



PROJECT MUSE®

## Catchy but Not New: "Indivisible Security" in the Chinese Foreign Policy Lexicon

Zha Daojiong, Dong Ting

China: An International Journal, Volume 22, Number 1, February 2024,  
pp. 42-59 (Article)

Published by NUS Press Pte Ltd

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.56159/chn.2024.a920957>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/920957>

# Catchy but Not New: “Indivisible Security” in the Chinese Foreign Policy Lexicon

ZHA Daojiong and DONG Ting

*“Indivisible security” is included as one principle of China’s Global Security Initiative, which was outlined in April 2022. Because, in English, the term is generally associated with Russian framing of its pursuit of security, of interest to this article is whether China is mimicking the Russian phrase in its own usage. Searching for the Chinese equivalent of “indivisible security” (anquan bukefenge) in databases, the authors find that the specific use has a certain tradition in China. The findings should be helpful in future dialogues and debates over Chinese rhetorical framings of security, and in appraising the country’s self-rationalisation of specific foreign policy actions.*

## INTRODUCTION

“Security” is an amorphous concept in international affairs as it can have different nuances across diverse national and regional contexts with their varying conceptualisations of world affairs and their consequent conduct. Most countries accept “national security” as the conceptual core which gives the term “security” a legitimate operational framing. In addition, definitions have proliferated, reflecting different governments’ self-promotion of their respective approaches to peace and their preferences within evolving world politics. It is challenging to identify or pinpoint the changes initiated across varying discourse networks or to construct a linear narrative of governmental approaches to security discourse. Nevertheless, it is clear that additional security narratives, usually constructed by placing an adjective before the word “security”, have competed for attention, recognition and endorsement. Given these operative norms, it is unsurprising that China has put forward a new security phrasing.

In April 2022, China presented a security framing that is commonly translated as “indivisible security”. Chinese President Xi Jinping first presented the Global Security Initiative (GSI) during his keynote speech delivered at the Boao Forum for Asia that month. This annual forum, established in 2001, is China’s dialogue platform

---

Zha Daojiong (zhadaojiong@pku.edu.cn) is a Professor at the School of International Studies, Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development, Peking University. He received his PhD in Political Science from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. His research interests revolve around the political economy of Chinese foreign relations.

Dong Ting (dongting@mail.tsinghua.edu.cn, corresponding author) is an Assistant Professor at the Center for International Security and Strategy, Tsinghua University. She earned her PhD in Political Science from the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations. Her research focuses on non-traditional security in the Asia-Pacific region.

to connect the country with the rest of the world on issues ranging from development to security. Literally, the word “indivisible” connotes entities which exist as a unified whole. Arguably, this connotation is already included in the terms applied to security as “common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable”, as reiterated in the full text of the GSI. The interest in adopting the principle arose at the time immediately following Xi’s speech, two months after the beginning of Russia’s military action against Ukraine. Statements in the GSI such as “we humanity are living in an indivisible security community” and “it is important that we...uphold the principle of indivisible security”, new in Chinese articulation, have caught, in particular, international attention.<sup>1</sup>

Such phrasing conceivably led Ned Price, spokesperson of the US Department of State, to remark that American observers “continued to see the PRC parrot some of what we have heard coming from the Kremlin”.<sup>2</sup> The United States is opposed to Russian military expansionism and has called for international condemnation of Russian actions against Ukraine.

An exchange of words between representatives of Chinese and American foreign policy agencies ensued. At a press briefing, Wang Wenbin, spokesperson of China’s foreign ministry, reacted to Price’s observation:<sup>3</sup>

The US should do its homework. The indivisibility of security is not Russia’s own assertion, but an important principle widely recognized and adopted by the US and other NATO members, European countries and the international community.

Was the inclusion of “indivisible security” in the GSI merely a coincidence of timing? This is an important and potentially consequential question that needs to be addressed. The ongoing conflict over Ukraine is a development in world security on an epochal scale. International observations and conclusions about China’s intent at this juncture of history could lead to profound policy changes towards China, whose own immediate external security and development environments are fast evolving as well.

As expected, following the exchange of words between American and Chinese diplomats, the interest in interpreting China’s intent of inserting the wording “indivisible security” in the GSI intensified. For example, an article in *The Economist* suggests that China’s promulgation of the GSI was an indication that “China is growing more

---

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), “Rising to Challenges and Building a Bright Future Through Cooperation, Keynote Speech by H.E. Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China at the Opening Ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference”, 21 April 2022, at <[https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx\\_662805/202204/t20220421\\_10671081.html](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202204/t20220421_10671081.html)> [20 July 2023].

<sup>2</sup> United States Department of State, “Department Press Briefing”, 21 April 2022, at <<https://www.state.gov/briefings/department-press-briefing-april-21-2022/>> [20 July 2023].

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference on April 25, 2022”, 25 April 2022, at <[https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/xwfw\\_665399/s2510\\_665401/2511\\_665403/202204/t20220425\\_10673526.html](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/202204/t20220425_10673526.html)> [20 July 2023].

willing to adopt Russian arguments about how to organize a global security order”.<sup>4</sup> At a hearing of the US–China Economic and Security Review Commission of the United States Congress on 3 August 2022, Sheena Chestnut Greitens, in her written testimony, opined that “the unfolding of Xi Jinping’s Global Security Initiative in parallel with these criticisms suggests that Beijing may be gearing up for a significant attempt to revise international order in the realm of global security, something the US should watch closely”.<sup>5</sup> Freeman and Stephenson’s analysis, on the other hand, situates the nascent Chinese initiative within the evolving dynamics of peace and security in Asia and argues that “it is imperative that the United States ensure that the concept [of indivisible security] is commonly understood in a way that prevents it from becoming a pretext for armed conflict”.<sup>6</sup>

The GSI and the Global Development Initiative (GDI), which Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly meeting in September 2021, are China’s two key campaigns that seek acceptance in bilateral and multilateral channels of diplomacy. International scrutiny of how China justifies its foreign policy actions as based on a concept of the indivisibility of security will be ongoing. This article aims to bridge international and Chinese researchers’ understanding of the ideational underpinnings of the Chinese security narrative by investigating the evolving use of the term “*anquan bukefenge*” in the Chinese language context.

