
THE IMPACT OF THE MILITARY INDUSTRY ON NATIONAL SECURITY

Brigadier General

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary international system, national security remains a paramount priority. Its enhancement is contingent upon the convergence of political and economic stability alongside military and technological capabilities. In this regard, the military industry serves as a fundamental pillar of a state's sovereignty, strategic independence, and defense sustainability. This paper aims to analyze the role of the military industry in the systemic reinforcement of national security, examining the circumstances under which its influence may emerge as both a stabilizing element and a potential source of risk.

The study is grounded in a comprehensive analysis of both theoretical frameworks and empirical sources, including the security theories articulated by Waltz, Nye, and Buzan, as well as contemporary examples of military-industrial policies practiced by various states. The findings indicate that the military industry exerts a multifaceted impact on national security through enhanced defense capabilities, strategic autonomy, technological advancement, and economic stimulation. Furthermore, the research reveals that excessive politicization or alignment with private interests can precipitate imbalances within the state's system.

In conclusion, the military industry should be regarded not merely as a tool of aggressive policy but as a mechanism for fostering peace, stability, and sovereign development. Its effectiveness is predicated upon political will, economic resources, and technological expertise, which collectively shape the state's position within the global security landscape.

Keywords: national security, military industry, strategic independence, defense capability, military-industrial complex.

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INTRODUCTION

National security constitutes one of the paramount challenges within the framework of contemporary international relations. Its key determinants encompass both political and economic stability, as well as military and strategic capabilities. In this context, the military industry serves not only as a provider of defense capabilities but also as a crucial factor in establishing a state's sovereignty, technological independence, and its position within the global security architecture. As noted by Waltz (1979), the stability of the security system is directly correlated with the military-political capabilities of states. The military industry is frequently regarded as an integral part of the "Military-Industrial Complex," a term first introduced by US President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1961 during his farewell address. This concept underscores the notion that military production significantly influences state policy and international relations (Eisenhower, 1961). Beyond its military implications, the military industry plays an essential role in fostering a country's economic and technological advancement. As articulated in Fukuyama's analyses, military innovations often create the basis for civilian progress (Fukuyama, 2004).²

The military industry constitutes one of the foundational pillars of a national security framework. A state that possesses the capability to develop its own defense technologies and armaments significantly enhances its prospects for maintaining independence and sovereignty. As Franklin D. Roosevelt aptly stated, "A nation that cannot defend itself is not truly free." Consequently, the military industry not only acts as a safeguard for defense but also serves as a guarantee for freedom.

However, Dwight Eisenhower cautioned against the potential overreach of the military-industrial complex, emphasizing that, when excessive, state security could become vulnerable to private interests. In contemporary circumstances, as noted by Joseph Nye, the concept of security encompasses not merely an arsenal of weapons but also extends to economic, technological, and diplomatic capabilities. Therefore, the enhancement of the

² K. Booth, *Theory of World Security*. Cambridge University Press. (2007).

military industry should be directed towards fostering stability and peace rather than promoting aggression. Only by maintaining this balance does national security become an expression of responsibility, not power. The primary objective of this paper is to ascertain, through thorough analysis, the contributions of the military industry to national security. A comprehensive examination of this issue remains notably sparse within the existing literature, which predominantly focuses on economic and international political dimensions. The central question of this research seeks to elucidate the significance of the military industry in both the broader context of national security and within the realm of international relations. The topics and conclusions articulated herein reflect general considerations and provide a universal analysis, devoid of alignment with the perspectives of any specific state. The findings derived from the empirical analysis aim to cultivate an understanding of the military industry's importance in the context of national security.³

The military industry constitutes a fundamental component of national security. A robust defense sector enables a state to independently safeguard its sovereignty and prepare for crisis situations. However, there exists a critical perspective regarding the potential for the military industry to exert excessive influence. Such influence may lead to the transformation of national security into an avenue for economic gain, with defense serving as a mechanism for political manipulation. Therefore, to foster the military industry while mitigating associated risks, it is imperative to establish a balanced approach. This concept posits that sustainable national security is predicated on equilibrium: a strong military industry is essential, but its purpose should be to promote peacekeeping and stable development rather than aggression. The military industry's influence on national security manifests through several primary avenues:⁴

a) Ensuring defense capability - A well-established military industry enables swift and effective responses to crises, reduces reliance on imports, and bolsters strategic stability. In critical circumstances, this capability may prove essential for preserving national security.

