China's military potential – evolution, trends and challenges

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Summary/Abstract: The paper seeks to determine how China's armed forces try to create a favorable strategic posture with more emphasis on the employment of military forces and means, and provide a solid security guarantee for the country's peaceful development, in response to the new requirement of safeguarding national security and development interests. Potential, evolution, and trends of basic Services: Army; Air Force; Navy and the most crucial aspects of nuclear potential have been presented. Problems related to the cyber space domain, as the new era of information warfare are discussed by the view of building unique capabilities. PRC openly identifying information assets as a key to winning contemporary wars. Particularly, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), aiming at building modern forces and winning an informationalized war, deepens its reform, dedicates itself to innovation, improves its quality and actively pushes forward the revolution in military affairs. Chinese strategy, operational art and doctrine reflect the desire and need for a holistic approach to national security, utilizing the entirety of national resources.
coordination, a PLA principle of warfare, illustrates this holistic approach by stressing that military and nonmilitary entities should work in concert towards common objectives. Multidimensional coordination occurs at and between all levels of war, includes strategic resources and instruments of power and efforts to shape the environment. The paper underlines also shift from joint operationsto integrated joint operations. Chinese military experts perceive it as the basic approach in order to meet the requirements of confrontation between war systems in modern warfare. Integrated joint operations are designed to bring the operational strength of different Services and arms into full play, combine offensive operations with defensive ones, and give priority to the flexible application of strategies and tactics.

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