NEW PERSPECTIVES *in foreign policy*

A JOURNAL WRITTEN BY AND FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
SPRING 2013 | ISSUE 4

CSIS | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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Letter from the Editorial Board

The security issues confronting policymakers in 2013 are dynamic and constantly evolving. In our fourth issue of *New Perspectives in Foreign Policy*, young professionals identify, assess, and present policy options for some of the most pressing security challenges in the world today.

Nuclear weapons remain at the crux of several global security concerns. Foremost are the ongoing challenges with North Korea and Iran and the continued advancement of their nuclear ambitions. In the case of North Korea, has the United States' current policy of oscillation between engagement and disengagement been fruitful? Or would a more multifaceted, active management approach open up new doors and foster progress? Turning to Iran, is the widely held assumption that a nuclear Iran will be able to dramatically increase its influence through nuclear blackmail a viable assumption? Closing out the analysis of the impact of nuclear weapons on global security, is Vladimir Putin's decision to end the U.S.-Russia Cooperative Threat Reduction program a harbinger of nuclear instability and proliferation or an opportunity to update the nonproliferation framework to work more effectively in the modern era?

Moreover, such challenges are occurring against a backdrop of one of the biggest defense drawdowns by the United States in years, leaving questions as to how the U.S. defense-industrial base will adapt to this changing environment and continue to contribute to national security.

Finally, we close with a nontraditional security challenge: the double-edged sword of social media in China. Online networks act both as a platform for the public to voice discontent and as a mechanism for the Chinese government to detect dissatisfaction.

Maintaining security in the international system has long been a central objective of U.S. foreign policy, but security challenges take many forms. In the following pages, we are proud to offer the analysis of five authors as they assess a wide range of security-oriented issues and what they mean not only for the United States, but for the world.

SINCERELY,

New Perspectives Editorial Board

Iran and the Illusion of Nuclear Dominance

Matthew Fargo

DO NUCLEAR WEAPONS actually help nations extract additional concessions or successfully demand changes in their adversary's behavior?[1] The assumption that they do has permeated the public debate on the potential risks of a nuclear Iran. The fear of a nuclear Iran frequently hinges upon the notion that Iran, if in possession of even a handful of nuclear weapons, would be able to dramatically increase its influence through the use of nuclear blackmail and emboldened foreign policies. However, evaluation of the history of other conflicts and crises involving nuclear powers suggests that nuclear weapons not only fail to bestow outright dominance, but that the perceived value of nuclear weapons has become hyper-inflated.

In his 2002 State of the Union address, President George W. Bush warned that nations seeking weapons of mass destruction could "attempt to blackmail the United States."[2] Ten years later, this idea was again given voice in an article advocating military action against Iran. Early last year, Matthew Kroenig, former Pentagon special adviser for defense strategy and policy on Iran, suggested that, "Having the bomb would give Iran greater cover for conventional aggression and coercive diplomacy."[3] Though this idea is commonly asserted and taken as fact, there is ample evidence suggesting otherwise.

The "nuclear blackmail" admonition presumes that a nation like Iran in possession of nuclear weapons could intimidate its adversaries or act in ways that nonnuclear nations cannot. The argument continues that even if nuclear states could be contained using traditional deterrence methods, they would still benefit from increased freedom of action that could thwart American interests abroad. For example, Iran could provide its proxies Hezbollah and Hamas with more advanced weaponry to harass Israel. However, this concern ought not be conflated with the fear of nuclear blackmail because it would not necessarily

empower a new nuclear-armed state to coerce other nations to do its bidding. Studies examining crisis bargaining have found that nuclear states are no more likely to enjoy success in forcing behavioral change upon other nations than states that do not possess nuclear weapons.[4]

Nor do nuclear powers gain a demonstrable advantage in crisis bargaining with other nuclear states. Studies analyzing the behavior of nuclear weapons states in crisis situations compared to the behavior of nonnuclear states have found that in disputes between nuclear powers, threats or displays of force breed reciprocal responses rather than acquiescence. The Soviet Union employed this strategy, at least initially, in response to American coercive tactics aimed at removing nuclear weapons from Cuba in 1962.[5] Nuclear powers also demonstrate greater caution toward their nuclear rivals, likely as a result of the potential risk of escalation in a nuclear crisis.

