

PLA Military Modernization: **An Appraisal**

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Disclaimer

- The views expressed by the speaker are purely his and do not represent the views of the Government of India, Ministry of Defense or the Indian Army
- The inputs in the presentation are from open sources

Preview

- Threats to China & Importance of PLA
- Modernization trends: PLAA, PLAAF, PLAN & Second Artillery Force
- Appreciated Force Structure in 2025

“Unquestionably, victory or defeat in war is determined mainly by the military, political, economic and natural conditions on both sides, however, not by these alone. It is also determined by each side's subjective ability in directing the war. In his endeavor to win a war, a military strategist cannot overstep the limitations imposed by the material conditions; within these limitations, however, he can and must strive for victory. The stage of action for a military strategist is built upon objective material conditions, but on that stage, he can direct the performance of many a drama, full of sound and color, power and grandeur”

Mao Zedong in 1936

China's Threat Perception

- Loss of control of Party
 - 85.13 million/ 1.39 billion
 - Three Narratives
 - CPC can improve standard of living
 - Maintain a stable, unified country & construct happy harmonious society
 - Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation
 - China Dream: Two Hundreds & Three milestones
 - Contradictions
 - Urban, prosperous & educated population:
Transparency, inclusive governance, freedom of speech and communication, global connect and integration: Orange Movement
 - Role of the PLA: Ideological & Application of Force

China's Threat Perception

- Extremism, Separatism & Terrorism
 - Tibet: Extremism & Separatism – No Solution
 - Xinjiang: Terrorism & Separatism – Response as per Global norms
 - Kunming, Beijing, Changsha & Urumqi
 - ETIM: Separatist force using extreme measures
 - Is China prepared to tackle this threat
 - Will this separatist movement take an Islamic turn
 - How will the PLA tackle this
 - Chinese Borders

TIBETAN SELF-IMMOLATIONS

2009-2014



China's Threat Perception

Trends of Transformation Chengdu MAC: Xizang MD

Xizang MD (2011)	Xizang MD (2013)	Xizang MD (2014)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 SF Unit• 1 (HAA) Indep Mech Bde• 2 Mtn Inf Bde• 1 EW Regt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 SF Unit• 1 (HAA) Mech Bde• 2 Mtn Inf Bde• 1 EW Regt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 SF Unit• 1 (HAA) Mech Bde• 2 Mtn Inf Bde• 1 Arty Regt• 1 AD Regt• 1 Engr Regt• 1 EW Regt

Trends of Transformation Lanzhou MAC: Xinjiang MD

Xinjiang MD (2011)	Xinjiang MD (2013)	Xinjiang MD (2014)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 (HAA) Mech Div• 2 Indep Mech Inf Regt• 3 (HAA) Mot Div• 1 Avn Bde• 1 Arty Bde• 1 AD Bde• 1 Engr Regt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 (HAA) Mech Div• 2 Indep Mech Inf Regt• 3 (HAA) Mot Div• 1 Avn Bde• 1 Arty Bde• 1 AD Bde• 1 Engr Regt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 SF Unit• 1 (HAA) Mech Div• 1 Indep Mech Inf Regt• 3 (HAA) Mot Div• 1 Avn Bde• 1 Arty Bde• 1 AD Bde• 1 Engr Regt• 1 EW Regt

China's Threat Perception

- External: No major threat
 - Effective Counter intervention Strategy
 - Salami Slicing/Cabbage Strategy

Importance of PLA

- CPC ↔ PLA ↔ CPC
- XI's Major Moves
 - Mass Line Campaign
 - Anti Corruption Campaign
 - China Dream
 - No concessions; Territorial issues

Conscription

- **Based on Military Service Law 1984. Amended in 1998 & 2009**
- **2014 nationwide conscription to conclude: Sep 11, 2014 – China Military Online**

