

RESEARCH NOTE

External Policymaking under Hu Jintao—Multiple Players and Emerging Leadership

HONGYI HARRY LAI

China's new leadership emerged after the Sixteenth Party Congress in 2002 and was formally established on Hu Jintao's assumption of the chairmanship of the Central Military Commission in September 2004. This article examines the changes and continuity in foreign policymaking under Hu. It highlights three prominent features in external policymaking. First, Hu has become the most influential leader over external policies, as reflected in his leading posts in most key organs in charge of external policymaking. Second, Hu has demonstrated his own style of external policies—a greater emphasis on proactive and pragmatic diplomacy and on formal institutions in policymaking. Third, the process of external policymaking continues to involve multiple players, ranging from the Politburo, leading small groups, national ministries, think tanks, and public opinion. This article examines the new Politburo, its Standing Committee, the line-ups of leading small groups supervising foreign policies, and relevant ministries. The article discusses the respective roles of Hu and Wen Jiabao, as well as think tanks, advisers, and public opinion. It also explores Hu's style of decision-making and external policies.

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The Sixteenth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in late 2002 elected a new Central Committee, and a new Politburo and its Standing Committee. Over the past few years, China observers have centered their attention on the issue of whether Jiang Zemin (江澤民) would hand over his chairmanship of the Central Military Commission (CMC, 中央軍事委員會) to Hu Jintao (胡錦濤) and whether Hu could assert his influence in decision-making, including external policies.¹ The growing literature on China's foreign policymaking does reveal a trend toward a diffuse and pluralized process in recent years.² Few studies, however, shed light on the process of external

¹For a critical analysis of the Sixteenth Party Congress, see Joseph Fewsmith, "The Sixteenth National Party Congress: The Succession That Didn't Happen," *The China Quarterly*, no. 173 (March 2003): 1-16. It has also been suggested that Hu's view on major domestic and external issues was vague and poorly defined when he was about to become the Party general secretary. See Richard D. Ewing, "Hu Jintao: The Making of a Chinese General Secretary," *ibid.*, 17-34. David Bachman also stated: "Assuming that Jiang Zemin wishes to remain the key leader in China despite his retirement from a number of his top positions, his strategy is likely to be to try to hold on to ... chairman of the CMC." See David Bachman, "New Leaders, New Foreign Policymaking Procedures?" in *China after Jiang*, ed. Gang Lin and Xiaobo Hu (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2003), 115-36. For an insightful analysis of China's leadership succession, see Hongyi Lai, "Institutionalization of China's Power Transfer behind Dramatic Reports," *Hsin Pao* (Hong Kong Economic Journal), October 11, 2004, 23.

²David Bachman ("New Leaders, New Foreign Policymaking Procedures?") also held that management of foreign affairs under Hu will be bureaucratized. David Shambaugh suggested that decision-making under Jiang was becoming pluralized, consultative, consensual, and rational. See David Shambaugh, "The Dynamics of Elite Politics during the Jiang Era," *The China Journal*, no. 45 (January 2001): 103-6. This view is confirmed in some of the following studies of China's foreign policymaking. For an earlier study of Chinese foreign policymaking, see A. Doak Barnett, *The Making of Chinese Foreign Policy: Structure and Process* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1985). For detailed analyses of the process in the 1990s, see Lu Ning, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 2000); Michael D. Swaine, *The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policymaking* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1998); David M. Lampton, ed., *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001); Samuel S. Kim, ed., *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Policy Faces the New Millennium* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1998); Carol Lee Hamrin, "Elite Politics and the Development of China's Foreign Relations," in *Chinese For-*

polymaking and new features of external policies since the Sixteenth Party Congress.³

A question naturally arises: To what extent have continuity and change been exhibited in external policymaking under Hu? This article aims to address this question by highlighting three outstanding features. By and large, the first two features reflect changes and the third continuity. First, Hu has become the core leader in China's external policymaking. In the months following the Sixteenth Party Congress, Hu Jintao assumed top positions in the leading small groups (LSGs, 領導小組) that control external policies. In September 2004, Jiang Zemin handed over his last and most powerful post—i.e., the CMC chairmanship—to Hu Jintao. Hu has hence become the first among equals in the new Chinese leadership. Second, Hu displays a style in external policies different from his predecessor. Hu is apparently more proactive and pragmatic regarding external issues. In addition, Hu pays greater attention to institutions and formal procedures. Third, external policymaking, as it has in the past, continues to involve a multitude of players and an increasingly diffuse process. The demise of dominant leaders such as Mao Zedong (毛澤東) and Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平) also permits national leaders other than the top leader, national institutions and bureaucracies, and even public opinion to take more of a role in external policymaking. This trend has been noted by scholars, including Shambaugh, Bachman, and Lampton,⁴ and it echoes the

eign Policy: Theory and Practice, ed. Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 70-114; George Yang, "Mechanisms of Foreign Policy-Making and Implementation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," in *Decision-Making in Deng's China: Perspectives from Insiders*, ed. Carol Lee Hamrin and Suisheng Zhao (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995); and Alastair Iain Johnston, "Learning versus Adaptation: Explaining Change in Chinese Arms Control Policy in the 1980s and 1990s," *The China Journal*, no. 35 (January 1996): 27-62. For a discussion of foreign policymaking under Jiang in the early 2000s, see Hongyi Lai, "Key Actors and Institutions in China's Japan Policy" (Paper presented at an EAI Conference on "Contemporary China-Japan Relations: Conflict and Cooperation," Singapore, August 1, 2002).

³For analyses of the Sixteenth Party Congress, see Cheng Li and Lynn T. White, "The Sixteenth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party," *Asian Survey* 43, no. 4 (July/August 2003): 553-97.

⁴See Shambaugh, "The Dynamics of Elite Politics during the Jiang Era." Bachman also suggested that management of foreign affairs under Hu will be bureaucratized. See Bachman, "New Leaders, New Foreign Policymaking Procedures?" Lampton noted corporate plural-

fragmented authoritarianism characterized by Lieberthal.⁵ This development has continued and intensified under Hu. In addition to traditional players such as the core leader, the Politburo and its Standing Committee, LSGs, and the CMC, other institutions and players are exerting an increasingly important influence. They include more tangible players such as national ministries, advisers, and think tanks, and their influence is more or less institutionalized. They also include the less tangible element of public opinion which is playing a greater role partly due to the growing use of the Internet (see fig. 1).

This paper first examines the new Politburo and its Standing Committee, the LSGs, and the CMC, all of which supervise foreign policy. The article then discusses the roles of Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao (溫家寶), and other top leaders, relevant ministries, as well as think tanks, advisers, and public opinion. Finally, it discusses Hu's style of decision-making and external policies. The data come from interviews with well-informed mainland Chinese officials and scholars, directories, news reports, and scholarly publications.

Institutional Decision-making Bodies

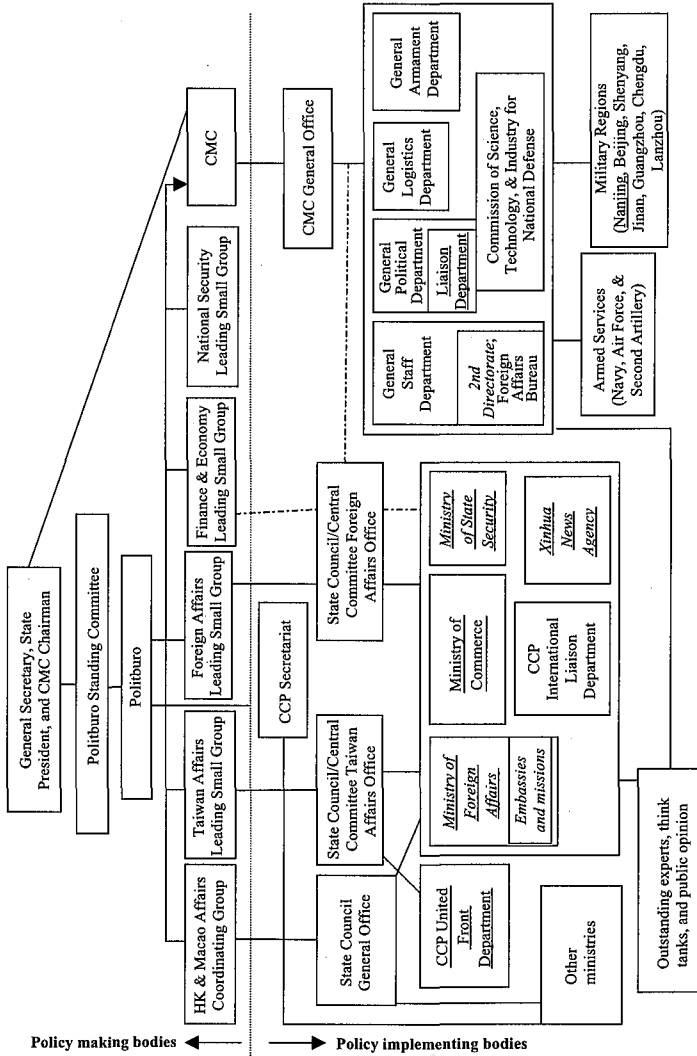
The Politburo and Its Standing Committee

