

ON MILITARY TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Zhang Fuyuan

New Technology Application Institute, Shijiazhuang, China

***Abstract:** National security is state affairs. To maintain and expand national security interests, the present paper analyzes military technical cooperation in the perspective of national security from both positive and negative aspects. On this basis, the direction and emphasis of military technical cooperation in the developing countries are put forward hereof.*

***Keywords:** military technical cooperation; weaponry development; national security*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the national security is state affairs, maintaining and expanding national security interests is correlated to the survival of a state. The weaponry construction plays an irreplaceable role in national security maintenance. It is not only a key guarantee to maintain national security and stability, but also material base to maintain national interests and realize national security strategy. As the weaponry market was gradually withered in the world and the development cost for high-tech weaponry surged increasingly and other issues appeared after the end of Cold War, all countries, including the developed countries, held that self-sufficient weaponry development strategy had not adapted to the new characteristics of existing market demand, therefore, international military technical cooperation could yet be regarded as an ideal strategy to effectively respond to the new change of weaponry market demand. The military technical cooperation, apart from associated research and development of weaponry, also includes weaponry procurement, technology introduction, etc. Nowadays, with rapid development of science and technology and gradual deepening of economic globalization, the broad application of military technical cooperation has been the basic policy orientation for different countries to strengthen weaponry construction and strive for national security.

2. THE BROAD APPLICATION OF MILITARY TECHNICAL COOPERATION IS THE PRACTICAL NEED TO MAINTAIN NATIONAL SECURITY

The military technical cooperation is an outcome emerging with the advancement of times.

The new revolution in military affairs is gradually promoted so as to make weaponry—material base to maintain and expand national security interests increasingly complicated, as a result, traditional self-sufficient weaponry strategy can not adapt to the new situation of weaponry development. The international security situation is complex and changeable, thus, different countries are confronted with increasingly severe security situation and it is a further arduous task for each country to maintain and expand their national security interests. The multiple factors are interacted so that the military technical cooperation becomes an inevitable choice for all countries to maintain and expand national security interests.

2.1 Military technical cooperation is an effective weapon for the state to boost weaponry construction. First of all, the military technical cooperation is an effective way to improve the economic affordable of weaponry development.

On military technical cooperation in the perspective of national security

Due to swift development of science and technology and their wide application in the military field, the cost for weaponry development rises substantially and the weaponry research & development is faced with increasingly high risk.

At present, as the result of high cost and high risk in the weaponry research and development, any country (even USA) in the world gets powerless for the completely independent development and manufacturing of a high-tech weapon.

Confronted with the new situation of weaponry development, different countries in the world explore the new path of weaponry development in succession in order to improve the economic affordability of weaponry development.

Through military technical cooperation of different countries, it is available to make full use of the existing technology and conditions of all participating countries and share the expenses so that weaponry development cost can be largely lowered for all participating countries.

A survey of Western European countries showed that the cost for weaponry development by two cooperating countries was 30% less than that of independent weaponry development by one country, and 50% cost could be lowered in the event of associated research and development by multiple countries.^[1]

The cost is reduced so that weaponry development risk can be lowered naturally. Since the military technical cooperation has such advantages as “reducing development cost, shortening development cycle and sharing development risk”, it has been an effective way for different countries to improve the economic affordability of weaponry development.

Secondly, the military technical cooperation is an effective measure to break through the technical bottleneck of weaponry development. With the end of Cold War, the technological level and technological content of weaponry development get higher and higher, the weapon system becomes complex increasingly and each kind of modern weapon is often the integration of various sophisticated technologies.

Under these circumstances, “there is almost no country which is leading in all key technology fields, thus, only through technology sharing based on international cooperation in national defense industry, all countries can find another shortcut to develop, manufacture and obtain further advanced weapons”.^[2]

Just for this actual situation, different countries turn to international society to overcome technical difficulty by means of scientific technology capability of other countries.

As new revolution in the military affairs is gradually promoted, the inter-state military technical cooperation is clearly accelerated, the cooperation field and scope are continually expanded and the cooperation level is gradually enhanced so that military technical cooperation becomes an indispensable part of weaponry development and production for many countries.

Thirdly, the military technical cooperation is a strong guarantee for the developing countries to strive for late-developing advantage and reach weaponry spanning development.

For the developing countries, weak economic foundation and backward science and technology are actual situations they must confront.

On the basis of backward national defense technology industry, the self-sufficient technology for weaponry development is unrealistic and unavailing.