³ B. Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers. Please use the same font as in the text above. (1991).

⁴ B. Buzan, Hansen, L. *The Evolution of International Security Studies*. Cambridge University Press. (2009).

The defense capability constitutes a fundamental component of the national security framework. In this regard, the military industry assumes a significant role, as it directly influences the capabilities of the nation's armed forces, the expediency of ammunition supply, and the overall strategic stability.

b) Strategic independence - Dependence on imports represents one of the most significant vulnerabilities within national security. An international embargo or geopolitical tensions can severely undermine a nation's defense capabilities, whereas a robust domestic military industry bolsters strategic sovereignty (Buzan, 1991). Strategic independence constitutes a critical element of national security, as it affects a state's sovereignty, its capacity for autonomous decision-making, and its position within the global security framework. The military industry is integral to this process, as the capability to produce and develop military resources grants the state greater resilience against external pressures.

c) Technological progress and innovation - Numerous scientific advancements have their origins in military applications. Technologies such as GPS, the Internet, and unmanned aerial vehicles exemplify how innovations initially developed for military purposes become integral to civilian life. Consequently, the military sector serves as a significant catalyst in the process of technological modernization. Historically, the military industry has played a vital role in driving scientific and technological progress. The challenges associated with military operations frequently necessitate the development of innovative technologies, which are subsequently adapted for widespread civilian use. Therefore, the enhancement of national security through the military sector is intrinsically linked to the overarching technological advancement of a nation.

d) Economic importance - The military industry plays an important role in the creation of new employment opportunities, the enhancement of the industrial base, and the expansion of export potential. However, there exists a concern that an excessive allocation of resources to the military sector may adversely affect social development (Kennedy, 1987). Furthermore, the military industry not only serves as a crucial component of national defense capability and strategic autonomy but also functions as a significant economic

driver. Its influence extends both directly and indirectly to the economic framework of the nation, impacting various sectors, employment rates, and the overall dynamics of economic growth.⁵

MAIN PART

1. How the Defense Industry Contributes to National Security

The development and evolution of the global military arms production and procurement system have emerged as pivotal factors in contemporary international relations. In the context of economic globalization, technological advancements, and the integration of the defense industry, the sector has become an essential element not only for economic growth but also for the maintenance of national security. In the twenty-first century, the significance of the defense industry has escalated, as the security strategies of nations increasingly rely on innovative military technologies, production autonomy, and networks that hinge on global partnerships.⁶

In this context, the role of the defense industry in national security can be articulated through two primary mechanisms. The first mechanism pertains to the facilitation of access to military goods, technologies, and services, which in turn influences the state's defense capabilities and strategic autonomy. The second mechanism involves the enhancement of a nation's international standing and influence, thereby contributing to the reinforcement of national identity, pride, and political cohesion.

This article seeks to conduct a comprehensive analysis of these two mechanisms, examining both their historical evolution and contemporary dynamics. The study will focus on the transformation of the defense industry's function, evolving from traditional military production into a technological and geopolitical instrument that shapes the state's security

2. Access to Military Goods, Technologies, and Services

⁵ K. N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley. (1979).

⁶ B. Buzan, O. Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*. Cambridge University Press. (2003).

