

China's Strategic Blueprint: Creating A Multipolar World Through 2035

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About This Document

This report documents research and analysis conducted by the United States Army War College (USAWC) student team “PAWS” as a group Strategic Research Requirement. The report’s research, analysis, and production occurred over eight months, from October 2023 to May 2024, as a USAWC Senior Service College curriculum requirement in support of completing a Master of Strategic Studies degree.

The briefing book is available in electronic (PDF) and hard-copy formats. The electronic version is the primary version for future reference, as all source links are active.

Requirement

This report synthesizes and analyzes open-source documents to answer the following question(s) posed by GEN Charles Flynn, Commander, United States Army Pacific, in accordance with the Terms of Reference (see [Annex A](#)).

- How will China likely attempt to develop and shape a China-led alternative to the US-led rules/norms-based international order through 2035?
 - Is there an ideological “unifying principle” for a Chinese-led order leading to a “new Cold War”?
- What will the political, economic, and military structures look like that underpin an alternative order?
 - What existing organizations does China currently belong to, what do they do, and could any of them perform similar functions as NATO or other international orders?
 - What countries would China work with to build an alternative order?

Analytical Confidence

The estimate has an overall analytic confidence of *moderate*. The questions asked were complex, and the analysts had sufficient time. Source reliability and corroboration were generally moderate to high, except for Chinese and other foreign sources. The analysts worked individually and collectively to research the answers to the questions. The team used a combination of structured analytic techniques, including the nominal group technique and multi-criteria Analytic Model. Team PAWS used variations of Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications to include ChatGPT, Gemini, Microsoft Co-Pilot, Perplexity, Llama, and Claude. Team PAWS evaluated the analytic confidence using Peterson's Analytic Confidence Factors (see [ANNEX B](#))

Words Of Estimative Probability

Team PAWS used the Kesselman List of Estimative Words (see [ANNEX F](#)) to express the estimative probability of predictions made.

Source Reliability

Source reliability is annotated throughout the document as high (H), moderate (M), or low (L). Source reliability was determined using the Standard Primary Source Credibility Scale (see [ANNEX D](#)) and the Trust Scale and Website Evaluation Worksheet (see [ANNEX E](#)). Reliability annotations hyperlink to the primary sources in the electronic version. Team members were instructed in techniques to search the Chinese internet, and those sources' reliability is labeled where appropriate.

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Key Finding 1: How will China likely attempt to develop and shape a China-led alternative to the US-led rules/norms-based international order through 2035?

Based on an analysis of over 1,263 sources, including subject matter expert interviews, The People's Republic of China (PRC) is highly likely (71-85%) to attempt to develop and shape a China-led alternative to the US-led rules-based international order through 2035 through a "Covert Hegemonic Ambition" (CHA) strategy. The PRC has not formally articulated this strategy. Rather, it has emerged from the intersection of goals, policies, actions, and the increasingly dominating influence of President Xi Jinping.

This grand strategy highly likely centers on aligning global governance with "Xiism," a combination of China's core national interests and Chairman Xi's ideological orientation. This CHA strategy is characterized by nuanced engagements and influence, prioritizing overt and covert hybrid warfare actions. However, all of China's actions must be favored by its domestic audience and adhere to Xi's vision of a "community of common destiny."

Despite international scrutiny and potential pushback, the PRC is highly likely to employ the following hybrid warfare tactics (See Figure 1) to execute the CHA strategy:

- Economic warfare
- Favorable energy and tech standards creation
- Political and legal warfare
- Cyber Warfare
- Information/cultural influence operations

The CHA strategy is highly opportunistic and will, under favorable conditions, target countries worldwide, including traditional adversaries such as the United States, Taiwan, and its allies. China is, however, likely (56-70%) to target some countries more than others (See Key Finding 5 for more details).



Figure 1: Although this Rand study did not capture China's creation of favorable energy and tech standards, it does capture China's other hybrid warfare tactics in the Indo-Pacific region

The various elements of the CHA strategy are well supported by a variety of sources:

- **Economic Warfare:** China will highly likely continue to use economic warfare in a case-specific way to advance its interests. Victor Cha, Senior Vice President for Asia and Korea Chair, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), testified before Congress in May 2023, stating that *China's economic coercion has become part and parcel of its foreign policy against many trading partners. Countries that interact with Taiwan, support democracy in Hong Kong, oppose genocide in Xinjiang or offend any other "core interests" of China face discriminatory, non-WTO-conforming sanctions and embargoes.*
- **Favorable Energy and Tech Standards:** China will likely continue to pursue positions on international standards-setting boards. A recent Carnegie Endowment for International Peace report states, *"China has expanded the number of technical committees and subcommittees it participates in, from 465 in 2005 to 668 in 2021...China held sixty-nine International Organization for Standards secretariats in 2021...China doesn't dominate these organizations by sheer numbers, but it does play a large and growing role, particularly in strategic technology sectors such as 5G."*

In addition to 5G, a 2023 Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) report stated that China's global lead extends to 37 out of 44 critical technologies that ASPI is now tracking, covering a range of crucial technology fields spanning defense, space, robotics, energy, the environment, biotechnology, artificial intelligence (AI), advanced materials and key quantum technology areas. A few of these technologies are captured in ASPI's Critical Technology Tracker below (See Figure 2).

Technology	Top 5 countries				
Advanced aircraft engines (incl. hypersonics)	 48.49%	 11.69%	 6.96%	 3.93%	 3.60%
Drones, swarming and collaborative robots	 36.07%	 10.30%	 6.13%	 5.15%	 4.53%
Small satellites	 24.49%	 17.32%	 7.82%	 4.36%	 4.11%
Autonomous systems operation technology	 26.20%	 21.01%	 5.28%	 5.11%	 3.55%
Advanced robotics	 27.89%	 24.64%	 5.49%	 4.81%	 3.79%
Advanced radiofrequency communications (incl. 5G and 6G)	 29.65%	 9.50%	 5.18%	 4.89%	 4.83%
Advanced optical communications	 37.69%	 12.76%	 5.64%	 3.88%	 3.48%
Artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms and hardware accelerators	 36.62%	 13.26%	 4.20%	 4.15%	 3.48%

Figure 2: (ASPI) The top-ranked countries leading critical and emerging technologies

- Political and Legal Warfare:** Between now and 2035, China is likely to continue using legal systems and institutions as a weapon to achieve strategic, political, or military objectives. The Lowy Institute stated in 2021 that the issue, however, is not that China flagrantly violates international law—it *is that it does so while simultaneously creating a veneer of legal legitimacy for its position.*

For example, in 2022, China gave Mandarin-language names to 80 islands, reefs, and other features in the South China Sea, 55 of which are fully submerged, in further defiance of international law. Qian Feng, a senior fellow at Tsinghua University in Beijing, stated that *the standardization [of names] reflected China's sovereignty over these listed islands in the South China Sea and their surrounding waters.*

- **Cyber Warfare:** China will likely remain the single most capable and aggressive cyber threat between now and 2035. On January 31, 2024, FBI Director Christopher Wray sounded the alarm about China's targeting of U.S. critical infrastructure for potential cyber-attacks in his opening statement to the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. He said that *the CCP's dangerous actions – China's multi-pronged assault on our national and economic security – make it the defining threat of our generation.*

For example, in April 2024, the FBI reported that an ongoing Chinese hacking campaign known as Volt Typhoon successfully gained access to numerous American companies in telecommunications, energy, water, and other critical sectors, with 23 pipeline operators targeted.

- **Information/Cultural Influence Operations:** China will likely increase and expand its ability to conduct successful information/cultural influence operations, particularly in the global south, between now and 2035. A 2024 Rand report stated that *China views modern warfare as being centered on the struggle for information dominance, which is considered the most important of the traditional 'three dominances,' along with air dominance and sea dominance.*

For example, in 2022, Meta removed 7,704 accounts, 954 pages, and 15 groups linked to efforts to promote pro-China talking points and attack the Chinese government's critics. According to Meta's analysts, Chinese influence operations targeted at least 50 other platforms and apps, including YouTube, Reddit, Pinterest, TikTok, Medium, and X, the company formerly known as Twitter.

The execution of the CHA strategy is underpinned by three key criteria: avoiding long-term alliances typically associated with hegemonic power that could empower opposition blocs, a transactional, “one-for-you, two-for-me” approach in international aid and cooperation, and China's aspirations for global power without responsibility. Specifically:

- **Avoidance of Long-term Alliances:** China is almost certain (86-99%) to continue its pattern of forming transactional and issue-specific partnerships rather than binding military or political alliances. This approach aims to deter states from joining U.S.-led alliances, maintaining flexibility in foreign policy.

As President Xi Jinping stated during the last Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in July 2023, *We should keep in mind the overall and long-term interests of our region, and make our foreign policies independently, and be highly vigilant against external attempts to foment a new Cold War or camp-based confrontation in our region.*

- **Transactional Cooperation - "One for You, Two for Me" Principle:** China's foreign aid and investment strategies often include terms that disproportionately benefit Chinese economic and strategic interests.

An analysis by AidData, a research lab at William and Mary University, showed that China's aid allocation correlates significantly with the recipient countries' diplomatic support for China in international forums and calculated that for every 10 percent increase in voting support within the United Nations, China increases aid by an average 86 percent.

- **Global Power without Responsibility:** By advancing initiatives like the Digital Silk Road and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), China subtly crafts a narrative of egalitarian global development. However, these initiatives strategically place China at the center of new technology and financial networks, expanding its influence without the direct appearance of seeking hegemony.

A 2020 Brookings article stated that while *China is an active player in global economic institutions, it has been careful to define itself as a developing country and to avoid taking on the responsibilities of rich countries. Examples of China's reluctance to take on new responsibilities abound in every domain.*

Indeed, the two components of Xiism, when combined with the three criteria discussed above, likely provide a rough guide to future Chinese decisions. When applied to 16 recent actions and two hypothetical scenarios from recent history (See Figure 3 below) and based on what was known *prior* to China's eventual decision, China took no actions that violated the two core principles of Xiism and only took action where the gain significantly outweighed the cost. While this method prioritizes speed over precision, it is likely a useful first-order analytic approach.

		Screening Criteria #1	Screening Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #1	Evaluation Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #3
		Alignment with Xiism	Positive Domestic Response	Avoidance of Long-Term Alliances	Transactional Cooperation	Global Power without Responsibility
Actions Taken By China	Promote Digital Silk Road	Y	Y	3	3	3
	Attempt Peacefully Reunify Taiwan	Y	Y	3	2	3
	Expand in Antigua	Y	Y	2	3	3
	Enhanced UN Engagements	Y	Y	2	3	3
	Expand BRI Developments	Y	Y	2	3	2
	Expand SCO	Y	Y	2	3	2
	Expand Actions in South China Sea	Y	Y	3	2	2
	Expand BRICS	Y	Y	2	2	2
	Establish AIIB	Y	Y	1	2	2
Actions Not Taken By China	Ban All Foreign Tech In CI	Y	Y	2	1	1
	Forgive Debt in BRI Countries	N	N	2	0	1
	Reunify Taiwan Forcefully	Y*	N	1	1	1
	Obtain Full G7 Membership	N	N	0	1	1
	Join Trans-Pac Partnership	Y	Y	0	1	1
	Join Paris Climate Agreement	Y	N	0	1	1
	Adopt Intl Cyber Sec Standards	Y	Y	0	1	1
	Condemn North Korea Publicly	N	N	1	1	0
	Military Alliance with Russia	Y	Y	0	1	1

Figure 3: (Team PAWS) Multi-criteria analytic model representing the CHA grand strategy through two screening criteria and three evaluation criteria. Evaluation criteria ranking from (0-low) to (3-high) alignment with criteria. The Chinese decision to act appears to be between a total score of (4 to 5) on the evaluation criteria. China is still deciding whether to ban all foreign technology in critical infrastructures.

For example, China's recent expansion in Antigua aligns well with this first-order analytical approach. This action supports both Xiism and Xi Jinping's strategic goals of expanding China's global influence while reducing the influence of U.S. and European powers in key regions. Chinese investments in countries like Antigua often involve infrastructure projects and loans that favor Chinese companies and export Chinese standards and technologies. However, these actions are often without the significant responsibilities of traditional global power roles, such as military protection or substantial economic bailouts. China can extend its global footprint and enhance its international image as a major development partner without the traditional responsibilities.

When applied to two hypothetical scenarios, the peaceful and the forceful reunification of Taiwan, the model yields interesting results as well, suggesting that peaceful reunification is likely the currently preferred outcome.

Peaceful reunification with Taiwan is a core component of Xi Jinping's nationalistic agenda, reflecting a strong commitment to restoring China's territorial integrity. An April 2024 Guardian article stated that the recent meeting between Xi Jinping and former Taiwan president Ma Ying-jeou, *was an attempt to promote peaceful unification as the only alternative to military annexation of Taiwan*. Xi stated that *external interference cannot stop the historical trend of reunion of the country and family*, that people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait were Chinese, and *there is no rancor that cannot be resolved, no problem that cannot be discussed, and no force that can separate us*. Ma stated that a war would be *an unbearable burden for the Chinese nation*. *The Chinese people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait will definitely have enough wisdom to handle cross-strait disputes peacefully and avoid conflicts*.

Forceful reunification, although in stark contrast to the promoted peaceful development approach of Xi Jinping, still aligns with the overarching goal of national unification, a central theme in Chinese nationalistic and sovereign ambitions under Xiism. Forceful reunification will likely rally nationalistic sentiments initially, supported by state propaganda. However, the likely economic repercussions, potential human costs, and international backlash would likely lead to mixed or negative perceptions among the Chinese populace over time. While it aligns with the ultimate goal of national unification, forceful unification with Taiwan contradicts the preferred narratives of peaceful development and the avoidance of entangling alliances. Moreover, it would involve China in substantial global responsibilities and reduce its ability to maintain a transactional approach in its international relations. Such an action would mark a significant and risky shift in China's foreign policy, likely resulting in severe international repercussions and altering China's global standing.

Key Finding 2: Is there an ideological “unifying principle” for a Chinese-led order leading to a “new Cold War”?

It is highly likely that the ideological “unifying principle” guiding a potential Chinese-centric world order is best captured in President Xi’s ideas regarding the “Community of Common Destiny for Mankind.”

