

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

In the modern era, the development of hypersonic weapons has assumed a major role in the dynamics of global security and strategic importance. Major nations are implementing this technology as an essential first step toward improving their offensive and defensive capacities. Many nations are currently engaged in vigorous competition to create hypersonic weapons, with each hoping to establish itself as the leader in terms of inventiveness and technological prowess. The competitive dynamics gave rise to genuine tensions and garner global attention. Despite the enormous military potential of hypersonic weapons, several difficulties must be overcome, such as concerns about re-entry heat, control, navigation, and defense against anti-ballistic missiles. Thus, the creation of hypersonic weapons raises several ethical and security issues that call for creative answers in addition to being a type of scientific advancement (Utomo, 2018).

Furthermore, in the context of weapons rivalry, the idea of security becomes central to the discussion. It offers a thorough comprehension of the existence and endurance of anarchy within the global system. The idea of security offers a perspective that anarchy is not just the result of the accumulation of power but involves complex aspects that include cooperation, diplomacy, and potential conflict by highlighting the significance of units in anarchic systems and the evolving dynamics of authority (Junita, 2023). In addition, the concept of a secure environment has grown in significance within the framework of global security. By taking into account important aspects of international relations, the idea of a secure environment offers a more thorough approach than the concepts of power and peace. A comprehensive and long-lasting security policy can be built on this understanding.

To preserve security, weapons are essential, particularly when controlling the environment, protecting people, and preventing the escalation of violence are required (Barak, 2023). Rivolindo, the Director of the KPLP, stated "In this context, firearms are an important tool to control the situation, protect personnel, and prevent escalation of violence that could endanger lives and security." However the use of weapons also calls into question morality and accountability; their use must be reasonable and consistent with human rights (Utomo, 2018). Collaboration on

international security is also required in a larger framework. International cooperation is necessary to tackle serious dangers such as terrorism, natural disasters, maritime crime, disease outbreaks, separatists, cyber warfare, information technology, narcotics, and illicit drug usage (Maatif, 2023). Furthermore, global cooperation can foster global security, which in turn can aid in resolving social issues like poverty, the refugee crisis, and human trafficking (Auria & Gischa, 2022). However, given the conflicts between strong nations and the global arms trade, the stability of global security is not always assured. Since the end of the Cold War, the US, Japan, and China have increased their efforts to improve national standards throughout Southeast Asia (Azhar, 2020).

The development of armaments by Xi Jinping has become a major worldwide issue. Chinese President Xi Jinping accelerated the nation's military gear and weaponry development. An additional direction from Xi Jinping to China's armed forces by 2035 states that they must have a "World Class" military force that is capable of "fighting and winning wars by 2049" (Shalini, 2021). After building up its arsenal over the preceding few years, China is predicted to have 700 nuclear weapons in use by 2027 (Auria & Gischa, 2022). Furthermore, China is developing nuclear and ballistic weapons, where President Xi Jinping assigned Wang Houbin the task of overseeing the PLA Rocket Force's nuclear and missile development in 2023. When facing enemies who are based in the sea, China is also bolstering its finances, maritime power, and military expenditures (Utomo, 2018).

During the Xi Jinping administration, several factors affected China's arms development, including a rise in the military budget, the modernization of the armed forces, the advancement of nuclear weapons, and the building of naval vessels. This is shown in several ways Over the past ten years, China has raised its military spending to such an extent that the Asia-Pacific region's defense budgets will exceed \$1 trillion by 2021. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reports that China has increased its military budget for 27 years running, which has caused military spending in nations like China, the Philippines, and Vietnam to triple. China plans to modernize its military by 2035 and become a "world-class" force that is capable of "fighting and winning wars" by 2049. This budget rise is a component of that larger plan. Two operational aircraft carriers, the use of long- and medium-range ballistic missiles, and the development of air force and naval capabilities are all part of this upgrading (Bintarsari, 2018).

China, which presently ranks third in the world for nuclear weapon production, is concentrating on building up its nuclear arsenal in addition to its conventional military developments. China's nuclear weapons are viewed as a serious threat to Western military supremacy, even if its arsenal is still smaller than that of the US. In addition, it is anticipated that China would grow its naval fleet by 40% between 2020 and 2040, securing its place as the most powerful navy in the world. In order to counter perceived threats in China's territorial waters, especially those originating from the United States, it is believed that this naval development is imperative (Shalini, 2021).

