Chapter 3

GLOBAL REGIMES: A NEW PHASE IN CHINA’S ADAPTATION

China is a late entrant to most of the global regimes because of its self-imposed isolation from the international scene under the dictates of Maoism. During the Cold War period, China was relatively isolated in the world system, yet it tried to carve a niche for itself despite being dominated as well as used by the US and the USSR. China adopted an independent foreign policy during this period, which sought to distance its policies from those of the United States as well as the Soviet Union, while maintaining a position from which it could relate independently to both superpowers (Zhao 2007: Personal Interview). China also emphasized strengthening unity and co-operation with the countries of the Third World and creating a sort of united front against the dominance of super powers in world affairs. In the post-Cold War period, however, China started adapting itself to various regimes based on commonly shared principles as it opened up to the outside world and thereby gained strength as an economic power. The change in the world order that moved towards institutionalization and multipolarity helped China in playing a proactive role in the global power structure. However, the process of adaptation has been far from smooth as it entailed making difficult adjustments in China’s domestic policies and mechanisms to ensure compatibility with the international norms and standards. To understand China’s contemporary role in the global regimes, we must look at how China has moved on the path of adaptation (with the global system) since its inception as a free country. The development of the relations between China and the global institutions and regimes can be reviewed from the perspective of history. This is divided mainly into three phases. Each period has its own unique features and dynamics that have contributed to China’s present status as a global power.
Old Phase: Dominance of Ideology; 1949-1978

This was a period of general avoidance and suspicion, which dominated the phase between the founding of the People’s Republic and the opening to the United Nations and later to the West in the 1970s. The lack of recognition by many countries of the regime in Beijing, coupled with the Mao Zedong government’s aversion towards international economic and security institutions being utilized by the West to dominate the international system and erode the communist revolution, prevented China from effectively engaging the global community through the growing number of international regimes created during this period. In this period, China on the one hand had to counter the Western countries led by the US in order to exclude Taiwan and restore its legal status in the UN; on the other hand, it tried to establish links with other international organizations and regimes. In the early 1950s, for example, China submitted entry applications to some global regimes such as World Health Organization (WHO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and Universal Postal Union (UPU). As it was the phase of an open alliance with the Soviet Union against the United States, China joined some regimes of the socialist camp led by the Soviet Union- World Democratic Union, International Students’ Federation, International Women League and, as an observer, the Warsaw Treaty Organization. But, soon serious differences cropped up between China and Soviet Union leading to the break up of the alliance and China treading an independent path of its own. Even though both countries continued to claim membership in a common socialist block, they began to express vehement opposition to each other’s domestic and foreign policies. In this context, the Great Leap Forward programme can be viewed as China’s first attempt to assert an independent development model and a third power role, independent from the alliance system of both Moscow and Washington. China developed its own
independent nuclear capability without any Western help and exploded its first bomb in 1964.

With the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution in late 1966 and early 1967, Chinese foreign relations underwent further radicalization, reflecting the heightened radicalism of Chinese domestic politics. “In the early part of the decade, China was independent from the two superpowers but actively involved in world affairs; at the height of the Cultural Revolution, China turned almost completely inward, isolated from the rest of the world” (Harding 1984: 188). Under the influence of Maoism, China did not recognize the legitimacy of international regimes (including international organizations and various mechanisms and treaties) led by the Western countries, let alone real cooperation or participation. Its experience with the West in the 19th and late 20th century had taught the bitter lesson that these regimes did not represent universal norms or general public good, but rather the narrow political interests of the major powers. Marxism-Leninism similarly taught that post-War institutions- the World Bank, the IMF, the United nations – were primarily the instruments of the international capitalist system, biased against the socialist countries like China. The development of the arms control regimes in 1960s were also interpreted as an attempt by both the Soviet Union and the United States to prevent countries like China from obtaining nuclear weapons, while maintaining their own nuclear monopoly. Hence, for two decades from 1949 to 1970, China was more or less outside the international system of governance.

However, the PRC soon realized the negative fallouts of its isolationist global policy and began to reorient its foreign policy to in accordance with the prevailing situation at the world level. It not only formally apologized to foreign countries for what had happened to their embassies in Beijing during the Cultural Revolution, but agreed to make restitution as well (Dreyer 1996: 314). This more accommodative posture enabled China both to reestablish relationships that had been broken off during the Cultural Revolution, win new friends and to get back its lost status in the international community. The PRC’s acceptance as a legitimate member of the international community was given formal endorsement in October 1971 when it replaced Taiwan in the United Nations and was made a permanent
member of the UN Security Council. After the restoration of its legal status in the UN, China not only improved relations with the US and other Western countries, but also began limited participation in the international regimes dominated by the West. It joined several important organizations of the UN to which it had applied earlier besides others. Moreover, it began to cooperate with European Community, Latin American Nuclear- Free Zone Organization, International Commission on Large Dams, International Olympic Committee and International Organization for Standardization. The treaties signed between 1971 and 1979 largely reflected China's increased participation in the UN system and other international regimes. The characteristics of this period were the foreign political relations developed faster than Chinese trade and economic ties with other countries. However, it was not possible to have any complete transformation in Mao's guiding philosophies at his old age. There could be only limited 'adjustment' instead of overall 'transformation'. Therefore, the core strategy of Mao towards international regimes and organizations was seeking for more international recognition and getting away from the isolation China had faced because of the alignment with the Soviet Union and more for its ideological postures. In 1976, Mao passed away and with that ideology ceased to be the most important determinant of Chinese foreign policy.

New Phase : Beginning and Intensification; 1977-1991

The first immediate tendency evident under the new leader Hua Guofeng can be termed as neo-Maoist. The new leadership maintained the anti-imperialist tone and proclaimed its commitment to radical policies of Mao. But with Deng coming to power in 1978, the emphasis shifted from ideology to economic considerations while deciding the course of interactions with the global community. By the end of 1978, "Chinese foreign policy began to reflect Deng's preoccupation with China's modern problematique: how to quickly enhance the nation's wealth and power as the means to obtaining its rightful place in the world" (Hamrin 1979:43). There was a surge in engagement with the multilateral treaty system after China adopted its reform and opening-up policy under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping. The year 1979 marked the first year in which China became actively involved in accession to
international treaties signing 10 of them that year followed by 18 a year later reaching a peak of 21 in 1984. Many of the treaties recognized by the PRC in 1984 related to workers’ rights of various kinds under the purview of the International Labour Organization. In fact, the 1980s witnessed a golden decade in China’s accession to international treaties. For the success of its economic reform programme, China stressed upon maintaining political stability and legitimacy at the domestic level and a peaceful and secure international environment around the country. As has been discussed earlier, the economic imperatives pushed China to enhance the level of engagement with global regimes and multilateral institutions, and this increased level of interaction produced phenomenal results for China as an economy. Partly as a result of its membership of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund from 1980, its application to rejoin the GATT in 1986, and its promulgation of a major foreign-trade reform document in September 1984, China had become a major power within that system (Foot 1995:235). Virtually non-existent in 1978, the cumulative total of foreign investment in China reached US $20 billion by 1990, which kept increasing in subsequent years (Foot 1995:235).