When rival nations also possess nuclear weapons, nuclear states are less likely to resort to war and more likely to use other methods of coercion. Surprisingly, Iran already exhibits behavior commonly observed in nuclear-armed states, such as using caution in foreign policy and asymmetric tactics such as proxy warfare to increase its influence while also limiting the potential for conflict escalation. A nuclear Iran would certainly still pose significant risks to stability in the Middle East. Its nuclear status could fuel regional competition, conflict, or an arms race, and pursuit of a weapon could lead Israel or the United States to attack its nuclear facilities with unknown consequences. But historically, new nuclear states have not enjoyed significant increases to their operational military might or to their international prestige and influence.[6] Alarmist rhetoric aside, there is no evidence to suggest that Iran's behavior or experiences would deviate dramatically from those of other nuclear actors.

Even if Iran developed a nuclear weapon and attempted to intimidate its nonnuclear neighbors such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia, or Egypt, any nuclear threat would inherently lack credibility. Any

The centrality of asymmetric and proxy warfare to Iran's strategic posture suggests that the loss of Syria as a conduit and ally would dramatically reduce Iran's ability to project power or shape the region's future.

actual use of a nuclear weapon by Iran would immediately invite reprisal, military or otherwise, from allies of the victim—such as from the United States—and would make permanent Iran's estrangement from the international community. It would thus undermine the most significant benefits that the possession of nuclear weapons is commonly believed to confer: state sovereignty and regime survival.

In fact, Iran's influence in the Middle East may depend more upon the outcome of the Syrian civil war than on its own status as a nuclear state. The centrality of asymmetric and proxy warfare to Iran's strategic posture suggests that the loss of Syria as a conduit and ally would dramatically reduce Iran's ability to project power or shape the region's future.[7]

While the potential consequences of a nuclear-armed Iran remain hotly debated, the notion that nuclear coercion is the threat to be feared most does not hold up. ■

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Back to Active Diplomacy: North Korea Policy for the Second Obama Administration

Jenny Jun

ONE CANNOT WAKE UP from a policy nightmare by covering one's eyes. It is true that North Korea has frustrated policymakers by reneging on every agreement from the 1994 Agreed Framework to the 2012 "Leap Day Agreement." It is also true that experts already agreed in past debates that the reclusive state was a "land of lousy options."[1] Yet, an aversion for repeating the past decade of failed negotiations must not be translated to a hesitation for active diplomacy. In the second Obama administration, the United States should break from a cyclical paradigm between engagement and disengagement, and approach North Korea's nuclear program as a management issue that needs continuous and timely attention. Taking advantage of greater domestic political will generated from the third nuclear test, along with China's shifting attitude toward Pyongyang, may enable this administration to build higher barriers of entry for North Korea establishing itself as a nuclear weapons state.

After President Obama's first term, policymakers learned that while patience may not reward bad behavior, it does not prevent it either.[2] Much of 2010 and 2011 had been spent on waiting for North Korea to uphold a series of unrealistic preconditions—including denuclearizing the state—in order to engage in talks. Meanwhile, North Korea torpedoed a ROK vessel, shelled an island, and revealed a brand new uranium enrichment facility. After the December 2012 Unha-3 rocket launch, State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland struggled to respond when asked what creative ideas the United States brought to the table, except to repeat that the administration made clear offers that North Korea did not accept.[3] While there was merit in the argument that Washington should not provide an incentive package first if Pyongyang wasn't going to return the favor, the patience failed to be strategic when

the United States did not actively seek alternative measures outside of the negotiation framework to control and deter stages of North Korea's nuclear program.[4]

In the second term, policymakers should take advantage of two developing opportunities to establish a much more active North Korea policy. First, Pyongyang's third nuclear test and a successful long-range rocket launch generated grave concerns from experts and the public. According to a recent Gallup poll, 83 percent of Americans responded that North Korean nuclear weapons are a critical threat.[5] These results were unprecedented, placing the threat at the top of a list of nine potential threats, including international terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, and China's military power. Experts urge that this issue be prioritized significantly, especially given the advanced stage of North Korea's nuclear program and the grave regional implications of having a nuclear state in East Asia.[6] Political will is growing, and President Obama, along with Secretary of State John Kerry, should grasp this opportunity to spearhead a major reassessment of U.S. policy on North Korea that produces a comprehensive strategy integrating political, military, economic, and human rights issues, taking into account lessons from past mistakes, new constraints, and U.S. objectives in nonproliferation and regional security.