As such, this article limits the research scope to a review of Chinese phrasings corresponding to the notion of indivisibility of security. It can be argued that were it not for the verbatim reference to “indivisible security”, which, to the best of the authors’ knowledge, appeared for the first time in the English translation of the speech by Xi in April 2022, the speech or the GSI itself would have attracted far less attention internationally. After all, a large part of the content of Xi Jinping’s speech is mainly a repetition of statements commonly found in previous Chinese official literature.

Is there a basis to conclude that China took an opportunistic approach to include “indivisible security” in the GSI? Chinese diplomats and scholars alike should have recognised that the wording first gained wide attention in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 but was later cast aside by mainstream European security studies scholars and officials. In contrast, “indivisibility of security” or “indivisible security” has been

<sup>4</sup> “China’s Global Development Initiative Is Not as Innocent as It Sounds”, *The Economist*, 9 June 2022, at <<https://www.economist.com/china/2022/06/09/chinas-global-development-initiative-is-not-as-innocent-as-it-sounds>> [20 July 2023].

<sup>5</sup> Sheena Chestnut Greitens, “China’s Response to War in Ukraine, Testimony before the US–China Economic & Security Review Commission Hearing on ‘Challenges for Chinese Policy in 2022: Zero-Covid, Ukraine, & Pacific Diplomacy’”, US–China Economic and Security Review Commission, 3 August 2022, at <[https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/Sheena\\_Chestnut\\_Greitens\\_Testimony.pdf](https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/Sheena_Chestnut_Greitens_Testimony.pdf)> [20 July 2023].

<sup>6</sup> Carla Freeman and Alex Stephenson, “How Should the US Respond to China’s ‘Global Security Initiative’?”, United States Institute of Peace, 4 August 2022, at <<https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/08/how-should-us-respond-chinas-global-security-initiative>> [20 July 2023].

“featured in all major Russian strategic documents since 1990”.<sup>7</sup> In the early 2000s, Russia proposed to use the notion as a basis for resetting its security relations with NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) but was rejected as well.<sup>8</sup>

In this article, the authors attempt to consider the term *anquan bukefenge*, which can be translated as “security being inalienable, indivisible or inseparable”, through lexical analysis.<sup>9</sup> The authors do so by conducting keyword searches of the expression in Chinese-language databases that archive full-text Chinese publications, including official documents. Findings are presented in chronological order to indicate the evolution of the wording from the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to December 2022, the year the GSI was announced. To the extent manageable, the authors offer a brief account of major events in Chinese foreign policy and world affairs, in order to help place the (re-)emergence of the phrase in context.

The authors justify the feasibility of this methodology, in part, by the fact that the shaping of a security narrative is rooted in a country’s official national discourse history. One need not be an international relations (IR) constructivist to agree that a significant part of any country’s security thinking is by nature discursive.<sup>10</sup> The lexicon forms a part of the projection of a nation’s identity into the rest of the world. On the other hand, a specific analysis of whether the formal presentation of the wording could be understood as a Chinese attempt to deconstruct a Western international relations paradigm would require a different research framing. The authors therefore leave open the question for future projects.

## IDENTIFYING INDIVISIBILITY IN THE CHINESE SECURITY LEXICON: *ANQUAN BUKEFENG*

Xi Jinping’s speech delivered at the 2022 Boao Forum upholds “the principle of indivisible security” (*anquan bukefenge yuanze*). The core words in this phrase are *anquan* (security) and *bukefenge* (should not be divided or separated in conceptualisation). The “principle” (*yuanze*) denotes an ideational position undergirding the specific policies offered.

For content tracing purposes, China National Knowledge Infrastructure or CNKI (<https://www.cnki.net>) is a useful source, as it offers access to digitised copies of books,

<sup>7</sup> Patrick Wintour, “Why Does Russia Focus on ‘Indivisible Security’ in Ukraine Standoff?”, *The Guardian*, 3 February 2022, at <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/03/why-does-russia-focus-on-indivisible-security-in-ukraine-standoff>> [20 July 2023].

<sup>8</sup> Brad L. Hull, “Russia’s Proposal for a European Security Treaty: Origins and Prospects”, Naval Postgraduate School MA Thesis, June 2019, at <<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/trecms/pdf/AD1080270.pdf>> [20 July 2023].

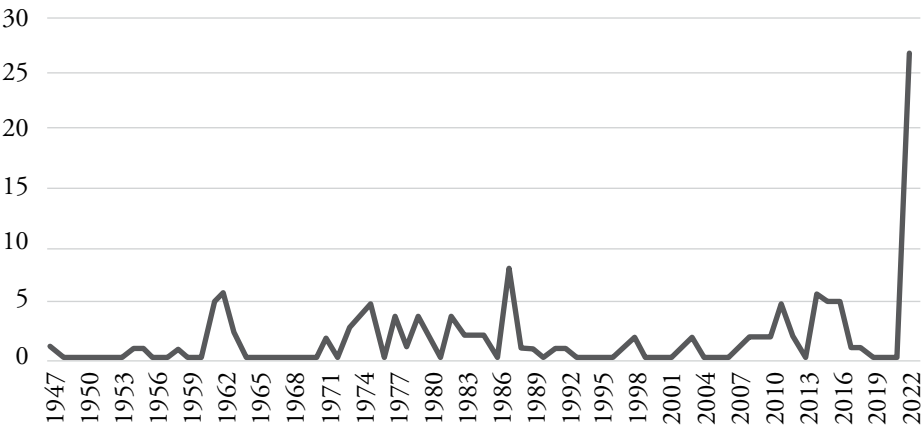
<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of nuances and applications in translating Chinese language expressions into English, see Zha Daojiong and Dong Ting, “A Chinese Notion of Indivisible Security?”, *Asian Perspective* 47, no. 2 (2023): 323–30.