Under Deng’s rule, China’s approach to international regimes underwent a dramatic change. His basic idea was that China needs stability and development; poverty and backwardness is not the socialism that Chinese people have been looking forward to; the situation of stability and development can only be realized through intercourse with the global community, including exchanges and cooperation with the developed world; and although the current international regimes do have their defects, China needs and has to cooperate with them. In comparison to Mao, Deng’s approach was more liberal and in tune with the changing times. He often emphasized that “China should concentrate on economic development”, (Chinese people should) focus on construction with heart and soul”, and “the policy of reforms and opening-up will not be waived for a hundred years” (Deng 1993:350-51). In order to support domestic economic construction and the priority of improving people’s living standards, by taking into account the international situation in the late 20th century, Deng Xiaoping had made some important remarks such as “peace and development are the two major issues of the contemporary world”, “both planning and market are ways of developing
productivity”, and “China has no necessity to hold the Flags in the world” (Deng 1993:350-51). Compared to Mao Zedong thought, Deng’s theory fully reflects the principle of “seeking truth from facts”. Hence, the leadership of the second generation, led by Deng Xiaoping, had adopted moderate and practical measures in dealing with international regimes and organizations in order to promote China’s modernization process. Similar to Mao Zedong, Deng also agreed that the existing international political and economic order were unreasonable and unfair, however, his solutions were quite different from that of his predecessor. He emphasized to “establish a new international order on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence” and resort to both struggle and cooperation in dealing with international affairs including global regimes. Guided by Deng’s pragmatic theory (of international cooperation), the international regimes and treaties that China had joined during his tenure were far beyond the Maoist period both in terms of quantity and level of participation. In this period, China not only played an active role in the international political organizations, but also expanded its connections with international economic, trade and financial institutions and regimes and most significantly it also managed to become a key player in the field of arms control and disarmament. In brief, the core of Deng Xiaoping’s strategy of international organizations was striving for favourable (external) environment for Chinese economic development by first recognizing the current international regimes, and driven by the need for economic modernization.

New Phase: Maturation; 1991 to the Present

In 1991, the Cold War that was prevalent since the end of the Second World War came to an end with the collapse of the Soviet Union. It also marked the end of the bipolar system of the world. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union and its empire, Beijing had to face the fact that the United States now remained the sole superpower. Moreover, this occurred at a time when Washington had stepped up its criticism of Beijing over human rights, trading practices and missile sales. The Gulf War of 1991 further strengthened the perception that the US dominated the global
system and it was feared that in this post-Cold War era, the West was using new opportunities to impose its views and policies upon other countries.

However, not perturbed by the changes in the international scenario, China continued to vigorously pursue the programme of domestic economic development and also play a responsible role in the world community. It condemned Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait and, although Iraq had been an important customer for China’s weapons, agreed to observe the UN boycott against shipping arms to Iraq (Dreyer 1996:316). The Gulf War demonstrated how valuable a co-operative China could be when it voted for all ten UN resolutions that ordered military and economic sanctions against Iraq and abstained on resolution 678 that permitted the use of force to compel Iraq’s withdrawal from Kuwait (Foot 1995:235). In the Post-Cold War years, China became an active participant in a wide range of international regimes and committed itself to observe a large member of international conventions. Thus, reversing previous “principled” positions, China signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1992 and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996. It has also joined some other international regimes, which include arms control, trade, environment, intellectual property rights and even human rights.

In post-Cold War period, China’s institutional engagements were expanded to include more regionally based economic regimes such as Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the ASEAN-Plus-Three (APT), as well as strategic institutions like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). These initiatives were also inspired by the demise of the Soviet Union, since this removed Moscow as one of Beijing’s major security concerns, paving the way for warmer Sino-Russian relations. Also, the end of the Cold War created more stability around other parts of Asia such as in Southeast Asia as enhanced initiatives to foster regional cooperation replaced former rivalries. China’s newfound skill and confidence enabled it to not only react to existing international regimes, but to influence their development and even call for, and develop, new institutions (Lanteigne 2005:1-33).

During the 1990s, China feared that the international system was drifting towards unipolarity, with the United States at the apex. Beijing repeatedly professed
its preference for a multilateral system with a number of great powers preventing a concentration of power. Thus, China increased its participation with inter-state institutions in order to ensure a continued role in shaping the evolving post-Cold War international order. In the post-Deng phase, the leadership (under Jiang Zemin) developed and put forward a series of policies and strategies in dealing with international organizations and regimes. With better understanding of China’s international position, the leaders henceforth have promoted the deepening of the relations between China and international organizations including various regimes. They argue that it is a multipolar world, in which the developing countries should flexibly meet their challenges and opportunities by striving for benefits while avoiding disadvantages, thereby gradually altering the nature of the old global regimes during the process of involvement. As China’s involvement with the global community has deepened, the relations of international organizations and regimes with China have undergone a fundamental change evolving into one of more positive and more optimistic. Moving away from the ‘token’ participation, China, of late, has started adapting itself to the rules, norms and conventions set by different international organizations and regimes. Furthermore, greater institutional engagement served as an outlet for China’s more nationalist foreign policies, which flourished under the Jiang regime and have continued under Hu Jintao. The current phase of globalization and the events of 9/11 further underscored the fact that China needed to engage more actively both regionally and internationally, and at Track I and Track II levels.

A new stage in China’s institutional engagement has quietly begun over the past few years, defined by the sophisticated and confident utilization of institutions to advance Chinese power in the international system. The Chinese leadership has put forward three basic principles with regard to dealing with the international regimes and organizations:

- There should be emphasis on comprehensive and adequate participation, seeking a bigger say and more powers in the decision-making arrangements. This point has been reflected in
the events such as applying to enter the WTO or bidding for the host of Olympic Games.

- China should be more active in joining regional international organizations and mechanisms, especially those of immediate regions with key interests and multilateralism should be promoted as the most important facet of foreign policy. For example, it was China which took the initiative for creating the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

- China should stick to the progressive and practical principles of Deng Xiaoping period. It should not only "uphold justice and safeguard world peace and stability" but also "keep an eye on Cold War mentality and dedicate to developing a new type of international relations without alignments, confrontations and directing against the third party" (Wang 2003:29-30)

As a late entrant to the international community, China is not very comfortable with the international rules related to political and security matters. China still feels that even though most of the international regimes are rule-based and appear to be fair and equitable at the macro level, at the micro level they function under the Western influence and discriminate against the emerging countries like China (Hong 2007:personal interview). In the realm of politics, security, environment, trade and media, the Western powers are trying to unduly influence and interfere with the developing countries. The developed countries have dominated the global regimes and thereby dictated what should be the international rules of conduct. "At the same time, under the cover of 'human rights above sovereignty' and 'limited sovereignty', the developed countries demand that developing countries surrender partial sovereignty, and make these issues excuses for intervening in developing countries' internal affairs. Their real intention is to safeguard their own interests at the cost of the interests of the developing countries" (Pan 2001:10). China's participation in global regimes is inextricably linked to its domestic interests. The Chinese policy makers, while conscious of China's global role, never overlook its domestic as well as regional interests (Wang 2007: personal
China always maintains that national interests have to be accorded primacy even while complying with international obligations. The international regimes should be treated as a framework of negotiations and during such negotiations, national interests should be emphasized over all other considerations (Ma 2007: Personal Interview).