Hu Jintao's unparalleled influence over external policy can be seen through his coordinating role in the Politburo and his leadership of the key decision-making organs such as the LSGs and the CMC. Hu's significant influence, however, is exercised in the context of an elaborate process involving a number of key organs and bureaucracies. Thus a core leader

ization and professionalization, as well as decentralization and globalization in Chinese policymaking process. See David M. Lampton, "China's Foreign and National Security Policy-Making Process," in Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, 1-38.

⁵Lampton also characterized pluralized decision-making as a bargaining process. For their views, see Kenneth Lieberthal, "Introduction," and David M. Lampton, "A Plum for a Peach," in *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China*, ed. Kenneth Lieberthal and David M. Lampton (Berkeley: University of California, 1992), 1-32, 33-58.

Figure 1
Chinese External Policy Making and Implementing Institutions



Notes: (1) Underlining indicates agencies also related to Taiwan and Hong Kong policies. (2) Italics indicate key information providers.

Table 1
Members of the Politburo Standing Committee Elected at the Sixteenth Party Congress (in Order of Official Rank)

Name	Current Posts	Duties/Power
Hu Jintao (胡锦涛)	State President, Party General Secretary, Chairman of CMC	Party; external affairs; military; and major economic policies
Wu Bangguo (吳邦國)	Chairman, National People's Congress Standing Committee	Legislature
Wen Jiabao (溫家寶)	Premier of the State Council	Administration; economic policy
Jia Qinglin (賈慶林)	Chairman, National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference	United front work; satellite parties and mass associations; religion; ethnic minorities; Taiwan; and overseas Chinese
Zeng Qinghong (曾慶紅)	State Vice President; Secretary, Party Central Committee Secretariat; President, Central Party School	Party building and organization; and Hong Kong and Macao affairs
Huang Ju (黃菊)	Executive Vice Premier of the State Council	Finance; manufacturing; transport; and state enterprises
Wu Guanzheng (吳官正)	Secretary, Party Central Commission for Discipline Inspection	Party discipline and anti-corruption
Li Changchun (李長春)	Propaganda chief	Ideology; media; and education
Luo Gan (羅幹)	Secretary, Party Central Commission for Politics and Law	Law enforcement and security

Sources: *China Directory 2003* (Tokyo: Radiopress, 2002); and Qiu Ping, *Disidai quan-zheng neimu* (Inside story of the power struggle of the fourth generation) (Hong Kong: Xiafeier chuban youxian gongsi, 2003).

exists side by side with institutional and public players. This coexistence, as will be discussed below, can be attributed in part to Hu's respect for institutions.

The Politburo is the highest decision-making body in China. It deliberates on the most important issues, including war and peace or major shifts in policy. It consists of top Party, administrative, legislative, military, "united front," and provincial leaders. Since the Sixteenth Congress, the Politburo has had twenty-four members and one alternate member (see tables 1 and 2). The previous Politburo as of September 2001 had twenty-

Table 2

Other Politburo Members Elected at the Sixteenth Party Congress

Name	Current Post	Name	Current Post
Wang Lequan (王樂泉)	Secretary, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regional Party Committee	Chen Liangyu (陳良宇)	Secretary, Shanghai Municipal Party Committee
Zhang Lichang (張立昌)	Secretary, Tianjin Municipal Party Committee	Yu Zhengsheng (俞正聲)	Secretary, Hubei Provincial Party Committee
Hui Liangyu (回良玉)	Vice Premier of the State Council	Zhang Dejiang (張德江)	Secretary, Guangdong Provincial Party Committee
Liu Qi (劉淇)	Secretary, Beijing Municipal Party Committee	He Guoqiang (賀國強)	Secretary, Party Central Committee Secretariat; Director, Party Central Committee Organization Department
Wu Yi (吳儀)	Vice Premier of the State Council (foreign and domestic trade; non-state business; markets)	Guo Boxiong (郭伯雄)	Vice Chairman of CMC
Liu Yunshan (劉雲山)	Secretary, Party Central Committee Secretariat; Director, Party Central Committee Propaganda Department	Cao Gangchuan (曹剛川)	Vice Chairman of CMC; Minister of Defense
Zhou Yongkang (周永康)	Public Security Minister	Zeng Peiyan (曾培炎)	Vice Premier of the State Council (planning, cities, and environment)
Wang Zhaoguo (王兆國)	Vice Chairman, National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference	Wang Gang (王剛, alternate member)	Secretary, Party Central Committee Secretariat; Director, Party Central Committee General Office

Sources: *China Directory 2003*; and Xia Nanfang, "Five New Changes in the High-Level Power Structure in China," *Fenghuang zhoukan* (Phoenix Weekly), no. 112 (June 2003): 20.

one members and two alternate members. The current Politburo is too large and too diverse to hold regular meetings (see table 2).

The Politburo Standing Committee (PSC) meets regularly to decide on foreign policies. Its membership has expanded from seven in 2002 to nine now. The Politburo and its Standing Committee make decisions based on proposals from the LSGs and the CMC. Members of the PSC as well

as the heads and deputy heads of these LSGs (especially Hu) may have a larger say over policies. Members of the Politburo and their duties are listed in tables 1 and 2. As the Party's general secretary, Hu has the largest say over the convening of the Politburo and the PSC as well as the agenda for meetings.

Leading Small Groups

As the Politburo and its Standing Committee are very busy with their own duties, the national center (i.e., the CCP Central Committee) has set up agencies to handle external affairs. Five LSGs fall into this category (see table 3): the CCP Central Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group (中共中央外事領導小組), the CCP Central Finance and Economy Leading Small Group (中共中央財經領導小組), the CCP Central Taiwan Affairs Leading Small Group (中共中央對台工作領導小組), the newly established CCP Central Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Coordinating Group (中共中央港澳工作協調小組), and the CCP Central National Security Leading Small Group (中共中央國家安全領導小組). The LSGs (and their offices) make day-to-day decisions and submit major decisions to the Politburo or its Standing Committee for approval.⁶ Reports suggest that the leadership and membership of the Foreign Affairs, Finance and Economy, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, and National Security LSGs have changed following the Sixteenth Party Congress. This appears to lend support to other reports that Jiang turned over leadership of the other LSGs to Hu soon after the Sixteenth Party Congress.

Apparently Hu started chairing all these LSGs except the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Coordinating Group soon after the Sixteenth Party Congress. In September 2004, Hu also took over the CMC chairmanship from Jiang. Hu's leadership over the LSGs related to external policies is line with Jiang's leadership over external policies between 1997 and 2002. This places Hu at the core of the Chinese leadership, the same key

⁶For earlier studies of LSGs, see Carol Lee Hamrin, "The Party Leadership System," in Lieberthal and Lampton, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China*, 95-124.

position that Jiang occupied during his tenure.

The Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group: This LSG is the most long-standing of all the groups dealing with foreign affairs. This LSG makes recommendations regarding foreign policy to the Politburo for ratification. In addition, it provides a forum for central Party leaders in charge of foreign affairs to meet with top Party, government, and military bureaucrats in this field, and even department-level officials, academic experts, and journalists. Hu Jintao apparently heads the LSG, with Premier Wen Jiabao serving as his deputy. Its members reportedly include State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan (唐家璇), Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing (李肇星), and Wang Jiarui (王家瑞), director of the Party Central Committee's International Liaison Department (ILD, 對外聯絡部).⁷ The lineup of the previous LSG suggests that the membership should also include Vice Premier Wu Yi (吳儀), who is in charge of foreign trade; Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan (曹剛川); State Security Minister Xu Yongyue (許永躍); Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai (薄熙來); Jiang Enzhu (姜恩柱), deputy director of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee; and Liu Huaqiu (劉華秋), director of the State Council Foreign Affairs Office (SCFAO, 國務院外事辦公室) (see table 3). The ministries and functional areas of these members are thus represented in the LSG.

Tang Jiaxuan has now taken over Qian Qichen's (錢其琛) role as the supervisor of China's external policy. Tang, who was born and educated in Shanghai, served as foreign minister between 1997 and early 2003. He was an envoy and eventually ambassador to Japan between 1988 and 1991 and can speak good English as well as fluent Japanese. A slow-speaking and modest diplomat, Tang was groomed by Qian, a retired and well-qualified leader in charge of foreign policy, to be his successor.

The State Council Foreign Affairs Office serves as the general office for the Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group. The SCFAO is responsible

⁷"Several Items of Jiang Zemin's Power Are Handed over and Hu Jintao Takes Command of Foreign Affairs, Finance and Economy, and Taiwan Small Groups," *Sing Pao Daily*, May 30, 2003.

Table 3

Lineups of CCP Central Leading Small Groups and the Central Military Commission

	Head	Deputy Head(s)	Members
Foreign Affairs	Hu Jintao	Wen Jiabao	Tang Jiaxuan, Wu Yi, Li Zhaoxing, Cao Gangchuan, Wang Jiarui, Xu Yongyue, Bo Xilai, Jiang Enzhu, Liu Huaqiu
Finance & Economy	Hu Jintao	Wen Jiabao	Huang Ju, Wu Yi, Zeng Peiyan, Hua Jianmin, Wang Chunzheng (deputy secretary-general)
National Security	Hu Jintao	Zeng Qinghong Wen Jiabao	Tang Jiaxuan, Xu Yongyue, Chen Yunlin, Zhou Yongkang, Wang Gang, Guo Boxiong, Liu Jing
Taiwan Affairs (official lineup)	Hu Jintao	Jia Qinglin	Guo Boxiong, Wang Gang, Tang Jiaxuan (secretary-general), Liu Yangdong, Wang Daohan, Chen Yunlin, Xu Yongyue, Xiong Guangkai
Hong Kong & Macao Affairs Corrdinating Group	Zeng Qinghong	Tang Jiaxuan Liao Hui	Huang Huahua, Sheng Huaren, Wu Yi, Ma Kai, Wang Gang, <i>Liu Yandong, Gao Siren, Chen Yunlin, Xu Yongyue, Zhou Yongkang, Bo Xilai, Zhang Chunxian, Mou Linsheng</i>
Central Military Commission (official lineup)	Hu Jintao	Guo Boxiong Cao Gangchuan Xu Caihou	Liang Guanglie, Liao Xilong, Li Jinai, Chen Bingde, Qiao Qingchen, Zhang Dingfa, Jing Zhiyuan

Note: Regular font indicates lineups reported by media and analysts outside mainland China; italics indicate possible candidates.

Sources: *China Directory 2005* (Tokyo: Radiopress, 2004); information supplied by David Shambaugh; Xia Nanfang, "Five New Changes in the High-Level Power Structure in China," *Fenghuang zhouban* (Phoenix Weekly), no. 112 (June 17, 2003): 20; "Mainland's New Team for Taiwan Policy Is Revealed," *Lianhe Zaobao* (United Morning Post), December 26, 2003; "Hu Jintao Replaces Jiang Zemin as the Director of National Security Leading Small Group," <http://www.boxun.com>, December 21, 2002 (accessed March 1, 2004); information posted at <http://www.chinanews.com.cn/subsite/yj16d/16-mindian.htm>; "After Adjustments at the Top Level in Beijing, Zeng Qinghong Takes Charge of Hong Kong Affairs," <http://www.chinesenewsweek.com/172/ChinaAffairs/17641.html> (*Duowei Weekly*, no. 172, September 10, 2003); Pan Xitang, "Where Is Article 23 Heading after the Large Demonstration in Hong Kong," National Security Report no. 092-310 (October 3, 2003, Taipei); and "Guangdong Governor Joins Central Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao Coordinating Group," <http://hk.news.yahoo.com/> (February 11, 2004).

for research, policy suggestions, and executive meetings of the LSG. It also supervises the execution of decisions taken at these meetings, drafts and examines certain national regulations on foreign affairs, handles reports to the LSG, and coordinates foreign affairs work. Headed by Liu Huaqiu, it has two deputy directors and six departmental-level (司局級, *siju ji*) chiefs. The SCFAO has some twenty-one staff members, mostly former officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The SCFAO has a Secretariat, an Administrative Department (headed by Li Dongdu 李東都), a Foreign Affairs Management Department (headed by Xing Jiarui 邢家瑞), and a Policy Research Department (headed by Gong Xiaosheng 宮小生). The SCFAO also carries the nameplate of the Party Central Foreign Affairs Office.

The Finance and Economy Leading Small Group: This LSG has jurisdiction over trade and economic ties, an increasingly important dimension of China's external relations. Hu Jintao has taken over the leadership of this LSG from Jiang, and Wen Jiabao serves as the deputy director. Reportedly, the members of the LSG include vice premiers Huang Ju (黃菊), Wu Yi, and Zeng Peiyan (曾培炎), as well as Hua Jianmin (華建敏), the secretary-general of the State Council. Hua probably continues to head a general office that provides staff support for this LSG. Wang Chunzheng (王春正) serves as a deputy secretary-general. Below the LSG are several bureaus. The two identified ones are the Financial and Economic Bureau and the Rural Bureau.⁸

The National Security Leading Small Group: This was reportedly established in October 2000, in the aftermath of the U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.⁹ The lineup of the LSG after the Sixteenth Party Congress reportedly consists of Hu Jintao (head), Vice President Zeng Qinghong (曾慶紅) (executive deputy), and Premier Wen Jiabao

⁸ Ibid. Also see Zong Hairen, *Disidai—China's New Leaders: The Fourth Generation* (Hong Kong: Mirror Books, 2002).

⁹ Shambaugh, "The Dynamics of Elite Politics during the Jiang Era." An analyst in Beijing, who had close links with and good knowledge of China's national security institutions, hinted at the existence of the leading small group in a conversation with this author in September 2003.

(deputy). Members include State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan; State Security Minister Xu Yongyue; Chen Yunlin (陳雲林), director of the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office; Public Security Minister Zhou Yongkang (周永康); Wang Gang (王剛), director of the Party Central Committee General Office; Guo Boxiong (郭伯雄), vice chairman of the CMC; and Liu Jing (劉京), director of the State Council Office for Preventing and Handling Evil Cults (國務院防範和處理邪教問題辦公室; or the so-called "601 Office"). The National Security LSG may rely on the SCFAO for staff support. No detailed reports are available regarding the division of labor between the National Security and Foreign Affairs LSGs.

Reportedly, this LSG manages national security crises, both domestic and international. It makes vital decisions, manages major external crises, and influences China's external relations and orientation. The LSG is responsible for collecting and processing information regarding national security; proposing diplomatic, military, economic, scientific, and technological policies; coordinating the PLA and the MFA and other ministries; and supervising the implementation of national security strategies.¹⁰ The lineup of the LSG suggests that it is primarily concerned with the following issues of national security: economic security (overseen by Wen Jiabao), military events (supervised by Guo Boxiong), Taiwan (managed daily by Chen Yunlin), Hong Kong (overseen by Zeng Qinghong), public security (Zhou Yongkang), state security (Xu Yongyue), and Falun Gong (法輪功) and religious protests (Liu Jing).

The China-U.S. spy plane crisis of April 2001 and the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States are the two most recent examples of issues in which the LSG was involved. Its role is controversial even among senior Chinese officials, and one well-informed Chinese analyst has questioned its effectiveness in formulating policies.¹¹

¹⁰"Hu Jintao Replaces Jiang Zemin as Director of National Security Leading Small Group," <http://www.boxun.com>, December 21, 2002 (accessed March 1, 2004); and Yang Kai-huang, "Chinese Communist 'National Security Leading Small Group': A Preliminary Analysis," <http://www.winwinfree.com>, July 3, 2002.