The “Community of Common Destiny for Mankind” concept, on paper, underscores the values of mutual respect, economic progression, and political autonomy, avoiding the enforcement of a singular political doctrine. This concept likely challenges the Western-led liberal democratic order in several ways:

- **Alternative Path to Development:** It suggests that countries need not adopt Western-style democracy to achieve economic development and prosperity. China's rapid economic growth under authoritarian rule is a counterexample to the long-held belief that democracy is a prerequisite for development.
- **Non-Interference and Sovereignty:** The Community of Common Destiny for Mankind emphasizes respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. This contrasts with the Western approach, which often advocates for promoting democracy and human rights abroad.
- **Multipolar World:** By promoting a community based on shared interests and mutual respect, China advocates for a more multipolar world in which power is distributed among several major powers rather than concentrated in the West.
- **Cultural and Civilizational Diversity:** The concept acknowledges and values the diversity of cultures and civilizations, suggesting that different paths to development and governance models can coexist and cooperate for the common good.

This concept of a "Community of Common Destiny for Mankind" was first articulated by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013. Since then, Xi and his senior officials have reiterated this idea in numerous speeches and international forums. Most recently, at the 14th National People's Congress, March 2023, he stated, *Mankind, by living in the same global village in the same era where history and reality meet, has increasingly emerged as a community of common destiny in which everyone has in himself a little bit of others.*

Key Finding 3: What will the political, economic, and military structures look like that underpin an alternative order?

The political, economic, and military structures are highly likely to reflect the PRC's policy of non-interference and its bilateral approach to security and economic development. Key Chinese initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Global Security Initiative (GSI), and the Global Development Initiative (GDI) reflect these tenets.

- The BRI is a cornerstone foreign policy effort by Chinese President Xi Jinping that will highly likely serve as the backbone of PRC economic and political structures. Projects under the BRI are negotiated bilaterally, allowing each participating country to maintain its sovereignty. This bilateral approach allows China to establish economic ties and dependencies that enhance its influence while ostensibly adhering to its non-interference policy. As of October 2023, BRI touches 151 countries with a combined gross domestic product of \$41 trillion and nearly 5.1 billion people.

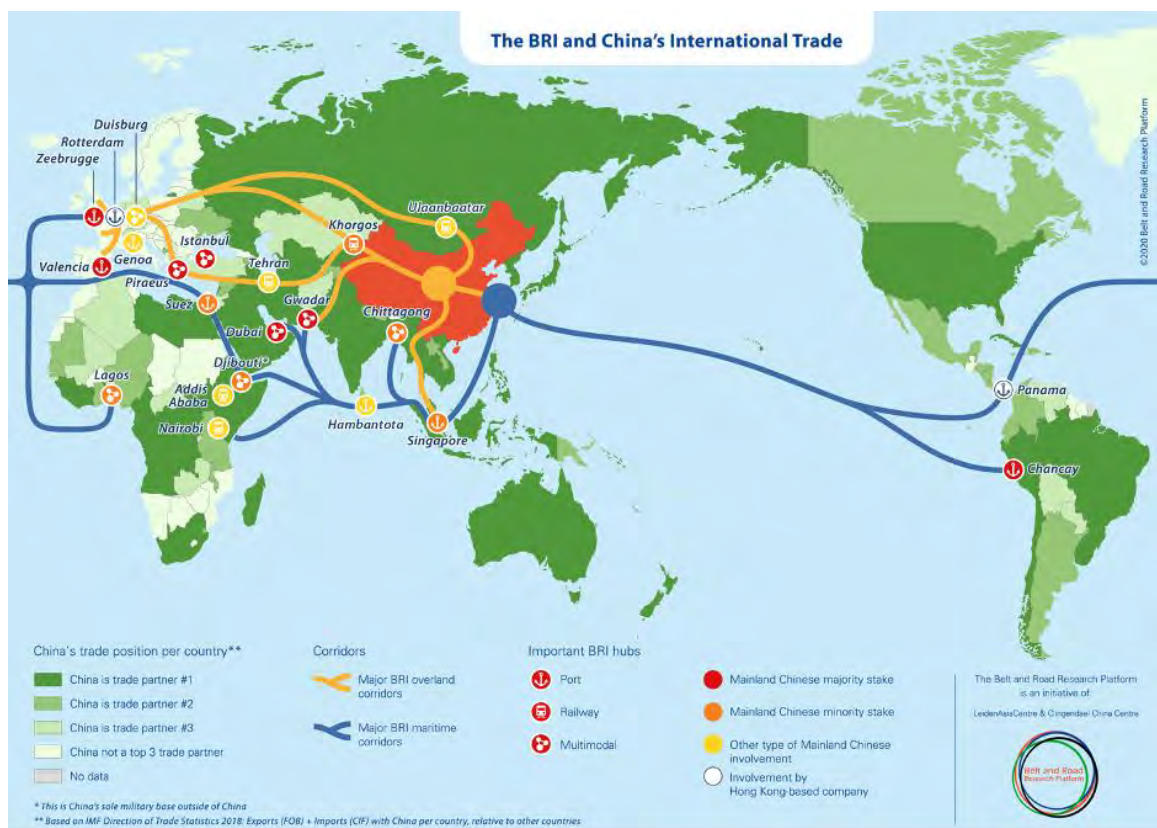
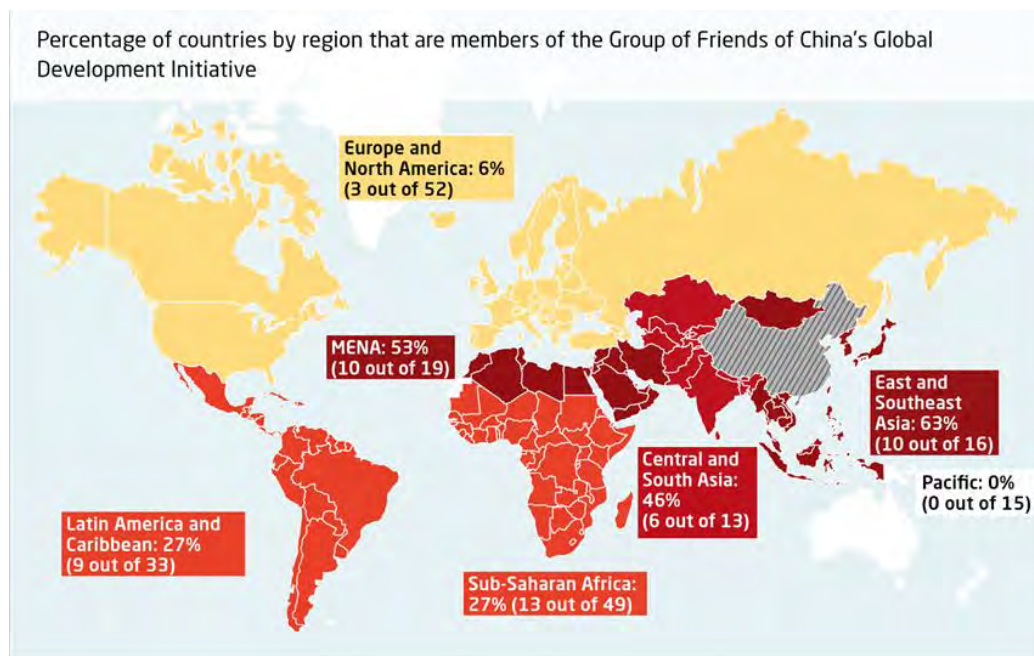


Figure 4: (Yale Review of International Studies) People's Republic of China Belt and Road Initiative

- Dr. Junhua Zhang, a senior associate at the European Institute for Asian Studies, stated in February 2024 that *the BRI's purpose has evolved and now embodies Mr. Xi's global aims; while Beijing overlooks debt and tolerates corruption in recipient countries, the BRI remains influential and is likely here to stay.*
- The GSI is highly likely to emphasize a security framework that aligns other countries with China's vision of a new international security architecture. According to China's February 2023 Global Security Initiative Concept Paper, the GSI reflects China's core principles of diplomacy, including the paramount importance of state sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, and opposition to unilateral sanctions and bloc confrontation. China will likely build this security structure around arms sales, joint exercises, and security cooperation, particularly with African and Asian nations. This strengthens security ties and allows China to gather intelligence and gain logistical advantages without overt military intervention.
- The GDI highly likely serves as a political and economic framework that seeks to extend China's influence in global governance, particularly in development and economic areas. GDI claims to stress development that respects the paths and models chosen independently by participating countries, thus adhering to the non-interference policy. Despite operating within the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, GDI is highly likely to focus on tailoring development projects to meet the specific needs of participating countries through bilateral agreements while supporting a one-for-you, two-for-me approach to development.



[*Figure 5: \(MERICS\) World Members of China's Global Development Initiative*](#)

- Paul Haenle and Nathaniel Sher at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace stated in December 2023 that *these [GDI and GSI] initiatives aim to bolster the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), reshape the global governance system, increase China's international influence, and present an alternative to the U.S.-led liberal international order.*

Key Finding 4: What existing organizations does China currently belong to, what do they do, and could any of them perform similar functions as NATO or other international orders?

Organization	Organization Type	Organization Role/Function	China's Member Status	China's Interests	China's Influence Strategy	NATO Likelihood	Due to Reasons
United Nations (UN)	International	Engages in global governance, peacekeeping, and security issues.	Permanent Security Council Member	Enhance global influence and participate in shaping international policies.	Financial support, staffing, aligning votes and shaping U.N. language (1)	Remote	Focuses on peacekeeping and diplomacy, not collective defense.
World Trade Organization (WTO)	International	Facilitates global trade negotiations and enforces trade agreements.	Member since 2001	Access to global markets and protection of its economic interests.	Advocates for rules that benefit its growing economic stature (2)	Remote	Economic body without security or military components.
Group of Twenty (G20)	International	Addresses international economic and financial stability issues.	Active member	Influence global economic policies and advocate for developing nations.	Pushes for global economic reforms to reduce Western dominance (3)	Remote	Primarily an economic forum with no military or defense functions.
BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)	International	Engages in economic, political, and cultural cooperation among emerging economies.	Founding member	Develop strategic partnerships with other major emerging economies.	Fosters an alternative economic bloc to challenge Western financial institutions (4)	Remote	Focus is on economic growth and development, not military activities.
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)	International	Supports infrastructure development primarily in Asia, enhancing regional connectivity.	Founding member Largest shareholder	Lead regional development initiatives and export China's construction standards.	Promotes infrastructure projects that extend Chinese influence (5)	Remote	Focused on development funding, not defense or security.
New Development Bank (NDB)	International	Finances infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS countries.	Founding member	Finance development projects aligned with China's interests.	Uses it to solidify relationships and economic ties with other BRICS nations (6)	Remote	A financial institution with no role in defense or military alliances.

Figure 6: China Affiliated International Organizations (1).(2).(3).(4).(5).(6).(7).(8).(9).(10)

China currently belongs to 10 key international or regional organizations that conduct various roles and functions that serve China's interests (See Figures 6 and 7 above). There is a remote (1-15%) chance that 9 of the 10 organizations will evolve to perform as a NATO-like military alliance due to their focus on trade, peacekeeping, economic aid, and infrastructure development and their lack of focus on military issues.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), on the other hand, performs two of five NATO functions – political dialogue and security cooperation. Despite these parallels, it is highly unlikely (16-30%) that the SCO will form a NATO-like military alliance in the next decade.

This is due to the SCO's policy of military non-alignment, focus on addressing regional security issues, broadening emphasis on economic matters, and effort toward a cooperative and integrated Eurasia that operates independently of Western influence.

- Both international observers and the Chinese do not see the SCO as a military alliance. In February 2024, according to Ties Dams, a geopolitical and PRC expert associated with Clingendael Institute and Leiden University, *the SCO shows how lots of countries, despite significant ideological differences, are attracted to the kind of diplomacy propagated by Beijing: à la carte, based on self-interest, and without Western interference.*
- Likewise, SCO Secretary-General Zhang Ming rejected any comparison between the SCO and NATO in May 2023: *The Shanghai Club never sought to compare itself with the transatlantic alliance. It is not a political or military bloc, and it follows its path and strives to promote peace.*



[Figure 7: Shanghai Cooperation Organization Membership](#)

Key Finding 5: What countries would China work with to build an alternative order?

Note: Low Confidence Estimate

Like the Daoist parable of the “useless tree,” China will likely find several ways to work with different countries to build an alternative order. That said, China is likely to work most closely with those countries that have already bought into its approach to global governance.

This, in turn, is likely captured in the network of alliances, memberships, trade and loan agreements, and telecommunications networks that exist between China and other countries in the world.

After evaluating existing Alliances, BRICS, BRI, SCO, AIIB, and ASEAN memberships, loans from Chinese banks, Huawei technology networks, and China Foreign Military Sales (FMS), it is likely that the world’s countries can be sorted into six rough categories based on how likely each country would be to work with China to build an alternative order. Many of the countries at the top of the list (see Figure 9) are already firmly in China’s camp, while those at the bottom are likely out of China’s reach for now. Those in the middle (see Figure 10) are likely the most interesting, representing targets of opportunity for China’s global interests.