Procedure

- Timing: Aug 1 to 30 Sep
 - Conscription Mobilization & Publicity Activities: May & June
 - Recruit Transport & Issue of Enlistment Notice: Sep 5 to 30
 - For College Students
 - Organized in June
 - Prelim Exam, First Review & pre confirmation – Before students leave School or before holidays
- Online Registration:
<http://www.gfbzb.gov.cn>
 - First Review
 - Prelim Physical Examination
 - Physical Examination
 - Political Appraisal
 - Investigation
 - Booking of Recruits
 - Putting up notices – Announcing name lists
 - Enrollment Approval

Contours of PLA War Fighting Doctrine

People's War	1927 – 76
People's War under Modern Conditions	1979 – 84
Local War's under Modern Conditions	1985 – 91
Local War's under Hi Tech Conditions	1992 – 2004
Local War's under Conditions of Informationalization	2004 Onwards

- **Environmental Scan**
 - Internal
 - External
- **Leadership & Ideological Thinking**
- **Triggers**
- **Internal Dynamics**
- **Structural & Operational Readiness**

Informatalization

- Deploying new generation of C4I2SR systems & networks
 - Command and Control Systems
 - Communications networks and Data links
 - Intelligence collection systems
 - Information fusion systems
 - Space, Sub Space, Manned & Unmanned aerial, marine and underwater means
 - HRD & Training
- These capabilities - the key factor in PLA's ability to
 - Coordinate operations within & among its ground, air, naval, and missile forces – IJO
 - Detect and track foreign military activities
 - Conduct time-sensitive, long-range strikes with its ballistic and cruise missiles

PLA Modernization

Modernization Trends PLA Army(PLAA)

- Reorganization of PLAA**
- PLAA Brigades & Brigadization - Mechanization**
- Appreciation & Capabilities of PLA in Lanzhou & Chengdu MACs**
- PAPF - History, Mission, Command & Control, Strength, Organization & Deployment**
- Reserve Forces & Militia**
- Assessment of RRFs**

Trends of Transformation

Trends of Transformation Chengdu MAC: Two Combined Corps: 13 CC & 14 CC (DT)

13 CC (2011)	13 CC (2013)	13 CC (2014)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 (HAA) Mech Inf Div (RRU) • 1 Mot Inf Div • 1 Avn Regt • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 (HAA) Mech Inf Div (RRU) • 1 Mot Inf Div • 1 Avn Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 SF Unit • 1 Armd Bde • 1 (HAA) Mech Inf Div (RRU) • 1 Mot Inf Div • 1 Avn Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt • 1 EW Regt
14 CC (2011)	14 CC (2013)	14 CC (2014)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 (Jungle) Mot In Div • 1 Mot Inf Div • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 (Jungle) Mot Inf Div • 1 Mot Inf Div • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 (Jungle) Mot In Div • 1 Mot Inf Div • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt

Trends of Transformation

Trends of Transformation Lanzhou MAC: Two Combined Corps: 21 CC (O) & 47 CC (DT)

21 CC (2011)	21 CC (2013)	21 CC (2014)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Div • 1 Mot Inf Bde (RRU) • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 Mech Inf Bde • 1 Mot Inf Div (RRU) • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 SF Unit • 1 Armd Bde • 1 Mech Inf Bde • 1 Mot In Div (RRU) • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt • 1 EW Regt
47 CC (2011)	47 CC (2013)	47 CC (2014)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 Mech Inf Bde • 2 (HAA)Mot Inf Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 Mech Inf Bde • 2 (HAA)Mot Inf Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 Mech Inf Bde • 2 (HAA)Mot Inf Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt

Trends of Transformation Nanjing MAC: Three Combined Corps: 1 CC , 12 CC & 31 CC

<u>1 CC (2009)</u>	<u>1 CC (2011)</u>	<u>1 CC (2013)</u>	<u>1 CC (2014)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Div • 1 Amph Div • 1 Mot Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Amph Div • 1 Arty Div • 1 Armd Bde • 1 Mot Inf Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt • 1 Avn Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Amph Mech Inf Div • 1 Arty Div • 1 Armd Bde • 1 Mot Inf Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt • 1 Avn Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Bde • 1 Amph Mech Inf Div • 1 Mech Inf Bde • 1 Mot Inf Bde • 1 Avn Bde • 1 Arty Div • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt • 1 EW Regt
<u>12 CC</u>	<u>12 CC</u>	<u>12 CC</u>	<u>12 CC</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Div • 3 Mot Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Div • 3 Mot Inf Bde (1 RRU) • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Div • 3 Mot Inf Bde (1 RRU) • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Armd Div • 2 Mech Inf Bde • 2 Mot Inf Bde (1 RRU) • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt
<u>31 CC</u>	<u>31 CC</u>	<u>31 CC</u>	<u>31 CC</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Mot Div (1 (86th) RRU) • 1 Amph Armd Bde • 1 Mot Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Avn Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Mot Inf Div (1 RRU) • 1 (Amph) Armd Bde • 1 Mot Inf Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Avn Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Mot Inf Div (1 RRU) • 1 (Amph) Armd Bde • 1 Mot Inf Bde • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Avn Regt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 SF Unit • 1 (Amph) Armd Bde • 2 Mot Inf Div (1 RRU) • 1 Mot Inf Bde • 1 Avn Regt • 1 Arty Bde • 1 AD Bde • 1 Engr Regt • 1 EW Regt

Analysis

- Organization of CC standardized
- Offensive CC has SF Unit & EW Regt
- From 2013 to 2014, maximum transformation in Chengdu and Lanzhou MACs
- In Shenyang(40 GA), Beijing(27 GA), Jinan (20 GA & 54 GA) and Lanzhou(47 GA) MACs one CC fully brigadized
- In many MACs, all formations less RRU s reorganized into brigades. 54 GA, 31 GA & 21 GA
- Nanjing MAC, formations which are likely to be employed for the Taiwan contingency remain as divisions. Remaining divisions reorganized into brigades
- Similar comparison seen in 41 & 42 GAs of the Guangzhou MAC.
- Maximum number of formations brigadized are in the Jinan MAC, there by supporting the fact that the formations of this MAC are likely to be employed initially in any contingency across China.
- In the Chengdu MAC, the 13 and 14 GAs have one armored brigade each. The remaining formations are divisions, with some of them having terrain specific employment like high altitude and jungle
- The GAs which need to be closely watched for reorganization are 38 & 65 GAs (Beijing MAC) and 41 & 42 GAs (Guangzhou MAC)

PLAA Modernization: White Paper 2013

“In line with the strategic requirements of mobile operations and multi-dimensional offense and defense, the PLAA has been reoriented from theater defense to trans-theater mobility. It is accelerating the development of army aviation troops, light mechanized units and special operations forces, and enhancing building of digitalized units, gradually making its units small, modular and multi-functional in organization so as to enhance their capabilities for air-ground integrated operations, long-distance maneuvers, rapid assaults and special operations.”

PLAA: 2025

- **MRs/ MACs to be reorganized**
- **Size of PLAA will depend on – Internal Dynamics & Geo Politics**
- **Army remains same or downsizes. However the quality will improve. AF & Navy to grow.**
- **PAPF & Reserves – increase**
- **Up to 2025**
 - **PLA Units – Mix of high, medium & low tech weapons**
 - **Strive to find ways to max use of this mix**
 - **50 to 60% units equipped with cutting edge hi tech weapons**
- **Incr in logistics & tech units**
- **Rapid deployment – key focus & this PLAA capability to increase**
- **Integration of forces & their synergized application: System of System Ops – IJO**



Trends: PLAAF Modernization



- Integrated Air Space Operations, Being prepared for Simultaneous Offensive and Defensive Operations; PLAAF Service Strategy 2004
- PLAAF Expected to
 - Be capable of defending China's Air Space & of Strike Operations against China's Adversaries
 - Augment Strategic reach of PLA
 - Function as a Strategic Service
 - Be capable of obtaining China's Political Objective's in concert with rest of PLA or separately

PLAAF Modernization: White Paper 2013

“In line with the strategic requirements of conducting both offensive and defensive operations, the PLAAF is strengthening the development of a combat force structure that focuses on reconnaissance and early warning, air strike, air and missile defense, and strategic projection. It is developing such advanced weaponry and equipment as new-generation fighters and new-type ground-to-air missiles and radar systems, improving its early warning, command and communications networks, and raising its strategic early warning, strategic deterrence and long-distance air strike capabilities.”