The changes that took place in China's international relations in the post-Cold War period were mainly shaped by its changing perceptions of the international system and major institutions associated with that system and more than that the urgent need for economic modernization of the country. The Chinese leaders invoked nationalism by associating success in a globalizing, interdependent world with the underlying goal of making China rich and strong. In an October 2001 speech commemorating the ninetieth anniversary of the 1911 Revolution, Jiang noted that Sun Yat-sen had also called on China to adapt itself to "world trends" in trying to catch up with the advanced countries. Jiang quoted Sun as saying, "The tide of world events is mighty. Those who follow it prosper, whereas those who resist it perish" (Jiang 2001:0919). Again, in a speech marking the eightieth anniversary of the Chinese Communist Youth League in 2002, Jiang argued, "this kind of patriotism [rejuvenating the nation] puts the future destiny of China in the context of global structures, and closely combines the development of Chinese society with the advancement of the entire human society". To act on this vision, Jiang argued, the Chinese people "must grasp the general trend of global development" in order to properly "take up the historical mission of modernization" (Jiang 2002:0515). In this connection, it should be noted that Beijing has long tried to rally the Chinese diasporas to the cause of rejuvenating China, thereby allowing the country to stand up as an equal in the world of states (Zhu 2001:0919). In one of Hu Jintao's first speeches as Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), he argued for continued economic reform referring to the "wide gap between our country's economic strength, strength in science and technology, and strength in national defense and those of the world's advanced level"(Hu 2003:0102). Just as the CCP itself must advance with the times, as enshrined in Jiang's doctrine of the "three represents", so too must China adapt to global regimes. In a statement made in 2003 at the UN, Li Zhaoxing placed unprecedented emphasis on multilateral cooperation
arguing that it should be the “principal vehicle in the handling of international affairs.” He further asserted that global challenges require “globalized cooperation” (*quanqiu xing de hezuo*) (Li 2003:11).

During this period, China revisited and repositioned its foreign policy that enabled it to operate comfortably in the international arena just like any other country of the world. ‘Co-operation’ and ‘co-ordination’ became the key words in place of ‘confrontation’ and ‘isolation’. Moreover, instead of questioning the international order, “the PRC committed itself to an (international) order which was analogous to what was conceived by a majority of member states in international society. It was an order, however, which was grudgingly regarded as acceptable, though not desirable and fully justifiable. Such commitment nevertheless dictated modifications and adjustments, sometimes painful, of China’s international policies in many sensitive areas” (Zhang 1998:28). All these changes and reformulations were very significant as they signaled China’s gradual acceptance of, and conformity to, rules, norms, and conventions universally accepted in international society. Thereby, China conveyed its desire for active participation in the global regimes through which it could enhance its status as a responsible power in the world system. Zhang terms this ‘political socialization’ of China as an integral part of the global system of governance (Zhang 1998:30). In this context, Hongying Wang refers to the famous slogan “linking up with the international track” that first appeared in official rhetoric around 1987 (Hongying 2007:4). This entailed a definite change in ‘posturing’ on the part of China as well as substantial modifications at the policy level.

After China took the conscious decision to adopt a ‘proactive’ role in international affairs in the post-Cold War period, it joined innumerable international inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and regimes in order to facilitate the drive for economic development. However, the sweeping changes that took place in the political, economic and ideological realm of China generated wide-ranging debates in the political circles as to what would be the impact of such an unqualified embrace of globalism. The paramount area of concern for the policymakers was the possible erosion of state sovereignty, and most importantly...
defending all these changes ideologically. The debate resulted in the political establishment of China defending the changes “as means of facilitating the growth of Chinese economic power, political influence and international prestige” (Roy 1998:139). In fact, globalism was justified as a strategy for protecting China’s state sovereignty and other national interests.

The great benefits accrued from the process of economic reforms made China embrace the hitherto proscribed concepts such as the open door, international interdependence, adaptation and integration. The Chinese leadership realized that by fully integrating into the world market and making proper utilization of scientific and technological expertise, the country could attain the status of world power – Deng made sure that “Chinese nationalism and globalization were defined in virtuous and mutually complementary terms” (Kim 2007:211). Globalization soon became a part of Chinese official lexicon and most significantly, national power was now defined in terms of economic strength rather than military strength. In the post-Cold War period, achieving economic supremacy became the primary goal for Chinese policymakers and that (goal) guided the country towards better adaptation to global norms and conventions. Also, there was a significant change in the Chinese perception of international order. It was no more regarded as antithetical or unfair and rather accepted as it was. There was a conscious attempt by the Chinese leaders to play according to the international rules, norms and conventions rather than questioning them. The rise of China as a responsible nation in the international community is said to be one of the major changes in post-Cold War Chinese foreign policy (Kim 2007:230). This change reflected through China’s active participation in different multilateral institutions and global regimes.

However, China’s increasing involvement in global regimes does not signify any decline in emphasis on principles such as independence and sovereignty of state. For example, the compromises that China made while acceding to WTO, were accepted primarily as a means for advancing specific state interests related to economic modernization. Indeed, Beijing’s logic was that the protection of China's sovereignty actually required further reform and opening, as expressed in the following statement by Jiang:
Modern technology is advancing rapidly and industrial and economic restructuring on a global scale is speeding up. Competition based on overall national strength will increasingly become the leading factor deciding a country's future and destiny. We are facing rare development opportunities as well as grim challenges. Only by constantly improving our economic strength, national defense strength, and national cohesiveness, can we remain invincible amidst increasingly intensive international competition and truly safeguard our national sovereignty and national pride (Jiang 1999:0817).

The Rationale behind China’s Adaptation to the Global Regimes

In an increasingly complex and interdependent world, negotiations, adaptation and implementation of international agreements are major components of the foreign policy decisions of every state. China is no exception to this fact. China has made a paradigmatic shift from seeking unilateral advantage from the public goods provided by international institutions towards playing an increasing participatory role in multilateral organizations and in the promotion of its own ideas for international norms and regimes. Here, we analyze the rationale and motivation behind China’s proactive engagement with the international regimes.

Economic Imperatives

Since Beijing began its process of institutional engagement, it has been more receptive to institutions, which focus on trade and economic cooperation issues rather than on security matters, perhaps because cooperation in economic and security areas involves different ‘stakes’. As Lipson explained, states within economic regimes must concern themselves with the potential of another member breaking rules since most such actions would be slow to develop and difficult to conceal (Lipson 1984:17). Jervis noted that security issues usually spark more competitiveness between states and that the stakes are much higher in the strategic realm than the economic. A state is also commonly able to defend itself against external economic problems without adversely affecting other states' interests and can take such defensive measures at a more leisurely pace than during a security emergency (Jervis 1982:358-60). A feature of many current economic regimes is a
provision which permits members to suspend obligations without withdrawing from
the regime altogether. Even though the use of such 'escape clauses' may carry some
degree of penalty, their existence has assuaged concerns that members would be
completely locked into international economic agreements (Lanteigne 2005:21). All
of these features of modern economic regimes may explain why states often view
economic regimes as more congenial to their interests.