<sup>10</sup> David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), pp. 1–12.

journal articles, conference papers, newspapers and industry literature on Chinese-language platforms since their respective inception. The authors’ keyword search led to over one million entries, which cover both domestic and international topics, and in both natural and social sciences. However, as *anquan* in Chinese refers to both “security” and “safety”, the majority of publications address purely technical, managerial, or domestic issues. Thus, the authors turned their attention to digitally searchable full-text archives of the *People’s Daily* and Xinhua News Agency reports, both available in the CNKI. As the CNKI’s coverage of reports by Xinhua begins only in 2000, the authors decided to further restrict their text-mining to searchable full-text databases of the *People’s Daily* (1946–2022), as it also contains news articles by China’s Xinhua News Agency.

In order to gain an overall image of the use of the Chinese-language characters in the *People’s Daily* database, the authors used Chinese toolkits Gooseeker and Wei Ciyun (<https://www.weiciyun.com>) for their text mining. A total of 224 hits was found for the selected time period. The authors further screened out translated texts that identify foreign news agencies as the source and mentioned the wording in contexts unrelated to China or Chinese policies. The procedure allows the authors to focus on transcripts of speeches by Chinese leaders and diplomats, position papers by Chinese governmental agencies, and joint communiqués between China and other governments. These entries, though small in number (102), all pertain to China’s foreign policies and Chinese statements on world affairs. Figure 1 shows the frequency of the Chinese characters, as a set, in the *People’s Daily* database.

**Figure 1.** Frequency of the Term *anquan bukefenge* (Indivisible Security) in the *People’s Daily*, 1946–2022



Source: Compiled by the authors.

*Anquan bukefenge* was first mentioned in a summary of a news article carried by Xinhua in April 1947 in the *People’s Daily* database. It expressed a Soviet position on the international political status of the Ruhr: as part of the post-World War II settlement,

whether or not to grant Germany sovereignty over the region was said to be indivisibly connected with the future security of Europe.<sup>11</sup> The phrase “the arc of indivisible security” had been used to discuss European perspectives on the Ruhr and other Germany-related topics in *Foreign Affairs* a year prior.<sup>12</sup> It is not clear to the authors if there could have been any cross-referencing between Russian and European uses of the term. In any case, as the authors have not come across Chinese deliberations on the topic, it seems that the Chinese wording—as it applies to discussions in international affairs—might have originated through translation.

In the following sections, the authors periodise the selected entries in the *People's Daily* into three phases. The first phase is between 1949 to 1978. The third plenary meeting of the 11th Party Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), held in December 1978, marked a pivotal turn in China's overall foreign policy on peace and development. In the second phase, from 1979 to the 18th Party Congress, held in November 2012, the overall security paradigm China espoused can be summarised as “peaceful rise” and pursuit of harmony in world affairs. Since 2013, China has pursued great power diplomacy (*daguo waijiao*)—as an unambiguous mantra.<sup>13</sup> In what contexts of China's diplomacy is the phrase *anquan bukefenge* used in each of these phases?

### “INDIVISIBLE SECURITY” IN THE *PEOPLE'S DAILY*: 1949–78

After the founding of the PRC in 1949, the first mention of indivisible security in the *People's Daily* was in reference to the Geneva Conference in 1954. Chinese Premier and Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai attended the conference and actively worked towards getting China's preferences and positions heard.<sup>14</sup> China's positions aligned with those of North Korea and the Soviet Union. A commentary published on 20 June 1954 in the *People's Daily* during the conference argues against proposals led by the United States but endorses those by Japan and South Korea. The commentary states that<sup>15</sup>

Peace on the Korean peninsula not only directly concerns the interests of the Korean people but also is inseparable from [*bukefenge*] the peace and security interests of all countries, particularly those in the Far East.

<sup>11</sup> “Sulian laodongbao zhichu, luer shi Nacui de yaolao, buneng liuzai fandong jituan shouli” (*Trud of the Soviet Union Points Out: the Ruhr is a Cradle of the Nazi and Should Not Be Kept in the Hands of Reactionary Cliques*), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 22 April 1947, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Georges Bidault, “Agreement on Germany: Key to World Peace”, *Foreign Affairs* 24, no. 4 (1946): 571.

<sup>13</sup> Byun See-won, “China's Major-Powers Discourse in the Xi Jinping Era: Tragedy of Great Power Politics Revisited?”, *Asian Perspective* 40, no. 3 (2016): 493–522.

<sup>14</sup> *Qian Jiang, Zhou Enlai zai Rineiwa huiyi* (*Zhou Enlai and the Geneva Conference*) (Beijing: Dangshi chubanshe [Party History Publishing House], 1991).

<sup>15</sup> “Gonggu Chaoxian de heping” (Solidifying Peace in Korea), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 20 June 1954, p. 4.

The Chinese characterisation of security in the Korean peninsula as being inseparable from China's can be understood as genuine, as China was a direct party to the Korean war and had participated in the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement in July 1953. It is interesting to note that also in 1954, the *People's Daily* adopted the phrase "indivisibility of security" to discuss topics not directly related to the territorial or state security of China. Tan Wenrui, an editor of the international news division of the *People's Daily* at the time, wrote a commentary to condemn the invasion of Guatemala by the United States:<sup>16</sup>

Peace is indivisible. Forces of peace in all countries of the world should more extensively unite to stop the American invasion. This is an urgent task.

For China in the 1950s, the major concern regarding its external security environment was in its geographical neighbourhood—namely, Sino–North Korean relations.

### *Sino–North Korean Relations*

Throughout the 1960s, the phrase *anquan bukefenge* was most prominently featured in the *People's Daily* in presenting China's positions on Sino–North Korean relations. The signing of the China–North Korea Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance on 11 July 1961 was one such major supporting event. Zhou Enlai made a remark at the welcoming ceremony hosted for visiting North Korean leader Kim Il-sung:<sup>17</sup>

The security of China and North Korea is indivisible. The security of the socialist camp is also indivisible. Any invasion of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea equals invasion of China, and of the entire socialist camp as well. The Government of China and its people will resolutely carry out its duty and struggle to the end to safeguard the common course of world socialism.

