spread of liberal regimes to third-party states pulls them into alignment with the U.S. and EU, and weakens Chinese and Russian influence in those states. Several types of evidence support these claims, including (1) private and public statements from both Chinese and Russian elites on the liberal-democratic threat; (2) the general deepening of bilateral cooperation since the anti-liberal Putin took office; (3) the specific deepening of bilateral cooperation after the Ukraine revolution of 2014; (4) efforts by both countries to counter the spread of liberal hegemony in their regions; (5) the tendency for anti-liberal elites in neighbouring states to cooperate more with China and/or Russia. Owen opined that his arguments implied that insofar as U.S. relative power recedes, or America tires of its role as liberal hegemon, this particular impetus to Sino- Russian cooperation would fade.

**Elizabeth Wishnick**, Professor of Political Science and Law at Montclair State University, presented the last paper of this panel in which she analysed evolution of Sino-Russian relations from the onset of Cold War to present day in meticulous details. In her paper, Wishnick applied the role theory to three cases in the history of relations between Moscow and Beijing, corresponding to Alexander Wendt’s three roles (Wendt 1999:258). These were: 1) enemies (1960s-1970s); 2) rivals (1980s-early 1990s); friends (mid-1990s to today). According to her, the problem with discussions of Sino-Russian relations today is that they fail to take into account the impact of history of the interactions between these two countries and the lessons the two countries have drawn from previous experiences. The current phase of Sino-Russian friendship has evolved in the context of a fraught history over many decades and it is useful to go back and compare the roles Moscow and Beijing have assigned to each other over time. In her research, Wishnick relied on documentary evidence from the Soviet Communist Party archives, as well as official statements by officials from both countries, and some secondary literature and news items. She concluded that two points stood out in the discussion of the evolution of the relationship between Moscow and Beijing from enmity to friendship which were important for its future evolution. One is that perceptions of equality and inequality matter, especially since, as we have seen, equality is one of the key characteristics of friendship. Second, participation by Russia and China together in international institutions may hinder rather than help their bilateral relationship.

### ***Session 3. Inductive Theory-Building: Generalizing from China-Russia Relations***

**Paul Fritz**, Associate Professor at Hofstra University, began the third panel with his presentation on the limitations of partnership between China and Russia, which he termed as “rising” and “resentful”, respectively. Fritz attempted to show differing dynamics and trajectory of a rising dissatisfied state and a defeated, declining dissatisfied state to illustrate the limits of the Sino-Russian partnership. While both Russia and China seek higher status in the international order by exerting a great power identity and desire a change in the international distribution of power, the motivations for and manifestations of status seeking and great power identity cultivation are different. Fritz therefore argued that this was due to Russia’s position as a defeated state that must recoup losses associated with the ending the Cold War, which in turn created a type of asymmetry in how China and Russia could claim great power status. Combined with asymmetries in power and dependence in the Sino-

Russian relationship, this argument implied that there were significant limits to the relatively new partnership that would likely prevent it from being a force that alters the international order.

**Andrew Kydd**, Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, delivered a presentation of his research paper titled “The Balance of Power, Regime Security, and the Nuclear Revolution: The Realist Case for Russian-Chinese Alignment”. According to Kydd, the prevailing consensus that China and Russia are loosely aligned against the United States makes sense in static balance of power terms – the leading power in the system is incurring balancing from the number two and three powers. But China’s growth, Chinese-Russian proximity and Russian territorial vulnerability would seem to suggest that Russia should move closer to the US as part of an overall effort to contain China. Instead, Russia appears to weigh the threat from the U.S. more than that from China. Liberal and constructivist theories, such as the papers presented by Owen and Larson in this volume, help explain why the democratic world poses a threat to the regime security of authoritarian Russia and China. However, such threats have existed for many decades and have often been subordinated to power political concerns. An important overlooked variable is the presence of nuclear weapons. Russia has a secure second strike against China, and hence may infer that territorial threats from China are off the table. China, if it does not already have it, will soon acquire a secure second strike against Russia. However, both sides have grown increasingly concerned about the security of their nuclear forces against the US as the latter has steadily upgraded its nuclear capabilities. Thus, Kydd concluded, the nuclear variable captured a previously unidentified systemic security motivation for the Russia-China alignment against the United States, and as such required closer examination.