The Xi Jinping period saw China improve its armaments, one of which was the creation of hypersonic weapons, a significant focus of the twenty-first century. China and the US have been working hard to create hypersonic weaponry. Hypersonic weapons are classified into two categories: guided weapons, which can alter their trajectory to strike targets with extreme precision, and limited weapons, which fly on a predetermined path without altering their course after launch and are intended to cover large distances quickly. In addition, China has been testing intercontinental ballistic missiles with hypersonic launch vehicle payloads since 2014 (Daurina & Natania, 2022). Additionally, the nation is developing novel surface materials for long-range hypersonic missiles (CNBC Indonesia, 2023; Sindo News.com, 2023). China could endanger US security because it possesses space weapons capable of destroying enemy satellites and interfering with military communications (Arbar, 2023). Furthermore, China's capacity to use invisible missile launchers to avoid adversary radar detection presents significant difficulties for regional security.

China's development of hypersonic weapons affects not just regional security but also global security to a great extent. China has the potential to emerge as a new global superpower as its might grows. It is consequently imperative that the United States respond to this development, particularly considering the history of tense diplomatic relations between the two. However, the US is still a powerhouse that can react to shifting dynamics in international security. The United States has been significantly impacted and influenced by China's development of hypersonic weapons. As the world's police force, the United States of America never stops expressing concern for global security. There are advantages and disadvantages to the United States playing the position of global peacekeeper in light of its lengthy history of getting involved in conflicts and crises around the world, frequently using its economic and military might. There are compelling

arguments on both sides of the question of whether the US should act as the global police force, and the discussion is still in progress (Primawati, 2021). Supporters contend that despite criticism of US meddling in other nations' internal affairs, the US must uphold international norms of value and preserve world stability.

Furthermore, the United States has demonstrated a strong concern for South China Sea security. Maritime security is a top concern because of the US's political and economic ties to the area. To uphold international freedom of navigation and to assert its rights, the United States regularly engages in freedom of sailing activities in the South China Sea. The United States is particularly concerned about the region since it is a vital commerce route and has an abundance of natural resources. Ensuring security and stability in the South China Sea is of utmost importance to the United States. Tensions arose between the US and China as well as other nations in the region because of the freedom of sail policy and support for freedom of navigation. A key component of the US goal to preserve these ties is forging strong alliances with nations bordering the South China Sea (Sutriyani, 2021). It will be interesting to watch how the US reacts to China's development of hypersonic weapons. Drawing from the aforementioned, the investigator devised the research title, "United States Response to China Hypersonic Weapons 2017-2023".

## **1.2. Research Objective**

What was the United States' response to China's successful Hypersonic missile orbital test in August 2021?

## **1.3. Goals of the Research**

The "United States Response to China's Hypersonic Weapons" study project aims to elucidate the measures and responses that the United States of America adopted in response to China's development of hypersonic weapons. The capacity of China to create hypersonic weapons and their possible effects on the balance of power in the world are the main subjects of this analysis. It also looks at the reasons why the US has lagged behind China and Russia in the development of these weapons. The US intends to bolster its position in space and handle the issues raised by China's hypersonic capabilities and space technology breakthroughs in the framework of their bilateral relationship.

## **1.4. Theoretical Foundation**

## **1. Theory of Neo-Realism**

Kenneth Waltz's book "Theory of International Politics" introduced NeoRealism, an overhaul of classic realism, as an international relations theory. According to the theory, the anarchic structure of the global system influences state action, with each state seeking to maintain or expand its power and security. According to neorealism, the international system is unitaristic, which means that each state has the same ability and competes with one another, neglecting the pluralist concept of power diversity. Each state's principal priority is national security; to achieve this, they will increase their military capability (Kenshanahan, 2016).

