

U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission

Press Release



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NEW REPORT: China's Military Logistics

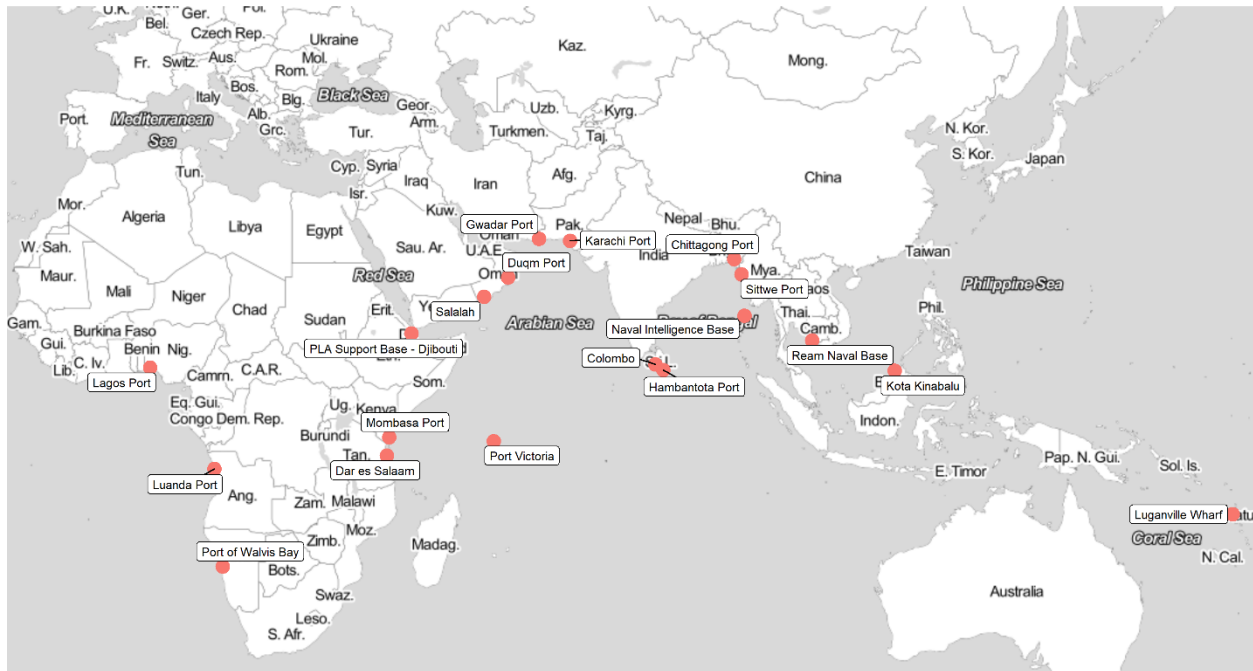
Washington, DC— Today, the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission released a report entitled *China's Logistics Capabilities for Expeditionary Operations*, prepared for the Commission by Jane's. The report assesses China's overseas military logistics capabilities, operating concepts, internal timeline for global power projection, and use of civilian entities to support expeditionary operations conducted by its armed forces. The full report can be found [here](#).

Key Findings:

- The People's Liberation Army's (PLA) pursuit of expeditionary capabilities is driven by its desire to achieve three goals within the next decade: to impose unacceptable costs on countries seeking to access or maneuver within the Western Pacific extending to Guam; to bolster international perceptions of China as a responsible great power through antipiracy and peacekeeping operations; and to defend China's overseas economic interests.
- By 2025, China seeks to possess the strategic sealift and airlift capabilities necessary to fight and win a high-tech limited maritime war; by 2030, to project power to countries along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and win overseas high-tech wars; and after 2030, to project power globally by relying on overseas bases.
- The Chinese government makes use of civilian and dual-use capabilities to support expeditionary operations under the auspices of its military-civil fusion strategy. China has released several laws and sets of technical standards to enable the PLA to leverage civilian firms, such as those operating roll-on/roll-off and container ships. Civilian entities are capable of supplementing capabilities for operations short of war and of fulfilling an emergency reserve function; however, they have important limitations that undercut their wartime utility.
- Chinese expeditionary capabilities, potential overseas basing sites, and strategic goals suggest that China will rely on overseas military logistics support from commercial facilities in the Indian Ocean region, Red Sea, and Africa. China is likely to establish bases in Pakistan and Cambodia within the next decade. Key indicators that a site may become a PLA base include the presence of major BRI infrastructure investments, debt to China, PLA Navy port calls, government support for a Chinese presence, and the potential host country's prior openness to foreign basing.
- The PLA Navy and PLA Navy Marine Corps may be developing the capability to conduct organic amphibious combat operations in the model of the U.S. Marine Corps. China is likely capable of deploying two amphibious task forces concurrently for approximately six-month long deployments, anywhere in the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific, but would struggle to sustain combat operations for more than several weeks. By 2035, the PLA Navy and PLA Navy Marine Corps could possess approximately six amphibious groups the size of U.S. marine expeditionary units.

- Despite PLA Navy and PLA Air Force advancements in offensive and logistical capabilities, the PLA has not yet had the time to develop the doctrine or experience necessary to maximize their use of these new capabilities.
- China's overseas economic interests include the rapid increase in infrastructure projects and Chinese nationals working abroad in recent years, particularly those associated with BRI. The vulnerability of Chinese facilities and personnel to local violence and instability is one driver of the PLA's development of expeditionary combat capabilities.

Potential PLA Overseas Basing Locations by 2030



Source: Jane's

The report was authored by Chad Peltier, Tate Nurkin, and Sean O'Connor.

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The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission was created by Congress to report on the national security implications of the bilateral trade and economic relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China. For more information, visit www.uscc.gov or follow the Commission on Twitter at @USCC_GOV.

DISCLAIMER: This report was prepared at the request of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission to support its deliberations. The Commission issued a public request for proposals on November 8, 2019 which supported this report. Posting of the report to the Commission's website is intended to promote greater public understanding of the issues addressed by the Commission in its ongoing assessment of U.S.-China economic relations and their implications for U.S. security, as mandated by Public Law 110-161 and Public Law 113-291. However, it does not necessarily imply an endorsement by the Commission or any individual Commissioner of the views or conclusions expressed in this commissioned research report.