**Brandon Yoder**, Research Fellow at CAG LKYSPP NUS, and **Mike Glosny**, Assistant Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School, presented their paper that was aimed at explaining Russia’s post-Cold War foreign policy towards China, especially via in-depth analysis of the interactions and signals between the states, as well as their credibility. According to Yoder, during China’s rise over the last three decades, it has adopted a consistent strategy of reassurance toward Russia — that is, actions and policies designed to minimize Russia’s perceptions of China as a threat, even as the latter became more powerful. But there was a large theoretical literature which indicated that rising states’ reassurance signals should not be credible, making the rising power’s reassurance efforts especially difficult. Even rising powers whose preferences were incompatible with the declining one’s had a strong incentive to misrepresent their hostile intentions by behaving cooperatively in the present — while still relatively weak — in order to avoid a balancing response from other states that would jeopardize their future power gains. Therefore, Yoder argued, that their research paper presented a formal model of a rising power’s reassurance during a power shift, both with and without the potential threat from a third-party. The model identified two mechanisms by which the presence of a third-party threat increased the credibility of a rising state’s reassurance signals. First, it reduced incentives for highly-incompatible risers to misrepresent their hostile intentions and, second, it constrained moderately-incompatible risers to cooperate in the future where they otherwise would not have. Yoder concluded by stating that the findings of the model helped to explain apparent incongruities in Russia’s post-Cold War beliefs and strategy toward a rising China.

#### ***Session 4. Predictive and Prescriptive Applications of Theory to US-China-Russia Relations***

**Alexander Lukin**, Professor at the National Research University – Higher School of Economics (Moscow), delivered the first presentation of this last panel. He argued that the Russian-Chinese was changing the international system of politics. According to Lukin, as cooperation between Moscow and Beijing developed in recent years, significant differences crept into the way Russian and Chinese

pundits viewed the status and prospects of that process on the one hand, and how their colleagues outside Russia and China perceive it on the other. While acknowledging the impact of domestic politics and American foreign policy as pressures and effects on China-Russia relations, Lukin argued that the improved and strong relations were a natural happening that developed between two countries steadily. Therefore, he argued, the short-term outlook for Russian-Chinese relations did not depend much on the international situation. Their partnership has developed steadily as a result of their common interests and the underlying global trend away from a bipolar and toward a multipolar world order. In fact, those relations have continued to progress for more than thirty years now, despite changes in leadership, national economic models, and even political systems. To Lukin, the Russian-Chinese partnership will remain as one of the pillars of the emerging multipolar world order and a linchpin of global and regional stability.

**Robert Ross**, Professor of Political Science at Boston College, contended that there was a considerable expectation that as China rose, Russia would balance against China, thus contributing to the US security. But this expectation was grounded in a number of mistaken assumptions about international politics, the Northeast Asian balance of power, and Soviet security interests. First, contrary to contemporary perspectives, non-great powers nearly always bandwagon, rather than balance, aligning with the more powerful regional actor irrespective of intentions and threat perceptions. Second, contrary to a widespread assumption, Russia is not a great power in East Asia, as it lacks the necessary capabilities in its Far East. Therefore, Ross argued that China is the sole great power on mainland Northeast Asia. He added that there was little likelihood that Russia would reemerge as a Northeast Asian great power for at least the next two decades. Third, according to Ross, Russia's strategic priorities are not in the Far East, but rather in its European theatre in response to the US/NATO challenge to Russian security. He then opined that despite its rapid rise, China remained a secondary concern for Russia. Fourth, China's rise over the past ten years has had a minimal incremental impact on Russian security in the Far East. Thus, contrary to widespread expectations, even if China continues to rise going forward, there is no reason to expect Russia will re-evaluate China's challenge to Russian security. Ross concluded that these factors all combined to create a theoretically and empirically based expectation that Russia had no choice but to accommodate China's rise, and that it would continue to do so in both Central and Northeast Asia.

**Robert Sutter**, Professor of Practice of International Affairs at George Washington University, delivered the last presentation at the conference. In his presentation, Sutter analysed contemporary Russian-Chinese relations and American foreign policy in relation to them. According to Sutter, contrasting view from other knowledgeable America specialists is that the ever more extensive development of overlapping Russian-Chinese interests served by their mutual cooperation since the end of the Cold War makes any American effort to manipulate one against the other very difficult. Unlike the Sino-Soviet animus of the Cold War, the two powers have come to depend on each other for economic, military and diplomatic support in the face of challenges they face brought on in particular by U.S. and Western policies at odds with their domestic and international ambitions. The prevailing pattern is of ever closer Russian-Chinese cooperation in their respective oppositions to a US-led international order seen as disadvantaging them through often poorly managed policies creating chaotic and other adverse consequences for Russian and Chinese interests. Sutter suggested several options grouped in five "baskets" for the US to direct its foreign policy and concluded that the best options was to avoid conflict and promote inclusivity for China and Russia where possible.

--- The End of Report ---

## Contacts

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