Three months later, Deng Xiaoping, in his capacity as the general secretary of the CPC, travelled to Pyongyang and repeated the same phrase *anquan bukefenge* that Zhou Enlai had used in Beijing.<sup>18</sup> Statements that the security of China and North Korea was indivisible were repeated verbatim in five other entries in the *People's Daily*, at the first and second anniversaries of the signing of the China–North Korea treaty.

<sup>16</sup> Tan Wenrui, "Meiguo cedong dui Weidimala de qinglüe" (The United States Instigates Armed Invasion of Guatemala), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 23 June 1954, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> "Meiyou renhe lilang nenggou zuzhi Chaoxian renmin heping tongyi zuguo" (There is No Force Whatsoever that Can Prevent the Korean People's Pursuit of Peaceful Unification of Their Motherland), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 13 July 1971, p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> "Deng Xiaoping tongzhi daibiao Zhonggong zhongyang zai Chaoxian laodongdang daibiao dahui zhi heci" (Comrade Deng Xiaoping Offers Congratulatory Remarks on Behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 13 September 1961, p. 1.



However, in the *People's Daily* from 1954 to 1971, the authors did not find any Chinese quotes or summaries of North Korean sources that use the phrase *anquan bukefenge* to frame its perspectives on ties with China. Besides, after 1963 until 1971—the 10th anniversary of the signing of the treaty—the *People's Daily* did not use the phrase in its reporting on Sino–North Korean relations. The *People's Daily* article published on 11 July 1971 was a reprint of an editorial carried in other official publications. Furthermore, it made no attribution to a speech delivered by a senior leader or diplomat.<sup>19</sup> This can be interpreted as a signal of a change in thinking by the Chinese leadership. The shift that the *People's Daily* made from a proactive articulation of “indivisibility of security” to omitting the reference reflected the rapidly changing dynamics among China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Soviet Union in the 1960s and beyond—China viewed the DPRK as having veered away from seeking China as its main security protector.<sup>20</sup>

### *Rhetorical Support among Socialist Countries*

According to the authors' review of the *People's Daily*, phrases like “world peace and security are indivisible” were used at the occasion of the Moscow Conference for European Security in late 1954. Delegates to the conference came from the socialist bloc of Europe. Deputy foreign minister Zhang Wentian represented China as an observer.<sup>21</sup>

On 10 September 1958, amid the ongoing second Taiwan Strait crisis, the *People's Daily* carried a full-text translation of a letter that Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev had sent to US President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The letter, dated 7 September, conveyed Soviet observations of the second Taiwan Strait crisis. Khrushchev referred to “Taiwan and Penghu (Pescadores)” as “ancient Chinese territory”, thus aligning his country with mainland Chinese insistence. He wrote:<sup>22</sup>

I should like to emphasize...the fact that China is not alone, that it has true friends who are ready to come to its aid at any moment in case of an act of aggression against China, because the interests of security of the People's [Republic of] China are inseparable from those of the Soviet Union.

<sup>19</sup> “Fandui diguozhuyi qinglüe de jianjiang tongmeng” (A Solid Alliance against Invasion by Imperialists), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 11 July 1971, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Cheng Xiaohe, “The Evolution of Sino–North Korean Relations in the 1960s”, *Asian Perspective* 34, no. 2 (2010): 173–99.

<sup>21</sup> “Weile Ouzhou heping yu anquan” (For Peace and Security in Europe), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 1 December 1954, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> “Message from Khrushchev to Eisenhower on the Crisis in the Taiwan Strait Area”, *The New York Times*, 9 September 1958, p. 12. “Heluxiaofu jiu Taiwan haixia diqu jushi wenti gei Aisenhaoweier de xin (quanwen)” (Letter by Khrushchev to Eisenhower on the Situation of the Taiwan Strait Area [Full Text]), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 10 September 1958, p. 3.

The aforementioned quotes were an excerpt from an English translation of the full letter published in *The New York Times* on 9 September 1958. The wording corresponding to “inseparable” in Chinese is *bukefenge* (“indivisible” or more fittingly, “inalienable”).

Then in December 1961, General He Long represented China at the 12th anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic; the *People's Daily* carried a statement using the term to note that the security of East Germany was indivisible from that of the entire socialist camp and violation of East Germany would be tantamount to violation of all the members of the camp.<sup>23</sup>

By the second half of 1962, ideological disputes between the communist parties of China and the Soviet Union came into the open. On China's side, this is most notably seen in the publication of a series of nine articles in the *People's Daily* that denounced the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in various areas, including Soviet insistence on being the leader of the socialist camp.

Given that the Soviet Union was identified as a source of world instability throughout the 1970s, the *People's Daily* tended to use the term *anquan bukefenge* in quotations of expressions of Third World country opinions on matters of direct concern to them. Geographical references to Third World countries included the Arabian peninsula, the Red Sea region and the Mediterranean region. In July 1975, an article published in the *People's Daily* quoted a West German politician, who reportedly argued that based on the principle of indivisibility of security for Europe, investment in common defence against the Soviet threat had become a necessity.<sup>24</sup>

In summary, before the transformation of China's overall foreign policy orientation in 1979, China's reference to the indivisibility of security was firmly rooted in its own perceptions of the insecurity of its territory. These perceptions were demonstrated in China's flagship newspaper's endorsement of Khrushchev's framing of the Soviet position during the second Taiwan Strait crisis, in addition to justifying Chinese involvement in the Korean war and its aftermath. Nevertheless, the *People's Daily* had refrained from adopting the phrase in discussions related to China's relations with the Soviet Union, even in the 1950s. Such is the real scenario despite the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance in February 1950, and the PRC's espousal of “leaning to one side” (the Soviet Union) as the official slogan of China's overall foreign policy in the formative years of the Cold War era. In addition, notably absent in the *People's Daily* was any association of the phrase