Trends of Modernization: PLAAF

- **Stealth**
 - Chengdu J-20
 - Shenyang J-31 or J-21
- **AEW &C Platforms**
 - KJ-2000
 - KJ-200
- **Strategic Projection Capability**
- **Integrated Air & Space Defense**
- **4th & 4.5 Generation Aircrafts**
- **UAVs & UCAVs**

PLAAF: 2025

- Operate in an Informatized environment
- Continue to be a mix of 5th , 4.5 and lower generation combat aircrafts
- Su-35, Su-30, Su-27, J-11 & J-10 will be the frontline fighters
- Total 63-66 Regts/ bdes
- No major increase of Tpt, AEW&C & ISR ac's
- Induction of
 - J-20s
 - Y-20s
- Integrated AD System based on S-300, S-400, HQ-9 & HQ-19
- Large number of UCAVs & UAVs
- ALCMs, BVRs, AAMs
- No major change in 15 AB CC



Trends: PLAN Modernization

PLAN Naval Strategy



- Admiral Lin Huaqing
 - Third Commander of PLAN
 - Senior Vice Chairman of CMC
- Offshore Defense
 - Regional Strategy
 - Generally described as operations within China's 200 Km EEZ.
 - Admiral Lin described China's off Shore Defense Areas as – Yellow Sea, ECS, SCS, sea's around Spratly islands and Taiwan, areas inside and outside Okinawa and Northern part of Pacific Ocean; Areas outside 1st Island Chain as well as traditional coastal waters
- Distance Sea Defense
 - No geographical limitation
 - PLAN required to defend Chinese interests; Close to home or other side of world
 - MOOTW; Important component

PLAN Modernization: White Paper 2013

“In line with the requirements of its offshore defense strategy, the PLAN endeavors to accelerate the modernization of its forces for comprehensive offshore operations, develop advanced submarines, destroyers and frigates, and improve integrated electronic and information systems. Furthermore, it develops blue-water capabilities of conducting mobile operations, carrying out international cooperation, and countering non-traditional security threats, and enhances its capabilities of strategic deterrence and counterattack”