The Cold War period, along with significant transformations in international relations, led to the development of the military industry and resulted in a substantial increase in arms procurement. Historically, North American and Western European enterprises predominantly led arms production during the Cold War. However, ongoing international and regional developments have given rise to new nations in the field of arms manufacturing and procurement, notably Brazil, India, South Korea, and Turkey. These countries are now recognized as prominent producers within the global arms market. Such shifts have contributed to the diversification of this market. These changes have led to the diversification of the global arms market. According to the new trend, the priority is on the buyer, which has made the global market buyer-oriented.

In recent years, the most significant transformations have been driven by the emergence of new technologies, particularly within the digital domain. This development has facilitated the integration and advancement of new technologies in military production, consequently leading to an increased demand for such innovations. Military analysts have referred to the advent of artificial intelligence (AI) within these technologies as the sixth revolution in military affairs. States are striving to reduce costs and diversify by collaborating with private companies within the military sector; these companies are oriented towards export opportunities while simultaneously witnessing growth in critical sectors of the domestic military industry. Notable trends remain evident within the international arms production and development market. The United States continues to maintain a dominant position in the global arms market. American arms companies enjoy considerable credibility and prestige in research and sales on the world stage. Any military procurement contract involving the United States is often regarded as a benchmark of success. Concurrently, new digital and high-tech companies have emerged in the global market, entities that previously had no affiliation with the defense industry; however, shifts in the nature of hostilities have prompted them to realign their priorities.⁷

⁷ B.Buzan, O.Wæver, de Wilde, J. Security: A New Framework for Analysis. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers. (1997).

One of the main functions of the military industry is the development, production, and technical support of military goods, technologies, and related services. These processes enable the armed forces and other security agencies to attain the necessary material and technological capabilities. The operations of the military industry encompass both qualitative and quantitative dimensions. The qualitative dimension pertains to the technological complexity, innovativeness, and efficiency of the goods and technologies produced, as well as the overall level of professional competence within the industry. High levels of technological expertise are regarded as strategic assets that significantly enhance a state's defense potential and the operational capabilities of its armed forces (defense forces). Conversely, the quantitative aspect reflects the volume and scale of production that the industry can achieve, given its existing resources and infrastructure.

Although the defense sector is characterized by rigorous regulation and often benefits from government subsidies, it remains subject to the principles of market economics and competitive mechanisms. Consequently, conflicts of interest may arise in the production process between economic efficiency and strategic needs, for example, when balancing resource optimization and national security priorities.

The primary factor driving the development of defense industrial production is the level of perceived and actual threats to a state. In a high-threat environment, there is usually an acceleration in military innovation and an increased need to invest in new technologies. Consequently, countries that face greater external threats tend to develop stronger and more innovation-focused defense industries over time.⁸

A prominent example is Israel, which operates in a high-threat environment and has developed a robust domestic defense industry in response. Some of the latest military systems created by Israel include unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), the Iron Dome missile defense system, and advanced reconnaissance satellites. These innovations clearly illustrate how security challenges can serve as a catalyst for technological advancement.

⁸ D.Eisenhower, Farewell Address. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. (1961).

A similar trend has been observed in South Korea and Japan, both of which have significantly enhanced their defense production capabilities in recent decades, driven by escalating geopolitical tensions with China. The expansion of the defense sector in these nations has not only resulted in an augmentation of technological capabilities but has also led to a substantial increase in the economic scale of the industry and the volume of exports.

Furthermore, the strategic competition among leading powers, particularly the United States, China, and Russia, exerts a considerable influence on the dynamics of the global defense industry. This competition is especially prominent in sectors related to emerging technologies, including cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, hypersonic weapons, and autonomous systems. Consequently, the international security environment itself acts as a catalyst for innovation and a primary driver of military-technological advancement.⁹

The domestic armaments industry in numerous states relies significantly on technology transfer and the importation of components and subsystems. Actually, the acquisition of technology from foreign entities is a principal driver behind the advancement of domestic defense industries. This process enables states to enhance their production technology base and improve the quality of military products. One prevalent mechanism in this interaction is licensed production, which not only facilitates the manufacturing of specific weapon systems but also enables countries to acquire broader technological expertise and manufacturing experience. Furthermore, offset agreements are widely utilized, allowing purchasing nations to obtain technology transfer, access to advanced production techniques, and the development of new industrial capabilities. Consequently, technology transfers and licensed production frequently serve as strategic instruments for importing states aiming to modernize their industries and cultivate niche markets. Over time, this approach has empowered certain countries to establish themselves as reliable suppliers to prominent international arms manufacturers.¹⁰

⁹ M.Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–1978*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. (2007).