<sup>23</sup> “He Long zai Bolin qinzhū dahui shang jianghua zaici xuanbu: Zhongguo guanqian zhichi Su De liangguo dui de gouhe de zhuzhang, zhichu bixu chedi jielou Meiguo jikou ‘Bolin weiji’ fengkuang jiasu quanmian kuojun beizhan yingmao” (He Long Makes Another Solemn Declaration at the Celebration in Berlin: China Totally Supports the Soviet-German Democratic Republic Position on Peace Talks with the Federal Republic of Germany, Pointing Out the Necessity to Thoroughly Expose the Conspiracy by the United States Using the “Berlin Crisis” as a Pretext to Aggressively Speed Up its Comprehensive Military Expansion and Preparation for War), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 9 October 1961, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> “Xi Ou bixu jianli gongtong fangwu duifu Sulian weixi” (West Europe Must Establish Common Defence against Threats from the Soviet Union), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 12 July 1975, p. 6.

*anquan bukefenge* with China’s relations with North Vietnam, in spite of its provision of material support for the latter’s struggle for independence.

A second discernible feature was China’s use of the phrase to demonstrate political solidarity with socialist countries other than the Soviet Union and with Third World countries. Quotation of views in Third World countries—which almost invariably involved complaints about US foreign policies towards them—might have had to do with China’s campaign to secure a membership in the United Nations. In 1971, the PRC succeeded in gaining UN recognition of China’s representation in the international body.

### “INDIVISIBLE SECURITY” IN THE *PEOPLE’S DAILY*: 1979–2012

From 1979 to 2012, Europe became the most frequently associated term with *anquan bukefenge* in the *People’s Daily*. This perhaps demonstrates China’s rhetorical support to Western Europe for the latter to play a more prominent role in geostrategically counterbalancing intense competition between the two superpowers, i.e. the United States and the Soviet Union.<sup>25</sup>

With this presumed support as backdrop, this section focuses on three frequent word associations: arms control, Sino–Russian relations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Each of the three topics was more pertinent in Chinese diplomacy than European policies or opinions were in word associations during the 1979–2012 period.

#### *Nuclear Disarmament*

Before the early 1980s, China opposed any multilateral nuclear test ban dialogues, but instead emphasised that superpowers had a special responsibility. China however changed its stance in 1981 when the Chinese delegation at the Conference on Disarmament, set up in 1978 by the United Nations General Assembly, submitted a working paper on a comprehensive programme for disarmament. The Chinese position emphasised that after the United States and the Soviet Union had carried out substantial reductions in nuclear weapons, other nuclear powers and militarily significant states could be called upon to join in a multilateral process on disarmament.<sup>26</sup>

In the *People’s Daily*, the use of the phrase *anquan bukefenge* in relation to nuclear disarmament was intended to imply that the two nuclear superpowers ought to factor in the world security preferences of weaker countries like China. At the UN Special Session on Disarmament held in July 1982, Chinese representatives not only announced that China would participate in nuclear arms reduction negotiations with other states—

<sup>25</sup> David Shambaugh, “China and Europe”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 519, no. 1 (1992): 101–14.

<sup>26</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, “Learning Versus Adaptation: Explaining Change in Chinese Arms Control Policy in the 1980s and 1990s”, *The China Journal*, no. 35 (1996): 27–61.

on condition that the United States and the Soviet Union cut their stockpiles by 50 per cent—but they also presented a position paper stating the objectives:<sup>27</sup>

To reduce the threat of war and to safeguard world peace, the prohibition of the military use of nuclear weapons and the reasonable reduction of nuclear as well as conventional weapons are interconnected and inseparable by nature.

When the special session ended, albeit without reaching a consensus, the Chinese delegation proposed a six-point position of principles. The first point states that:<sup>28</sup>

Striving for disarmament and safeguarding world peace are indivisible. Striving for the realisation of disarmament should be coupled with efforts to safeguard world peace and security.

Then, in March 1987, China convened a regional seminar on the global disarmament movement in cooperation with the United States. In his remarks delivered at the seminar, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen opined that:<sup>29</sup>

[Pursuit of] security in [one region of] the world is inseparable from that in another. Security for Europe is important, and that for Asia is equally important. We insist on demanding that inter-continental missiles deployed in Europe and Asia should be reduced by applying the same principle, conducted simultaneously and equitably, until total elimination.

Qian also reiterated these remarks at the 10th Sino–Soviet consultation towards renormalisation of ties held in Moscow in late April 1987.<sup>30</sup> Conceivably, China's indication that its positions on arms control were not an issue for negotiation can be seen as an aspect of its attempt to normalise relations with the Soviet Union. Given however that research on Chinese arms control policy in the 1980s and 1990s is abundant, the objective of this article is not to conduct an analysis of arms control.<sup>31</sup> The authors' reading of Chinese references to indivisibility and/or inseparability of security in associated issues is that China found utility in the phrase to project a morally sound position: i.e. beseeching the superpowers to demonstrate their responsibility to the entire world through action.

<sup>27</sup> "Dierjie caijun tiebie lianda weihuo chenggong er bimu" (The Second Special Session on Disarmament at the United Nations Ends Without Success), *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily), 12 July 1982, p. 6.

<sup>28</sup> "Liji tingzhi junbei jingsai he jinxing caijun" (Immediately Cease Arms Race But Begin Arms Reduction), *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily), 2 July 1982, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> "Wo yiguan fandui junbei jingsai ye bucanjia junbei jingsai" (Our Country Consistently Opposes Arms Race, Nor Do We Participate in Arms Race), *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily), 24 March 1987, p. 4.

<sup>30</sup> "Zhong Su zhijian zhangai weichu zhengzhi guanxi shangyou kunnan. Wo jiang jixu yu Su renzhen cuoshang zhengqu yousuo jinzhan" (Obstacles Remain between China and the Soviet Union. Difficulties in Political Relationship Remain. China is Going to Continue to Earnestly Consult with the Soviet Union and Strive for Progress), *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily), 27 April 1987, p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> For example, Johnston, "Learning Versus Adaptation".