Especially nowadays with rapid development of science and technology and quick change of military technology, the developed countries even feel powerless for self-sufficient weaponry development strategy so that they have to seek for inter-state military technical cooperation to offset their strength.

Let alone the developing countries, they can not be comparable to the developed countries in terms of manpower, material resources, financial resources or technological level.

On this occasion, if it is expected to realize weaponry spanning development in the developing countries, it is necessary to turn to the military technical cooperation.

The developing countries, based on military technical cooperation, can digest and absorb numerous high technologies from the developed countries, ramp national defense technology base, elevate the start of technical innovation and boost capacity improving. Currently, the technical progress has been fundamental element to promote weaponry spanning development. The developing countries shall firmly seize economic globalization, carry out practical and effective military technical cooperation with the developed countries and make the best use of late-developing advantage to avoid detours in weaponry development and boost modernized weaponry development.

2.2 The military technical cooperation is an effective means for the state to build peaceful development environment. The military technical cooperation generally occurs between the countries with similar ideology or close geopolitics relation and closely related to national strategic interests. The conditions of military technical cooperation determine that military technical cooperation is an influential factor to maintain national security. First and foremost, for different parties in military technical cooperation, the win-win military technical cooperation partnership makes the cooperators constitute interest community, enhance the political trust of different parties and promote all cooperators to form the strategic partnership. It is undoubtedly a heavy weight to maintain peaceful coexistence of all parties for a long term, resolve conflicts and disputes appropriately, reduce and avoid unnecessary conflicts. In addition, the interest community or strategic partnership formed due to military technical cooperation also gives a safety barrier for all cooperative parties. Especially for the developing country, the relevant military technical cooperation partner on the back will become a favorable umbrella for such developing country in international affairs and international communication. So far, the military technical cooperation has been an effective means for different countries to increase mutual benefits and to seek for the safety effect under intersection of interests and interdependency.

3. THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON NATIONAL SECURITY DUE TO EXCESSIVE DEPENDENCE ON MILITARY TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The military technical cooperation is also a double-edged sword. It shares weaponry development cost of all participating countries, reduces development risk and improves economic affordable. For the developing countries, excessive dependence on military technical cooperation will bring non negligible negative effects on the national security.

3.1 The strategic interests are easily controlled and influenced by the developed countries. For a developed country, its military technical cooperation with the developing country always exists under some conditions. The developed country hardly transfers its military technology to the developing country for only economic interests. Generally, the real purpose for the developed country and the developing country to participate in cooperation is to make use of military technical cooperation as the lever to strive for strategic interests for their own country. In other words, apart from economic interests, the politics, diplomacy, culture, ideology and other aspects will be also key factors to affect the decision-making of the authority in respect of military technical cooperation between the developed country and the developing country. For instance, MIG-21 fighter was introduced by India from former Soviet Union. When the war between China and India happened, the first choice of fighter for India was not MIG-21 fighter of former Soviet Union, but F-104G fighter of USA. However, the request for privileged imitation production line with weaponry introduction proposed by India was rejected by USA at that time. American government held that India which was powerful and self-reliant in military affairs did not conform to the strategic interests of USA. Nevertheless, the authority of former Soviet Union maintained that the coordination with India as “non-aligned leader” was an indispensable condition to battle for world supremacy with USA.

On military technical cooperation in the perspective of national security

Based on common strategic interests, former Soviet Union not only agreed with India's request for introducing production line, but also supplemented numerous favorable measures. [3]

Therefore, considering that the strategic interests and sovereign act of the developed countries are of selfishness, the strategic interests and sovereign act of the developing countries will often be controlled and influenced by the developed countries during their military technical cooperation with the developed countries. In that case, the developing country, which depended on the military technology of developed countries excessively, would lack the right to speak in international affairs and also autonomy in international communication so that developing country had to take action under the baton of the big power and became a political subordinate to the big power in international affairs.

3.2 The weaponry development is possibly controlled by others. For the developing country, the military technical cooperation in wide application can promote weaponry spanning development and improve weaponry development capability.

If one country blindly emphasizes the military technical cooperation with the developed country and neglects autonomous innovation, the weaponry development in this country will be controlled by others finally.

Since the beginning of independence, India has insisted on the weaponry development strategy "learn strong points from others, incorporate and absorb diverse things, use by ourselves".

Just based on such development strategy, India can be developed from a country with backward technology, weak foundation and insufficient resources to a regional major military country in merely a few decades.

However, the major military country is not equivalent to the military power. Compared with the beginning of independence, Indian weaponry productivity is greatly improved, but there is still a long way to realize weaponry self-sufficiency.