¹⁰ F. Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. (2004).

Ultimately, domestic defense industries play a critical role in ensuring access to military products, technologies, and services; however, achieving this objective comprehensively remains a formidable challenge. A significant number of states lack the industrial infrastructure and capabilities required to establish and sustain a high-level defense sector. The simultaneous attainment of enhanced production quality, alongside increased technological and structural autonomy, presents particular difficulties.

Realizing these aspirations necessitates substantial financial investments and long-term commitments from domestic stakeholders, predominantly government agencies. Furthermore, in numerous instances, prolonged delays between research and development (R&D) phases and the subsequent commercialization of production may impose additional challenges on industrial advancement.¹¹

In the context of less industrialized nations, the trade-offs between technological ambitions, production autonomy, and financial implications are especially pressing. Empirical evidence indicates that efforts to establish domestic arms production are successful only when a country's technological objectives are aligned with its economic and industrial capacities. A prevailing disconnect between the needs of the state and the capabilities of local industries can hinder the efficient production and supply of defense products. Consequently, most nations continue to rely heavily on foreign sources for weapons, components, and technological systems. Although domestic defense production can mitigate this reliance to a certain degree, its overall impact tends to be limited. The pursuit of independent industrial development represents a long-term and resource-intensive initiative that necessitates strategic planning, technological collaboration, and ongoing financial investment.

3. Enhancing Security Status and National “Pride”

Domestic defense industries play a crucial role not only in enhancing military capabilities but also in bolstering national status and pride. This dimension can be viewed as a

¹¹ J. H. Herz, *Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma*. *World Politics*, 2(2), 157–180. (1950).
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2009187>

significant source of political influence, impacting both international and domestic policy frameworks and, consequently, shaping the entire national security infrastructure.¹²

Aspirations related to national status frequently serve as a significant motivator of state behavior within the realm of international relations. The endeavors of states to sustain or develop their defense industries often reflect a form of technonationalism, wherein the pursuit of technological advancement and enhanced status may take precedence over economic rationality or military efficacy. Thus, in certain circumstances, arms production fulfills not only defensive requirements but also acts as a manifestation of national prestige and autonomy.¹³

A prominent illustration of this strategy can be observed in the leading Asian nations, including China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Indonesia. These countries have, in recent decades, initiated extensive programs aimed at developing domestic defense industries and establishing policies to promote their advancement. Their objectives extend beyond mere military self-sufficiency; they also encompass the enhancement of regional power dynamics and the elevation of their international standing. Therefore, the defense industry may be regarded not only as a mechanism for ensuring security but also as a political emblem of national prestige and identity. This enables states to showcase their technological and strategic independence on the global stage.

Domestic defense production functions as a critical mechanism through which states can demonstrate their military-industrial capabilities and technological competence. Even in situations where states are not entirely self-sufficient in defense matters, the existence of domestic defense industries serves as a significant signal to other nations. This signal conveys that the state possesses the institutional and technological resources necessary to ensure national security and sustain military infrastructure. Particularly noteworthy is the variety and technical complexity of the military products produced, which serve as an

¹² M. C. Horowitz, *The Diffusion of Military Power: Causes and Consequences for International Politics*. Princeton University Press. (2010).

