

Mershon Center Speaker Series

**ROBERT ROSS***The East Asian Power Transition: Prospects for Peace*

Monday, October 17, 2016, 3:00PM - 4:30PM

The Mershon Center for International Security Studies

1501 Neil Avenue, Room 120

Columbus, Ohio 43201

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**Robert S. Ross** is professor of political science at Boston College, associate at the [John King Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies](#) at Harvard University, and senior advisor of the Security Studies Program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He received his Ph.D. in political science from Columbia University in 1984. Since 2009 he has been adjunct professor at the Institute for Defence Studies, Norwegian Defence University College. He has taught at Columbia University and University of Washington.



Robert Ross  
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In 1989 Ross was a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.

In 1994-95 he was Fulbright professor at the Chinese Foreign Affairs College, in

2003 he was a visiting senior fellow at the Institute of International Strategic

Studies, Qinghua University, Beijing, and in 2014 was visiting scholar, School of

International Relations, Peking University. In 2009 he was visiting scholar, Institute for Strategy, Royal Danish Defence College.

Ross's research focuses on Chinese security policy, East Asian security, and U.S.-China relations. His recent publications include *Chinese Security Policy: Structure, Power, and Politics*; *China's Ascent: Power, Security, and the Future of International Politics*, and *New Directions in the Study of Chinese Foreign Policy*. His other major works include *Normalization of U.S.-China Relations: An International History*; *Great Wall and Empty Fortress: China's Search for Security*; *Negotiating Cooperation: U.S.-China Relations, 1969-1989*; and *The Indochina Tangle: China's Vietnam Policy, 1975-1979*. Ross is the author of numerous articles in *World Politics*, *The China Quarterly*, *International Security*, *Security Studies*, *Orbis*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *The National Interest*, and *Asian Survey*. His books and articles have been translated in China, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, and various European countries.

Ross has been the recipient of research fellowships from University of Washington and Columbia University.

He has received research and collaborative project grants from the Social Science Research Council, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Smith-Richardson Foundation, International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), Asia Foundation, and United States Institute of Peace.

Ross has testified before various Senate and House committees and the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, he advises U.S. government agencies, and he serves on the Academic Advisory Group, U.S.-China Working Group, United States Congress. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and National Committee for U.S.-China Relations. Ross is also a member of the executive committee of the John King Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, Harvard University. He is a founding member and former board member of the United States Committee of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (USCSCAP) and former co-chair of the committee's task force on Confidence Strategic Building Measures. He is on the editorial board of *Security Studies*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, *Journal of Cold War Studies*, *Issues and Studies*, *Asia Policy*, *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, and *Chinese Political Science Review*.

**Abstract**

After near forty years of economic, technological and military modernization and increased Chinese defense spending, the rise of Chinese military capabilities has reached a critical stage for the U.S.-China power transition and the prospects for continued East Asia stability. The narrowing gap between U.S. and Chinese capabilities has elicited fundamental changes in U.S. regional strategy and the near-term trajectory in defense spending and relative capabilities suggests the likelihood of heightened security tension associated with great power transition dynamics. In addition, as the U.S.-China power transition evolves, the distinct geopolitical characteristics of the East Asian theater will have implications for the prospects for war and peace. These developing strategic trends have the potential to interact with destabilizing domestic political trends in both China and the United States, thus exacerbating great power conflict.

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