¹¹Interview with a military analyst in Beijing, September 2003.

The Taiwan Affairs Leading Small Group: Since Taiwan factors heavily in China's external relations, this LSG is worth closer examination.¹² The official lineup has also been made public. Hu Jintao is the director; and Jia Qinglin (賈慶林), chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC, 政協), serves as his deputy. The other members are Guo Boxiong (CMC vice chairman), State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan, Wang Gang (director of the Party Central Committee General Office), Liu Yandong (劉延東) (director of the Party Central Committee United Front Work Department), Wang Daohan (汪道涵) (chairman of the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait, 海峽兩岸關係協會), Chen Yunlin (CCP Taiwan Affairs Office director), Minister of State Security Xu Yongyue, and the deputy chief of the PLA General Staff Xiong Guangkai (熊光楷).¹³ Understandably, these members represent the views and interests of their own institutions. In addition, Hu's chairmanship of the CMC and Xiong's military position suggest that they will represent the military's interests to varying extents.

The changes in the composition of this LSG are as follows. First, Wang Gang's inclusion is new, signifying the growing role of the Party leadership (especially Hu) in Taiwan affairs. Second, the top supervisor of foreign affairs—previously Qian Qichen and now Tang Jiaxuan—no longer serves as the deputy director. Instead, Jia Qinglin, a Politburo Standing Committee member and chairman of the CPPCC, serves as deputy director and Tang is secretary-general. This signifies a greater emphasis on a united front approach and an effort to win over the people of Taiwan.

The CCP Central Taiwan Affairs Office (中共中央台灣工作辦公室) serves as the general office of the Taiwan Affairs LSG, as the SCFAO does for the Foreign Affairs LSG. Similar to the SCFAO, the CCP Central

¹²For a study of Beijing's Taiwan policymaking in earlier years, see Wei Tsai, "The Making of Taiwan Policy in Mainland China: Structure and Process," *Issues & Studies* 33, no. 9 (September 1997): 1-30. For a study of Beijing's Taiwan policy in the recent years until early 2003, see Yun-han Chu, "Power Transition and the Making of Beijing's Policy towards Taiwan," *The China Quarterly*, no. 176 (December 2003): 960-80.

¹³"Mainland's New Team for Taiwan Policy Is Revealed," *Lianhe Zaobao* (United Morning Post) (Singapore), December 26, 2003.

Taiwan Affairs Office also carries a governmental nameplate, namely the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office (國務院台灣事務辦公室).

The Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Coordinating Group (HKMACG): After the handover of Hong Kong from the United Kingdom to China in July 1997, this group, under the leadership of the Foreign Affairs LSG, ceased to operate. Day-to-day work relating to Hong Kong and Macao was managed by the State Council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office (HKMAO, 港澳事務辦公室), and Tang Jiaxuan supervised Hong Kong and Macao affairs after the Sixteenth Party Congress. China's Hong Kong policies, however, suffered from bureaucratic paralysis for two reasons. First, Tang's rank was the same as that of Liao Hui (廖暉), director of the HKMAO, who is also a vice chairman of the CPPCC, meaning that Tang lacked the status to coordinate the work of the Office. Second, in addition to the HKMAO, the Hong Kong Branch of the Xinhua News Agency (新華通訊社香港分社, or the Central Liaison Office, 中聯辦) also operates in Hong Kong. These two parallel agencies overseeing Hong Kong policies were not well coordinated.¹⁴

After the July 1, 2003 demonstration in Hong Kong, the CCP became worried that the "one country, two systems" (一國兩制) arrangement would fail and that unification of Taiwan with the mainland would thus be obstructed. It therefore elevated the status of this group to the equivalent of the Taiwan Affairs LSG. Vice President Zeng Qinghong reportedly heads this group. Zeng, a former associate of Jiang Zemin, did not hesitate to change Jiang's Hong Kong policy after his departure. This is revealed in the stepping down of Tung Chee-hwa (董建華) in 2005, which will be discussed in detail below. Zeng is assisted by Tang Jiaxuan and Liao Hui. Reportedly, members of the group include Wu Yi, who supervises external economic affairs, as well as Governor Huang Huahua of Guangdong

¹⁴Shi Yiming, "The CCP Adjusts Its Work toward Hong Kong after the July 1 Large Demonstration," *Work Report on the Mainland* (Taipei), August 13, 2003; and reports in *Sing Pao Daily News*, published in Hong Kong on July 24 and July 31, 2003. For a study of China's Hong Kong policymaking in the earlier years, see Kam Yiu-yu, "Decision-Making and Implementation of Policy toward Hong Kong," in Hamrin and Zhao, *Decision-Making in Deng's China*, 101-10.

(廣東省省長黃華華) who represents Guangdong in forging closer ties with Hong Kong and Macao. The HKMACG thus gathers together the heads of offices handling Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan affairs, public and state security ministers, as well as ministers overseeing external economic affairs (see table 3). The aim is to strengthen economic ties between the mainland and Hong Kong and assist with Hong Kong's economic recovery, step up united front and national security work, and ensure the integrity of the Hong Kong Basic Law.

Central Military Commission: When an external event involves the military, the CMC will also meet and make a decision. The CMC follows the principle of personal responsibility and entrusts its chairman with sole leadership. It arranges meetings, and can appoint personnel from the PLA bureaucracy to form special ad hoc working groups and committees to make policy recommendations. In 1999, for example, the CMC held meetings to discuss responses to the U.S. bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade and Lee Teng-hui's (李登輝) proclaimed "special state-to-state" relations between Taiwan and China.¹⁵

In September 2004, Jiang Zemin surprised many observers by passing his chairmanship of the CMC to Hu Jintao. This marked the completion of the power succession and the installation of Hu at the core of the Chinese leadership with a predominant influence over external policies. Xu Caihou (徐才厚), the former director of the PLA General Political Department (總政治部) and a member of the CMC at that time, was promoted to vice chairman, alongside the incumbents Guo Boxiong and Cao Gangchuan. Commission members include the PLA Chief of General Staff Department (GSD) Liang Guanglie (梁光烈); Liao Xilong (廖錫龍), director of the PLA General Logistics Department (總後勤部); and Li Jinai (李繼耐), director of the PLA General Political Department (GPD). There are also four new members: Chen Bingde (陳炳德), director of the PLA General Armament Department (總裝備部); Qiao Qingchen (喬清晨),

¹⁵Tai Ming Cheung, "The Influence of the Gun," in Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, 74; and Zong Hairen, *Zhu Rongji zai 1999* (Zhu Rongji in 1999) (Hong Kong: Mirror Books, 2001), 91, 105-6.

commander of the PLA Air Force; Zhang Dingfa (張定發), commander of the PLA Navy; and Jing Zhiyuan (靖志遠), commander of the PLA Second Artillery Corps. The new CMC not only represents all the general departments, as it did before, but it also gives representation to each arm of the services. After the Sixteenth Party Congress (around the beginning of 2004), Jia Ting'an (賈廷安) became the director of the CMC General Office.¹⁶

Policy-Implementing Institutions

Once external policies are formulated by Hu Jintao, the other national leaders, and the leading agencies, the task of policy implementation falls on the national ministries and departments as well as their local branches. Yet the latter also have a certain input into policymaking. Given the limited space in this paper, only the national bureaucracy will be discussed here. National ministries, especially the MFA, appear to have retained their influence over foreign policy. A few institutions, especially the Ministry of Commerce (商務部) and the Secretariat (書記處) of the CCP Central Committee, have witnessed changes and their influence may thus have waned.

The Secretariat and the General Office of the CCP Central Committee

The Secretariat is responsible for making detailed plans, overseeing the actual implementation of policy, and directly supervising the central Party bureaucracies.¹⁷ The General Office of the CCP Central Committee, the standing institution for the Secretariat, may be directly involved in the day-to-day details of matters under the Secretariat's jurisdiction.