¹³ A. Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. (1962).

indicator of the level of military-technological expertise within the state. Consequently, the development of the defense industry can indirectly reflect the operational capabilities and innovative potential of a state's armed forces.¹⁴

The quantitative capabilities of the domestic defense industry, encompassing the scale of production and the capacity to mobilize resources, are indicative of a state's ability to sustain its armed forces during protracted military conflicts. Consequently, the domestic defense sector serves as a crucial measure of a nation's survivability and military resilience. Moreover, arms exports hold both economic and substantial political significance, functioning as an effective mechanism to advance national security interests. The exportation of defense products often contributes to the enhancement of military capabilities among allied states, thereby supporting them in countering common adversaries or geopolitical rivals.

The authorization of arms exports constitutes a significant political statement, reflecting support for the security objectives of another state and thereby establishing a strategic partnership. Such relationships can enhance the exporting country's influence on the international stage, promote defense cooperation, and strengthen diplomatic ties. Consequently, the defense industry and arms exports provide a state with the opportunity to cultivate a reputation as a reliable and influential actor in regional or global security policy. Simultaneously, these exports create a platform for establishing and maintaining political influence with specific partners. However, the process of arms exports is accompanied by considerable political and strategic risks that necessitate careful and deliberate management by the state.

The granting of an export permit may strain relations with rival nations of the importing country, while a denial of such permits may adversely affect diplomatic relations with both existing and prospective partners. Therefore, arms exports should be viewed not merely as economic or industrial transactions but as instruments of strategic balance. The effective

¹⁴ P. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*. New York: Random House. (1987).

management of these exports demands a high level of coordination in foreign and security policy.¹⁵

In conclusion, the domestic defense industry possesses the potential to significantly enhance the international standing of a nation and foster national pride, ultimately contributing to national security. However, accurately assessing the extent to which these nations can achieve such objectives presents considerable challenges. The attainment of international prestige through the defense sector is a protracted, resource-intensive, and costly endeavor that necessitates both technological excellence and substantial production capacity. In this context, the qualitative and quantitative standards of the weapons and military technologies produced by a nation serve as crucial indicators of its perceived strength and credibility. The more innovative and technologically advanced the systems developed, the greater the impact on the nation's status in the global arena.¹⁶

Thus, the defense industry can be seen as a complex system that has military, economic, and symbolic importance. Its success relies not only on industrial and technological abilities but also on how effectively the government converts these resources into strategic advantages that bolster national security and enhance international standing.

CONCLUSION

The domestic military industry plays a crucial role in enhancing national security by integrating military, political, and economic functions, thereby serving as a strategic asset for the state. From a military perspective, this industry facilitates reliable domestic access to military goods, technologies, and services. Such access enhances the operational readiness of the armed forces (defense forces), fosters technological self-sufficiency, and bolsters the capacity of states to respond to both national and global threats effectively. The capability for high-quality and large-scale production significantly contributes to the

¹⁵ J. S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: PublicAffairs. (2004).

¹⁶C. Peoples, N. Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies: An Introduction* (3rd ed.). Routledge. (2021).

efficient mobilization of domestic resources, thereby strengthening the state's resilience in conflict situations.

Second, within the framework of dependency and interdependence, the defense industry establishes a network of political and economic ties among states. It reinforces strategic partnerships with allies and enhances influence within regional or international security dynamics. Arms production and export reflect a state's willingness to support its partners; strengthen diplomatic positions and contribute to political influence in the long term.

Third, the dimension of status and national pride underscores the symbolic significance of the defense industry. A robust defense sector enables a state to exhibit its technological and strategic autonomy on the international stage, enhance its political and regional influence, and fortify its national identity. This aspect is particularly vital for smaller states striving to elevate their strategic prestige through industrial advancement.

Ultimately, the military industry contributes to national security by reinforcing military capabilities, augmenting the strategic influence of states, facilitating the establishment of international standing, and bolstering the foundation for national pride. However, the efficacy of this contribution is neither automatic nor flawless. It is contingent upon the political context of the state, economic resources, technological capabilities, and prevailing social values. Thus, the military industry functions as a multifaceted strategic instrument that simultaneously encompasses both practical and symbolic dimensions in the establishment of national security.

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