The primary cause is that, under the guideline of Indian weaponry development strategy, Indian weapon production system is established on the technical or capital support of one country or several countries.

Its development is of no independence or autonomy, which will surely make Indian weaponry development blindly follow others and be controlled by others.

India once made great efforts to develop light combat aircraft (LCA), but the light combat aircraft could not be put into production as the result of technical sanction by USA for India and other factors, which was a typical case of weaponry development controlled by others.

3.3 Resulting in the technological dependence on the developed countries. One main purpose of military technical cooperation between the developing country and the developed country is to introduce the advanced technology which can not be acquired independently by one country or which a long term must be spent on.

This technology introduction can rapidly lay a foundation for weaponry development and improve weapon system in the developing country in a short term.

However, the technologies from the exporting country have been mature and they will be inevitably eliminated as the scientific technology advances.

When there is no technological base for research and development in local country, such developing country has to purchase the mature technology again.

If this situation is continued, the country of technology introduction will be trapped in a vicious cycle of "introduction—backward technology—reintroduction—backward technology".

Consequently, it is difficult for the developing country to realize autonomy and innovation in technology.

4. CONSIDERING NATIONAL SECURITY AND STABLY PROMOTING MILITARY TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Although the military technical cooperation is a successful experience for weaponry construction in the developing country, under the background of changeable international strategic pattern and gradual deepening of new military revolution, it is required to review previous achievements and experience in development perspective, consider the new situation of weaponry development, innovate the idea and hold the key point, in terms of the military technical cooperation.

4.1 The emphasis of military technical cooperation shall be on the introduction of sophisticated technology. If the weaponry development history of the developing countries is surveyed, it is easily realized that military technical cooperation is always an effective way to boost modernized weaponry construction.

The military technical cooperation not only improves the start of weaponry research and development in these countries, but also avoids possible detours in weaponry development. With the deepening of new military revolution, the conditions and background of military technical cooperation have profound changes. During military technical cooperation, the developing country shall fully learn and absorb former experience, do something but not everything in principle and focus on advanced core or key technology in the cooperation, especially key technology fields such as weapon system optimization, operational efficiency improvement of weapons and system operation capability, etc. The ways of cooperation shall be changed from equipment introduction to special technology introduction, mutual research & development, cooperative production and other aspects to reinforce weaponry development capability through cooperation.

4.2 The secondary innovation upon technology introduction must be emphasized. The developing country, through military technical cooperation, can certainly introduce technology and improve weaponry technological level.

However, if the developing country always introduces technology blindly, but not absorbs these technologies or conducts innovation, the weaponry development will only follow others passively, the surpassing will be impossible and finally its weaponry development will be controlled by others. The intrinsic attributes and essential characteristics of weaponry development determine that the weaponry development can not exist without independent innovation and the independent innovation shall be the eternal subject for weaponry construction and development. As the economic globalization is gradually accelerated, inter-state military technical cooperation has been an important part of weaponry construction for all countries. Based on the antagonism of military field and the need to maintain national security interests, we argue that the core technology can not be bought. Even if it is bought, there will be potential safety hazard; technological imitation is not a long way but only brings short-term benefit; the technology introduction is not practicable either for dependence on others must result in control by others, the weaponry development finally relies on independent innovation and the independent innovation is the root of weaponry development. Therefore, the innovation based on technology introduction must be valued in the military technical cooperation, which is a strong guarantee to promote sound military technical cooperation and also a strategic demand to maintain national security interests.

4.3 The independence must be maintained in military technical cooperation. With the gradual deepening of world economic globalization, the source of advanced technology for weaponry development gets diversified increasingly and the military technical cooperation also becomes the strong power for weaponry development increasingly, but independence and self-dependence are still the fundamental principle of current weaponry construction and development. Otherwise, the weaponry development controlled by others due to excessive dependence in military technology will make such country dominated and driven by the developed country in international affairs and international communication and even fail to guarantee basic national security.

On military technical cooperation in the perspective of national security

It is extremely dangerous for the developing country. As to the developing country, it is not feasible to keep self-seclusion in weaponry construction or place all hopes on foreign help and support. The external force can only be used for auxiliary and supplement. The external force is used as a means to promote sound development of local country and to insist on independent weaponry development. Only when the developing country insists on independence and self-dependence, concentrates on breaking through urgent and the most driving key national defense technology and improves original innovation capability of weaponry construction, the developing country can select development road independently and also ensure to hold a place in future revolution in military affairs.

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