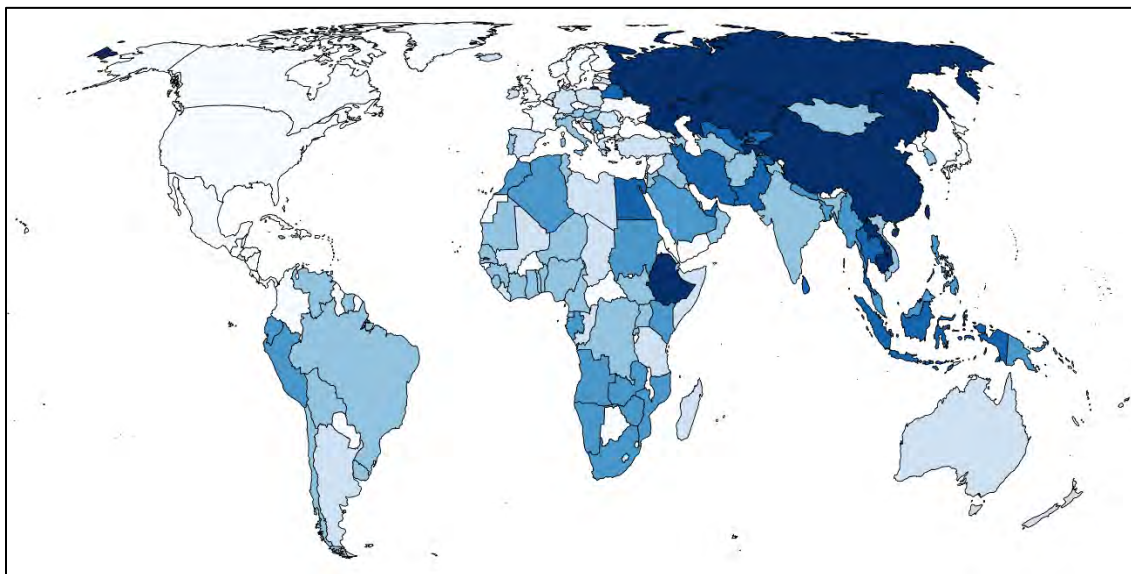


Figure 8: (Team PAWS) Multi-criteria analytic model representing the countries most likely to work with China to develop an alternative world order. The darker the color, the more closely aligned the country like is with China (see Annex I of the final report)

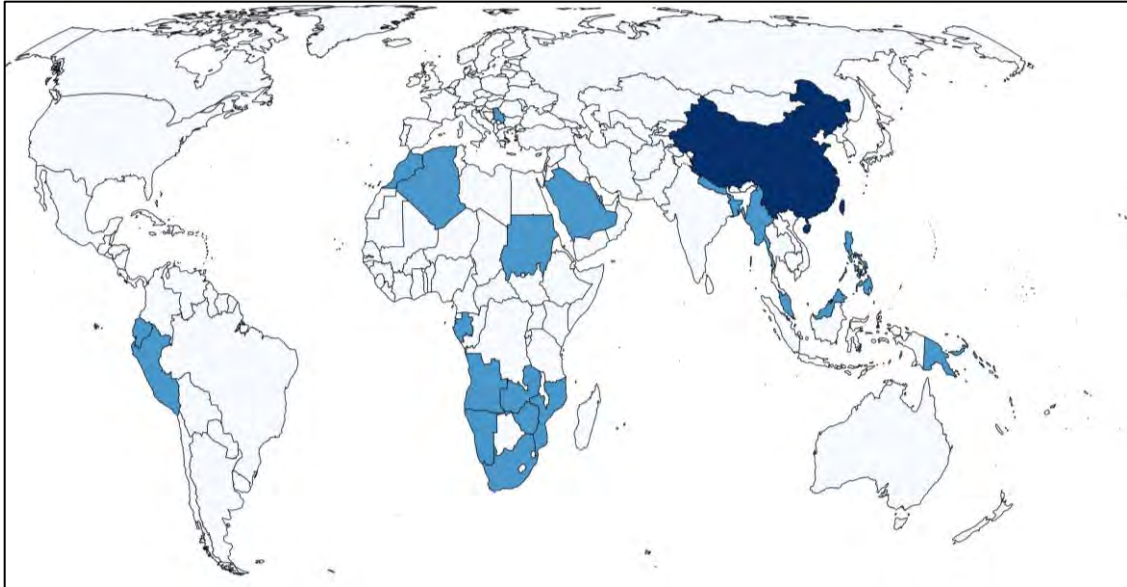


Figure 9: (Team PAWS) Multi-criteria analysis model representing the countries China will most likely target for an alternative China-led order (see Annex I of final report)

Table of Contents

Key Findings.....	3
-------------------	-------------------

Key Finding 1: How will China likely attempt to develop and shape a China-led alternative to the U.S.-led rules/norms-based international order through 2035?

People’s Republic Of China Almost Certain To Use Nuanced And Opportunistic Hybrid Warfare Tactics To Challenge And Shape Alternative To U.S.-Led Rules-Based Norms By 2035.....	21
---	--------------------

People’s Republic Of China Almost Certain To Continue Use Of Economic Warfare Within Next Ten Years To Increase Global Influence And Secure Strategic Assets.....	25
---	--------------------

China’s Economic Slowdown Highly Likely Hinders Ability To Underwrite Alternative World Order; Weakens Challenge To Western-Led Status Quo Over The Next Ten Years.....	28
---	--------------------

People’s Republic Of China’s Energy Companies Highly Likely To Shift Global Energy Business To A Chinese-Led Market In The Next Ten Years Due To Exports Of Power Generation To Include Nuclear, Wind, And Hydroelectric Systems.....	30
---	--------------------

People’s Republic Of China’s Three Global Initiatives Highly Likely To Significantly Increase Its Diplomatic And Political Influence In The World Within Next Ten Years.....	32
--	--------------------

People’s Republic Of China Likely Aims To Broaden Its Impact By Elevating Its Influence On International Standards By 2035.....	35
---	--------------------

People’s Republic Of China’s Investment And Expansion Of The Belt And Road Initiative Is Highly Likely To Continue Global Infrastructure Development And Create New Investment Standards In The Next Ten Years In Asia And The Global South.....	38
--	--------------------

People’s Republic Of China Is Highly Likely To Pursue Strengthening Their Core Interests Of Sovereignty, Internal Security, And Expansion Of Developmental Programs To Pursue An Alternative World Order By 2035.....	40
---	--------------------

Key Finding 2: Is there an ideological “unifying principle” for a Chinese-Led order leading to a “New Cold War”?

Resiliency Of The Chinese Communist Party Highly Likely Through 2035; Core Interests, Leadership Are Key Drivers.....[43](#)

People’s Republic Of China Highly Likely To Use Cultural Soft Power Initiatives Like Confucius Institutes, Celebrity Ambassadors, And Panda Diplomacy.....[46](#)

People’s Republic Of China Will Likely Increase Investments In Emerging Technology, Research, Development, And Education Within The Next Ten Years.....[50](#)

People’s Republic Of China’s Cyberspace Security Laws Highly Likely A Legal Framework To Advance Vision Of China-Led Alternative International Order.....[53](#)

Key Finding 3: What will the political, economic and military structures look like that underpin an alternative order?

People’s Republic Of China Highly Likely To Shape Alternative World Order Based On “Connectivity Politics” Over The Next Decade; Key Development Initiatives, New Multilateral Organizations, Diplomacy Underscore Connectivity Ambitions.....[56](#)

People’s Republic Of China Likely To Become A Global Leader In Smart Cities Development In the Next Ten Years; Successful Domestic And Continued International Development Driving Efforts To Shape Global Standards.....[60](#)

People’s External Economic Development Highly Likely To Remain Flat For The Next Ten Years Due To Projected Decreases In The Stock Market, Exports, External Loans, And Foreign Investment.....[63](#)

People’s Republic Of China Highly Likely To Increase Presence And Capability In The Space Domain Within Ten Years.....[65](#)

People’s Republic Of China Shipbuilding Industry Poised To Assert Dominance And Likely Shift Global Standards Towards A Chinese-Led Market In the Next Decade Due To Advancements In Naval Technology.....[67](#)

China Highly Likely To Invest Billions Of Dollars Annually Over The Next Ten Years To Become A Global Leader In Artificial Intelligence, Biotechnology And Quantum Computing With The Goal Of Setting Global Standards.....[70](#)

People’s Republic Of China’s Digital Silk Road Will Likely Increase Its Control Of The Information Domain In the Next Ten Years.....[73](#)

People’s Republic Of China Will Increase Control Of Information And Media Globally Within The Next Ten Years.....[75](#)

People’s Republic Of China’s Technology Companies Likely To Achieve Dominance To Shift Global Technology Standards To A Chinese-Led Market In The Next Ten Years Due To Micro-Chip Production, Continued Majority Market Share In Telecom Equipment And Smart Cities Technologies.....[78](#)

People’s Republic Of China’s Internal Economic Development Highly Likely To Remain Flat For The Next Ten Years With Minimal Growth by 2035.....[80](#)

Key Finding 4: What existing organizations does China currently belong to, what do they do, and could any of them perform similar functions as NATO or other international orders?

Shanghai Cooperation Organization Highly Unlikely To Form Military Alliance In The Next Decade; Highly Likely To Remain Regionally Focused Based On People’s Republic Of China-Influences Security Development.....[82](#)

People’s Republic Of China Likely To Continue Joint Military Exercises Within Ten Years 2024-2035, Promoting Interoperability With Other Nations.....[86](#)

Key Finding 5: What countries would China work with to build an alternative order?

People’s Republic Of China-Russia Bilateral Ties Highly Likely To Deepen Through 2035; A Military Alliance Is Highly Unlikely.....[88](#)

People’s Republic Of China Highly Likely To Intensify Military Diplomacy With Economically Dependent Countries Within Next Ten Years To Increase Global Influence And Support Narratives.....[91](#)

People's Republic Of China Highly Likely To Establish Security Alliances In The Next Ten Years; Partnerships Are Highly Likely The Alternative.....	<u>95</u>
People's Republic Of China Highly Likely To Significantly Increase Peacekeeping And Conflict Resolution Leadership Roles Within Next Ten Years.....	<u>98</u>
China Highly Likely To Use Economic Alliances And Partnerships To Pursue A New World Order Within The Next Ten Years.....	<u>101</u>
People's Republic Of China Highly Likely To Use BRICS To Counter G7 World Influences For A China-Led Alternative World Order By Reshaping Global Governance Structures, Challenging Western Dominance, And Promoting A Multipolar International System.....	<u>105</u>
Annex A: Terms Of Reference.....	<u>108</u>
Annex B: Peterson's Analytic Confidence Worksheet.....	<u>112</u>
Annex C: Friedman Corollaries.....	<u>113</u>
Annex D: Standard Primary Source Credibility Scale.....	<u>114</u>
Annex E: Trust Scale And Web Site Evaluation Worksheet.....	<u>115</u>
Annex F: Kesselman List Of Estimative Words.....	<u>116</u>
Annex G: Professional Interviews.....	<u>117</u>
Annex H: Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) – Critical Technology Tracker.....	<u>120</u>
Annex I: Multi-Criteria Analytic Model.....	<u>125</u>
Annex J: Slide Presentation.....	<u>137</u>

People's Republic Of China Almost Certain To Use Nuanced And Opportunistic Hybrid Warfare Tactics To Challenge And Shape Alternative To U.S.-Led Rules-Based Norms By 2035

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is almost certain (86-99%) to utilize opportunistic and nuanced hybrid warfare methods within the next ten years to shape an alternative to the international order in its favor while steering clear of full-scale military confrontation. Despite international scrutiny and potential pushback, the PRC is highly likely (71-85%) to emphasize economic warfare, energy and tech standards creation, political and legal warfare, cyber operations, global infrastructure investment, and information/cultural influence - targeting countries across Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America, as well as traditional adversaries such as the United States and its allies.

Discussion

Although the PRC does not officially use the term hybrid warfare as a strategy, Han Aiyong, an associate professor at the Institute of International and Strategic Studies of the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCP), stated that hybrid warfare involves deploying all aspects of physical and non-physical state power, including civil society, to confront an adversary indirectly.^H The People's Liberation Army (PLA) Daily stated, "Hybrid warfare is generally regarded as a war operation in which multiple war subjects comprehensively use political (public opinion, diplomatic, legal, etc.), economic (trade war, energy warfare, etc.), military (intelligence warfare, electronic warfare, special operations) and other means to achieve a certain goal, and carry out unified and coordinated war operations at the strategic level."^H

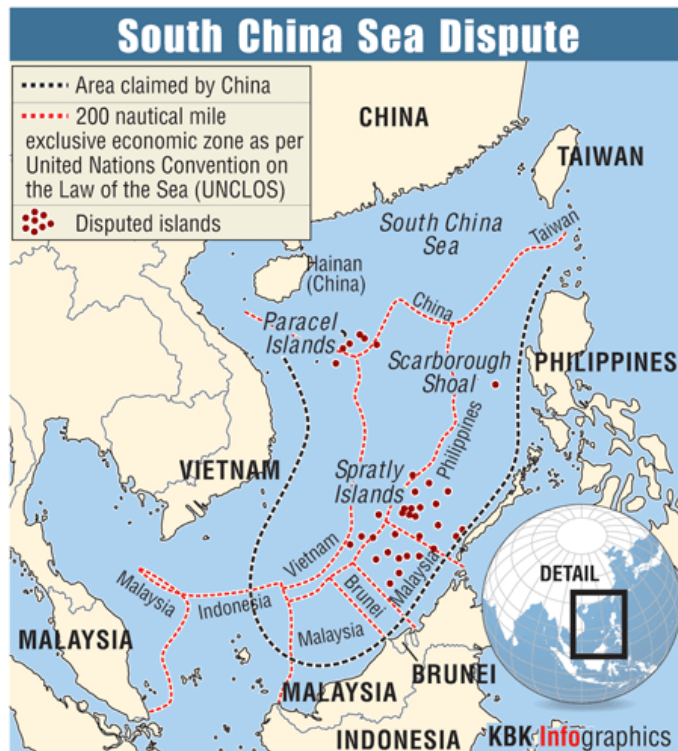
Xu Sanfei, senior editor in the Theory Department of Liberation Army News, stated that hybrid warfare has become an "important option"—"the option of first resort" in great power conflict.^H He further wrote that:

- Political warfare (政治战) is the essential manifestation of hybrid warfare
- Diplomatic warfare (外交战) is an important vehicle for hybrid warfare
- Public opinion warfare (舆论战) is the main way of hybrid warfare
- Economic warfare (经济战) is a key means of hybrid warfare
- Subversive warfare (颠覆战) is a special form of hybrid warfare
- Military warfare (军事战) is the basic basis for hybrid warfare^H

Political and legal warfare (lawfare): The PRC is almost certain to engage in "lawfare" and political warfare to create an international environment conducive to its policies and challenge the prevailing international legal order.^H It uses other nation's institutions,

forums, and legal systems to promote its interpretation of international law, often leading to conflicts with the current order's principles of freedom and sovereignty.^H

The construction of artificial islands by the PRC in the South China Sea, especially in the Spratly Islands, showcases how they exploit international law to justify actions that pursue strategic and military objectives.^H The PRC claimed that the island-building was in accordance with Article 60 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).^H However, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague issued a ruling denouncing the PRC's actions in the South China Sea, including the construction of artificial islands, and that the PRC has no legal basis for its claim over the waters.^H Although the Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling is legally binding under the United Nations Convention on UNCLOS, it cannot enforce it.^H The PRC boycotted the hearing process, ignored the ruling, and faced no economic, military, or other consequences as a result.^H



[The PRC's legal claim of artificial islands in the South China Sea, exemplifies legal warfare \(lawfare\)](#)

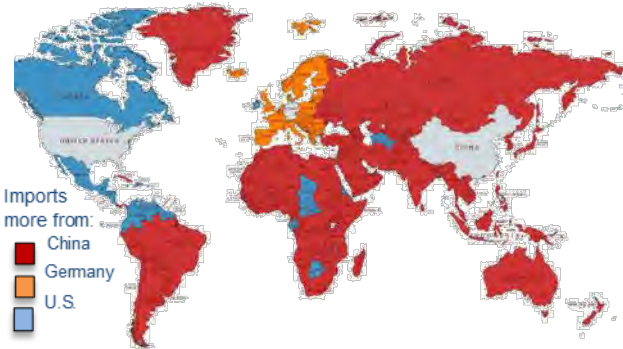
Diplomatic Warfare: The PRC is highly likely to leverage its political and military diplomacy,^H including using "united fronts," to influence foreign governments, businesses, and academia.^H The united front combines engagement, influence activities, and intelligence operations to shape the CCP's political environment, including influencing other countries' policies and gaining access to advanced foreign technology.^H Although technically not warfare, the PRC's participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)^H and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa)^H can be seen as political and diplomatic efforts to challenge Western hegemony and promote a multipolar,^H international system.^H See^H for more information on BRICS.