¹⁶*China Directory 2005* (Tokyo: Radiopress, 2004), 179; information posted at <http://www.chinanews.com.cn> (accessed January 19, 2003); and "Director of Jiang's Office Jia Ting'an Is Promoted as Director of General Office of CMC," <http://www.chinesenewsnet.com> on January 1, 2004 (accessed January 22, 2004).

¹⁷Lu Ning, "The Central Leadership, Supraministry Coordinating Bodies, State Council Ministries, and Party Departments," in Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, 43.

The Secretariat has seven members, all of whom are new except Zeng Qinghong. Including alternate member Wang Gang, five members also serve on the Politburo; only one of these, namely Zeng, is a member of the Politburo Standing Committee. Only Zeng, Zhou Yongkang, and Wang Gang are members of the external policy LSGs. In comparison, all seven members of the previous Secretariat, including Zeng who was an alternate member, served on the Politburo, and two of them, Hu Jintao and Wei Jianxing (尉健行), were Standing Committee members. The Secretariat's clout in policy in general and foreign policy in particular thus appears to have declined significantly.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The MFA remains the most important implementer of foreign policy. One of its major roles is to translate broad policy guidelines or long-term goals into practical policy choices and implementation plans. The MFA does also have a policymaking role, mainly in relation to minor states and within the guidelines of regional policy. The MFA is responsible for issuing policy clearance to ministerial-level bureaucracies in matters concerning sensitive countries.¹⁸ The new minister of foreign affairs is Li Zhaoxing. He was known for his tough stance in countering criticism of China during his ambassadorship to the United States. Nevertheless, in recent months, he appears to have moderated his hard-line approach and has become more skillful in managing public relations. Now many diplomatic initiatives, such as the China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement, involve a number of ministries. Endowed with the most able and best-informed officials in foreign affairs, the MFA plays an enhanced role in coordinating ministries and agencies.

Ministry of Commerce

Premier Wen introduced changes in the ministries of the State Council, and as a result, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-

¹⁸Ibid., 50-51; and Lu, *The Dynamics of Foreign-Policy Decisionmaking in China*, 175.

operation (MOFTEC, 對外貿易經濟合作部) was incorporated into the newly-formed Ministry of Commerce (MOC). This ministry is in charge of formulating, studying, and implementing China's policies, strategies, reports, planning, and negotiations regarding foreign trade, external co-operation, and foreign aid. Since these matters belong to the category of "low politics" and are less sensitive than security issues and political relations, the MOC may have a high degree of discretion. It is now headed by Bo Xilai, a son of the veteran leader Bo Yibo (薄一波) and a former mayor of Dalian (大連) who is credited with achieving the rapid and flashy development of the city during his incumbency. With a portfolio that includes both domestic and external commerce, Bo's attention to external affairs may be more limited than that of the former head of MOFTEC.¹⁹

International Liaison Department

The ILD manages the CCP's relations with other communist parties around the world, particularly in North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba. It has contacts with and a small amount of influence over policies toward overseas non-communist political parties. The director of the ILD is Wang Jiarui, a former mayor of Qingdao (青島). The ILD is trying to retain its relevancy in external affairs by building up its research capacity and by engaging various non-communist parties around the world. Now officials at the ILD fall into two types—those who receive guests and those who analyze foreign countries. Many of the latter hold degrees in international relations from top universities in China.²⁰

The People's Liberation Army

At the Fifteenth Party Congress in 1997, Jiang Zemin established his authority within the Party and the military. The military has now lost its seat on the Politburo Standing Committee, thus signifying the institutionalization of civilian control over the military and its reduced influence over

¹⁹Information posted at <http://www.mofcom.gov.cn> (accessed January 22, 2004).

²⁰Interview with an ILD official, January 2004.

external policies. Nevertheless, two of the twenty-four Politburo members (or the eighteen resident Politburo members) are from the PLA. They are Guo Boxiong and Cao Gangchuan (CMC vice chairmen). The PLA has one seat on the Foreign Affairs LSG (Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan); one seat on the National Security LSG (Guo Boxiong); and two seats on the Taiwan Affairs LSG, held by Guo and deputy chief of the GSD Xiong Guangkai. Since Hu took over the CMC chairmanship from Jiang in September 2004, he has played a dual role. As state president and Party general secretary, he is the highest ranking leader and the only civilian leader on the CMC. He therefore exercises leadership over the military on behalf of the Party and the civilian components of the state, while also representing the military in major state affairs and external policies.

Cross-Strait relations have become a top priority for the PLA since the early 1990s, and this is reflected in its holding two seats on the Taiwan Affairs LSG. The military's influence over other external policies may be less important. The PLA's role in foreign policy is based on its sectoral interests, such as budget, intelligence, arms purchases and exports, Taiwan, and possible threats from China's periphery, including the Korean Peninsula, a re-armed Japan, the South China Sea, and Central Asia.²¹

Ministry of State Security

The minister of state security (currently Xu Yongyue) is a member of the Foreign Affairs and Taiwan Affairs LSGs. The ministry now appears to have gained a new seat on the HKMACG. The MSS is the Chinese counterpart of the CIA and FBI. Its main tasks are counter-espionage, intelligence gathering, and analysis aimed at safeguarding the state from enemy spies and dissidents. It has seventeen bureaus and one office. According to one report, the Second Bureau covers foreign countries, and the

²¹Cheung, "The Influence of the Gun," 74. For a brief analysis of the military's view on major national security issues, see Ellis Joffe, "The Military and China's New Politics: Trends and Counter-Trends," in *The People's Liberation Army in the Information Age*, ed. James C. Mulvenon and Richard H. Yang (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1999), 37-39.

Third Bureau Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan.²²

Xinhua News Agency

This plays two roles: publicizing and clarifying China's foreign policy inside and outside China and collecting valuable information for the leadership. In the latter role, it informs central leaders about the implementation of China's foreign policy, and in recent years Xinhua may have become a more important supplier of information and feedback on China's foreign policy from the outside world. Tian Congming (田聰明), a former director of the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (國家廣播電影電視總局), has served as the president of the agency since 2000.

Policy Advice and Information Channels

One integral part of policymaking is policy research and the processing of information.²³ Key think tanks and advisers fall into three categories. The first consists of personal secretaries of top leaders and internal policy research units within the LSGs, the MFA, the ILD, and other relevant ministries. Secretaries probably play a significant role in providing leaders with information and advice.²⁴ Specialized internal researchers can be found in the LSGs and ministries. The SCFAO and (probably) the National Security LSG share a Policy Research Department. Headed by Gong Xiaosheng since 1998, this department researches on major international issues and the implementation of foreign policies and passes on its sugges-

²²For information on the MSS, see postings <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query> (June 24, 2002) and <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/china/mss/org.htm> (June 24, 2002).

²³For an earlier study of research centers, see Nina Halpern, "Information Flows and Policy Coordination in the Chinese Bureaucracy," in Lieberthal and Lampton, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China*, 125-50.

²⁴Interview with an informed scholar from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, February 2004. For an earlier and in-depth study of the topic, see Wei Li and Lucian Pye, "The Ubiquitous Role of the *Mishu* in Chinese Politics," *The China Quarterly*, no. 132 (December 1992): 913-36.

tions.²⁵ Other LSGs may have their own units.

The MFA has its Department of Policy Planning (政策研究司). With about fifty staff members, the department has seven sections, covering strategy, diplomatic history, diplomatic history study, situation analysis, economics, research coordination, and comprehensive affairs. Under the leadership of Cui Tiankai (崔天凱), the department became a useful unit for policy research and information processing on behalf of the MFA and the Party. Now the department is headed by Du Qiwen (杜起文), as Cui has become the director of the MFA's Asian Affairs Department.²⁶ Major regional departments of the MFA, such as those covering Asia, North America, and Western Europe, are believed to have their own substantial research units.²⁷

The ILD also has notable research capacity covering various parts of the world. The junior officials of the ILD are mostly researchers or interpreters/reception officers who receive the ministry's official guests. These researchers also serve in the China Association for International Friendly Contact (CAIFC, 中國國際友好聯絡會).²⁸

The second category of advice-givers consists of ministry-affiliated think tanks. The most effective of these are: (1) the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS, 中國國際問題研究所) under the MFA; (2) the China Institute for Contemporary International Relations (CICIR, 中國現代國際關係研究所) under the MSS; and (3) the CAIFC under the ILD.²⁹

²⁵Xinhua, ed., *Kuashiji Zhongguo zhengfu jigou minglu* (Directory of Chinese government departments and agencies at the turn of the century) (Hong Kong: Takungpao, 1999), 231; and *China Directory 2002* (Tokyo: Radiopress, 2001), 28.