China's changing calculus vis-à-vis North Korea will enable the United States to employ more tailored sanctions as well as use coordinated diplomacy to manage North Korea.

Second, China's changing calculus vis-à-vis North Korea will enable the United States to employ more tailored sanctions as well as use coordinated diplomacy to manage North Korea. Previously, without strict Chinese enforcements of sanctions along land and sea borders, UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874 did not have their intended impact. Recently, however, China quickly gave support to

UNSC Resolution 2087 and 2094, the two most comprehensive and tailored UN sanctions on North Korea at the time of this writing.[7] Resolution 2094 uses the term "decide" 18 times, on provisions for preventing bulk cash purchases and financial assistance, as well as on cargo inspections and luxury goods.[8] This language points to China's willingness to finally enforce parts of the agreed provisions. As further evidence, China has subsequently tightened land and sea customs inspections on North Korean cargo in Dandong and Dalian by sending down an official government letter asking for strict adherence to UN sanctions, with reports claiming that 60–70 percent of North Korean products have been held back for lack of proper documentation.[9]

Additionally, China's four largest banks—Bank of China, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, the China Construction Bank, and the Agricultural Bank of China—all suspended money transfers to North Korea's Foreign Trade Bank, a measure that went beyond provisions of Resolution 2094 to cooperate with U.S. Department of Treasury's independent sanctions.[10] Although China's chief concern will continue to be about stability in North Korea, these are concrete signs that China no longer thinks that shielding North Korea is a security panacea. Now Washington must build on this trend to actively coordinate with China on enforcing these sanctions seamlessly and initiate high-level bilateral dialogue on a long-term strategy toward the Korean Peninsula.

At the 30,000-foot view, policy questions regarding North Korea's nuclear program boil down to how much the United States cares about its long-standing policy on nonproliferation. Some have already argued that the endgame is for Washington to accept North Korea as a nuclear weapons state, the other option being "bombing North Korea to oblivion."[11] Policymakers must realize that the debate is not that simple. The United States' stance on North Korea is a stance on Iran, a stance on promised extended nuclear deterrence to allies, and a stance on the principle that nuclear proliferation will make the world a more dangerous place to live in. For political and military considerations, some options in halting Pyongyang's nuclear program may not be

realistic; that is not to say that the United States should not employ all other means to render acquiring a comprehensive nuclear program the hardest task the North Korean leadership has ever encountered in their lives. If a flood cannot be stopped, one should build a barrier, and a high one too. ■

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The End of Cooperative Threat Reduction (As We Know It)

Sarah Weiner

IN OCTOBER 2012, Russia announced that it would reject an automatic extension of its participation in the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, due to expire in June 2013. Since the end of the Cold War, the program has deactivated more than 7,600 nuclear warheads, destroyed over 900 intercontinental ballistic missiles, and removed all nuclear weapons from Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus.[1] By many accounts, CTR—also called the "Nunn-Lugar" program after its founders Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar—is the United States' most successful nonproliferation program.[2] So many were distressed when Russia declared it was not interested in an extension of the agreement. With headlines like "Russia Won't Renew Pact on Weapons with U.S."[3] and "Russia no longer wants U.S. aid on nuclear arms security,"[4] the media declared CTR dead and began writing its eulogy.

However, such declarations may be premature. In its initial rejection of automatic extension, the Russian Foreign Ministry stated that "Our American partners know that this proposal does not correspond with our view of the form in which and basis upon which it would be proper to build further cooperation. For this, a more modern legal framework is needed, among other things…."[5] Some U.S. administration officials and nonproliferation experts now argue that Russia may be amenable to a new deal, provided the United States agrees to some significant modifications.[6] This demand for a "more modern" framework likely refers to two of the thorniest issues in Nunn-Lugar cooperation: liability and transparency.