Public opinion warfare: The PRC is highly likely to use state-controlled media outlets, social media platforms, and covert influence operations to shape public opinion and control the narrative.^H Leveraging global media,^H cultural soft power,^H and the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI),^H the PRC engages in comprehensive campaigns to sway international public opinion^H in its favor, portraying Western influence as declining and promoting its model as superior, despite global criticisms of its domestic policies.^H

Economic Warfare:^H U.S. Senator Tom Cotton stated that the PRC has been waging an economic global war for the past twenty years, leveraging its economic strength to gain global strategic advantages.^{HH} Under the

direction of the CCP,^H the PRC is almost certain to intensify its economic warfare efforts with countries in the Global South and “strategic strongpoint” areas through BRI^H and the Global Development Initiative (GDI).^H

Although the PRC is almost certain to continue using economic tactics in the Global South, the PRC will highly likely also use economic warfare to disrupt the economies of U.S. allies, particularly Taiwan, to isolate them globally and advance the PRC's policy positions.^H See^H for more information on BRI. The PRC will also highly likely use its economic power to influence international energy and tech standards,^H and pressure countries to adopt Chinese standards for energy and technology, such as 5G networks.^H



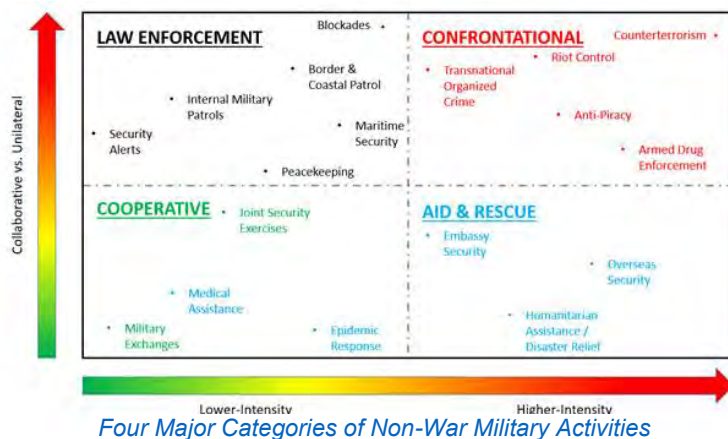
128 of 190 countries trade more with China than with the U.S.

Subversive Warfare: Despite its professed commitment to non-interference principles and respect for sovereignty,^H the PRC is highly likely engaged in subversive warfare tactics.^H For years, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has executed a coordinated cyber and cognitive warfare campaign, including espionage, disinformation,^H and subversive tactics, to demonstrate its capacity to disrupt Taiwan during a crisis digitally.^H The PRC supports non-state actors and movements that align with its strategic interests, using these groups to destabilize regions or governments that are a “threat.”^H

The digital domain is a significant battlefield in subversive warfare.^H The PRC not only gathers intelligence through cyber espionage, data theft, digital surveillance, and misinformation campaigns but also manipulates public opinion, disrupts the democratic processes of adversaries, and steals intellectual property.^H This strategy seeks to weaken adversaries while strengthening China's technological development and its version of cyber governance standards.^H PRC state-sponsored cyber actors such as Volt Typhoon compromise and maintain persistent access to critical infrastructure in the U.S.^H This is a preemptive strategy to position themselves on IT networks, potentially for disrupting or destroying U.S. critical infrastructure in case of a major crisis or conflict.^H

Military Warfare: The PLA Daily stated that military force forms the backbone of hybrid warfare.^H The PRC is unlikely (31-45%) to engage in direct military confrontation but highly likely to engage in non-war military operations. In 2022, PRC President Xi Jinping signed an order to establish a legal framework for conducting non-war military operations.^H Non-war military operations/activities (NWMA)^H provides a doctrinal framework for integrating military and non-military means to achieve national security objectives.^H The “Science of Military Strategy,” (SMS)^H a core textbook for senior PLA officers, published by China's two leading military institutes - the Academy of Military

Sciences (AMS) and National Defense University (NDU),^H describes NWMA abroad as the “soft use” of “hard power.”^H The 2020 SMS stated that China should flexibly employ deterrence measures to shape favorable strategic conditions and protect its security and development interests.^{HH}



The PRC's hybrid warfare strategy is global in scope, but it is highly likely to be opportunistic and nuanced, while targeting countries of strategic importance, such as the U.S., Taiwan,^H and other regional powers in the Global South to advance the PRC's global influence, secure essential resources and logistics, and promote an alternative to the U.S. led rules-based norms.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized internet sources from the PRC, Australia, Canada, India, and the UK, whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. Finally, the analyst used ChatGPT, Copilot, Perplexity, and Claude Anthropic AI as a predictive tool for the PRC's use of hybrid warfare. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Michael Flury

China Almost Certain To Continue Use Of Economic Warfare Within Next Ten Years To Increase Global Influence And Secure Strategic Assets

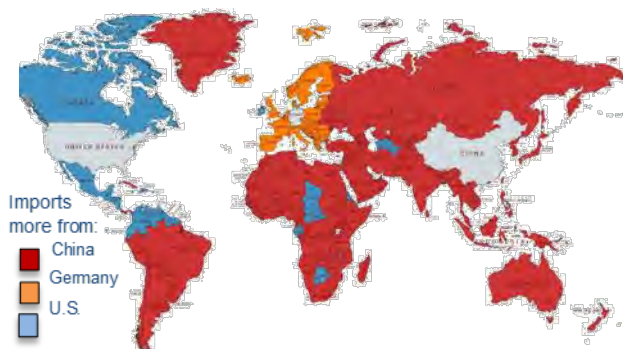
Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is almost certain (86-99%) to continue to use economic warfare within the next ten years to expand its global influence and alter the rules-based norms. Economic warfare refers to using coercive economic measures, such as trade restrictions, sanctions, and technology theft, to weaken one's economy and diminish its political and military influence. Despite the potential for backlash, the PRC targets nations with strategic resources, geopolitical importance, or within critical supply chains through various economic coercion methods to gain strategic advantage. The PRC claims that it promotes international stability, but the deep integration of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) into public and private enterprises enables it to utilize economic warfare tactics. These tactics are critical for advancing the PRC's global influence, securing essential resources and logistics, and altering the established rules-based norms.

Discussion

U.S. Senator Tom Cotton stated that the PRC has been waging an economic global war for the past twenty years, leveraging its economic strength to gain global strategic advantages.^{HH} The PRC's rapid economic growth made it the second-largest economy in the world, with significant influence over other nations.^H The PRC has bilateral investment agreements with over 100 countries,^H and is the largest direct trading partner for at least 120 countries,^{HH} making it the world's most important trading partner.^{HH}

This economic power enables the PRC to use economic warfare tactics to expand its global influence and solidify its position as a regional hegemon and international power.^{HH} These tactics include but are not limited to, sanctions, market manipulation, trade restrictions, investment withdrawals, tourism bans, and unofficial boycotts.^H Critics also accuse the PRC of gaining control over certain nations through debt-trap diplomacy through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).^{HH}



[As of 2023, 128 of the 190 countries trade more with China than with the U.S.](#)

Under the direction of the CCP,^H the PRC is almost certain to intensify its economic warfare efforts with countries in the Global South and “strategic strongpoint” areas through BRI.^H The BRI, a massive infrastructure and investment project spanning multiple continents, gave China significant economic leverage over participating countries.^H Chinese loans to BRI countries like Sri Lanka, Zambia, Laos, and Pakistan have resulted in debt traps, allowing the PRC to gain control of strategic assets such as ports and military bases.^{HHHH}

There are several factors that make countries potential targets of PRC economic coercion. The first four factors are heavily determined by the presence of Chinese companies in the country, which collectively ensures the importance of the PRC as a trading partner and a source of investment.^H The PRC is almost certain to exploit these economically dependent countries to support its geopolitical agenda, such as isolating Taiwan,^H endorsing the PRC's territorial claims in the South China Sea, or voting in favor of PRC's interests in international organizations.^H Countries rich in strategic resources, such as rare earth minerals or oil, may also face increased economic coercion as the PRC seeks to secure its supply chains.^{HHH}

Factors in Assessing Industry Vulnerability to Chinese Economic Statecraft

I	DEPENDENCE OF THE TARGET COUNTRY OR INDUSTRY ON CHINESE COMPANIES
II	PRESENCE OF ALTERNATIVES TO CHINESE COMPANIES IN THE TARGET COUNTRY
III	SUBSTITUTABILITY OF GOODS AND SERVICES FOR CHINA
IV	STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE INDUSTRY FOR CHINA AND THE TARGET COUNTRY
V	DOMESTIC POLITICAL ATTITUDES TOWARD CHINA IN THE TARGET COUNTRY ²⁹

[Five factors in assessing vulnerability to PRC economic coercion in prospective target country](#)

Although the PRC is almost certain to continue using economic tactics to put pressure on countries in the Global South, it is also highly likely (71-85%) that the PRC will use economic warfare in an attempt to disrupt the economies of U.S. allies, particularly Taiwan, to isolate them globally and advance the PRC's policy positions.^H In recent years, the PRC demonstrated a pattern of using economic warfare against countries like Australia, Japan, India, and South Korea to pressure them into aligning with its interests.^{HHH}

Despite the PRC's claim that it promotes international stability, the CCP's deep integration in state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and private-owned enterprises (POEs) enables it to use economic warfare in a coordinated and strategic manner.^H Thus, it is almost certain that economic warfare will be a central component of its foreign policy in the years ahead.^H

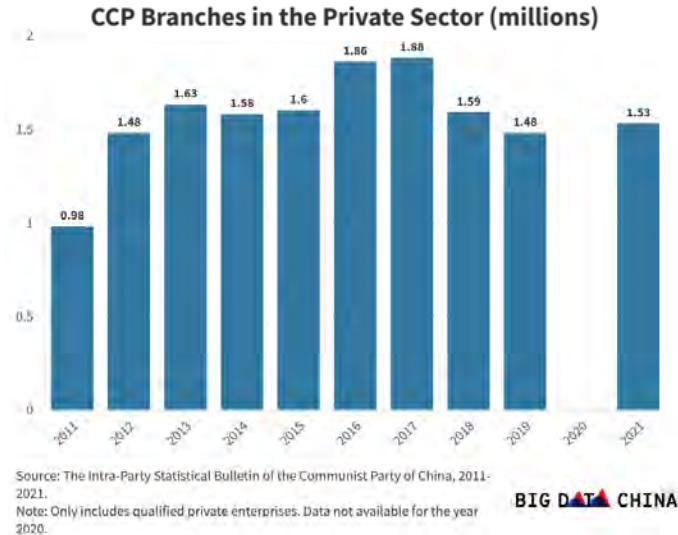
In September 2020, the CCP issued the “Opinion on Strengthening the United Front Work of the Private Economy in the New Era”,^H directing its United Front Work Departments (UFDs) to “guide” private enterprises to “improve their corporate governance structure and explore the establishment of a modern enterprise system with Chinese characteristics.”^{HHH} The CCP is now deeply embedded in SOEs and POEs through party committees, ownership stakes, and informal networks.^H Over 92 per cent of China's top 500 private enterprises now host CCP units.^H The CCP uses direct ownership,

regulatory control, and party cells embedded within companies to compel firms to advance state objectives.^H

Chinese companies, under the influence of the CCP, may resort to predatory business practices, intellectual property theft, and espionage to gain an economic advantage over foreign competitors.^{HHH} Even though nominally independent, private enterprises like Alibaba,^H

Huawei,^{HH} Tencent,^H and Bytedance^H (Parent company of TikTok) can still come under the influence of the CCP and be used for economic coercion efforts.^{HH}

Major SOEs like ZTE and CRRC are already suspected of serving PRC's strategic interests abroad.^H



[The CCP is influencing private firms' governance by taking "golden shares" and encouraging them to form CCP branches](#)

Despite its economic power, the PRC's use of economic warfare carries inherent risks such as potential retaliatory measures, damage to reputation, and long-term economic consequences.^H Nevertheless, the PRC is willing to accept short-term costs to advance its strategic objectives, indicating that it will likely selectively calibrate these tactics to minimize negative consequences.^{HH}

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized internet sources from the PRC, Australia and the UK whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. Finally, the analyst used AI as a predictive tool for the PRC's use of economic warfare. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Michael Flury

China's Economic Slowdown Highly Likely Hinders Ability To Underwrite Alternative World Order; Weakens Challenge To Western-Led Status Quo Over The Next Ten Years

Executive Summary

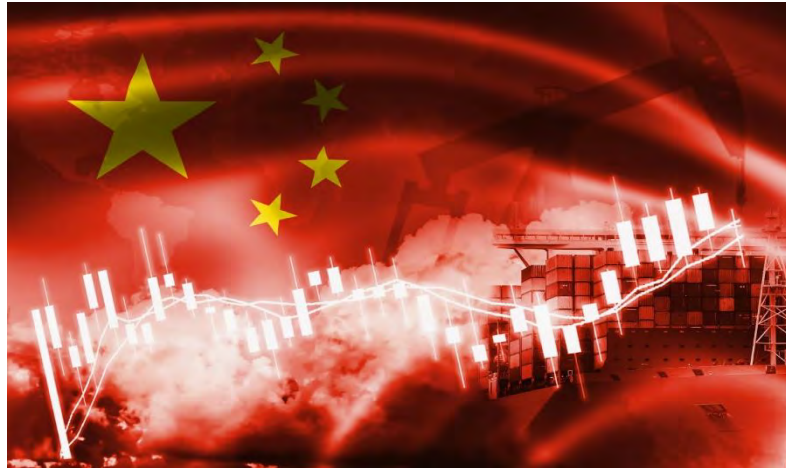
The People's Republic of China's (PRC) economic slowdown highly likely (71-85%) poses a significant threat to the foundation of a China-led alternative world order. China's remarkable economic growth over the past few decades has positioned it as a formidable player on the global stage, leading to discussions about the emergence of a potential alternative world order led by China. However, recent indicators in the real estate market and slowing productivity growth suggest that China's economy is slowing down, raising concerns about the sustainability of this trajectory and the stability of a China-led world order. The reduced demand for imports from China has led to a decline in income for China and its trading partners and political influence. Skeptics believe that the interconnectedness of the global economy means that it is likely (56-70%) a significant slowdown in China could have far-reaching implications for various regions and sectors and potentially balance out China's economic downturn. China's capacity to muddle through the current challenges should not be underestimated.