²⁶*China Directory 2005*, 53.

²⁷Interview with an official who worked at the Department of Policy Planning, February 9, 2004.

²⁸Interview with an ILD official, January 2004.

²⁹For a good historical and overall analysis of major international relations think tanks in China, see David Shambaugh, "China's International Relations Think Tanks: Evolving Structure and Process," *The China Quarterly*, no. 171 (September 2002): 575-96; for a discussion on the role and activities of China's think tanks, see Bonnie Glasser and Phillip Saunders, "Chinese Civilian Foreign Policy Research Institutes: Evolving Roles and Increasing Influence," *ibid.*, 597-616.

On the military side, think tanks include the following: (1) the China Institute of International Strategic Studies (CIISS, 中國國際戰略學會) under the Second (Intelligence) Directorate of the GSD of the PLA; (2) the Center for Peace and Development Studies of the CAIFC that is affiliated with the Liaison Directorate of the GPD of the PLA; (3) the Strategic Research Institute and the International Relations Teaching and Research Office at the National Defense University (國防大學); and (4) the Strategic Research Department at the Academy of Military Sciences (軍事科學院).³⁰

The third category of think tanks can be considered as academic. These institutes include the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS, 中國社會科學院) (although this is under the direct leadership of the State Council), the Shanghai Institute for International Studies (SIIS), as well as the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. While CASS scholars are frequently consulted by the MFA, the MSS, the PLA, the LSGs, or the General Office of the CCP Central Committee, the SIIS likewise conducts both academic and policy-related analyses. As recently as early 2004, the SIIS was still able to channel its opinions to the central government.³¹

While many of the previously mentioned somewhat secretive think tanks affiliated with central bureaucracies are engaged in analyzing short-term issues, the CICIR and the institutes at the CASS research on longer-term issues. Experts, especially those in Beijing, exert a certain influence. They are invited to workshops to prepare officials for upcoming major international events and some of their reports and analyses may be read by leaders, including ministers and Politburo members. Scholars with original and highly sensible proposals may catch the attention of central leaders.³²

³⁰For discussion on military think tanks, see Bates Gill and James Mulvenon, "Chinese Military-Related Think Tanks and Research Institutes," *The China Quarterly*, no. 171 (September 2002): 617-24; *China Directory 2002*, 174-75; and Swaine, *The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policymaking*, 64-65, 68.

³¹Conversation with scholars from the SIIS, January 2004.

³²Interview with a CASS analyst on international relations who has experienced the process, October 2002.

In addition, agencies in charge of foreign policy and key ministry-related think tanks consult experts regularly. The General Office of the CCP Central Committee, the LSGs, the military, and think tanks such as the CIIS and CICIR now and then invite top experts from their own and other think tanks, CASS, and the universities (chiefly Beijing, Tsinghua [清華], and People's universities) to meetings and solicit their opinions on international affairs or particular issues. Academically-reputed, well-informed, and insightful scholars are placed on a regular list of invitees of these institutions, whereas scholars known to lack useful insights may be invited less frequently. The opinions of these experts are summarized and serve as a reference for decision-making.³³

Important information channels for top leaders are the MFA and the Xinhua News Agency, followed by other bureaucracies including the PLA general departments. The MFA usually processes information before supplying it to the leaders. Central leaders tend to favor the MFA's policy recommendations and opinions over those from other bureaucracies. In 1999, the MFA had 140 diplomatic missions overseas which could cable central leaders directly. Those cables ranged from brief reports on specific cases to research papers generated by the missions' own research sections.

Public Opinion

China in the reform decades has witnessed the passing of dominant leaders such as Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping and the rise of multiple players in the decision-making process. Meanwhile, although the top level of the Party has retained its ability to impose its policies on cadres and the populace, its power has waned considerably, especially compared with the Mao era. This has allowed public opinion to take an increasing role in

³³Interview with a Chinese scholar who is familiar with the consultation process, February 2004. Many overseas observers are too attentive to outspoken Chinese analysts. Careful analyses of their remarks and subsequent policies often suggest a noticeable gap, evidence of their lack of influence on actual policies.

external policymaking.³⁴ Two questions thus emerge. First, who among the public has a larger say in external policymaking? Second, how do these influential groups express their views on external policy?

Highly-educated Chinese are more interested in politics and tend to think more independently. These include academics, college students, engineers, managers of state-owned enterprises, as well as employees of Party and government agencies and public institutions (cadres, officials, journalists, clerks at presses, etc.). The former groups are more likely to challenge official external policy than the latter. They can be regarded as key public opinion groups in China's external policy. Urban blue-collar workers may be moderately interested in external policy; peasants, who constitute a majority of the population, are less likely to be interested in external issues and have little influence on external policy.

The more influential group above is more likely to have access to the Internet and other non-official sources of information. With certain restrictions and a degree of caution, highly-educated Chinese can also voice their opinions through formal, semi-formal, and informal channels, including TV interviews, letters to the press, phone calls to government offices, posters in public venues, or Internet postings. Increasingly, Internet chat-rooms or popular websites have become an inexpensive, convenient, anonymous, relatively safe, and highly visible place for them to voice their views. Finally, the above group can even circulate jokes, ditties, catch phrases, or rumors satirizing policymakers, and, more importantly, stage protests in the street.

China-Japan relations provide probably the best illustration of the influence of public opinion on foreign policy. The few available surveys

³⁴For a study of the role of public opinion in China in the 1990s, see Joseph Fewsmith and Stanley Rosen, "The Domestic Context of Chinese Foreign Policy: Does 'Public Opinion' Matter?" in Lampton, *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform*, 151-90; Allen Whiting, "Chinese Nationalism and Foreign Policy after Deng," *The China Quarterly*, no. 142 (June 1995): 295-316; and Stanley Rosen, "Public Opinion and Reform in the People's Republic of China," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 23, no. 2/3 (Summer-Autumn 1989): 153-70. For a case study of how public opinion affected foreign policy in China's WTO accession, see Hongyi Harry Lai, "Behind China's World Trade Organization Agreement with the U.S.," *Third World Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (2001): 237-55.

reveal an astonishing degree of Chinese enmity against Japan. In 2002, on the thirtieth anniversary of the normalization of Sino-Japanese ties, one Chinese newspaper survey found that only 5.9 percent of its respondents had warm feelings about Japan, while 47.6 percent had neutral feelings and 43.3 percent were negative.³⁵ Continued visits by Japan's leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine and other controversial acts by individual Japanese have stirred up strong public outrage in China. This overwhelmingly negative public opinion about Japan has compelled China's new leaders to take a strong stance on the issue of Japan's interpretation of its recent history and to treat Tokyo coolly. Neither Hu Jintao nor Wen Jiabao has visited Japan since they assumed their current posts. Nor do they appear to be ready to accept any visit from the Japanese prime minister.

Hu's Circle and His Political Style

Hu Jintao now leads four of the five important leading small groups related to external policies—the Foreign Affairs, Taiwan Affairs, Finance and Economy, and National Security LSGs. Since September 2004, he has also chaired the CMC. Hu has thus become the first among equals in the new Chinese leadership. Even Jiang Zemin referred to Hu as the head (班長, *banzhang*) of the new leadership team. Since his retirement in September 2004, Jiang appears to have withdrawn completely from the public scene. He did not attend the NPC session in March 2005 that formally approved his resignation and elected Hu as his successor. Unlike Li Peng (李鵬) and Zhu Rongji (朱鎔基), Jiang was not even listed as a recipient of the Party's Chinese New Year greetings in 2005.³⁶

Hu has furthered his influence by forging an alliance with the administrative branch led by Premier Wen Jiabao. An informed source suggests

³⁵"Miscellaneous Talks across Five Continents—Why Japan Leaves No Good Impression," <http://japan.people.com.cn>, December 19, 2002 (accessed January 18, 2004).

