

# EU-China Relation: the Arms Embargo

楊三億

遠景基金會助理研究員

波蘭華沙大學國際關係博士

摘要

本文主要處理關於歐盟與中共雙邊關係的武器禁運問題，本文認為，歐盟與中共皆為現存國際政治體系下興起的兩個強權：歐盟於去年納入中東歐與地中海地區十個新會員國，其全球政經地位再度提升，而中共由於近年的經濟發展也使其在國際活動空間獲得更高地位。因此，雙方互動已由雙邊格局提升為全球戰略架構，雙方除在政治、經濟與社會文教各層次上多有合作空間外，歐盟與中共要求解除武器禁運呼聲日益高漲，因此舉有益雙方進行更高層次的戰略交往合作，並促進雙邊層次更深的商業與經貿互動。然而，武器解禁又不僅是雙方互動過程的單純問題，解禁還同時牽涉了歐盟、中共與美、俄等國的交叉互動，以及其對兩岸穩定狀態的直接介入。對歐盟而言，如果僅僅從戰略與商業利益角度思考歐盟與中共的雙邊交往，則其不啻為可能的未來兩岸發展埋下更多變數，同時也將因此牽動歐盟與美國、俄國的互動格局。在此基礎上，本文將分析歐盟為何解禁？美國為何企圖阻止武器解禁？解禁對歐盟開拓武器市場有何助益？以及歐盟應該如何調整其武器出口政策等，希望能對歐盟武器禁運問題提供一個較完整面貌。

## A more comprehensive exchange between the EU and China

This paper deals with the relationship between the European Union and China. Both are emerging world powers. On 1 May 2004, the European Union expanded for the fifth time in its history, increasing to 25 members. From the viewpoint of European activists, this expansion will lead to changes in world politics. Meanwhile, as China's influence on the world stage grows, it is becoming more confident in dealing with international and regional affairs, despite the fact that it has serious domestic problems. In this regard, both the EU and China have strong desires to cooperate in the international sphere and to protect themselves from the influence of other vested interests.

The close economic interaction between the EU and China is worthy of consideration. A few key points may help illustrate the comprehensive relationship that has developed between the two sides. According to statistical data, trade volume between Europe and China was more than US\$160 bln in 2004, almost 35 percent higher than the same period in 2003. The growing economic interdependence between the EU and China is evident in the fact that the EU has surpassed Japan and the US to become China's largest trading partner. China has become the second largest trading partner of the EU, second only to the US. Sino-European economic and trade ties saw rapid growth last year, pushed by highlevel exchanges between China and Europe. These included exchanges between political leaders, such as a visit by the PRC's president and

premier to the European continent, and official visits to Beijing by political elites from EU member states. What's more, social and cultural exchanges across the Eurasian continent also have bolstered twoway understanding. As Romano Prodi, then president of the European Commission, put it, the EU-China relationship is "at its best in history." Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao also said recently that he thought the bilateral relationship was enjoying the most active and fruitful period in its history.

The desire to construct a more comprehensive relationship has brought an improvement of bilateral political exchanges. Nowhere is this more visible than in the EU's moves toward lifting the arms embargo. It is hoped that the decision to normalize arms sales to China will lead to a mutually beneficial future, not only in the sphere of commercial exchanges, but also in the sphere of strategic cooperation.

### **Bush administration: stop discussions about lifting the arms embargo**

Nevertheless, the EU's and China's intentions to construct a new strategic framework inevitably will be influenced by hegemonic power. The Bush administration worries that the EU's attitude toward China will pose a potential threat to US strategic deployment in East Asia. The aim of US strategic behavior in this area is to consolidate stability and to promote regional dialogue, no matter whether it is between China and Taiwan or on Korean Peninsula. The U.S. worries that by lifting the arms embargo, the EU could send a vague or wrong signal that the EU backs China's aggressive actions against Taiwan. In this context, the Bush administration has urged the EU not to lift the embargo, and has even threatened to retaliate if the EU acts alone.

When US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice paid a visit to Beijing on 20-21 March this year, she cautioned the EU not to lift the embargo because it would "alter the military balance in a place where the United States has very strong security interests," a very clear signal for Brussels. Almost simultaneously, the EU summit (European Council) in Brussels expressed a watered-down message that the EU probably would postpone consideration of the arms issue, despite the fact that it has sought closer ties with China since the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989.

It is widely recognized that the EU's moves toward lifting the arms embargo as quickly as possible have come to a halt because of China's recent adoption of the "anti-secession law." British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, who favors ending the embargo, declared that the anti-secession law "has created quite a difficult political environment." Asked whether the law would delay action on the embargo, Straw said only that the question "is not on the agenda of the European Council." Discussion of the issue has all but disappeared and it remains uncertain whether the EU might bring it up again before June. The EU's current Luxembourg presidency recently denied that it has ruled out lifting the embargo before June. It is worth noting that even if

the ban is not lifted during Luxembourg's EU watch, it could still come up when Luxembourg hands over the reins to Britain. Britain seems to be facing an awkward predicament on this issue: On the one hand, it has a tradition of strict adherence to transatlantic cooperation with the US; on the other hand, it is also a member of the European Union, and has profound interests within both the EU and China.