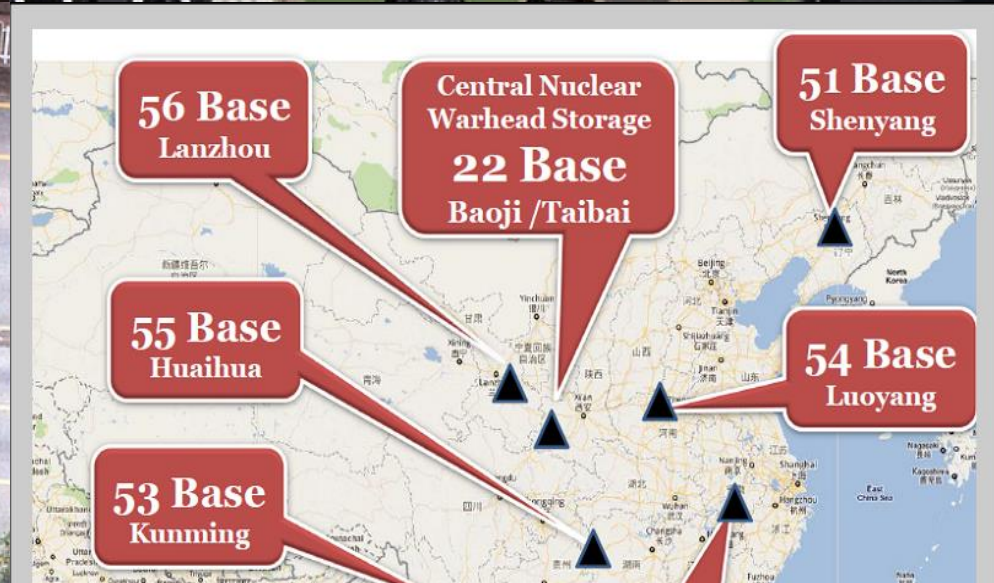
Trends of Modernization: PLAN

- **ASBM & Cruise Missiles**
- **SSBNs**
- **Aircraft Carrier**
- **Submarine & Surface Forces**
- **Surface Combatants**
 - **Destroyers, Frigates & Corvettes**
 - **Amphibious Ships**
 - **Support Ships**

PLAN: 2025

- **Maximum two CBGs**
- **SSBNs**
 - Jin class (Type 94) mainstay. Up to seven – nine in service
 - First of Type 96 to enter service
- **Submarines & Surface Forces**
 - SSN Shang Class (Type 93). Up to Four – five in service
 - Conventional: Yuan Class with AIP mainstay up to 20-22 in service. Remaining Kilo and Song class.
 - Destroyers: Luyang III class (Type 52D) mainstay. 8 to 10 in service.
 - Frigates: Jiangkai II class
 - Jiangdao class corvettes – for littoral warfare
- **Amphibious**
 - Yuzhao Class LPD & Type 81 Landing Helicopter Assault Ship
- **DF – 21D & Cruise Missiles**

二炮导弹旅的山中洞库阵地



Trends: PLA SAF Modernization

PLA SAF Strategy

- China follows policy of no first use of nuclear weapons, implements a self-defensive nuclear strategy & takes it as its fundamental mission - Protection of China from any nuclear attack
- Doctrine: Dual Deterrence and Dual Operations
- PLA SAF is under direct command and control of the CMC
- Core force for Strategic Deterrence
- Responsible for
 - Deterring other countries from using nuclear weapons against China
 - For conducting nuclear counterattacks and precision strikes with conventional missiles
- In peacetime the nuclear weapons of the Second Artillery Force are not aimed at any country
- Conventional Missile Force tasked for conducting medium- and long-range precision strikes against key strategic and operational targets