Discussion

China's economic growth has been a cornerstone of its global influence, but as growth rates decline, this influence will wane.^M The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects a slowdown in China's economy, with growth rates to fall from 4.1 percent in 2022 to 4.0 percent in both 2023 and 2024, which is considered a structural slowdown according to International Monetary Fund.^M China's historical growth rates have been much higher, averaging 6.7% growth through the last decade.^H The recent economic slowdown in China has brought into question the possible implications of an alternative world order led by China; it is widely believed that China presents a unique and distinct economic model and influence, separate from that of the Western liberal economic model.^H China's economic struggles result from flawed policymaking, and the PRC's insular approach to decision-making has hindered effective responses to challenges, including the aftermath of COVID-19. As the world's largest purchaser of commodities, China's economic slowdown is highly likely to disrupt global supply chains and have widespread repercussions for companies worldwide.^H Many Asian countries, which count China as their biggest export market, have experienced a decline in the value of their exports to China.^M Africa, which has forged strong economic ties with China over the past two decades, has seen its partnership with China threatened by the economic slowdown, leading to a decline in the value of its exports to China.^M This trade slump can lead to economic downgrades in these exporting countries, as seen with central bankers from South Korea and Thailand adjusting their economic outlooks.^M China's economic slowdown has dented the enthusiasm of Middle Eastern partners and dimmed their expectations for economic engagement with China which has led to a decline in trade, tourism, and engagement with China's Belt and Road Initiative.^M

Given China's significant share of global GDP, 19%, and manufacturing, a substantial economic downturn in China will have a far-reaching implication for the global economy, potentially leading to a global recession and posing challenges to international security.^H

A one percentage point decline in China's growth rate will reduce average growth in the region, particularly affecting countries that are major exporters of commodities to China, such as oil-exporting nations like



[China's Economy Facing a New Era](#)

Angola and Nigeria.^H The stalling of China's economic rise is seen as an opportunity and risk, with implications for the existing global economic narrative and the distribution of capital worldwide.^H

The PRC's economic challenges will lead to a more defensive and distracted stance in foreign policy, potentially making it less willing to engage in economic reform or trade compromises.^M China's deflation benefits countries battling high inflation. Still, a prolonged slowdown is more likely to hurt than help the global economy.^M A sustained slowdown in China will have far-reaching implications for global growth and trade relations.^M The economic slowdown has dented the enthusiasm of some BRI partners, potentially affecting the pace and scale of BRI projects and China's influence in those regions.^M While there is some speculation that the BRI was winding down or phasing out, PRC has expressed its intention to commit new loans to BRI countries.^M

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Troy Johnson

People's Republic Of China Energy Companies Highly Likely To Shift Global Energy Business To A Chinese-Led Market In The Next Ten Years Due To Exports Of Power Generation To Include Nuclear, Wind, And Hydroelectric Systems

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) energy companies are highly likely (71-85%) to shift to the new global energy generation business in the next ten years due to increasing exports of power generation systems, including nuclear power plants, wind power systems, and hydroelectric systems. Despite sanctions, restrictions, and export controls by the U.S. and some allies, the PRC energy companies are likely (56-70%) to continue investments in further improvements to capabilities to increase market share in Asia and the global south.

Discussion

China's nuclear power sector is a pivotal component of its energy export strategy, reflecting a broader ambition to lead globally in energy technology. With the world's fastest-growing nuclear fleet, the PRC is expanding its influence in nuclear power generation through exports and international cooperation.^H Significant investments in domestic capacity expansion and international collaborations, particularly in uranium-rich nations like Kazakhstan and Namibia, underscore its strategic intent to secure a dominant position in the global nuclear energy market.^H Moreover, the PRC's aggressive pursuit of nuclear power as a clean energy solution aligns with its Belt and Road Initiative, aiming to extend its technological and infrastructural prowess beyond its borders.^H For example, Argentina is building a nuclear reactor that is 100% financed by the PRC at \$8.3B; a debt Argentina is highly unlikely (16-30%) to repay.^H The PRC's clear trajectory towards becoming the world's largest nuclear power producer by 2030, combined with its strategic international partnerships, positions it as a formidable player in the global nuclear power industry.^H

China's role in the global wind power sector is substantial and growing, with significant domestic and international investments in wind energy.^H The nation has emerged as a key player in wind power equipment production, holding over 50% of the global market share.^H This dominance extends to offshore wind power, where China has set ambitious targets and recently built more offshore capacity than the rest of the world combined over the past five years.^H Chinese investments in wind power are not limited to its borders; they extend to Latin America and other regions.^H For example, in Brazil, Chinese companies have invested significantly in wind energy, showcasing their strategic focus on renewable energy investments abroad.^H These investments align with China's broader strategy to

enhance its energy security, reduce carbon emissions, and assert its technological leadership on the global stage.^H

PRC is making significant strides in hydroelectric power, which is crucial in its energy mix and export strategy.^H The nation has seen remarkable growth in hydropower, adding about 23 GW of new capacity in 2021 alone, which



[Map showing PRC power generation projects in Asia](#)

underscores its commitment to expanding renewable energy sources.^H This expansion is not just limited to China; Chinese firms are actively involved in developing hydroelectric projects globally, including significant investments in Angola.^H Moreover, China's advancements in hydropower technology are evident in projects like the Baihetan hydropower station, which, upon completion, will be the second-largest in the world.^H This project underscores China's capabilities in high-end equipment manufacturing and its ambition to lead in the global hydropower sector.^H Chinese companies like Toshiba Hydro Power are also contributing to the sector's growth by supplying turbines and generators for hydroelectric plants, further indicating China's comprehensive engagement in hydropower.^H In addition to domestic advancements, Chinese investments in hydropower extend to other countries, exemplified by their involvement in Zimbabwe's energy sector, where Chinese firms are predominant in hydroelectric power generation.^H

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Patrick L. Ryan

People's Republic Of China's Three Global Initiatives Highly Likely To Significantly Increase Its Diplomatic And Political Influence In The World Within Next Ten Years

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China's (PRC's) three strategic global initiatives, the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI), and the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), make it highly likely (71-85%) that the PRC's global diplomatic and political influence will significantly increase over the next ten years in developing regions and countries outside the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The PRC's proactive engagement in global security and development initiatives and political alliances is expected to bolster its global diplomatic influence despite potential challenges such as economic slowdown, competition, and resistance from other major powers, particularly the United States.

Discussion

The PRC already has significant regional diplomatic influence. It is almost certain (86-99%) that it will employ and use its strategic global initiatives to enhance its diplomatic and political influence in an attempt to promote its narrative and solidify China's global position.^H The latest Lowy Institute Asia Power Index report, which measures resources and influence to rank the relative power of states in Asia, found that China just surpassed the U.S. in diplomatic influence in Asia.^H



[Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index shows China surpassing the U.S. in diplomatic influence and economic relations](#)

In a strategic move to increase its diplomatic and political global influence, the PRC proposed and implemented various initiatives to reshape global governance and promote its vision for a "community of shared future."^H President Xi Jinping announced China's Global Development Initiative (GDI), 全球发展倡议, at the U.N. General Assembly in

2021, which aims to address global challenges through a multistakeholder approach. By September 2022, over 60 nations joined the Group of Friends of the GDI,^{[H](#)} and 100 countries and international organizations, including the United Nations, support the GDI.^{[H](#)}

The GDI transitions China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which focuses primarily on infrastructure construction, to a more people-focused approach that supports sustainable development in partner countries.^{[H](#)} Although there are many benefits to the GDI for China and the members of the GDI, it also allows China to lead what it hopes is a new era in development—not only by investing money but also by leading the conversation.^{[H](#)}

In another strategic move, President Xi Jinping announced in 2022 that the PRC would establish a new Global Security Initiative (GSI), 全球安全倡, to promote “indivisible security” and “the common security of the world”.^{[H](#)} The GSI and GDI are interconnected through the Chinese Marxist belief that “security is a prerequisite for development, and development is a guarantee for security.”^{[H](#)} Countries can choose to engage with or respond to the GSI based on their strategic interests and priorities. As of September 2022, over 60 countries have joined the GSI.^{[H](#)}

The concept of “indivisible security” was first used in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and refers to the idea that the security of states within regions is inseparable and that no country should pursue its security at the expense of another.^{[H](#)} However, the Chinese security agenda of “indivisible security” differs significantly from the United States' view in its principles and practice.^{[H](#)}

The Chinese Foreign Ministry released a concept paper on GSI, which highlights the six concepts or principles of GSI and identifies its “priority areas of cooperation”.^{[H](#)} The GSI reinforces the principles of territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and respect for the development path and social system chosen by the people of all countries.^{[H](#)} These principles align with the many security agendas of autocracies, to include many Gulf states.^{[H](#)} In 2023, China hosted talks between Saudi Arabia and Iran that culminated in a joint statement announcing the resumption of Saudi-Iran diplomatic relations.^{[H](#)} As China continues to gain global diplomatic and political influence, Daniel Russel, the top U.S. diplomat for East Asia under former President Barack Obama stated that China's involvement in brokering the deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran could have "significant implications" for Washington.^{[H](#)}

In March 2023, President Xi Jinping announced the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), 全球文明倡议, which is the third pillar of China's three global initiatives, which are alternative ideas and concepts of how large powers should exercise their global

influence.^H The GCI promotes non-interference, inter-cultural exchanges, and the right of individual states to determine the nature of their own modernization based on cultural, historical and ‘civilizational’ differences.^H

The GCI is a public diplomacy and media influence campaign to increase the influence of China's Western values-free "model" and promote a state-focused and state-defined values system.^H Xi Jinping expounded on this theme in his speech launching GCI, saying, "Chinese-style modernization does not follow the old path of colonial plunder, nor the crooked path of hegemony after a strong country, but the right path of peaceful development in the world."^H As China's diplomatic and political global influence increases, even some countries that have for decades embraced a close partnership with the U.S. have drawn closer to China and its vision.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. The analyst used AI as a predictive tool for PRC use of diplomatic and political cultural soft power. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Michael Flury

People's Republic Of China Likely Aims To Broaden Its Impact By Elevating Its Influence On International Standards By 2035

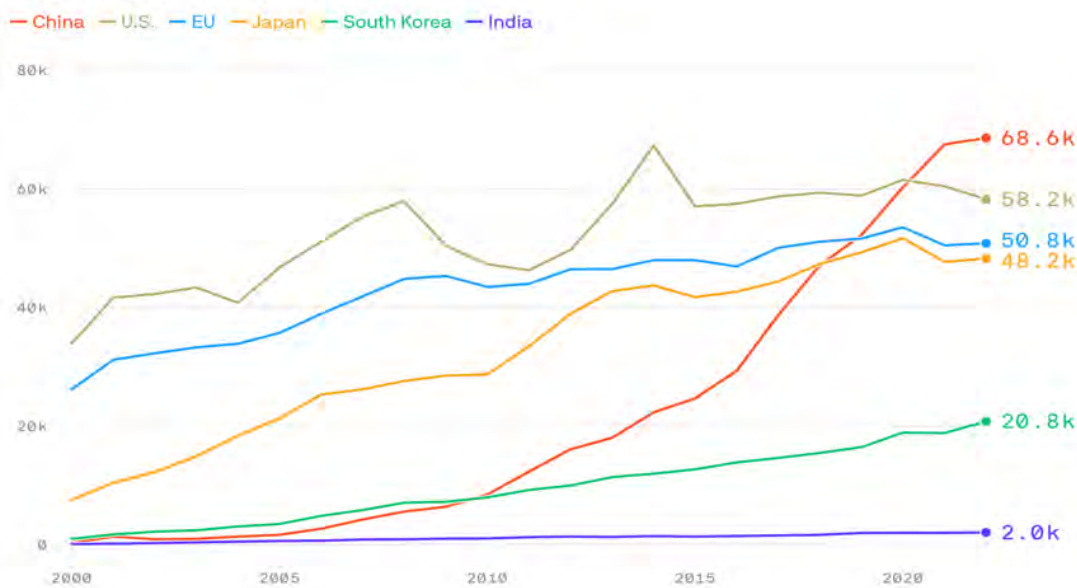
Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is likely posturing itself to lead the development and establishment of global standards in many technological domains, including the space domain, digital infrastructure, smart cities, and diplomacy over the next ten years. the PRC will invest \$150 billion annually in emergent technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing, biotechnology, telecommunications, and semiconductor production. China continues to pair its technological expertise with its manufacturing prowess, resulting in its ability to shift market standards to its advantage. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) continues extending its influence on emergent nations and their markets. These programs often exploit underdeveloped nations and foster dependence and cooperation with China. Despite the United States' long reign over creating global standards, China continues to close the gap.