### *Sino–Russian Relations*

In the 1980s, the *People’s Daily* attributed the notion of indivisibility of security to a prominent Russian source from a news report on Mikhail Gorbachev’s “new thinking”. The *People’s Daily* quotes Gorbachev in an article dated 2 November 1987:<sup>32</sup>

Security is indivisible. It is impossible to obtain one [nation’s] security through sacrificing that of others.

Considering the larger context, the framing by the *People’s Daily* of the news report can be explained as follows: among the Soviet leadership, Gorbachev was the one who had advocated for a conciliatory Soviet response to Chinese demands for renormalisation of ties with China. As it turned out, Sino–Soviet relations made substantial progress when Gorbachev was the Soviet leader and this culminated in his visit to Beijing in June 1989, which marked full renormalisation of bilateral ties between the two countries.

However, the wording “indivisible security” was included much later, in May 2003, in a joint communiqué issued by China and Russia on the occasion of Chinese President Hu Jintao’s visit to Moscow. That both China and Russia saw utility in affirming the joint declaration on the management of world affairs is evident in their foreign ministers’ presentation of the full text as an annex in a letter to the United Nations Secretary General in the wake of the visit. The English-language text of the statement states that:<sup>33</sup>

The parties believe that, in the area of safeguarding international peace and security, the coordinating role must be played by the UN with its authority, universality and unique experience. It is necessary to make concerted efforts to build, with the UN playing the central role, a comprehensive system for opposing new challenges and threats for the purpose of ensuring international stability, security and predictable development. Such a system must meet the vital interests of each State, ensure long-term socio-economic development and stability, correspond to *the principle of indivisibility of international security*, be based on the norms and principles of international law, above all the Charter of the United Nations. It must have a global character, be the widest in scope, and ensure the adoption of comprehensive solutions with account for interrelation between the new threats and challenges. (emphasis added by the authors)

It is beyond the capacity of the authors to ascertain whether China or Russia initiated the inclusion of the “principle” or if China’s participation proceeded on the basis of its sufficient awareness of the Western rejection of Russian interpretations.

<sup>32</sup> “Shehui zhuyi mingyun qujue yu gaige” (The Fate of Socialism Hinges on Reform), *Renmin ribao* (*People’s Daily*), 2 November 1987, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> “Letter Dated 30 May 2003 from the Permanent Representatives of China and the Russian Federation to the United Nations Addressed to the Secretary-General”, United Nations Security Council Digital Library, 2 June 2003, at <<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/496230>> [20 July 2023].

Still, in the early 2000s, the United States not only led a campaign against Iraq and Afghanistan without unequivocal authorisation by the United Nations Security Council, it had also prioritised maintaining its primacy in world affairs and enlisted the support of its allies in both Europe and Asia. A competition for influence and status therefore ensued among China, the United States and Russia.<sup>34</sup> Such major developments may put into context the inclusion of “international security” in the said document.

From 2003 onwards, the inclusion of the indivisibility of security as a principle for handling world affairs would become routine in joint statements between China and Russia. For example, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a joint statement on major international issues on 23 May 2008, following Russian President Dmitri Medvedev’s visit to Beijing. Among other matters, the joint statement states that:<sup>35</sup>

The two sides believe that international security is comprehensive and indivisible. The security of some countries should not be achieved at the cost of the security of others, including the use of expansion of military and political alliances. The two sides stress the necessity to fully respect and accommodate the interests and concerns of relevant countries.

Similar references can be found in joint Sino–Russian statements in 2010, on the 10th anniversary of the announcement of a partnership of strategic coordination and thereafter, before and after China’s leadership succession from Hu Jintao to Xi Jinping in December 2012.<sup>36</sup>

The joint communiqué issued for the 11th trilateral meeting of foreign ministers of China, India and Russia, held in April 2012, also made reference to “indivisible security”. Article Five of the communiqué states that:<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Deborah W. Larson and Alexei Shevchenko, “Status Seekers: Chinese and Russian Responses to US Primacy”, *International Security* 34, no. 4 (2010): 63–95.

<sup>35</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, “Joint Statement of the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Major International Issues”, 23 May 2008, at <[https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjdt\\_665385/2649\\_665393/200806/t20080616\\_679203.html](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/200806/t20080616_679203.html)> [20 July 2023].

<sup>36</sup> “Zhong–E guanyu quanmian shenhua zhanlue xiezuo huoban guanxi de lianhe shengming” (China–Russia Joint Statements on Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination), *Renmin ribao* (People’s Daily), 29 September 2010, p. 3; “Zhonghua renmin gongheguo he Eluosi lianbang guanyu dangqiang guoji xingshi he zhongda guoji wenti de lianhe shengming” (The People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation Joint Statement on Current International Affairs and Significant International Issues), *Renmin ribao* (People’s Daily), 17 June 2011, p. 2; “Zhong–E zongli di 17 ci dingqi huiwu lianhe gongbao” (China–Russia Joint Communiqué of the 17th Prime Ministers’ Meeting), *Renmin ribao* (People’s Daily), 7 December 2012, p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Ministry of External Affairs of India, “Joint Communiqué of the Eleventh Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People’s Republic of China”, 13 April 2012, at <<https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/19258/Joint+Communiqu+of+the+Eleventh+Meeting+of+the+Foreign+Ministers+of+the+Russian+Federation+the+Republic+of+India+and+the+Peoples+Republic+of+China>> [20 July 2023].

The Ministers stressed the importance for the Asia-Pacific region of establishing an open and transparent security and cooperation architecture responsive to the legitimate interests of every country in the region and built on universally recognized norms and principles of international law, *recognition of the indivisibility of security* and mutual respect and confidence. (emphasis added by the authors)

In short, that China and Russia had come to adopt identical positions on world affairs since the early 2000s is well known to scholars of Chinese and Russian foreign policy. Actions like submitting their bilateral documentation to the United Nations General Secretary, the repeated use of the term "indivisible security" in bilateral communiqués and including this wording—albeit in a nuanced form by prefacing it with "in recognition of"—in China–India–Russia foreign ministers' meetings all indicate a pattern of consistency in Chinese rhetorical practice on foreign affairs. Is there a subliminal distancing in China's and India's positions from that of Russia? That would be a question for historians of diplomacy to address.