According to neorealism, conflicts emerge due to an anarchic framework in which sovereign states do everything possible to safeguard their national security. As a result, developing armed forces is critical to protecting the country's frontiers from military threats. However, as the United States became the dominant power in the post-Cold War era, the balance of power that neorealism emphasised became less essential. The collapse of the Soviet Union caused volatility and uncertainty in the international system (Sorrensen, 1999).

Thus, neorealism underlines that military, economic, and political power influence state action more than ideology or moral principles. The anarchic structure and power allocation among states, which determine international behaviour, are central to neorealism. Despite criticism and modifications in its original formulation, the theory remains one of the most influential ways to study international affairs.

## **2. Security Dilemma**

According to the political science idea known as the security dilemma, when a state attempts to increase its security, another state responds, which lessens the state's original attempts to do so. According to certain academics of international relations, the security dilemma is what mostly leads to international war. They contend that each state must continue to be in charge of its security since there is no universal authority and no monopoly on legal violence. Consequently, the state's main objective is to maximize its security. Traveler Herbert Butterfield from Britain was the first to explain the reasoning behind this security dilemma. The statement is credited to American political scientist John Herz. Even while it appears to match the rivalry between the US and the

USSR during the Cold War, proponents of this notion do not think it is limited to a specific historical moment. Rather, they contend that it captures the tragic core of international politics, in which state players wind up using force to preserve peace and stability.

The security dilemma, often referred to as the spiral model, is a scenario in which an attempt by one nation to fortify its security, whether through military action or alliance creation, may compel other nations to see a threat and subsequently respond accordingly. Unwanted war is more likely as a result of the increased friction between the nations brought on by this circumstance. The events of World War I serve as one illustration. Despite the belief that Europe did not seek conflict, many scholars say that the creation of an alliance between allied blocs and central blocs of neighboring nations made Europe feel uneasy at the time and forced it to be activated. Furthermore, it is believed that other nations were influenced to follow Germany's Schlieffen plan, which involved rapidly building up its armed forces to avert fighting on two fronts. Nonetheless, a lot of scholars also believe that the desire for murder on both sides was the catalyst for the outbreak of World War I (Gabriella, 2014).

Herbert Butterfield and John H. Herz, both of Germany, first put forth and theorized the idea of a security dilemma in their respective books, *History and Human Relations* and *Political Realism and Political Idealism*. He clarified that "A structure" is the idea behind a security challenge. The theory holds that, regardless of purpose, a state's self-help efforts to satisfy its security demands often result in greater insecurity for other nations since each state views its activities as defensive and those of other states as potentially dangerous." In summary, Herz feels that although a state's self-help efforts to strengthen its military are driven by a desire to protect state security, other states feel more uneasy about them because they see them as a danger. However, Butterfield draws attention to the Security Dilemma so that decision-makers can keep learning about possible threats (Gabriella, 2014).

A nation can adopt any of the following scenarios to raise its level of security, arranged from most likely to least likely: (1) forging alliances and working together; (2) keeping military might while the armed forces of other nations are disarmed; (3) vying to build military might while confronting a higher risk of conflict; and (4) momentarily underestimating other nations. dilemma with movement security brought up by the wish to avoid being exploited by foreigners. When one state exploits another, that state will lose its sovereignty. Consequently, it is evident from the options presented that nations seeking to avert scenario (4) ought to fortify their military forces.

Jervis also emphasizes the subjectivity of governments' assessments of security.

A state may view an activity as an attempt to compromise its security even if it serves a different objective. A country is unable to gauge the extent of the threat it faces or the quantity of work it can complete due to this subjectivity. Nations are only able to maintain their independence through self-help because of this ambiguity. Like defensive realism, the root cause of the security dilemma is an anarchic international system. Anarchic international systems enable states to act independently, which leads to near to maximal power as demonstrated by the growth of military technology, increasing armaments, and alliances with other governments.

The rise of one nation versus the weakness of another is a sign that this condition leads to conflict for all nations worldwide (Wagner, 2007). The strength of other nations' influence does not always make things more difficult. These weak states, however, are not able to effectively limit the flaws that give rise to challenging situations. As a nation gains strength, an increasing number of other nations join it in an attempt to attain parity or a balance of power. Moreover, nations that have never comprehended the idea of maximizing the power of other nations are expected to conquer or subjugate others all over the world. The nation will prioritize maximizing riches, boosting literacy, and bolstering security before turning its attention to foreign threats, attacks, or subjugation (Wivel, 2011).