### **Arms embargo: strategic and commercial interests**

Arguments between the EU and US over whether to lift the arms embargo are currently the subject of fervent discussions, but a key point is often underplayed or missing from the debate: why the EU intends to construct a more comprehensive Eurasian framework.

Most observers concentrate their attention on the importance of the EU-China strategic alliance and commercial interests (such as EU arms sales to China). This coincides with a "realist" explanation: the Franco-German alliance aims at a multi-polar world; they share common strategic interests. On the other hand, they also see the massive potential of the Chinese market. With China's emergence as a significant regional entity and a rising power, no major global corporation can turn its back on China's vast economic attractions. This is especially significant as the EU's defence industry faces increasingly harsh competition in both the domestic and international spheres.

Unlike normal commercial activities, the defence industry is currently exempt from European market competition rules on the grounds that defence matters are a national security issue. When the European Defence Agency (EDA) was formed last July, its main goal was to integrate EU member states' separate defence industries into a single, efficient industry to battle global competition (especially from the US). The decision to open up Europe's 30 billion euro defence market is likely to emerge as part of member state co-operation within the EDA. This idea has arisen because of concerns that a lack of competition forces member states to overpay for equipment from their own national producers, which leaves them with fewer resources for research into new technologies. By prodding the EU to look at the Chinese market, the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS) and British Aerospace and Defence giant (BAE) hope to have a more prosperous future. Indeed, they have done a good job over the past several months in persuading the EU to consider lifting the embargo.

### **The lion share: EU focuses on Chinese market**

It can be argued that the EU's defence industry's market share in China is was marginal until 2002, but its prospects is are quite positive. According to a report in The Economist report, the volume of China's defence industry will be rise up to as much as 15 billion USD per year in the near future (despite the EU's share companies' participation in the Chinese market, in China's

import they accounted for only 2.7% of the China's defence trade imports is only 2.7 % in 2004). In this context, it is not difficult to imagine understand why France, Germany, British Britain and other member states might submit themselves to the vast commercial interests. What is more, the a political alliance between the EU and Russia in on this issue is possible when if the lifting of the arms embargo looms largebecomes likely. In order to prevent a harsh and vicious competition, both the EU and Russia will discourage from selling the sales of core technologies to China.

A more surprising fact is that EU possesses advanced technologies in the sphere of in such areas as generators, communications equipment, or night-vision telescopes. With the help of EU's technologies, the China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) could easily promote improve their its all-weather and digital warfare capabilities. That will would tilt the balance of power across the Taiwan-Strait and could even deter the U.S.'s military action in the face of a regional crisis or conflict. This is especially crucial when as China becomes more and more confident in dealing with Asian affairs and intervenes in cross-strait relations. Consequently, it is very important to askthe EU not to lift the arms embargo and to encourage Brussels to come up with a morecomprehensive framework for engaging China. That needs some measures.

### Arms embargo: how to re-adjust EU's external behaviors?

In order to keep EU's arms sell sales intact under at recent levels and to walk a thin line refraining from more avoid exacerbating transatlantic dissonancetensions, the EU authorities have to must take some important measures into account as the lifting of the embargo is approachingapproaches. What is more, Aas an emerging and responsible global power in the world, Brussels has to stabilize East Asiathere regional equilibrium in East Asia by prodding China and Taiwan to engage in constructive dialogue and by encouraging both sides to strictly adherence not to avoid military competition.

First, the EU should revise its "Code of Conduct" concerning on arms sellsales. It should lay put more emphasis on the promotion of human rights and democracy. Until recently, the four countries under EU's arms embargoes were: China, Myanmar, Sudan and Zimbabwe. , are All are notorious for their strict controls on freedom of expression and other political powers. The EU should win the allegiance of the world by treating countries equally and without discrimination. If China's notorious continues to ignore human rights performance and strict control on constrain freedom of speech and political rights exist, the European Union should not be subject to ignore Chinese pressure and react. On the contrarythe other hand, if the Chinese government makes remarkable headway in democratic processd evelopment, Brussels should bolster up this tendencyrespond with encouragement. In addition, the EU's new instrument on measures pertaining to arms exports to post-embargo countries should also be presented.

Second, the arms embargo is important in as much as because any military modernization enabled by the sales will tilt the region's balance in China's favor. The international community should urge Brussels to construct a transparency method in for arms sales so that EU members and other concerned countries would have the opportunities to could object to a potential sales to China or other non-democratic countries. A wellfunctioning communication and transparent linkage among member states concerning on arms sell sales could consolidate the EU's common stance and prevent member states from vying for China's favor. What is more, like as German foreign minister Joschka Fisher and other leaders have said, a possible confrontation looms large between US and China in East Asia. The EU would be forced to take a positionsides if China and the US have a strategic clash. The EU should caution take care not to push the US-EU-China triangularle relationship too hard in this regard.

Third, the EU should respect Taiwan's international status and support further democratic development on Taiwan further democratic development. EU statements about the need for announcement on regional stability is are a necessary buttress for Taiwanese de facto independence; without a stable environment Taipei would would be unable to sustain fail to achieve a sincere the democratic process. Since "civilian power" is a hallmark of the EU's international role is hallmarked by the concept of "civilian power" and since the EU also has relative profound interests in East Asia, ; Brussels should reassert the importance of peaceful resolution and of constructive dialogue across the strait.