### *The Shanghai Cooperation Organization*

In contrast, it is intriguing that throughout the 1990s the *People's Daily* did not feature other articles containing expressions of indivisibility of security between China and its north-western neighbours. After all, China was devoted to implementing the Sino–Soviet border agreement, signed in May 1991 (before the dissolution of the Soviet Union at the end of the same year). In April 1996, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan convened in Shanghai and signed the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions. This initiated the confidence-building forum known as the "Shanghai Five". The forum was elevated five years later to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), whose secretariat is located in Beijing. As the concerns about terrorism, extremism and separatism have been integral to the SCO since its founding, regularised coordination among its member states is but the means, while the underlying principle is that each member's internal security is indivisible from—or loosely interpreted as interrelated to—that of the others.

The authors' search in the *People's Daily* showed only two references to the SCO as embodying the principle of indivisibility of security. The first is in a written interview by the president of Kazakhstan conducted with the *People's Daily*, Xinhua and other Chinese news outlets in June 2006. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev expressed his expectations for the SCO:<sup>38</sup>

As a new mechanism for regional cooperation, the SCO can be expected to become an indivisible component of the global security system. As economic and trade cooperation among its members grows, the SCO can make an important contribution to the promotion of global economic development.

<sup>38</sup> "Shanghai hezuo zuzhi fazhang qude zhongyao chengguo" (The Shanghai Cooperation Organization Has Achieved Important Results), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 9 June 2006, p. 3.

The second reference points to Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon's 2008 remarks on the SCO that were similar to Nazarbayev's made two years prior.<sup>39</sup> But the authors' search did not discover any examples of Chinese leaders or diplomats using *anquan bukefenge* to illuminate the meaning and purpose of the SCO.

In summary, judging from the adoption of the concept *anquan bukefenge* in the *People's Daily* from 1972 to 2012, it becomes increasingly evident that Chinese references to the notion of indivisibility of security had shifted towards "high security" topics as defined in the international relations literature. Given that the authors do not have the knowledge or language base to assess the evolution of Sino-Russian diplomatic exchanges during this period, it is challenging for them to determine how the vocabulary entered the joint statements. The authors crossmatched corresponding Chinese terms for "Sino-Russian relations" and "indivisible security", and conducted a full-text search in the CNKI database from 1980 to 2012, but the search was futile as it did not yield any journal article written by Chinese authors using the aforementioned texts. It can be deduced that inclusion of the phrasing in this context is exclusively a practice among diplomats of the two countries.

Why Chinese negotiators of those joint declarations with Russia found utility or even necessity in incorporating the phrase "indivisibility of security" is an important topic that may warrant further research, as mentioned at the end of the opening of this article. Nonetheless, the authors view such an approach as a diplomatic practice that serves to signal Chinese displeasure with what the United States and its security allies had done in the security realm in East Asia.

### **"INDIVISIBLE SECURITY" IN THE *PEOPLE'S DAILY*: 2013–21**

A search for the phrase *anquan bukefenge* in the *People's Daily* during the 2013–21 period demonstrates that the term is highly and mainly associated with Russia. The authors attribute the high occurrence of usage to frequent, regular Sino-Russian diplomatic contacts and the bureaucratic practice of making repeated references to past statements. But it also should be noted that *anquan bukefenge* is used in references to China's multilateral diplomacy as well, especially in statements issued for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meetings during the same time period.

The second-highest frequency of association of the term "indivisibility of security" is to China; the authors attribute this occurrence to Xi Jinping's effort to champion his notion of a "holistic view of national security" (*zongti guojia anquan guan*). In 2013, Xi underlined the basic logic behind the holistic approach: "development depends on security" and "security requires development".<sup>40</sup> In China, the "holistic view of

<sup>39</sup> "Shanghe Dushangbie fenghui jiang qude fengshuo chengguo" (The Dushanbe SCO Summit Expected to Achieve Fruitful Results), *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 6 August 2008, p. 3.

<sup>40</sup> "Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Some Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deeping Reform", Communist Party of China, 16 November 2013, at <[http://www.china.org.cn/china/third\\_plenary\\_session/2013-11/16/content\\_30620736.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/china/third_plenary_session/2013-11/16/content_30620736.htm)> [20 July 2023].



national security” has, since 2013, been turned into a key paradigm that permeates all aspects of the country’s governance: political, territorial, military, economic, cultural, social, scientific and technological, information, ecological, financial and nuclear.<sup>41</sup>

In Chinese-language context, *zongti* (being holistic) and *bukefenge* (being inseparable or indivisible) are synonymous with each other. The wording “*zongti guojia anquan guan*” was first incorporated in China’s defence white paper in 2013. Therein, “national security” encompasses defending the country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, supporting the nation’s economic and social development, in addition to safeguarding world peace and regional stability.<sup>42</sup> Coupled with the establishment of the National Security Commission, operationalisation of security took on a centralised structure to oversee both domestic and external domains.<sup>43</sup>

The third-highest frequency of association of the term “indivisibility of security” is in relation to Afghanistan. This is based on the context of Chinese complaints against US (and NATO) military actions in both Afghanistan and other Central Asian countries. The reference to Afghanistan indicates Chinese disquiet with foreign occupation of a neighbouring country at the end of the 1970s by the Soviet Union and in 2003 by the US-led coalition. A prominent Chinese scholar argues, “China views security in Afghanistan as an indivisible component of its pursuit of security in China’s Xinjiang region”.<sup>44</sup>

In addition, the *People’s Daily* used the term *anquan bukefenge* in translating and/or summarising the expression “indivisible security” in joint statements issued at the Seventh, Eighth and 10th BRICS summits that were held, respectively, in Ufa, Russia, in July 2015, in Goa, India, in October 2016, and in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2018.<sup>45</sup>

In relation to China–Russia relations, it should be noted that the word *bukefenge* appeared in the joint statement on international relations issued in Beijing on 4 February 2022, when Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Xi Jinping ahead of the 2022 Winter Olympics Games opening ceremony. The English version of the statement posted by Russia highlights the following:<sup>46</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Xi Jinping, *The Governance of China* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2014).