Discussion

China is diligently working to increase its role in developing international standards to strengthen its global presence and sphere of influence.^M “China Standards 2035” in 2018 was the PRC's roadmap for the standardization of emergent technology and its role in the global market.^M China continues to invest heavily and incentivizing engagement in the standard-setting process while exerting more influence over the development and

Annual Patent Cooperation Treaty applications for selected regions, 2000–2022



Invention, Knowledge Transfer, and Innovation Report from the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics

implementation of technology standards.^M China seeks to influence proprietary standards in the technology industry, reversing the trend of China paying licensing fees to foreign companies.^M United States intelligence officials are critical of the PRC transferring intellectual property for their own uses and violating international law.^M In China received 120,004 assigned trademarks in the United States Patent and Trademark Office between 2012 and 2022.^M Geopolitical tensions among the United States, Europe, and China are creating new technology standards for organizations being less open to collaboration.^M Universal standards are vital in global technology.^M These standards ensure that lightbulbs made in one country will work in another or that picture files are stored on a computer disk.^M China's new involvement in standardization is often at odds with Europe, the United States, or both.^M As China continues to develop new technologies, its actions in standardization are becoming more aggressive.^M

China is postured to become the global leader in smart city development by standardizing emerging technology.^M Chinese corporations are developing and implementing the necessary technologies for smart cities, such as artificial intelligence (AI), 5G, facial recognition software, and cloud computing.^M As of 2020, China has nearly 800 smart city locations domestically.^M China's success in implementing smart cities domestically has made it an expert in promoting these technological models abroad.^M Huawei, a Chinese telecommunications company, maintains over 70% of the 5G networks in Africa, allowing the PRC to export more technological standardization abroad.^M China's ability to develop and standardize technologies assists them in exporting not only their products but also these sophisticated models to emergent nations.^M The PRC continues looking for ways to implement the "China Standard 2035," which makes Chinese technology compatible with global standards so that it cannot be excluded.^M China wants to set standards for the aerospace industry and space-related endeavors such as Positioning, Navigation, and Timing (PNT) or space monitoring stations.^M The PRC's collaboration with commercial aerospace companies has made significant progress in the standardization of space quality controls, most notably the China-Brazil Resources Satellite (CBERS).^M The PRC achieving space supremacy would allow China to set the standards for all other nations working in the space domain.^M

China continues to support 5G innovation and implementation around the world.^M The PRC continues to back state-coordinated SDOs to ensure Chinese 5G leadership in the global standards for telecommunications.^M In China, Huawei remains the state-sponsored choice for 5G production.^M The PRC supports Huawei with state research and development and a \$100 billion subsidy.^M Huawei telecommunications have been exported to Latin America, Europe and Africa.^M

China looks to become the world leader in 6G telecommunications.^M China claims to have launched a 6G capable satellite into orbit in 2020 and is testing the new network now in space.^M The United States State Department and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recognize the concerns of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leading innovation into new broadband telecommunications networks.^M There is no clear timeline for 6G network deployment. However, many believe this technology will be operational by the decade's end.^M

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. The sources used were all ‘open-source’ which given the subject matter hinders the level of detail used throughout. The analyst used AI for the PRC’s use of global standards in space, digital infrastructure, smart cities, and diplomacy. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Andi Tallman

People's Republic Of China Investment And Expansion Of The Belt And Road Initiative Is Highly Likely To Continue Global Infrastructure Development And Create New Investment Standards In The Next Ten Years In Asia And The Global South

Executive Summary

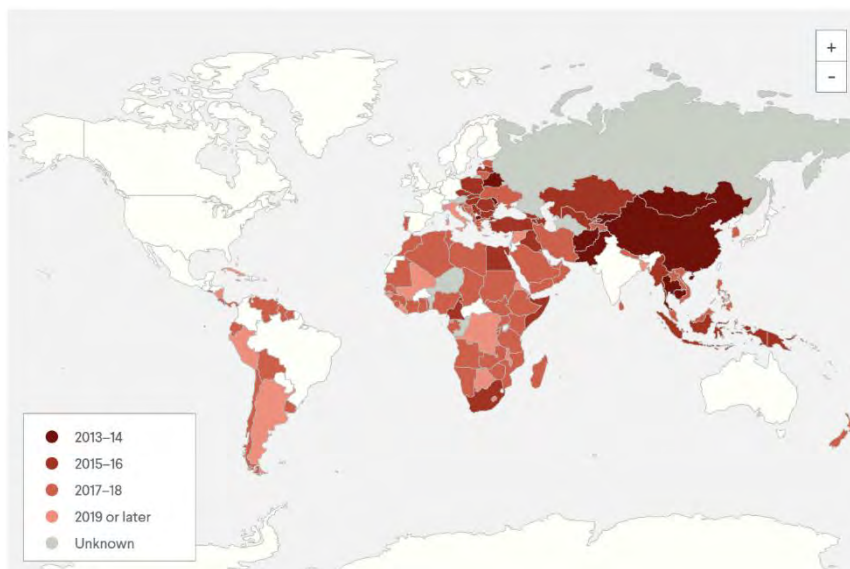
People's Republic of China (PRC) investment and expansion of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is highly likely (71-85%) to continue global infrastructure development and create new investment standards in the next ten years in Asia and the Global South to include Latin America and Africa. Despite over \$50 billion in unfulfilled projects in Asia, Asian, and Global South countries are likely (56-70%) to pursue improvements in infrastructure using PRC financing.

Discussion

The PRC's BRI represents an endeavor in global infrastructure development, especially across Asia. Launched in 2013, the initiative seeks to enhance regional connectivity and create a better economic future through a vast network of railways, roads, ports, and industrial parks.^{[H](#)} The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is one of the most significant CPEC BRI projects, with an estimated investment of \$62 billion, aiming to connect China to Pakistan's Gwadar Port.^{[H](#)} The project shows the PRC's strategic investments designed to bolster trade, stimulate economic growth, and enhance geopolitical influence across the continent.^{[H](#)} Some critics argue that the projects are too expensive. Malaysia even canceled some BRI projects due to high costs.^{[M](#)} Other critics argue that the initiative often favors Chinese companies, with most contractors on BRI projects being China-based. The PRC contractor dominance raises questions about the initiative's inclusivity and the extent of benefits accruing to partner countries.^{[H](#)} Despite these challenges, the BRI continues to evolve, impacting economic landscapes and reshaping trade and investment patterns across Asia and beyond.^{[H](#)}

The PRC BRI has been extending its reach into Latin America, signaling a significant shift in the region's economic and geopolitical landscape.^{[H](#)} With an array of projects spanning from infrastructure development to digital investments, the PRC aims to deepen its ties with Latin American countries by fostering enhanced regional connectivity and trade.^{[H](#)} Mining, energy, and telecommunications investments reflect the PRC's strategic interests in the region's diverse economic potential.^{[H](#)} However, these initiatives also raise questions about debt sustainability and the long-term implications of increased dependency on Chinese investments.^{[H](#)} Despite the debt sustainability issue, the BRI's expansion into Latin America illustrates the PRC's ambition to assert its influence on a

global scale and Latin American Countries' openness to Chinese financing to improve their infrastructure.^H



The PRC BRI in Africa signifies an expansion into infrastructure development aimed at enhancing economic interconnectivity and growth across the continent.^H Spanning various sectors, including rail transport, mining, and energy, BRI projects like the

[*The Belt and Road Initiative Has Gone Global: Official BRI participants by year of joining*](#)

Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway and the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway highlight China's commitment to boosting Africa's infrastructure.^H In Nigeria, the Lagos and Ibadan railway was completed in 2020 with over 156 kilometers of new infrastructure.^H However, these ventures have sparked debates regarding debt sustainability, environmental impact, and the broader geopolitical implications of China's expanding footprint in Africa.^H The PRC also struggles to understand shifting politics in the region, such as when election results canceled a port contract in Tanzania.^H While the BRI promises economic benefits and improved regional integration, it also raises concerns about dependency on Chinese investments and the long-term consequences for African nations' sovereignty and financial stability.^H

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *high*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another from multiple sources. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Patrick L. Ryan

People's Republic Of China Is Highly Likely To Pursue Strengthening Their Core Interests To Pursue An Alternative World Order By 2035

Executive Summary

People's Republic of China (PRC) is highly likely (71-85%) to pursue its core interests of sovereignty, internal security, and expansion of developmental programs to pursue an alternative world order that is PRC-led by 2035. The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) strategy endeavors to maintain and extend its domestic and international influence. Examining their five guiding principles of economic stability, technological dominance, energy leadership, and global infrastructure initiatives shows how the CCP's core interests shape and are shaped by the PRC's internal and external policies. Despite sanctions by the U.S. and its allies in various economic sectors, China continues to grow stronger in these areas.

Discussion

The PRC's core interests, encapsulating complete and historical sovereignty, internal and economic security, and Belt and Road Initiative developmental prerogatives, serve as the linchpin in its foreign policy and international relations strategy.^{HH} Integral to understanding this approach is the analysis of the 1954 Sino-Indian agreement and the ideological framework that underscores the PRC's diplomatic and strategic maneuvers, characterized by principles of benevolence, pragmatism, result-orientation, non-interference, and multipolarity.^{HH}

The 1954 Sino-Indian agreement, known as the Panchsheel Treaty, is a cornerstone in the PRC's diplomatic history and remains relevant today.^{MH} The agreement was predicated on five guiding principles: mutual respect, territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence.^M The principles delineated the framework for Sino-Indian relations and epitomized China's broader diplomatic ethos.^{MH}

The CCP's ability to maintain a political monopoly and foster China's emergence as a global powerhouse underlines its dedication to safeguarding its core interests.^H The national interests are pivotal in understanding the Party's strategies, from economic reforms and technological advancements to international projects like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and energy exports.^{HH} The CCP's projected resilience through 2035 underscores its adaptability and strategic foresight in navigating domestic and international challenges.^H By intertwining its leadership ethos with nationalism and

promoting the "Chinese Dream," the CCP seeks to reinforce its legitimacy and central role in China's socio-economic fabric and international stature.^{HH}

The PRC's internal economic growth will remain stagnant with minimal growth by 2029, highlighting challenges in transitioning to a consumption-based economy despite efforts to stimulate domestic demand and urbanization.^H Concurrently, external economic growth appears bleak due to declines in the stock market, exports, external loans, and foreign investments, with the CCP likely prioritizing significant internal economic issues



[The closing session of the National People's Congress in Beijing March 11, 2024](#)

over external economic engagements.^H The BRI exemplifies the PRC's strategic approach to fostering global infrastructure development, creating new investment norms, and expanding its geopolitical influence across Asia, Africa, and Latin America.^H Despite

criticisms and challenges, the BRI's expansion underlines the CCP's pursuit of its core interests, particularly in enhancing the PRC's global standing and fostering international partnerships.^{HH}

PRC technology companies, amidst sanctions and global competition, are poised to establish new global technology standards, leveraging advancements in micro-chip production, telecommunications, and smart city technologies.^H The technological ascendancy aligns with the CCP's ambition to shape global technology discourse and standards, reinforcing its core interest in development and security.^H The PRC's energy companies are set to redefine the global energy landscape, focusing on nuclear, wind, and hydroelectric power generation exports.^H The strategic energy move aims to secure the PRC's energy future. It extends its influence in global energy markets, resonating with the CCP's core interest in securing national development through global energy leadership.^{HH}

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *high*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another from multiple sources. However, the analysis also utilized internet sources from the PRC and the UK, whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. Finally, the analyst used AI (ChatGPT4, Copilot, and Gemini) to create graphics and as a predictive tool for the PRC's use of the five principles and core interests. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Patrick L. Ryan

Resiliency Of The Chinese Communist Party Highly Likely Through 2035; Core Interests, Leadership Are Key Drivers

Executive Summary

The resiliency of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is highly likely (71-85%) through 2035 due to security, specifically, the maintenance of its basic political system, being its number one core national interest, and Xi Jinping’s centralized leadership role that has allowed him to become deeply entrenched in the foreign policy structure ensuring that allegiance to him is the primary political criterion within the CCPs top echelons. It is likely (56-70%) that economic, environmental, public health, and income inequality challenges are a threat, but the CCP has intensified its control over Chinese society and economy, silencing dissent across various sectors, tackling corruption, and enhancing internet censorship to solidify its authority. In a significant move during its March 2023 plenary session, it outlined reforms to reinforce leadership, including the creation of an internal affairs committee for direct security control, aiming to tighten financial-technology regulations, boost technological competitiveness, and purge internal threats.