China's growing economic power has allowed the country to negotiate with
trading and financial regimes from a far stronger position than when it first opened
up to the global market. Admittedly, the country's advantage of being a major
economic power did not prevent its negotiation process of joining the GATT/WTO
from lasting well over a decade. Yet to be revealed is how China's economic power
will affect its actions and those of other members within the organization, and what
kind of role China will play in the current international trading round of negotiations
launched after the Doha meeting.

China has been presented with many incentives to develop positive
relationships with multilateral economic regimes. From a domestic-level viewpoint,
the opening to international economic institutions, especially the WTO, has assisted
the government in implementing reform initiatives throughout many sectors within
China, including the state bureaucracy, state-owned enterprises, private business,
trade in goods and services, the military, banking and financial services. The
country's economic success has been linked to its ability to adapt to international
economy, including its institutions, just as it has linked the legitimacy of its
communist regime to its ability to provide for the Chinese people and lead the
country further towards economic development and modernity.

Since the end of the Cold War, the Chinese government has largely been
accepting the WTO and the Asian initiatives designed to improve regional trade
flows and to avoid a repeat of the political and economic circumstances, which
created the Asian financial crisis. China had remained sufficiently insulated from the
regional economic system to endure the Asian flu with just a slight bout of sniffles
(Keohane 1984:102). At the beginning of the new century there appeared little
evidence that China would scale down its economic opening policies, since its
comfort level with liberalized trade has extended beyond international and regional trade regimes into smaller-scale preferential trade agreements in Asia and increasingly elsewhere in the world. The true test of the resiliency of China’s opening to the global economy, and its associated regimes, will be how it conducts itself within an increasingly dense network of trade obligations.

The ‘information question’ is another factor in examining China's relations with international regimes. As Keohane noted, asymmetrical information, when one party knows more than another, can lead to serious problems in the interaction between states. However, regimes by their very nature provide information, reducing the risks involved in making international agreements. Thus, he argues, economic regimes are beneficial in reducing the perceived risks of economic transactions and in reducing the costs of various interactions since regimes reduce gaps in information flow, which may lead to conflicts between partners (Feinerman 1995:186-210). The Chinese case is no exception. As a late comer, China has not only been required to quickly learn the rules of procedure in the global economy but also has been placed at the risk of adverse treatment by more advanced economies, a situation that the Chinese Communist Party with its legitimacy at stake largely based on continued economic growth can ill-afford.

Every institution which China decides to engage has the potential to provide information on international rules and norms, whether area-specific or of a more general nature, as well as the policy orientations of other participants in a given regime. Beijing appears to have made much use of economic institutions in assisting with its rapid transition from command to liberal economic system. In the cases of the WTO, the APEC forum and the APT, China has utilized these regimes not only for the mutual benefit of increasing trade flows with its counterparts, but also to increase its knowledge of multilateralism, international norms and the preferences of other political actors. Within the WTO, Beijing has the ability to better understand international trade discourse, while its membership and size ensures Beijing of a role in the shaping of future trade developments. APEC and the APT provide China with the ability to gain further insights into the economic recovery since the financial crisis of East Asia and to further examine how the development processes of the
economically advanced states in the region could act as models for future Chinese growth.

The advantages of these regimes are several. Since China is becoming increasingly integrated with the global economy through trade, joint ventures, international investment and foreign assistance, it is in its interests to ensure that the global economy evolves in ways that are compatible with Beijing's goals. In joining both regional and international economic institutions, Beijing has spoken out against protectionism as well as favoritism in global trade while seeking to distinguish itself as a large developing economy. At the same time, it has used these bodies to promote its growing economic and market power and to consolidate economic relations both with neighbours and with international markets, ensuring continued economic growth. To examine the economic case studies, Beijing's participation within APEC, the ASEAN-Plus-Three and various emerging preferential trade agreements in Asia has resulted in many gains for China, including heightened regional prestige, access into other important regional economies, and experience in the art of foreign economic interactions, thus giving China more weight in interacting with the global economic system. Since the rules of these two organizations are consensus-based, China need not fear being 'ganged upon' by other members and having its own policies dictated by outsiders. Within these regimes, China has the luxury of pursuing the largest possible number of gains at a very low cost. Yet, China's slow but steady evolution towards the economically leading position in Asia, as well as the growing number of economic ties China is forging with the rest of Asia, have placed additional pressures on Beijing. Thus, an argument can be made that as long as China continues to tie its economic growth to external trade and economic liberalization, it cannot afford to view economic institutional cooperation in a 'zero-sum' fashion. It was painfully proven in Asia in 1997 that an economic downturn in one country can affect all the neighbouring countries as well.

In the case of the WTO, China has had to pay a large admission price and did not have the luxury of entering into this group on its own terms. Instead, the process of joining was lengthened by China's many incremental attempts to improve its
economic liberalisation practices and laws to a point where other WTO members would accept China's accession. The economic impact of China’s WTO membership is bound to be severe in the short term, especially in the sensitive areas of financial services and agriculture. Having entered the organisation, the rule-based structure of the WTO system requires that if China attempts to act in an overly 'selfish' manner, it would be the subject of punitive action from other members and/or the WTO's dispute settlement body. Thus, China must play by the rules to a sufficient degree to maintain membership benefits.

It can be argued that China's huge market and growing economic power may provide a temptation for the country to act less cooperatively within the WTO, since other members might not wish to sacrifice their lucrative linkages with Beijing. However, the WTO will act as a strong incentive for the government of Hu Jintao to push forward with the economic reform programme to maintain its levels of economic growth so that the Party will be able to maintain the goodwill of the Chinese people. In the case of the WTO, China needs to take the costs with the benefits for maximum gain from its association with the organization.

**Security Imperatives**

Beijing's relations with security institutions have gone from cold to cordial, and the level of Chinese interest and participation in such regimes has grown since the beginning of the 1990s. This increasing interest can be explained in various ways. First, China is developing confidence that it can cooperate with these regimes while maintaining a necessary level of sovereignty and state security. Second, many of the strategic institutions which have developed around China since the end of the Cold War contain both frameworks and mandates more suited to specific Chinese interests both at an international and domestic level. Third, China’s ongoing concern about being marginalized by other states, and especially by other great powers, the 'containment' nightmare, has prompted its use of institutions to help thwart such potential international initiatives. Fourth, the security issues, which China is attempting to address today, are less within the realm of 'state vs state' and more in relation to non-traditional threats such as terrorism, separatism and international
crime. These new security dangers have proven too difficult for China to address alone, necessitating the cultivation of friends and allies to solve these complex problems.

Thus, the cost-benefit ratio of Beijing's engagement with international strategic institutions has been altered to the degree that China believes these organisations provide enough goods to be worth the risks and loss of sovereignty of institutional cooperation (Feinerman 1995: 189). The clearest symbol of this level of comfort is the creation of the SCO. SCO was the first major strategic institution created primarily under Chinese influence. Beijing's proposals to expand the mandate of the ARF and its stronger, more positive participation in the Korean Six-Party Talks provide additional proof of this rising comfort level.