To put it simply, we may comprehend the concept of a security challenge by taking into account the two following crucial principles: 1) The power of other nations declines in direct proportion to a country's increase in power, and; 2) No nation believes that bolstering the might of another nation can guarantee that a nation will not start an offensive of its own. In this case study, North Korea is developing its nuclear weapons program with an increasing degree of hostility, while the US is unable to respond. The worst-case scenario that the United States is alarmed is that North Korea will attack it with nuclear weapons. These worries are related to North Korea's subsequent military build-up and nuclear weapons acquisition. This is especially after North Korea threatened a nuclear strike in response to President Trump's pledge to deploy "fire and fury" against any nation that poses a danger to the United States (Chambers and Graham, 2017). In response to the North Korean threat, the US dispatched more B-2 stealth bombers to Guam to accompany the B-1 and B52 units as a sort of tactical defense to avert a North Korean nuclear weapons attack (Chambers & Graham, 2017).

## 1.5. Research Benefits

Studying the potential US response to China's hypersonic weapons has the following benefits. The dynamics of the US-China weapons competition should be discussed, with an emphasis on how their relationship has changed over time. In order to bolster American national security, it should also increase awareness of the risks that China's hypersonic weapons pose to the US and offer details on how to fight these threats.

## 1.6. Hypothesis

China is **developing hypersonic weapons**, so the US is **bolstering its military and security posture** in response. The US intends to **strengthen international security alliances** through NATO, ANZUS, the **Pacific Coastal Security Treaty** with Japan, and intelligence-sharing agreements like the **UKUSA treaty** in addition to **accelerating its own hypersonic weapons program** in an effort to preserve the balance of power.

## 1.7. Type Of Research

The methodology for the study will be a descriptive qualitative research. Sugiyono (2018) asserts that research using a natural object as the subject is known as qualitative research. In qualitative research, descriptive research is also conducted, with a collection of words or images serving as the data source. Therefore, research of the qualitative kind does not heavily rely on statistics.

This study was carried out between 2017 and 2023 since Lockheed Martin was hired by the US Air Force to develop a hypersonic weapon prototype in 2017. This was seen as a response to China's growing capability to travel at hypersonic speeds. The United States obtained the deal to update the armed forces and keep military superiority over China and Russia. Lockheed Martin, one of the biggest defense companies in the world, has created a variety of weaponry for the US military. Lockheed Martin was asked to develop a hypersonic weapon that could be fired from a fighter jet as part of the contract. These hypersonic weapons are expected to be faster than conventional weapons and able to get past enemy defense systems. The United States is working on developing hypersonic weapons and preserving military technology supremacy in the current era through several initiatives, such as this contract.



## **1.8. Data Source**

The data used in this study comes from a number of sources, including: The procedure entails looking for and compiling pertinent books, journals, research papers, and other materials that are associated with the subject of the study. The next step entails looking through these sources to locate important details, such the US reaction to China's hypersonic weapons. In order to direct future study and analysis, the analysis's final focus is on identifying trends or conclusions from the studied documents.

## **1.9. Writing Systematics**

The author divides the topic into four chapters to help direct and guarantee that the formulation of the study's problem is addressed. While each chapter will cover a different topic, they are all related to one another and work together to address the issues raised by the study's problem formulation. These sections are; **Chapter I:** This chapter provides an overview of the writing's background and general description. Research and writing techniques are utilized in this work. It has a number of sub-chapters, among other things;

1. Background
2. Research Objective
3. Goals Of The Research
4. Theoretical Foundation
5. Research Benefit
6. Hypothesis
7. Type Of Research
8. Writing SystematicS

**CHAPTER II:** In chapter II, will discuss China's development of hypersonic weapons and the US-China relationship following Xi Jinping's election.

**CHAPTER III:** In chapter III, will discuss the US government's media response, the escalation of US weaponry, and initiatives to foster more international collaboration

**CHAPTER IV:** In chapter IV, the final page and will be devoted to the researchers discussion of the conclusion.