³⁶"Central Leading Comrades Visit or Pass Well Wishes to Li Peng and Other Senior Comrades," <http://www.XINHUANET.com> (February 5, 2005).

that Hu would like Premier Wen to play a prominent role in foreign affairs through his administrative leadership over the MFA. Hu and Wen are similar in several ways. They were born in the same year, they both worked in Gansu Province (甘肅省) for fourteen years, they were transferred back to Beijing in 1982, and they are both low-key operators who opt for policies that are effective rather than merely showy.³⁷ Up to the present, Hu and Wen have enjoyed better relations than any other Party secretary and premier in the history of the People's Republic of China.

By entrusting Premier Wen with more power in conducting diplomacy, Hu has essentially enhanced the role of existing administrative agencies (such as the MFA and the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office) in external policies. Wen currently serves as deputy head of both the Foreign Affairs and the Finance and Economy LSGs, arguably the two most important LSGs involved in foreign affairs. In the months after the Sixteenth Party Congress, Premier Wen's involvement in China's external affairs and the number of his high-profile trips abroad were second only to President Hu's. For example, Wen attended an ASEAN summit on severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in Bangkok and paid an important visit to the United States. Wen's performance during these tours was excellent, paving the way for his assumption of legitimate place in the conduct of China's diplomacy.

Among the top leaders, Wu Guanzheng (吳官正), the secretary of the Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (中央紀律檢查委員會), is reportedly a friend of Hu's from their Tsinghua University days. Hu's circle in Beijing may include old associates from Tsinghua University, the Communist Youth League (共青團), and from his tenures in Tibet (西藏), Guizhou (貴州), and Gansu, as well as more recent acquaintances from the Central Party School. However, this circle may be fluid and flexible. Those former Youth League associates with a hand in external policies include Liu Yandong, director of the United Front Department; Dai Bingguo (戴秉國); and Cai Wu (蔡武), who is executive deputy foreign minister

³⁷For an insider's in-depth analysis of the Hu-Wen relations, see Zong, *Disidai*, 57-58, 148-50.

and the likely deputy director of the ILD. Hu's political circle may also include Ling Jihua (令計劃), deputy director of the General Office of the Party Central Committee and Hu's long-time political secretary, as well as Liao Xilong, Hu's associate during his tenure in Tibet.³⁸

Some scholars propose factionalism as a model for analyzing Chinese politics, especially in domestic issues.³⁹ However, foreign policymaking under Hu has not borne such a strong factionalist tinge as it did under his predecessor. Perhaps one key reason is that many of Hu's hand-picked protégés are still provincial leaders who do not serve on the Politburo and thus do not participate in foreign policymaking at the national level. Another reason is that Hu is said to be trying to avoid the impression that he is forming and relying on his own private circle, whereas Jiang promoted many of his former associates and came to rely on them during his tenure as Party general secretary. Hu tends to emphasize institutional representation in decision-making, and he tries to draw related agencies into the deliberation circle.⁴⁰ There are probably two reasons for this. First, he is trying to distinguish himself from Jiang and earn the support of officials and leaders who disliked Jiang's undisguised reliance on his own circle. Second, Hu, who has worked in the central Party apparatus for over a decade, has got into the habit of relying on institutions.

Several members of the Politburo Standing Committee worked closely with Jiang Zemin in the past, or were even hand-picked by him. They include Wu Bangguo, Jia Qinglin, Zeng Qinghong, Huang Ju, and to a lesser extent, Li Changchun (李長春). In the area of external policies, Zeng Qinghong reportedly serves as deputy head of the National Security

³⁸For discussion of Hu's circle, see Qiu Ping, *Disidai quanzheng neimu* (Inside story of the power struggle of the fourth generation) (Hong Kong: Xiafeier chuban youxian gongsi, 2003). Information on Hu's sources of advice on external policy comes also from my interview with an expert informed about China's circle of national security policy, December 2003.

³⁹See, for example, Andrew Nathan, "A Factionalism Model for CCP Politics," *The China Quarterly*, no. 53 (January-March 1973): 33-66; and Jonathan Unger, ed., *The Nature of Chinese Politics: From Mao to Jiang* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2002). This book contains many insightful articles from *The China Journal* as well as new articles on the topic.

⁴⁰Interview with a Chinese scholar who was well-informed about China's foreign policy, February 2004.

LSG and the head of HKMACG, and Jia Qinglin is deputy head of the Taiwan Affairs LSG. Other former associates of Jiang include Zeng Pei-yan, a member of the Finance and Economy LSG; Wang Gang, director of the General Office of the Party Central Committee; Liu Huaqiu, director of the State Council Foreign Affairs Office; Hua Jianmin, director of the Office of the Finance and Economy LSG; He Guoqiang (賀國強), the director of the Party's Organization Department; and Wang Huning (王滄寧), director of the Party Policy Research Office.⁴¹ Since Jiang's complete resignation from all his important posts, his influence has apparently waned. Although some speculate that Jiang's influence may persist through the above-mentioned associates, one significant trend is developing. That is, Jiang's associates are adopting the most rational strategy open to them and starting to shift their allegiance to the new "core leader" Hu Jintao. For example, Zeng Qinghong, speaking to the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in September 2004, declared that Hu's assumption of the CMC chairmanship four days previously was good for the Party's leadership over the military and for military modernization and reform. Zeng has also significantly modified Jiang's Hong Kong policy in line with Hu's pragmatic and proactive style. At the NPC session in March 2005, during which Hu Jintao was formally elected chairman of the State CMC, Wu Bangguo publicly stated that Hu's assumption of the chairmanship fulfilled public expectations. Wu also lavished praise on the achievements under Hu's leadership since the Sixteenth Party Congress.⁴²

⁴¹ For discussion on Jiang's trusted right-hand men, see Shi Jian and Hu Nan, *Jiang Zemin xiyou ji* (Jiang Zemin's journey to the United States) (Hong Kong: Mirror Books, 1998), 102-4, 106-11.

⁴² "Zeng Qinghong Says That Hu Jintao Taking Charge of the Military Is Conducive to the CCP's Leadership of the Military," *Lianhe Zaobao*, September 23, 2004; and "Wu Bangguo Says Hu Jintao's Assumption of the Chairman of the State Military Commission Is to Realize Public Wishes," <http://cn.news.yahoo.com/050314/72/29vxw.html> (March 14, 2005). For a detailed and informative analysis of the politics of Hu's succession, see Hongyi Lai, *Hu-Wen quan toushi: Hu-Wen shizheng neimu quan jiedu ji Zhongguo weilai zhanwang* (Hu-Wen under full scrutiny: a comprehensive inside story of governance under Hu and Wen and prospects for the future of China) (Hong Kong: Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 2005, forthcoming).

Hu and Wen also pay greater attention to public discussion of policies. They have revealed that they regularly surf the web, meaning they are able to access news, commentaries, and discussions concerning international affairs on Chinese websites, primarily in mainland China, Singapore, Hong Kong, and likely Taiwan and North America. This suggests that news outlets and postings on the Internet may become an increasingly important source of information for Chinese leaders.

Hu has demonstrated a new style of pragmatic and proactive external policies. While Jiang emphasized political appearances in diplomacy and yet lacked creative diplomatic initiatives, Hu tends to emphasize the real effects of external policy; he can also be proactive and flexible and introduce new initiatives when circumstances call for them. Hu's new style is exemplified by China's mediation of the Korean nuclear crisis, his management of the Taiwan issue during 2003 and 2004, and the recent replacement of the Hong Kong chief administrator.⁴³

In late 2002 and January 2003, North Korea reactivated its nuclear facilities and withdrew from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Alarmed, the United States and Japan started preparations to take military action against North Korea. With China's mediation, North Korea, the United States, and China held tripartite talks in Beijing in April 2003. The talks broke down later that month, but in order to prevent the crisis from deteriorating into military confrontation, Hu took a high-profile and active stance in managing the crisis in July and August. He dispatched his deputy foreign ministers, Dai Bingguo and Wang Yi (王毅), to Pyongyang and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing to Washington. In August, China hosted another round of talks, and this time the original three parties were joined by South Korea, Japan, and Russia. These were successful in preventing a deterioration of the crisis at that time.⁴⁴

⁴³For a detailed analysis and assessment of Hu-Wen external and domestic policies, see Lai, *Hu-Wen quan toushi*.