China originally approached post-Cold War security institutions with caution due, in part, to unfavourable historical encounters with them. The UN targeted Chinese interests in Korea in the early 1950s, and that body's recognition of the Republic of China instead of the mainland contributed to Beijing's forced isolation during the first decades of the Cold War. Even after China gained further international visibility and recognition, the country was still influenced by fears these regimes would force Beijing to make its defence policies less opaque, providing greater confidence to China's adversaries and reducing the Chinese deterrence abilities (Lanteigne 2005: 28). This anxiety still tends to permeate the Chinese approach to participation in strategic regimes, regardless of the level of formality or rules of the regime in question, but is no longer a major concern as it was during the Cold War period.

China's participation in global security institutions has helped the country to pursue a primary foreign policy goal of maintaining a stable neighbourhood to ensure that it can continue its social and economic development unimpeded by regional crises. China's neighbourhood is currently at a level of peace unprecedented since the end of the Second World War. Beijing is unwilling to take this stability for granted and instead operates on the assumption that the international system remains in a transitional period from a bipolar world dominated by superpower rivalry to either a multipolar one, which Beijing would favour for its
ability to bring about checks and balances on state power, or a unipolar one dominated by the United States, which Beijing has argued would be detrimental to global peace and stability. In addition to concerns about great-power alignment, China faces a host of non-traditional security threats which may adversely affect its desire for sustained regional stability. These include the ‘three evils’ of separatism, terrorism and extremism, all of which may be imported into China from abroad, as well as the smuggling of arms, drugs and persons.

With the beginning of the new century, the international war on terrorism has affected many parts of the world, and the question of nuclear proliferation has deeply impacted Asia with concerns that North Korea may barge into the nuclear club. Economic security has risen in importance as trade linkages have proven themselves vulnerable to terrorism and health crises, including SARS and avian flu. China lacks the power and abilities to address all of these problems unilaterally and although Beijing has built many strong bilateral relationships based on security interests, such ties have been deemed insufficient to address these new security threats. Therefore, China’s approach to multilateral security arrangements softened appropriately towards organisations, which discuss these matters on a regional scale, including ARF and APEC.

At the same time, China is concerned about the development of regional security organisations, which may exclude or align against China. This has been demonstrated by China’s skeptical view of the inroads the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have made into the former Soviet Union and closer to China’s western border. Neither the proposed ‘Four Party Group’ comprising the United States and select Pacific Rim allies based on shared security interests, nor the ‘theatre missile defence’ regime based on American anti-missile technology transfers to select allies, have been translated into actual alliances or even communities. Nevertheless, China’s harsh criticism of both groups demonstrated a high level of sensitivity to the possibility of being surrounded by unfriendly alliances.
Power Imperatives

A related rationale for China’s engagement with security institutions is based on China’s desire to improve its overall prestige in the international order and to develop a security role in keeping with its status as a great power (daguo) and developing global power. Previous great powers relied heavily on material and military strength to achieve their lofty status. However, the presence of the United States at the apex of the current post-Cold War international hierarchy coupled with the existence of nuclear weapons which some great power states possess, further discourages an attempt by China to improve its standing in the international order by means of force. Beijing has instead relied on participation in security institutions as one method of demonstrating its increasing importance to global security. Although China replaced the ROC at the UN Security Council in 1971, and demonstrated its own nuclear capability seven years before that, the country still seeks to develop its status as a modern great power. On the strategic side, the cases of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) provide new opportunities for China to expand its influence at the regional level. The ARF, like APEC, is consensus-based, which has allowed China the opportunity to block any multilateral initiatives which would challenge its security interests, namely Taiwan and the security situation in the South China Sea. The lack of binding rules within the ARF has permitted China to press its policies of insisting the above two issues as domestic in nature and best handled by Beijing, alone. Thus, China’s participation in the ARF could best be described as pursuing its national interests (keeping other members away from matters tied to Chinese sovereignty as well as gaining insights into other members’ strategic interests) at little cost. Should the strategic picture in the region change as a result of the creation of more formal security arrangements, China may need to further engage the ARF to ensure that its security interests are not marginalized. However, the idea of leaving China out of multilateral security dialogues is one, which is becoming less and less viable as Beijing takes a more active approach to international security problems.
A major area of contention between China and Western powers at the turn of the new century is the issue of when it is appropriate for security concerns to override norms of national sovereignty in the name of humanitarian intervention. Despite a softening on this question over the past decade, and especially since 9/11, the concept of ‘humanitarian intervention’ will continue to be seen by China as a game played by the rich and powerful, a game which brings differences in state power and abilities into sharp focus. As such, it is highly improbable that Beijing will attain a level of comfort with the idea of state intervention in a unilateral fashion on humanitarian grounds, and will prefer that such actions be taken under the aegis of the UN. Beijing’s acceptance of American actions in Afghanistan after 9/11 indicates a change in Beijing’s stance on the question of state sovereignty and military intervention. Though China has serious reservations about US interventions in Afghanistan and subsequently in Iraq, its relations with the US are far more important to sacrifice.

Regimes, as Krasner noted, are created when the distribution of power among a given set of countries is relatively equal, but problems in coordination are present (Lanteigne 2005:25). It should be added, that for a regime to appear, not only must power levels of potential members be compatible, but there must be at least a minimum of policy coordination and amicable relations among the partners. After the end of the Cold War, these conditions were present in the case of China, since while the country was more powerful than many of its partners, in terms of its exposure to international discourse, China was very much new. Examining Beijing’s current relationship with international institutions, the cost-benefit measurement greatly favours continuing to create and strengthen international linkages. How long will this particular situation last and what will be the next stage of China’s cooperation with international regimes? To answer these questions, it is necessary to examine the ability of such regimes to provide China with the instruments it desires and the costs the country will be willing to assume in the future to reap maximum benefits from multilateral diplomacy through these institutions.
Maximum Benefits with Minimum Responsibilities?

China’s adaptation to global regimes is essentially linked to the fulfillment of domestic interests. According to Prof. Wang Yizhou, China’s role in global regimes is shaped by its calculation of domestic as well as regional interests (Wang 2007: personal interview). This aspect of China’s approach to international regimes can be summarized by what Samuel S. Kim has termed the “maxi-mini principle” — maximization of rights and minimization of responsibilities. Although Kim acknowledges that during the reform period Chinese elites have articulated a foreign policy orientation of “international cooperation and global interdependence”, he also finds that the involvement of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in international regimes is directed at “state-enhancing, not state-diminishing functionalism” (Kim 1995:51). In essence, the PRC is interested only in “free rides” and in gaining access to technical expertise, foreign aid, and information in order to further its goal of economic development. In other economic and political regimes, China at the start of the twenty-first century appears to be slowly but perceptibly moving away from Kim’s ‘maxi-mini’ principle of engaging institutions to gain the maximum number of rights while minimizing the associated responsibilities. The term was used to describe Chinese participation in the UN and to account for its policy of oscillating between ‘tacit cooperation and aloofness’ within that organization. In other words, he noted that Chinese conservatism in its participation in the UN could be traced to its desire to accrue the most benefits while assuming the least costs (Lanteigne 2005:27). Elizabeth Economy noted that the principle could be applied to China’s association with international regimes as a whole, suggesting Beijing employs international institutions to enhance its state economic capabilities rather than to transfer state sovereignty to an international decision-making body (Lanteigne 2005:28).