Under the current agreement, U.S. contractors assume no liability for any accidents that result from their work under CTR. Russia has objected to this blanket protection in the past, almost causing the agreement to collapse when it was

last up for renewal in 2006.[7] In 2005, the United States and Russia reached a tentative agreement that would have made U.S. companies responsible for accidents due to sabotage but protected them from other liabilities.[8] Ultimately, this deal was not implemented, but it may provide a useful framework for a 2013 follow-on.

The second sticking point may be trickier. Russia has long resented the amount of access it is required to grant U.S. officials and contractors under CTR. Moscow argues that transparency requirements impinge on its national security, forcing it to divulge sensitive information about its nuclear program. Several stand-offs between U.S. and Russian officials have taken place as a result, notably Russia's refusal to allow U.S. inspectors access to nuclear storage facilities and prickly negotiations over dismantlement transparency measures at Russia's Mayak facility.[9]

Many members of Congress have insisted upon including transparency measures in CTR implementation to ensure that U.S. funds are not inadvertently subsidizing the Russian nuclear weapons program. While this hesitation is reasonable, it imposes a burden on the Russian nuclear complex that Moscow may no longer be willing to accept. Future negotiators will need to work very hard to find a balance of transparency requirements that are stringent enough for Congress but relaxed enough for Russia.

Both Russian objections share a common thread and suggest a common solution. Nunn-Lugar, in its current form, is a program designed for a different time. CTR was established as an emergency measure to safeguard the massive nuclear arsenal of a collapsing Soviet Union that lacked the funds and expertise to adequately secure sensitive material. More than 20 years later, Russia is a more financially secure nation with its sights set on reestablishing its status as a great power. (Senator Nunn recently made this observation himself.[10]) As such, Moscow has become increasingly sensitive to insinuations that it cannot keep its own house in order. This is especially the case when it involves what it considers to be the United States "meddling" in its domestic concerns.[11] The Nunn-Lugar program will need to adapt to this new environment. The success of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty shows that Russia is willing to negotiate over nuclear issues, but the United States may no longer be able to enjoy the protections and access it had under CTR.

Instead of treating Russia like a fortunate recipient of U.S. largesse, CTR must evolve into a more mutually beneficial partnership. Bilateral exchanges of nuclear security experts, forums for discussing best practices, and relaxation of transparency and liability requirements are just a few policy options that could provide a constructive path forward. In its first 20 years, CTR was a foreign aid program. In the next 20, it must evolve into a two-sided framework for confidence-building measures. Leaders in Washington and Moscow must reconceptualize and restructure CTR to suit the needs of the post–Cold War era. Changes must be made, because if the United States cannot allow CTR to evolve, then Russia will likely let it die. ■

Instead of treating Russia like a fortunate recipient of U.S. largesse, CTR must evolve into a more mutually beneficial partnership.

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The 21st Century Build-Down

Luke Heselden

FACING PRESSURE TO REDUCE spending and decrease overseas military commitments, in 2011 the U.S. Congress mandated a nearly half-trillion-dollar cut to defense spending over the next decade—the largest such reduction since the end of the Cold War. These reductions, deemed manageable by the Department of Defense's (DoD) own budgetary analysis, still pose significant challenges to strategic planning, balancing resource allocation, and maintaining a healthy defense industrial base.[1] Despite these challenges and the the risk of even further cuts as part of a deficit reduction bill or continued sequestration, DoD and the defense industry should see the build-down as an opportunity. By focusing on boosting defense exports, the U.S. government can strengthen strategic relationships with global partners, while protecting industry from the worst effects of domestic budget cuts.

The Budget Control Act, which legislated $487 billion in defense cuts that are already underway, also required an additional $492 billion in cuts—part of the process known as sequestration—over the same period if Congress was unable to agree to $1.2 trillion in deficit reduction. After a delay due to the passage of the American Taxpayer Relief Act, sequestration went into effect at the beginning of March, resulting in a $42.7 billion cut to FY13 defense spending to be implemented over the next seven months.[2]

With cuts of this magnitude, the impact on defense procurement—the acquisition of new goods and services—is significant; but the implementation of sequestration and the historic precedent set by previous defense build-downs suggest that additional cuts are possible and could hit the procurement budget hardest. In the three defense build-downs since the end of World War II—following the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Cold War—average cuts to the total DoD budget were 37 percent. By comparison, the average cuts to procurement spending were 66 percent, nearly double the department-wide average.[3]

Drastic reductions in resources pinch any organization, and DoD is no different. Rather than making draconian cuts to force structure and troop benefits, DoD has instead historically chosen to reduce its procurement budget by prolonging the shelf-life of existing platforms, stretching out new acquisition programs, and purchasing fewer new units of equipment than it had originally intended. If the defense industry is to thrive in such a challenging environment, it will need to look abroad for new markets.