Discussion

The CCP has maintained a political monopoly in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) since 1949 and has overseen the country’s rapid economic growth and rise as a global power.^H A 2020

RAND study of PRC

Grand Strategy

highlights that PRC leaders often speak of three specific core interests – security, sovereignty, and development.^H Xi

Jinping confirmed at a 2014 meeting with People’s Liberation Army (PLA)

delegates to the

National People’s

Congress that PRCs core interests are “national sovereignty, security and

development.”^{HH} At the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue of 2009, then–PRC State Councilor Dai Bingguo expanded on these interests by stating “the PRC’s number one core interest is to maintain its fundamental system and state security; next is state

Table 2.1
China’s Core Interests

Interest	Components	Relevant Threats
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic national security• Maintenance of the basic political system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existential dangers, such as nuclear attack, as well as challenges to social stability from terrorists and separatists• Challenges to CCP rule and values
Sovereignty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sovereignty over all claimed geography• Territorial integrity, including maritime and land boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threats to the government’s exercise of authority include Taiwan• Rival claimants to disputed land
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to natural resources and markets• Key shipping lanes. Threats include international piracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instability near vital energy sources• International piracy

[People’s Republic of China Core National Interests](#)

sovereignty and territorial integrity; and third is the continued stable development of the economy and society.”^H

The 2017 revision to the CCP Constitution states:

The CCP is the vanguard of the Chinese working class, the Chinese people, and the Chinese nation; it is the leadership core for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and represents the developmental demands of China’s advanced productive forces, the orientation for China’s advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the greatest possible majority of the Chinese people.^H

There appears to be no foreseeable conclusion to Xi Jinping’s leadership of the CCP with the abolition of presidential term limits in 2018.^M In March 2023, Xi received a third five-year

presidential term, setting the stage for him to potentially remain in power indefinitely.^M Xi oversaw modifications to the CCP constitution that embed his principal ideological beliefs and policy objectives.^M The revised Party constitution now incorporates the



[Structure of the Chinese Communist Party](#)

"two establishes," solidifying Xi Jinping's position as the CCP's "core" and creating the pivotal role of "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for the New Era."^M His authority has been formalized within the foreign policy ranks, cementing his leadership and prioritizing personal allegiance to him as the key guiding political principle for CCP Politburo members, up to and including those in the highest tier, the Politburo Standing Committee.^H

Xi recognizes that in the 21st century, while economic heft and military are important for the PRC, for the ruling party-military-state to maintain a firm grip on power, it cannot afford to ignore the promotion of lofty principles and big ideas.^M He puts great emphasis on party-centric nationalism and works to make the Chinese people believe that the CCP

is not only a defender of the nation in times of crisis, but also the heir to the grandiose Chinese civilization.^H

In 2012, Xi proposed the “PRC Dream of Great Rejuvenation” and declared that the time had arrived for the PRC to reclaim its lost global power position, matching the mood of renewed nationalism, confidence, and self-assertion.^H In 2017, he articulated at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China that “the CCP has drawn up a two-stage development plan for the period from 2020 to the middle of this century.^M In the first stage from 2020 to 2035, we will build on the foundation created by the moderately prosperous society with a further 15 years of hard work to see that socialist modernization is basically realized.”^M

Challenges associated with economic slowdown, environmental degradation, the global pandemic, and income inequality are likely to threaten CCP resilience. Despite these challenges, the CCP has applied a firmer grip on the Chinese society and economy to counter them.^H The CCP continues silencing dissent; restricting religious groups, media organizations, environmental nonprofits, human rights activists, and lawyers; reining in the private sector; combating corruption; and increasing censorship of the internet.^H The CCP also signaled a major overhaul of its structure and governance following an annual plenary session in March 2023 that seeks to push reforms that strengthen party leadership, establish an internal affairs committee to consolidate security functions under the party's direct control, and expand the influence of Xi's close allies to reinforce the CCP's authority over security and financial sectors.^H These initiatives also aim to tighten regulations in the financial-technology industry, enhance the PRC's competitive edge in technology on the global stage, and conduct further internal purges to remove challenges to Xi's authority.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized an internet source from the PRC whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Nicholas P. Panepinto

People's Republic Of China Highly Likely To Use Cultural Soft Power Initiatives Like Confucius Institutes, Celebrity Ambassadors, And Panda Diplomacy To Strengthen Global Influence And Reputation Over Next Ten Years

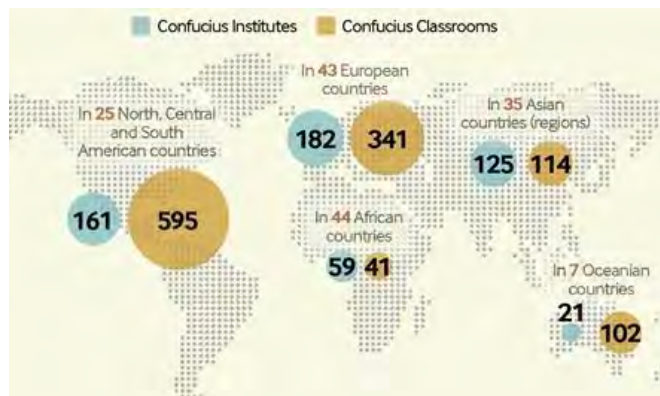
Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is highly likely (71-85%) to use cultural soft power initiatives, such as Confucius Institutes (CIs), celebrity ambassadors, and panda diplomacy over the next ten years to improve its reputation and strengthen its influence internationally, specifically in countries of the Global South. This involves promoting the Chinese language, culture, and values to shape positive perceptions of China. Despite substantial investments, the PRC has failed to achieve significant returns on its soft power initiatives from Confucius Institutes due to concerns over propaganda, perceptions of authoritarianism, language barriers, and geopolitical tensions. However, China's long-term perspective and patience will likely (56-70%) yield gradual gains.

Discussion

President Xi Jinping stated during the 12th group study session of the Political Bureau of the 18th Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee that “The strengthening of our cultural soft power (文化软实力) is decisive for China to reach the Two Centenary Goals and realize the Chinese Dream of rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”^H China employs a multifaceted approach to leverage its cultural soft power to influence global narratives and perceptions. China employs various cultural soft power tools - such as language and cultural programs, celebrity ambassadors, and panda diplomacy to influence global perceptions and narratives in its favor.^H However, the centralized control over these efforts may limit their effectiveness.

The CIs are Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-sponsored education organizations that teach Chinese language, culture, and history at the primary, secondary, and university levels globally,^H while advancing China's preferred narratives, subtly promoting its norms and values, while undermining academic principles such as institutional autonomy and freedom.^H



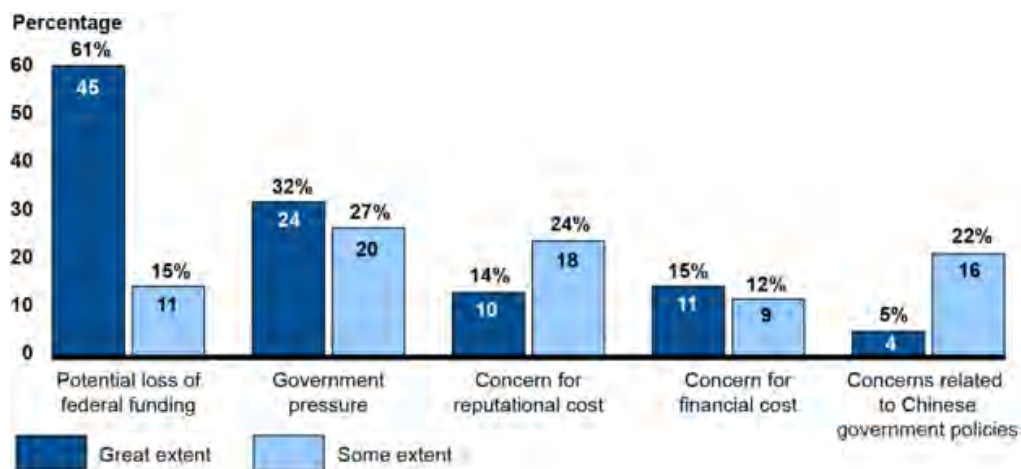
[The PRC established 548 CIs and 1,193 K-12 classrooms in 154 countries and regions by December 2018](#)

The first CI opened in 2004 in Seoul, South Korea, followed by one at the University of Maryland.^H The number of CIs nearly quadrupled from just over 100 in 2006 to over 400 in 2012.^H By December 2018, China established 548 CIs and 1,193 primary and secondary Confucius classrooms in 154 countries and regions.^H From 2006 to 2019, the CCP spent more than \$150 million on CIs in the U.S. alone.^H

The U.S. Department of Education found that from January 2012 to June 2018, 15 U.S. schools admitted to receiving more than \$15 million from Hanban (the CCP's manager of CIs).^H

The reception of CIs globally is mixed. Many countries in North America,^{HH} Australia^{HH} and Europe^{HHHH} closed most or all of their CIs.^{HH} Countries in Latin America,^H South America,^{HH} Africa^H and the Middle East are very receptive of CIs.^H The PRC opened several CIs in Central Asia and South Caucasus,^H laying the groundwork to reshape the Middle Corridor. Southeast Asia has 41 CIs,^H with 16 in Thailand alone—the second-highest number in Asia after South Korea, which has 23 CIs.^H The Philippines has 4 CIs.^H Most countries in Southeast Asia view CIs as a way to increase economic opportunities for their populations through learning Mandarin.^H

The 2019 U.S. National Defense Authorization Act prohibited universities that host CIs from receiving U.S. Defense Department funding for Chinese language study.^H In 2020, the U.S. Department of State designated the U.S. Confucius Center as a foreign mission of the PRC.^H Amid pressure from the FBI,^{HH} the U.S. Department of State,^{HH} and Congress,^H many U.S. colleges and universities terminated their CI agreements. Of the 118 Confucius Institutes that once existed in the U.S., 104 closed.^H The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that many universities only closed their CIs due to concerns of losing federal funds.^H However, many U.S. universities just replaced closed



Contributing Factors Schools Reported for Decision to Close Confucius Institutes

CIs with similar programs or maintained close relationships with their former CI partners.^{HHH}

The reception of CIs globally is mixed. Many countries in North America,^{HH} Australia^{HH} and Europe^{HHHH} closed most or all of their CIs.^{HH} Countries in Latin America,^H South America,^{HH} Africa^H and the Middle East are very receptive of CIs.^H The PRC opened several CIs in Central Asia and South Caucasus,^H laying the groundwork to reshape the Middle Corridor. Southeast Asia has 41 CIs,^H with 16 in Thailand alone—the second-highest number in Asia after South Korea, which has 23 CIs.^H The Philippines has 4 CIs.^H Most countries in Southeast Asia view CIs as a way to increase economic opportunities for their populations through learning Mandarin.^H

Despite the PRC's setbacks in North America, Europe, and Australia, the CIs are successful in the Global South, especially where the PRC has Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or other national interest projects.^H Even though the CIs in the U.S. are "closing," the PRC still considers it a successful soft power strategy as they allowed China to establish relationships, disseminate its narrative and exert global cultural influence.

The PRC also leverages the popularity of its celebrities, such as film directors, actors, musicians, and athletes, to enhance its soft power worldwide. These individuals are regarded as "unofficial cultural ambassadors" and include famous figures like Zhang Yimou, Jackie Chan, Lang Lang, Yao Ming, and Li Na.^H Through their international fame and popularity, they help promote Chinese culture and values.

The PRC also uses "panda diplomacy" as a means of building positive associations with other countries. This involves gifting or loaning pandas to other nations in order to improve China's global image.^{HH} Pandas have become a cultural symbol that China leverages to enhance its soft power and goodwill. Due to their incremental successes, the PRC is highly likely to continue to use soft power tools like CIs, cultural ambassadors and panda diplomacy over the next five years to strengthen its global influence and reputation.^H



[*Giant panda Mei Xiang eats a frozen fruit cake at the Smithsonian National Zoo in Washington, DC, in Sept. 2023*](#)

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized Chinese, Hong Kong, Tibetan, South Korean, Filipino, Australian, Canadian, British, German, French, Spanish, Swedish and Finnish internet sources whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. Finally, the analyst used AI as a predictive tool for PRC use of cultural soft power. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Michael Flury

People's Republic Of China Will Likely Increase Investments In Emerging Technology, Research, Development, And Education Within the Next Ten Years

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) investments in technology will likely increase (56%-70%) within the next ten years. The PRC will accomplish this through increasing research and development funding, prioritizing education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), and supporting technological innovation around the globe. China remains committed to acquiring and developing advanced technologies while reducing its dependence on foreign tech. The Chinese government has outlined initiatives to advance its technology and engineering capabilities by embracing cooperation with the private sector and prioritizing STEM education. Despite the United States' best efforts to compete in advanced education, China produces more PhDs in STEM-related fields. China's investment in research and development continues to encroach on the United States' lead.

Discussion

The People's Republic of China (PRC) continues to place great emphasis on investing in emerging technology.^M

Table 1. PhD graduates in the United States and China across different field categories

	STEM (including health sciences)		STEM (excluding health sciences)		Science & Engineering (includes social science)	
	U.S.	China	U.S.	China	U.S.	China
2025 (projected)	39,959	77,179	35,622	59,053	49,538	61,326
2019	33,759	49,498	30,609	39,830	43,398	41,890
2010	26,076	34,801	24,824	29,039	34,670	31,410
2000	18,289	9,038	17,395	7,518	26,331	8,219

[NCES IPEDS Completions Survey for U.S. data, Ministry of Education for Chinese data](#) China has surpassed the United States in producing STEM-related doctorates.^M STEM talent and capacity in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), biotechnology, and quantum computing have the potential to reshape the global hierarchy in both the economic and security domains.^M China continues to increase funding in research and development.^M China's investments in research and development for science, engineering, and technology are beginning to compete with the United States' tenuous lead in this arena.^M

Research and development drive technological advancements and innovation.^M The United States has historically maintained a lead in funding for research and development.^M China has made great progress in research and development in funding in the past two decades, surpassing Germany and Japan and getting closer to the United States.^M In 2000, China contributed less than 5 percent of global research and

development funding, and by 2020, that had grown over 24 percent, second to only the United States.^M China has made progress in establishing itself as a leader in emerging industries by shifting its emphasis on manufacturing towards more innovation as a catalyst for growing its economy.^M China's investment in research and development indicates that it intends to compete with the United States for the foreseeable future.^M

China has surpassed the United States in the production of STEM PhDs.^M In 2000, United States universities awarded twice as many doctorate degrees in STEM fields as China.^M China overtook the United States in STEM doctorate graduates in 2007. China has worked to increase its lead ever since.^M Current projections from Georgetown University's Center for Security and Emerging Technology indicate that China's yearly STEM Ph.D. graduates (77,179) will almost double the United States production of these graduates (39,959).^M China continues to send an increasing number of students to study in the United States.^M Nearly a quarter of all graduate students in STEM fields in the United States are Chinese foreign nationals.^M These students attend American universities on student visas and return to China immediately upon graduating.^M STEM talent has the potential to be the new arms race as nations focus on artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing, engineering, and biotechnology.^M

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) study on future power initiatives in February 2023 pointed out the potential risk in China monopolizing critical tech sectors such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), nanoscale materials, hypersonic technology, biotechnology, and semiconductors.^M China still relies on American innovation for some of these disciplines, specifically AI; however, they continue to progress in developing new technology.^M These critical technologies can drive the global economy and the balance of military power for nations.^M China monopolizes any technology or innovation facet is problematic for Western democracies.^M

China's rapid advances in technological innovations are shifting the geopolitical race.^M The United States has maintained its position as the technological superpower for an extended period; China continues to make huge investments and implement policies that have contributed to its military capability, economic growth, tech innovation, and global influence.^M China's top-down priorities on education and innovation will continue to pay dividends as it competes in the tech sector.^M

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. The sources used were all ‘open-source’ which given the subject matter hinders the level of detail used throughout. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Andi Tallman

People's Republic Of China's Cyberspace Security Laws Highly Likely A Legal Framework To Advance Vision Of China-Led Alternative International Order

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China's New Cyberspace Administration of China and Data Security Laws are highly likely (71-85%) to represent an emergent legal framework through which Beijing can advance its vision of a China-led alternative order. China's cyberspace security laws have become a focal point in the global cybersecurity and digital governance discourse. The regulatory landscape in China, characterized by the Cybersecurity Law and other related regulations, reflects the country's commitment to asserting control over its digital environment. China's stance on international treaties related to cybercrime, particularly its decision not to sign the Budapest Convention, reflects its strategic approach to shaping a global order that aligns with its interests and vision. Despite concerns raised by foreign companies and governments, China has been pursuing a legal framework that seeks to strengthen its cyber sovereignty and influence the development of global digital governance norms.