The ‘maxi-mini’ idea can arguably imply that China’s approach to international regimes is unique. In reality, a strong case can be made that any given state approaches an international institution first with the question of how the regime can benefit the state, and only secondly vice versa, if at all. Differences in state approaches to international institutions can be found in the degree to which each
state maximizes the benefits of cooperation while minimizing the costs. China, being a great power, is in a better position to do so than many other nations. While examining Beijing’s interactions with international institutions since the end of the Cold War, one may question whether China has become increasingly more willing to accept higher costs in cooperating with international institutions in order to accrue future gains. This would provide evidence that although the ‘maxi-mini’ principle can be used to describe some facets of Chinese behaviour towards international institutions, it does not reveal the entire picture. Furthermore, as China grows in both political and economic power, the country can less afford to take a ‘maxi-mini’ approach to institutional cooperation.

**China’s Adaptation to Global Regimes: A Process of Mutual Adjustment and Impact**

China's relations with the global regimes and international organizations could be characterized as a complex process of mutual adjustment and influence. Its adaptation to various global regimes could not be seen merely as a passive one-way course with self-adjustments on the part of China only, but rather a positive feedback for these systems as China as an active participant plays a prominent role in affecting, reforming and correcting the regimes (Wang 2003:42). So, during the long term process of engagement, while on the one hand the global regimes have adjusted their rules, regulations, and arrangements, "China has also improved its participation efficiency and confidence with the increase of participation frequencies and the development of relevant institutions" on the other (Wang 2003:44). While making adjustments to adapt to global regimes effectively, China tries to influence and reform the functioning of the (global) regimes, "formulating or amending international rules of conduct in order to occupy a beneficial position for international competition" (Tao 2001:10).

As has been mentioned, China in the post-Cold War period has become a key player in the system of global governance that functions through (global) regimes, organizations, and treaties. From an isolated, inward-looking state, it has transformed itself into an active participant in the policy-formulating mechanisms at
the global level. While in 1977, China was a member of merely 21 international governmental organizations, by 2005 it has joined more than 130 inter-governmental international organizations and has extended commitments to 267 international multilateral treaties (Government of the PRC 2005:30). It has taken part in international cooperation in such diverse fields as anti-terrorism, arms control, non-proliferation, peacekeeping, economy and trade, development, human rights, law-enforcement and environment. We can attempt to delineate certain reasons for China joining the (global) regimes and institutions at a rapid pace:

- In some cases, membership brought considerable benefits at very few costs and constraints (Membership of World Bank, IMF and ADB are prime examples).

- In others, China has to bear significant costs by joining the regime, but the benefits accrued from the membership certainly outweigh the costs (WTO is the principal example).

- In some cases, China has joined international regimes that it once rejected (in the Maoist era), but only after it had improved its own circumstances to the point that it could accept the obligations of membership (Thus, it accepted the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Partial Test-Ban Treaty, and the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty only after it had developed its own nuclear arsenal, and had assisted Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme).

- In some other cases, China has joined reluctantly, not because it shares the values and purposes of the regimes in question, but largely because it does not intend to be seen as isolated from the rest of the international community (International Human Rights Regimes are perhaps the best examples) (Harding 2002:375-400).

**China’s Approach towards Global Regimes: Is there any Change?**

The brief history of Chinese involvement in global regimes gives it a special place in any attempt to measure the impact of regime norms on the participating states. China’s status in the international community and its crucial role in the
regimes make the issue of essential significance. The rapid increase in China's involvement in various global regimes has raised a number of questions regarding the precise nature of Chinese involvement. What values and policy priorities does China bring to the global agenda? What is the impact of China's evolving political and economic system on Chinese behaviour and the policy-making process? What role does the international community play in shaping Chinese preferences? How effective is China's implementation of the global accords that it has ratified? What impact do the global regimes have on Chinese foreign policy-making?

It is not easy answering these questions as the level of China's involvement in different global regimes has never been uniform. Many scholars have attempted to study the values and priorities that China brings to the negotiating table and the nature of Chinese participation in a global regime. Despite differences in their approaches, the scholars agree on the point that even though showing eagerness towards more active participation in global regimes, China remains ambivalent, if not suspicious, of global governance. Thomas Christensen argues in a Foreign Affairs article:

Chinese elites are suspicious of many multilateral organizations, including those devoted to economic, environmental, nonproliferation, and regional security issues. In most cases, China joins such organizations to avoid losing face and influence....Chinese analysts often view international organizations and their universal norms as fronts for other powers (Christensen 1996:38).

Harry Harding and David Shambaugh also suggest that despite China being far more integrated into the international community than previously, its "ambivalence toward cooperation has not been completely resolved". They further argue that "Chinese leaders will continue to view international regimes with suspicion, especially those whose rules they did not help write" (Economy 2001:232). Other scholars like Bates Gill, Thomas Moore and Dixia Yang likewise argue that deep ambivalence characterizes China's participation in global regimes. We can outline the conclusions the academic analysis has reached regarding the pattern of China's involvement in global regimes (Moore and Yang 2001:191-228).
China does not intend to stand isolated in blocking the international action. It has been extremely reluctant to use its veto in the United Nations Security Council, unless it can join one or more other permanent members in the body.

Compliance with the regimes is a very important issue. There is no possibility of China violating the core norms and principles of regimes except in some gray areas.

China is fast learning the art of international cooperation. It seems increasingly willing to accept some international activity—such as international peacekeeping—that it once denounced as infringement on sovereignty. It has also made considerable progress toward accepting, at least in principle, the concepts of universal standards of human rights, even as it continues to insist that countries should advance those rights at their own pace, and in their own way.

However, China has taken few initiatives through international regimes and organizations to address major problems. Even less, it has proposed major changes in the international regimes and organizations that it has joined.

The Impact of Global Regimes on China's Policy-Making Process

Global regimes certainly influence the policy-making process of the participant country. "Such influence is important for several reasons: the transmission of new ideas and knowledge from the international community can contribute the learning process and to changes in behavioural norms by domestic actors, the requirements of the regime may result in the proliferation of new domestic actors or the establishment of new bureaucratic linkages that will influence policy outcomes, and regimes often provide training opportunities, financial transfers, and technological advances that enable policy change" (Economy 2001:236-37). The sharing of information and knowledge on various issues among the member countries of a particular regime helps in enhancing the level of intellectual expertise of the participant country. For developing countries like China,
international experts have proven instrumental in creating and strengthening a domestic expert community with shared values and principles. By identifying Chinese experts or potential experts and drawing them into the international discourse, the international regime may therefore contribute to the development of a domestic community of experts (Economy 2001:236-37). In the field of trade, Jacobson and Oskenberg found strong evidence that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund contributed not only to deepening the expertise of Chinese trade and foreign policy analysts but also to reconfiguring the balance of power among various individuals and groups of Chinese economic experts. There are instances of Chinese leaders sending individuals abroad for training and research when they realize that the technical demands of a regime require the development of domestic expertise. Moreover, the global community also provides resources to member countries either to ease the process of accession to a regime or to help ensure implementation of the regime’s goals. Kim notes that the World Bank, for example, is seen as providing “free technical assistance not available from other countries [serving as] a kind of global repository of scientific knowledge on economic development” (Kim 2004:39).