PLA SAF Modernization: White Paper 2013

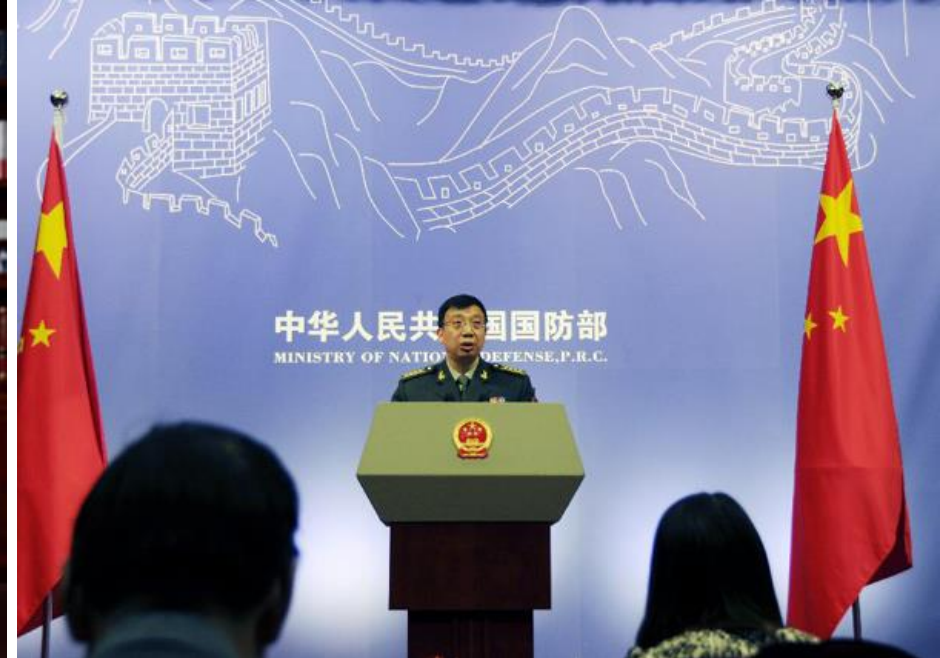
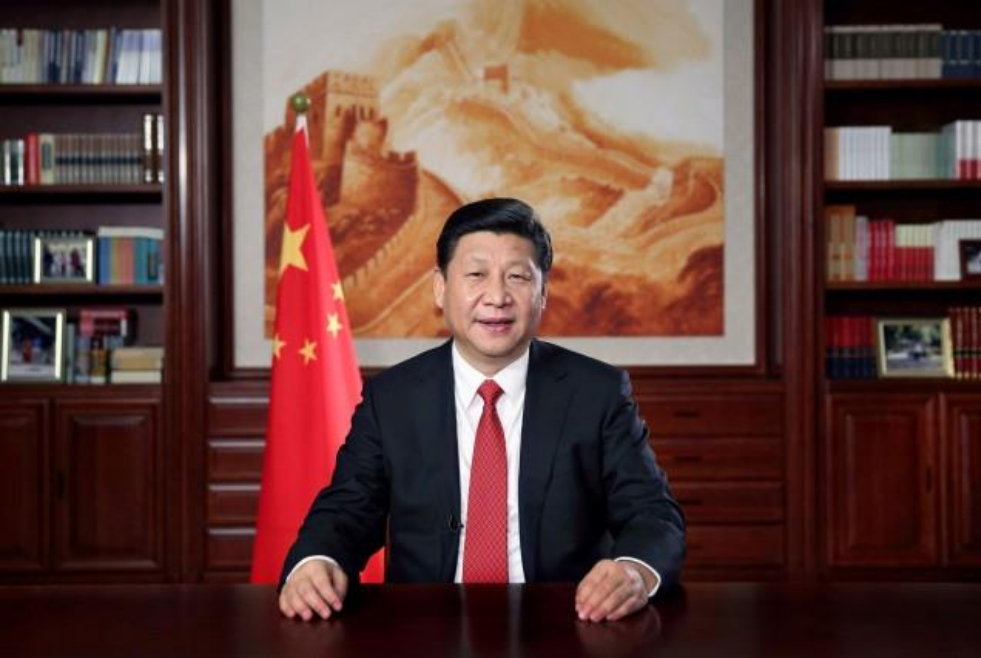
“Following the principle of building a lean and effective force, the PLASAF is striving to push forward its informationization transform, relying on scientific and technological progress to boost independent innovations in weaponry and equipment, modernizing current equipment selectively by applying mature technology, enhancing the safety, reliability and effectiveness of its missiles, improving its force structure of having both nuclear and conventional missiles, strengthening its rapid reaction, effective penetration, precision strike, damage infliction, protection and survivability capabilities. The PLASAF capabilities of strategic deterrence, nuclear counterattack and conventional precision strike are being steadily elevated. ”

Trends of Modernization: PLASAF

- **Largest Conventional Missile arsenal in Asia – Pacific**
- **Nuclear Missiles – Solid fueled & mobile**
- **Multi mission missile force – diminishing numbers of missile launchers only for nuclear missions**
- **ICBMs: DF-31 & DF-31A: increase numbers from 2010**
- **Arsenal to conduct effective conventional missions**
 - Precision or near precision SRBMs/ LACMs
 - Sharp decrease in numbers of IRBMs
- **Decrease ranges – focus on periphery**

PLA SAF: 2025

- **Force Development will follow the trend of conventional and nuclear capable missile force**
- **Focus to continue of development of conventional missile forces**
- **Increased Precision or near precision of MRBMs, SRBMs & LACMs**
- **ICBMs: Two Shifts**
 - **Nuclear to Nuclear and Conventional missions**
 - **Priority of Nuclear deterrence missions**





Thank You