American defense contractors are aware of the history of defense draw-downs, and are examining the best ways to weather the fiscal storm. Last November, Boeing announced major layoffs in its defense division, citing declining defense spending.[4] This comes after public concerns from several other corporations regarding reduced spending and its implications for industry.[5] Complicating matters is the lack of diversity in the revenue streams of large American defense contractors. Four of the five largest American companies in the defense business generate more than three-quarters of their revenue from the defense sector, leaving them vulnerable to declines in government spending.[6]

A healthy defense industrial base is vital to America's ability to project power and protect interests globally.

A healthy defense industrial base is vital to America's ability to project power and protect interests globally. Although further cuts to defense budgets will almost certainly mean additional reductions to the defense industry's workforce, infrastructure, and operational capability, it is in the interest of America's economic and national security that this pillar of domestic industrial capacity does not wither. It will help ensure American competitiveness in science and technology development and make sure that the platforms necessary for waging future wars are designed, developed, and manufactured domestically. A robust industrial base also means protecting jobs and infrastructure at home, which is particularly important in

today's economic climate. To protect domestic industrial capacity and strengthen strategic relationships globally, industry and government should work together to develop inexpensive platforms designed and constructed with the budgetary realities and tactical requirements of foreign governments in mind. By developing export-ready platforms, the U.S. defense industry will generate new incentives for foreign governments to buy American.

The first step toward establishing more attractive platforms for export is to recognize the limited missions and budgets of most importers of defense products. The U.S. defense industry is priced out of some commercial opportunities because it produces high-tech but expensive platforms that are beyond the required capabilities and available resources of most militaries.[7] DoD has begun to take a look at exportability issues as part of its Better Buying Power 2.0 initiative, which calls for the need to "assess and incorporate exportability design features and any needed anti-tamper features early in the acquisition process."[8] DoD has already developed pilot programs to test these new exportability initiatives, including one for a radar system and another for an electronic warfare system.[9]

These initiatives are a step in the right direction, but more can be done. Industry should work more closely with export control agencies to manufacture low-cost, technologically capable platforms that are export oriented from day one. These export-ready platforms will help industry develop new revenue streams from nontraditional clientele, diversify its sales portfolio, maintain the economies-of-scale and research and development budgets that have been crucial to developing next-generation technologies, and strengthen industry-to-industry ties across borders. In addition, a commitment to increasing defense sales to rising powers, which frequently have dynamic economies and increasing defense budgets, will allow the United States to strengthen strategic relationships with these countries. When a government purchases a major defense platform from a foreign firm, it is committing to a commercial relationship that will last for the duration of that platform's life cycle. Commercial relationships developed because of

defense sales will also strengthen military-to-military relationships, an important factor in strengthening interoperability and defense cooperation.

Reduced resources will require DoD to prioritize missions and seek out truly multilateral approaches to the world's greatest security challenges. Simultaneously, if the defense industry is to thrive during austerity, firms will need to be more proactive in seeking out diversified revenue streams by developing inexpensive yet capable export-oriented platforms as well as identifying and aggressively pursuing opportunities to sell those platforms globally. DoD and the defense industry cannot alter the fiscal reality that is dictating smaller budgets, but through creative problem solving and global thinking, they can leverage the build-down to the long-term benefit of both industry and the nation's security. ■

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Leveraging Social Media in China: It's All about the "Positive Energy"