The global regimes influence domestic processes and outcomes by helping to establish institutions and laws that address new activities. While entering into a new regime, a number of requirements have to be met like data collection, monitoring of implementation, and reporting results of impact of regimes at the ground level. All these call for the establishment of new bureaucratic linkages and even permanent institutions to carry out the process of adaptation smoothly. These institutions also provide the means by which member countries become inculcated with the values of the regime and they eventually lead to broader and deeper reforms in the foreign policy and attitudes of the country. The changes in China’s approach towards international regimes in the post-Cold War period bear ample testimony to this fact. For example, after China’s accession to the WTO, old laws were changed, new laws were promulgated, new departments and bureaus were set up, and additional tribunals were created within the court system to judge violations of intellectual property rights and other such WTO related regulations.
Does participation in regimes actually affect the policy-making process? Do (domestic) norms of behaviour evolve in ways that are consistent with the regime? Kim has outlined a theory on the mechanism by which international regimes and institutions affect Chinese behaviour. He says:

Most IGOs [intergovernmental organizations] can have influence through their own global agendas on the shaping or reshaping of Chinese national agendas. Most IGOs both give and take information, thereby gradually affecting Chinese foreign policy makers’ perception of self-interest and their calculations of the costs and benefits of norm-abiding and norm-defying behaviour. Post-Mao Chinese global learning does not have clearly demonstrated starting and ending points in time. Instead, it can be better explained as a form of learning process itself, an ongoing cognitive and experiential re-evaluative process in which both domestic and external variables interact and mediate between actors’ perception of national needs, interests and beliefs (Kim 2001:219).

However, there is still skepticism in the Western circles as to whether China is really moving in the direction of full adaptation of global regimes with long-term changes in behavioural norms and practices. But as the process of ‘learning’ continues, even the short-term changes in policies, practices, and behavioural patterns of China in line with the global regime standards, would eventually pave the way for complete adaptation.

China continues to adopt what Kim has called the “maxi-mini” approach towards the global regimes and organizations: obtaining the maximum benefit for itself, while paying the minimal cost, not only in terms of financial sacrifice, but also of restrictions on its autonomy. More specifically, encompassed within this maxi-mini principle is a set of enduring foreign policy values that the PRC brings to the negotiating table across a range of issues. In their historical analysis of China’s outlook on international relations Harding and Shambaugh suggest several such values, including protection against infringements on “territorial integrity and commercial viability, limiting foreign cultural and intellectual influences on their society,” and maintenance of a “monopoly of organized political power such that all politically active organizations would be sanctioned by and loyal to the central government”(Economy 2001:231). These same points are largely echoed by Alastair
Johnston in his study of Chinese thinking on nuclear weapons: "The preferred ends have predominantly remained the preservation of territorial integrity and foreign policy autonomy, the defense of political power by the communist leadership in Beijing, and the growth of China's influence commensurate with its self-ascribed status as a major power" (Johnston 2001:48).

A recent Council on Foreign Relations Report on Chinese behaviour in global regimes further illuminate the extent to which these values have become embedded in Chinese thinking and strategy concerning international regimes (Economy 2001:235). For example, the report concludes that with regard to the maintenance of sovereignty, Chinese leaders remain vigilant against the incursion of unwanted foreign influence in areas as disparate as telecommunications, human rights, and the environment. Therefore, although embracing the technological advantages of participating in the telecommunications regime, Chinese leaders have engaged in a continuous battle against the "spiritual pollution" that such technology brings (Economy 2001:236-38). In the realm of human rights, China has generally "defied the efforts of international organizations and individual governments to judge China's performance and impose international standards on its political system" (Chan 2006:43). In the environmental area, China's consistent refusal to allow formal monitoring of its implementation of environmental accords, on sovereignty grounds, has earned it a reputation for advocating agreements that "have no teeth" (Chan 2006:44). Similarly, M. Taylor Fravel argues that although China has generally adopted a more positive outlook toward peacekeeping since 1981, "as peacekeeping norms have evolved from traditional to non-traditional (e.g., do not have consent of all parties), China has maintained a traditional view by stressing the importance of sovereignty and emphasizing consent and impartiality" (Chan 2006:56). This view was clearly governing China when it agreed on the deployment of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping forces (and eventually allowed its own personnel to be sent) to East Timor in 1999 only after the Jakarta government, however reluctantly, "invited" the UN to do so.

Along with a defense of Chinese sovereignty, maintaining national security as traditionally understood is a top priority for Chinese decision-makers in
negotiations with other states. Michael Swaine and Alastair Johnston have detailed the extent to which Chinese leaders continue to apply a state-centered, balance-of-power approach to their negotiation of arms control regimes. They conclude that China's growing involvement in arms control negotiations has "primarily taught it to use the arms control arena more effectively for its state-centric purposes rather than promoting a reconsideration of how best to attain security" (Swaine and Johnston 1999:121). From their perspective, China has been slow to adopt cooperative concepts of security and to accept the need to place real restrictions on Chinese military capabilities (Swaine and Johnston 1999:90-135). Johnston additionally notes, in a separate study, that for China "the world is, in the main, a threatening place where security and material interests are best preserved through self help or unilateral security" (Swaine and Johnston 1999:112). China's concern with its international image, especially among developing countries, has occasionally engendered a more proactive stance in its participation in international regimes. For example, as the Council on Foreign Relations report notes, "China's decision to accede to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty resulted in large measure from pressure from the developing world" (Saich 2000:213). In fact, Chinese participation in regimes—from accession through implementation—is a highly dynamic process, with implications regarding both the mechanisms by which China formulates its foreign policy and the evolution of that policy. By the very nature of the ongoing interaction between Chinese domestic institutions and those of the international arena, China's involvement in international regimes represents strong linkages between domestic and foreign policies.

Even in the most sensitive foreign policy area, arms control, there is some evidence that the Chinese have learned from contacts with the West and that this has affected behavioural norms (albeit in a limited sense), a point Gill makes in his analysis (Gill 2001: 257-88). Swaine and Johnston argue that contact between Western and Chinese arms control experts has "helped buttress arguments in favour of signing the NPT and CTBT and joining the FMPC (Fissile Material Production Cutoff) talks. They [Western experts] have also exposed some members of the community to ideas about minimum deterrence, ideas that run contrary to much of the thinking in the uniformed PLA about limited deterrence" (Swaine and Johnston 60
Through their discussions with Chinese arms control experts Garrett and Glaser discovered an important shift in Chinese perceptions of the NPT following China's accession. They noted a "major change in thinking among scientists, analysts and officials in China during the early 1990s after China had signed the NPT," representing a "growing appreciation in China of the value of arms control in enhancing Chinese security" (Lampton 2001:30).

**China's Adaptation to Global Regimes: Gains and Losses**

As has been pointed out, China has never been very comfortable in being part of various global regimes as it has to make several difficult choices and has to effect significant changes in its domestic and external policy making to fulfill its international obligations. In other words, China has joined many global regimes for fear of exclusion and to achieve the benefits of membership. It is not necessarily fully committed to the principles on which they are founded, nor has concluded in every case that the regimes and institutions represent a true international consensus. Its skepticism has been reduced, but not eliminated. So, what has China gained and what has China lost by adapting to global regimes on various issue areas?