⁴⁴For a discussion on reasons for the Chinese active intervention in the North Korean nuclear crisis, see Hongyi Lai, "China's Low-key Diplomacy in the Korean Crisis Hardly Scores Points," *Lianhe Zaobao*, May 6, 2003, 14. *Lianhe Zaobao*, a Chinese newspaper published in Singapore, is accessible on the Internet in mainland China. This commentary suggested

During his election campaign in early 2004, President Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) of Taiwan proposed to amend the constitution and to hold a referendum on China's deployment of missiles against Taiwan and cross-Strait ties. In the past, Beijing had reacted strongly, and even hawkishly, to similar moves that it perceived as edging toward Taiwan's *de jure* independence, and it was adamantly against foreign intervention in cross-Strait affairs. During the presidential campaign of 1996, Beijing carried out missile tests near Taiwan as a warning to pro-independence voters, and on the eve of the next election in 2000, Premier Zhu Rongji of China again issued stern warnings to supporters of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, 民主進步黨). However, in 2004, Beijing's management of the situation was more subtle and skillful. Beijing voiced its criticism and concerns over Chen's proposals in public, yet refrained from any provocative moves. Instead, Beijing asked Washington to restrain Taiwan from behind the scenes. Although the proposed referendum was held, unlike in 1996 there was neither severe military tension across the Taiwan Strait nor any major electoral backlash against Beijing's ostensibly provocative acts.

The final example of Hu's pragmatic external policy is the retirement of Tung Chee-hwa. Tung was hand-picked by Jiang Zemin and in 1997 was elected by a small group to be the chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. After the July 1 demonstration, however, Tung became widely unpopular. Sensing that the legacy of his own Hong Kong policy was in jeopardy, Jiang proposed to the new leadership that they bolster Tung's authority. Hu and Wen accepted Jiang's proposal, and Tung was thus re-elected in 2002. In an effort to stay in his post and salvage his reputation, Tung requested a meeting with Jiang, his patron, during his visit to Beijing in mid-July 2003. Hu and Wen granted this request as at that time Jiang was still the CMC chairman.⁴⁵

that China would face an international quagmire if it did not actively mediate the Korean nuclear crisis. This conclusion was apparently accepted by the Chinese leaders.

⁴⁵"Hong Kong Newspapers Suggest Beijing Continues to Support Tung Chee-hwa," <http://www.naw1.com/weekly/519/519hk.htm> (July 18, 2003); and "World Daily: Zeng Takes Charge of Hong Kong Affairs," <http://www.secretchina.com> (July 22, 2003).

Jiang's retirement in September 2004, however, resulted in a shift in Beijing's Hong Kong policy. In December that year, Hu met Tung at the fifth anniversary of the return of Macao to China. Hu urged Tung to reflect on his experiences during his tenure in Hong Kong and draw lessons from them, subtly signaling his displeasure with Tung's performance. After several meetings, the Politburo Standing Committee decided in February 2005 to persuade Tung to retire. Zeng Qinghong, head of the HKMACG, is believed to have backed the decision. Tung then agreed to step down from his post in which he had attracted widespread criticism from the Hong Kong people, and in March he submitted his resignation to Beijing. Beijing accepted and offered him an honorary post as a vice chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Beijing is also supportive of Donald Tseng's (曾蔭權) bid to become the new chief administrator, despite his having made remarks in the past that were at odds with Beijing's stance. Hu Jintao's decision may be based on the following considerations. Tseng is much more popular than Tung was in Hong Kong, and as an experienced and senior civil servant, he can better manage his relations with the civil service, the legislature, and the media. Hu may also have faith in the formal institutions that would ensure a steady relationship between the chief executive of Hong Kong and the Beijing authorities. Tung's resignation and Tseng's candidacy have been viewed very favorably among Hong Kong people, allowing Beijing to recover some of its confidence in its Hong Kong policy.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Overall, China's foreign policymaking after the Sixteenth Party Congress is characterized by both changes and continuity. The most notable

⁴⁶For in-depth reports and analyses of Tung's retirement, see "Jiang Zemin's Full Retirement Causes Tung to Resign," *Ming Bao*, March 2, 2005; "Tung Resigns, or Is Persuaded to Retire?" *ibid.*, March 2, 2005; and "Beijing to Kick Hong Kong Leader Upstairs," <http://www.atimes.com> (March 3, 2005). For reports on Hong Kong people's reaction, see "Tung Chee-hwa Steps Down and Hong Kongers Applaud," <http://www.chinesenewsnet.com> (March 3, 2005). For Hu's emphasis on institutions in selecting Tung's successor, see "Donald Tseng Devotes a Loving Heart to Win the Center's Trust," *Ming Bao*, March 12, 2005.

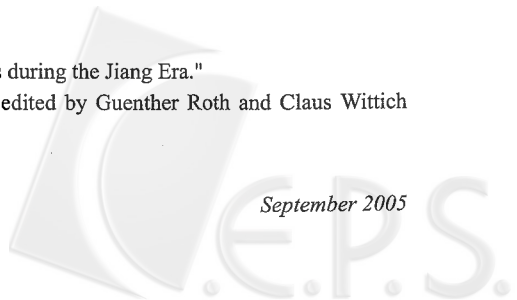
change is the complete transition to the new leadership. Hu Jintao assumed leadership of the Party and of most of the LSGs related to foreign policy, i.e., the Foreign Affairs, National Security, Finance and Economy, and Taiwan Affairs LSGs, soon after the Party Congress. He took over the chairmanship of the CMC from Jiang in September 2004. Hu thus exerts the greatest influence over external policies. As a result of Jiang's departure and Hu's emergence as the core of the new leadership, Jiang's former associates appear to have shifted their allegiance to Hu.

As Hu has risen as the core leader, he has formed his own style of leadership that is beginning to take effect. His distinct approach is leaving an imprint on the decision-making process as well as on China's external policies. As stated above, Hu tends to emphasize the real effect of policies and to take new, flexible initiatives to gain leverage in China's relations with the great powers and other external issues. This flexibility in diplomacy is aimed at reducing possible tensions in China's external relations and helping the new leadership focus on domestic development and stability.

The policy process also maintains an element of continuity—it continues to involve a significant number of players and is becoming more diffused.⁴⁷ This reflects the ongoing transition from a single dominant and charismatic leader to a collective leadership and reliance on institutions that has been taking place in China throughout the reform decades. This transition, according to Max Weber, is logical in the evolution of the state.⁴⁸ In addition to the top leader (currently Hu Jintao), a variety of other players exert varying degrees of influence on the process. The Politburo and its Standing Committee remain the most important general bodies in making major foreign policies. Top functional or coordinating agencies, namely the five LSGs (Foreign Affairs, Finance and Economy, National Security, Taiwan Affairs, and Hong Kong and Macao Affairs) and the CMC, specialize in managing day-to-day affairs, and investigating and

⁴⁷Shambaugh, "The Dynamics of Elite Politics during the Jiang Era."

⁴⁸Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 2, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California, 1978).



making proposals regarding external policies. Members of the LSGs represent the interests and preferences of their own respective agencies. Underneath these top leaders, policy is implemented by the MFA, the MOC, the ILD, the MSS, the PLA, and Xinhua News Agency. The SCFAO and the MFA oversee this implementation.

Leaders obtain information from various sources, including their own secretaries, the internal research units of the LSGs and the General Office of the CCP Central Committee, ministry-affiliated think tanks, accomplished and insightful experts in international affairs, as well as news outlets and the Internet. Where sensitive external issues are concerned, leaders may also take into account public opinion and tailor their public actions and gestures accordingly. Hu and Wen now have a more direct and less-distorted channel to public opinion, i.e., the Internet.

Understandably, Hu's reliance on processes and institutions rather than a small group of confidants to some extent helps to enhance the role of institutions. In addition, his partnership with Premier Wen also gives governmental bureaucracies such as the MFA a considerable role in external affairs. Whether Hu's emphasis on institutions is only temporary remains to be seen in the coming years. If this emphasis persists, it, along with the diffused process in decision-making, may reinforce the trend toward institutionalization.

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