<sup>42</sup> Information Office of the State Council, China, “The Diversified Deployment of China’s Armed Forces”, April 2013, at <[http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white\\_paper/2014/08/23/content\\_281474982986506.htm](http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2014/08/23/content_281474982986506.htm)> [20 July 2023].

<sup>43</sup> David M. Lampton, “Xi Jinping and the National Security Commission: Policy Coordination and Political Power”, *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 95 (2015): 759–77.

<sup>44</sup> Zhao Huasheng, “Zhongguo yu Afuhan: Zhongguo de liyi, lichang yu guandian” (China and Afghanistan: Chinese Interests, Positions and Perspectives), *Eluosi yanjiu* (*Russian Studies*) 177, no. 5 (2012): 3–18.

<sup>45</sup> The full text of BRICS summit statements is accessible at BRICS Information Centre, University of Toronto, at <<http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/>> [20 July 2023].

<sup>46</sup> “Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China on International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development”, The Kremlin, 4 February 2022, at <<http://en.kremlin.ru/supplement/5770>> [20 July 2023].

Russia and China aim to comprehensively strengthen the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and further enhance its role in shaping a polycentric world order based on the universally recognized principles of international law, multilateralism [and] equal, joint, *indivisible*, comprehensive and sustainable security. (emphasis added by the authors)

The multiplicity of adjectives in the joint communiqué appears to be a compilation of Chinese and Russian framings prior to the 2022 meeting. It may also be reflective of Chinese interests to demonstrate Russian acceptance of “common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security” as underpinning pillars in the PRC’s proposition of “a community with a shared future for mankind”, unveiled in 2015.<sup>47</sup>

In short, in a Chinese-language context, since 2013, *anquan bukefenge*, whether it is used as an explicit expression or an inferred notion, has become indistinguishable in its domestic or foreign origin. Its geographical reference, accordingly, has also expanded to encompass both governance of China and the projection of rationale of its foreign policies.

## CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The authors have stated that the objective of this article is not to engage in debates over the validity—conceptual or operational—of “indivisible security” either as a theoretical construct about international relations or as a basis for making sense of Chinese policy over the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The article therefore does not intend to critique or affirm commonly established views in the West about the phrase “indivisibility of security” or its diplomatic/political use.

Rather, the authors aim to highlight the evolving semantics on security in Chinese official sources, primarily the *People’s Daily*. The findings presented in this article are a first cut of the data and the proper translation of Chinese language texts—by the authors throughout this article—is always a challenging art in cross-cultural communication. However, it is possible to draw several generalised observations.

First, the wording *anquan bukefenge*—with “indivisible security” or “indivisibility of security” as acceptable English translations—has been used historically in the context of Chinese official discourses dating back to the 1940s. This adequately corroborates the deduction that its inclusion in Xi’s speech at the 2022 Boao Forum was not merely a tactical endorsement of or expression of support for the Russian position on its actions against Ukraine.

Second, as discussed earlier, both the Soviet Union and later Russia were featured prominently in the *People’s Daily* coverage of bilateral, multilateral and international security issues. Hence, concern has arisen in the West over China’s intention of having “indivisible security” included in China–Russia joint official documents in the short period since the beginning of Russia–Ukraine conflict in February 2022.

<sup>47</sup> Zhang Feng, “Chinese Visions of the Asia Political Security Order”, *Asia Policy* 13, no. 2 (2018): 13–8.

In this regard, the following wording in the Chinese foreign ministry’s GSI concept paper, published in February 2023, can be interpreted as an attempt to address Western doubts:<sup>48</sup>

We uphold the principle of indivisible security, advocating the indivisibility between individual security and common security, between traditional security and non-traditional security, between security rights and security obligations, and between security and development. There should be a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture, so as to realize universal security and common security.

Since such an elaboration excludes the country or geographical references in Chinese framing, its impact on addressing international, particularly Western, concerns is open to question.

Third, ensuing from the second point, scholars of Chinese foreign policy could benefit from insights provided by Western reactions to Xi Jinping’s articulations of security in Asia—succinctly expressed in English as “Asia for Asians”—in 2014 that were possibly deemed “unduly alarmist”.<sup>49</sup> Likewise, the authors advise against international researchers’ definitive conclusions about Chinese intentions in using “indivisible security” in the GSI.

Fourth, through inclusion and promotion of the GSI, China has stepped forward to add its own range of nuances to the term “indivisible security” or “indivisibility of security”. Then, to China, there arises the question of what it defines as indivisible, expressed in either Chinese or English, whether this is in reference to domestic and/or international affairs.

In short, *anquan bukefenge* or “indivisible security” with Chinese characteristics is catchy but not new when placed against the historical evolution of its usage in the Chinese lexical context. In future discussions between international and Chinese scholars about Sino–Russian relations since February 2022, conceptual stalemate could be expected over whether the adoption of the wording “indivisible security” in any standalone Chinese document should legitimately imply that Beijing ideologically sides with Moscow. More broadly and even structurally, knowledge about the term in Chinese language contexts may serve to enrich academic debates about theorising international relations between China and the rest of the world.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors thank the two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of this article and the editors of the journal for copy-editing the manuscript. Errors and opinions are entirely the authors’ responsibility.

<sup>48</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, “The Global Security Initiative Concept Paper”, 21 February 2023, at <[https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/wjbxw/202302/t20230221\\_11028348.html](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjbxw/202302/t20230221_11028348.html)> [16 July 2023].

<sup>49</sup> Linda Jakobson, “Reflections from China on Xi Jinping’s ‘Asia for Asians’”, *Asian Politics and Society* 8, no. 1 (2016): 219–23.