Meicen Sun

WHEN CHINA ANNOUNCED its new leadership at the Eighteenth Party Congress on November 14, 2012, China Yahoo!'s coverage of the event was a verbatim copy of the official statement released by the state's party-controlled news agency, Xinhua.[1] However, as readers scrolled further down the page, the comments section revealed a much more colorful discussion, with one ostensibly congratulatory comment reading "Warm congratulations from the people of Shanghai to Comrade Yu Zhengsheng for leaving Shanghai and entering the Center."[2] While not directly confrontational, carefully worded comments such as these reflect ways in which Chinese citizens are testing the limits of the government's control and policing efforts of the Internet. Similarly, the Chinese public's ability to share scandalous pictures and videos through online forums and microblogs has exposed a number of Chinese officials.[3]

Despite strict policing and tightening by the authorities, Chinese netizens are often able to share information faster than the government is able to police the Internet. Incidents, such as the ones noted above, may be an indication that social media in China is taking up its supposed role of empowering the common people. Subsequently, Chinese netizens are utilizing online outlets to exercise political power that they otherwise lack. However, the power of social media is a two-way street. Such media may provide the public a political voice, but it also gives the government the ability to detect discontent. Online forums can also play the role of a "detector" of public sentiment for the Chinese government.

Through tentatively releasing certain official statements online and then monitoring the responses from the public, the government is able to gather important information on how certain policies are perceived by the people. There are suspicions that the Chinese government has used social media to detect and punish domestic dissent. For

example, in June 2008[4] a teacher who posted pictures of schools that collapsed in the Sichuan earthquake was detained for spreading information unfavorable to the government.[5] While "unfavorable" political comments posted by common netizens in online forums rarely result in more than Chinese Internet police deleting them, the technical structure of the Internet in China makes it possible for the government to easily track down users through their Internet protocol (IP) address. China employs a real-name registration system in which all IP addresses are linked to their actual users, making the process of finding those who post comments straightforward.[6]

The government is starting to acknowledge the role and utility of the internet as a venue for political discourse and as a means through which to gauge public attitudes.

There is also a more subtle way in which the Chinese government is suspected of using social media to their advantage. China is likely monitoring comments and public sentiment online to help it adjust and implement certain policies. Widespread reports were circulated on the Chinese Internet that a Beijing court had jailed a group of officials from Henan for preventing residents from petitioning in the capital; the court publicly denied such an accusation.[7] An official commentary released by the Internet branch of China Central Television suggests that even if such accusations were false, their circulation on the Internet indicates public dissatisfaction with the government's handling of petitioners in general.[8] The incident, real or not, may be an indication that the government is starting to acknowledge the role and utility of the Internet as a venue for political discourse and as a means through which to gauge public attitudes.

The most recent commentary by China's state agency Xinhua further attests to the fact that the Chinese government has recognized the tremendous leverage afforded by public sentiment expressed through the Internet in its ongoing anticorruption campaign. In the

commentary, Xinhua praised the public's anger toward corruption as "positive energy" that should be encouraged.[9] The flip side to this is, of course, that other forms of public anger, which the article dismisses as "Internet rumor," are negative and should be discouraged. "Rumor always spreads faster than truth," claims the commentary. Therefore, as an expert advises, as long as the government enforces the "appropriate administrative regulation and guidance," the "possible damage" that comes with a free Internet could be "minimized."

The underlying conclusion, as the article rightfully summarizes, is that the Internet in China acts much like a "double-edged sword" for the government. Public discontent is welcomed only when it aligns with the government's policy, such as anticorruption. Thus, when the government still has the final say on what is "positive" and what is "negative," it can hardly be argued that netizens fundamentally have more freedom of speech now than before. ■

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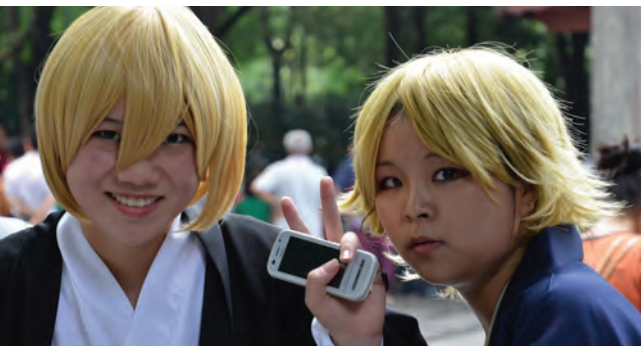

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