Marc Lanteigne identified about six gains for China, being part of multilateral institutions and global regimes - a) promotion of external peace and stability; b) perpetuation of regime and domestic stability; c) reduction of the risks and costs of information gathering; d) attainment of effective relations with other great powers; e) economic development and security and f) acquisition of greater prestige. However, by joining regimes, China is to be bound by rules created largely by great power competitions. Therefore, there is every indication that China could be accountable to these institutions with its options more limited than what could be deemed acceptable. Any participation in international institutions entails added responsibilities and risks to both the regime and to the state itself. This issue is acute in the case of China, due to its history of self-reliance, distrust of foreign influences, and direct interference by foreign powers in Chinese affairs during the nineteenth century.

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*See Lanteigne, Marc (2005), China and International Institutions: Alternate Paths to Global Power, London and New York: Routledge*
and twentieth centuries. The degree to which China can engage various economic and strategic regimes without damaging what its government sees as a threshold state and regime integrity present a constant dilemma for Beijing. Despite an increased understanding of the dynamics of multilateral cooperation and global-level institutions, the Chinese government is still very much dedicated to protecting state sovereignty, decrying 'hegemonistic' attempts by great powers to subjugate weaker ones. In short, these conditions are highly non-conducive to the level of institutional engagement, which China has sought. That perhaps explains China's incremental and selective adaptation to global regimes. But, with the deepening of the process of globalization, this stance may eventually make way for complete adaptation.

The growth of Chinese power over the past three decades is one of the most important events in the modern international system and will inevitably be used as a measurement for future studies of great power development. What makes China's rise distinct from its predecessors, however, is the fact that the country is growing within a global milieu, which is becoming increasingly saturated with international institutions. Rather than ignore them and concentrate on power acquisition vis-à-vis other great powers, China has chosen to directly engage regimes of many stripes in order to obtain further resources, knowledge and abilities to continue evolving as a great power and a potential global power. Unlike other great powers of the past which opted to enhance their power via the use of force and the development of far-reaching military and economic power, China has instead made use of the current international order, including its regimes, to attain greater power in the international system. The result of this engagement is that China is increasingly pursuing a foreign policy dedicated to cooperation and joint problem solving.

The post-Deng leadership has consistently maintained that China stands for greater adaptation to global regimes and deeper engagement with the international community working towards the establishment of a new international order. Addressing the Summit Meeting of the UN Security Council on January 31, 1992, Premier Li Peng put forward the Chinese views on the new world order:

In order to win genuine peace in the world and create a favourable environment for development for the people in all countries, the international community is focusing more and more on the subject of
what a new international order should be established. In our view, such basic principles such as sovereign equality of member states and non-interference in their internal affairs, as enshrined in the charter of the United Nations, should be observed by all its members without exception....The new international order should be established on the basis of the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence...countries, big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are entitled to participate in world affairs as equal members of international community and make their own contributions to world peace and development. The new international order should include a new economic order. The establishment of a just and rational new international economic order based on equality, mutual benefit, and providing for appropriate handling of the debt burden has become even more urgent and crucial (Beijing Review 1992:8).

During his visit to Russia in 1997, President Jiang Zemin expounded China's commitment to pursue cooperation with the international community and noted that China could not develop in isolation:

The practice of China's foreign policy fully demonstrates that China is a positive factor and a strong force in the maintenance of regional and world peace. China's development contributes to global stability, and a prosperous China means a stronger force of peace. History has proved repeatedly, that whether a nation poses a threat to world peace is not determined by its power but by the nature of its domestic and foreign policies. China's domestic policy is one of wholehearted commitment to socialist modernization and its foreign policy of independence and peace. We will not change the fundamental principles underlying these policies. We will, as always, make unremitting efforts to safeguard peace in the region and in world at large... China cannot develop itself in isolation from the rest of the world and the world also needs China for its own development. The maintenance of long-term social stability and economic prosperity in China is crucial both to the country itself and to the world at large. China will unswervingly keep to the road of development suited to its national conditions while vigorously absorbing all the achievements of human civilization. It stands ready to conduct extensive international cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit so as to make ever greater contributions to world peace and development. (Beijing Review 1997: 10)

China has in many ways exhibited behaviour which is consistent with its status as a rising power, including its current policies of seeking to advance its stature in the international system, increasing its global interests and desiring a greater voice in its
external relations. In keeping with its efforts to exert influence on the international
system, President Hu Jintao introduced the concept of ‘harmonious world’ at the
concept in his address at the United Nations. He said:

We should respect the right of each country to select its own social
system and path of development, encourage exchange rather than mutual
exclusion, learn from others rather than indulge in self-complacency, and
help other countries develop on the basis of their national conditions; we
should strengthen dialogues between different civilizations, improve
ourselves through competition, seek common development amongst
differences, and try our best to eliminate mutual suspicion and
misunderstanding, so that mankind will live in harmony and the world
will become colourful; we should, in the spirit of equality and openness,
maintain the diversity of cultures, promote democracy in international
relations, and work together to build a harmonious world where all
civilizations tolerate each other and live peacefully together (Hu
2005:11).

It will be necessary to the study of China’s evolving role in the world to look
beyond material capabilities and power politics to gain further knowledge of how
China cooperates with the international system. International institutions have
provided China both with pathways to its development as a great power and
reflections of much possible future for the Chinese state.

Over the last twenty years, China has undertaken a broad range of
international organizations to an extent unthinkable before the death of Mao
including those that it had previously denounced as embodying unacceptable values
or as the creations of ‘superpower hegemony’. These changes have coincided with
the sweeping reform policies stressing economic development and political stability
adopted since 1978. This period can be characterized as the phase of continuous
‘learning’, whereby China realizes that benefits emanating from cooperation (with
the regimes) certainly outweigh costs in the absence of major losses or adverse
effects from its earlier and limited interactions with the regimes. Kim has illustrated
this learning process:

[IGO]s have been allowed to enter, some by design and
others inadvertently, the castle of Chinese sovereignty as
conceptual Trojan horses influencing the process by which
Chinese national interests are redefined and Chinese national
priorities are restructured for a better fit with the logic of the global institution (Kim 1999:80-81).

The contemporary changes suggest that although the realist paradigm remains influential in Chinese foreign policy formulation, its predictive power has weakened since the PRC started engaging with the outside world through its ever-increasing participation in global regimes and IGOs. Such participation has certainly brought tangible benefits for China, which has consequently embedded itself further into them. While we can see that in the economic realm, China has moved decisively in a liberal direction, even in the fields of politics and security, it is increasingly accepting the universal norms and conventions as per the requirements of the different global regimes. Thus the trends-cooperating with the international regimes for absolute gains, acceptance of the fact that absolute sovereignty must be abandoned in the modern world, and intense involvement in the structures of global governance to maintain the status of 'big power' in the international community-have become determining factors for the formulation of the Chinese foreign policy. It is therefore imperative to reexamine the simplistic and generalized claims that China is a 'hard' realist state by taking into consideration the significant changes that took place in its approach towards the global regimes in the post-Cold War period.

In the subsequent chapters, we would analyze China's adaptation to the UN, the WTO and various non-proliferation regimes. The focus is on China's differential approach to these three distinct regimes.