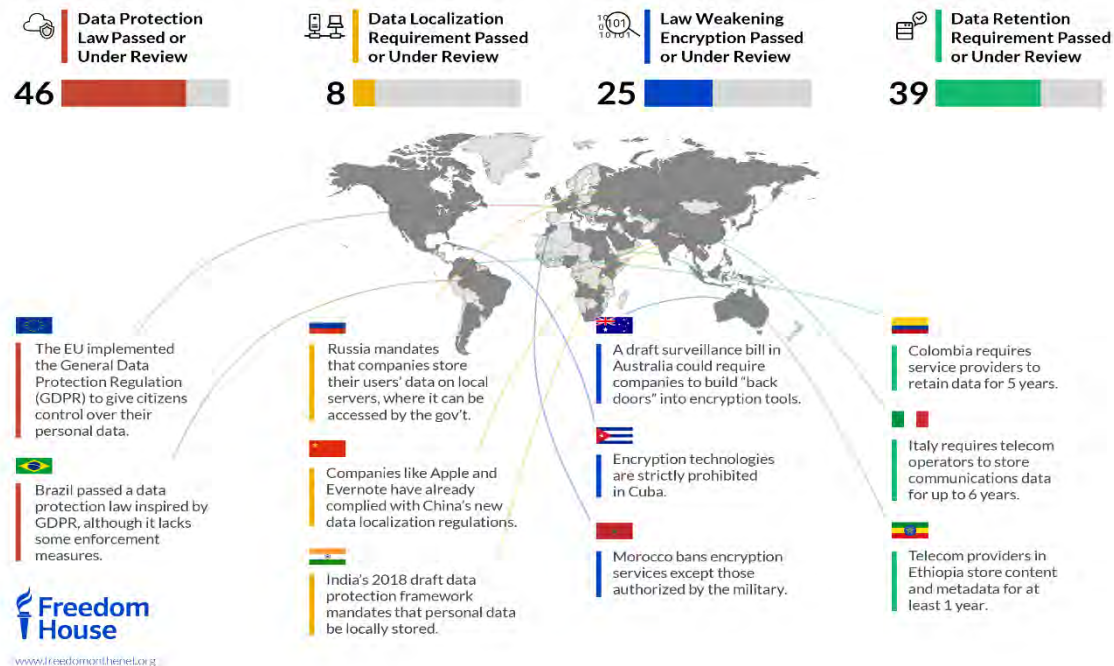
Discussion

The Budapest Convention, officially known as the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, is the first international treaty aimed at addressing Internet and computer-related crimes by harmonizing national laws, improving investigative techniques, and enhancing cooperation among nations.^M It was opened for signatures in 2001 and entered into force in 2004, with 70 states having ratified it as of April 2023, the treaty focuses on harmonizing national laws related to cyber-related crimes, supporting the investigation of these crimes, and increasing international cooperation in combating cybercrime.^M The Budapest Convention is more than just a legal document; it serves as a framework that allows practitioners from participating countries to share experiences and create relationships that facilitate cooperation in specific cases beyond the provisions outlined in the convention.^H

While China has not ratified the Budapest Convention, its engagement with the treaty as a benchmark indicates an awareness of the importance of international cooperation in combating cybercrime and aligning domestic legislation with global standards.^H China has actively engaged in alternative approaches to cyber governance, emphasizing state sovereignty and promoting its own initiatives and proposals within international forums.^H China has demonstrated a commitment to developing comprehensive domestic regulations related to cyberspace governance. China has laid the groundwork for robust cybersecurity frameworks aligned with its national priorities through policies like the

"Internet Plus" Action Plan, the Cybersecurity Law, and the National Cyberspace Security Strategy.^{[H](#)}

Where your Privacy Is (and Isn't) Protected



China has actively engaged in transnational cooperation on cyber issues through initiatives like the Global Data Security Initiative and participation in U.N.-led efforts.^{[M](#)} China's approach to international treaties on cybercrime reflects its broader strategy of promoting a state-centric model of governance that prioritizes national interests and sovereignty.^{[H](#)} By proposing new conventions that align with its principles, such as criminalizing the dissemination of false information, China seeks to influence global norms in cyberspace governance.^{[H](#)}

China's proposal for a U.N. treaty to address false information dissemination sets a precedent for establishing international norms in cyberspace governance, encourages discussions on responsible state behavior online, and promotes cooperation among nations to combat digital threats effectively.^{[H](#)} China's approach to law-based cyberspace governance has impacted the development of international cyber laws by advocating for a multilateral, democratic, and transparent global internet governance system. By actively participating in international exchanges and cooperation efforts related to cyberspace

governance, China has influenced online discussions on responsible state behavior and shaped global norms in digital regulation.^M

China's influence extends through the export of its governance model to other nations like Russia and Cambodia, leading to tightened censorship and surveillance measures; even democracies like India are adopting similar regulations due to economic dependencies.^M This trend risks normalizing authoritarian practices globally and dividing the online community into opposing governance models, potentially leading to a fragmented cyber order with implications for global trade, security, and human rights protections online.^M

China's law-based cyberspace governance has influenced its relationships with other countries by promoting international exchanges, cooperation, and the development of shared norms in cyberspace governance. It has positioned itself as a key player in shaping international cyber regulations and fostering collaboration with other nations.^M China's Cyberspace Administration and Data Security Laws are pivotal in promoting an authoritarian model of internet governance that diverges from Western-led multistakeholder approaches.^M By controlling data flows, censoring content, expanding surveillance, and asserting extraterritorial jurisdiction, China aims to shape global technology norms in alignment with its vision for a China-centric international order. This approach has led to a shift where authoritarian and developing nations like Russia, Iran, Cambodia, and others are adopting elements of China's legal framework, normalizing governance paradigms and restricting online freedoms.^M

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Troy Johnson

People's Republic of China Highly Likely To Shape Alternative World Order Based On “Connectivity Politics” Over The Next Decade; Key Development Initiatives, New Multilateral Organizations, Diplomacy Underscore Connectivity Ambitions

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is highly likely (71-85%) to shape an alternative world order over the next decade through the conduct of “connectivity politics”. This is due to the PRC’s proactivity in agenda setting and multidimensional approaches that are evident through its substantial infrastructure investments, development initiatives, international partnerships, and emphasis on diplomacy. The PRC’s Foreign Policy Outlook on Its Neighborhood In The New Era highlights the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), involvement in groups such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), recent ascent to becoming the world leader in diplomatic presence, and the Global Development Initiative. This policy underscores the PRC’s commitment to fostering global connectivity and promoting a world vision that avoids Western intervention. Despite China's ambitious drive to shape a connectivity-based world order, its approach faces criticism over concerns like debt-trap diplomacy and transparency issues.

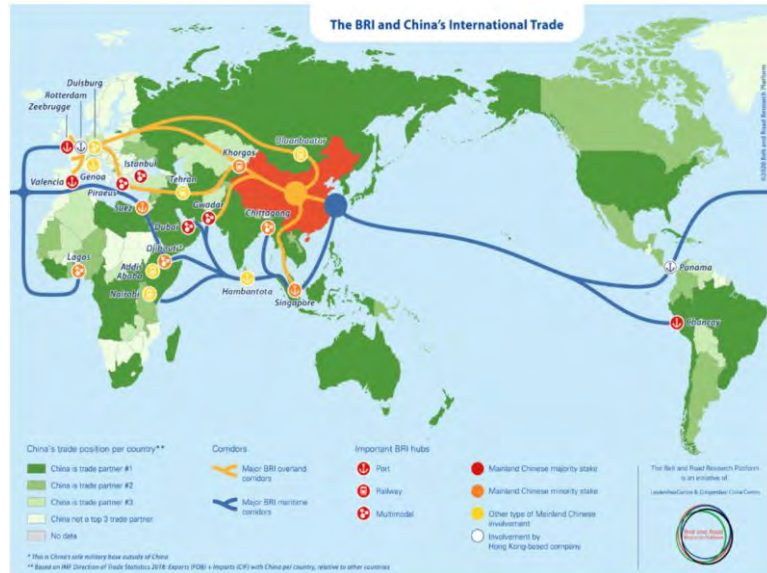
Discussion

Dr. Nadie Godehardt and Dr. Paul J. Kohlenberg, Chinese experts at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, affirm the PRC is using “connectivity politics” that include “proactivity in agenda setting, multidimensional aspects of initiatives, discourse power, and the internationalising impact of the Communist Party to shape an alternative international world order.”^{HHHH} Godehardt and Kohlenberg stated that:

“During President Xi Jinping's tenure, the PRC has developed a unique and worldwide approach to connectivity politics - an approach that encompasses infrastructure investments and international lending, expanding collaboration with and exerting influence over institutions in research, finance, and policy-making; additionally, it includes acquiring global media outlets and spreading technical and regulatory standards, and therefore, connectivity politics is guided by the PRC's strategic insight into the deep connection between power and connectivity.”^H

The PRC’s October 2023 Foreign Policy Outlook on Its Neighborhood In the New Era “highlights the PRC needs to jointly build a demonstration area of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation and deepen physical connectivity of infrastructure and institutional connectivity of rules and standards.”^H This policy underlines three key initiatives - the Global Development Initiative (GDI), Global Security Initiative (GSI) and Global

Civilization Initiative (GCI) – that seek comprehensive regional growth and security.^H This policy also emphasizes that participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS will further commit the PRC to multilateral cooperation aimed at countering global governance challenges and unilateralism by advocating for open regionalism and true multilateralism.^H



People's Republic of China Belt and Road Initiative

The BRI represents a cornerstone foreign policy effort by Chinese President Xi Jinping, designed to enhance the PRC's global connectivity.^H In October 2023, Xi Jinping stated, “Over the last 10 years, we have endeavored to build a global network of connectivity consisting of economic corridors, international transportation routes and information highways; the BRI, drawing inspiration from the ancient Silk Road and focusing on enhancing connectivity, aims to enhance policy, infrastructure, trade, financial and people-to-people connectivity.”^{HH}

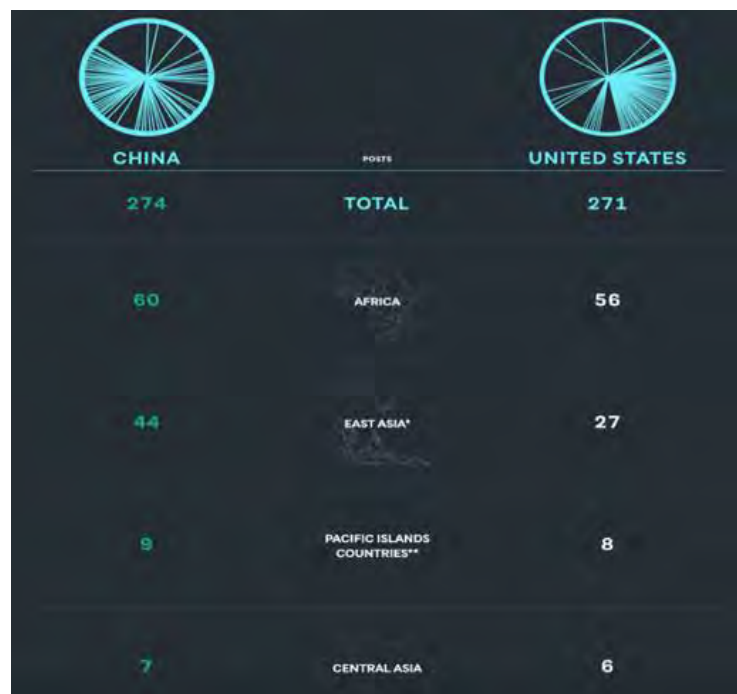
For example, from a multidimensionality and agenda setting perspective, the PRC is directing significant interest on port cities in the BRI situated along the new Silk Road that involves more than just strengthening logistical networks but establishing the groundwork for advancing new technical norms, like data transmission standards, over an extended period.^{HH} In March 2024, William and Mary College AidDATA research lab conducted a survey of 129 leaders from Global South countries that found “79% of leaders viewed Beijing as actively supporting their countries' development.”^H “Despite positive reception, Beijing's role extends beyond merely financing the infrastructure boom in the Global South; it has also emerged as the world's biggest and most contentious debt collector, holding \$1.1 trillion in outstanding debt.”^H See ^Hfor more information on BRI.

The PRC is proactively expanding beyond the BRI by striving to engage an increasing number of countries; it is doing so by promoting "openness" and broadening its network of partners within organizations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS.^H See ^Hfor more information on BRICS. Ties Dams, a geopolitical and PRC

expert associated with Clingendael Institute and Leiden University, stated “The PRC is eager to use the channels provided by these organizations to spread its own vision of the world; the popularity of SCO and BRICS shows how lots of countries, despite significant ideological differences, are attracted to the kind of diplomacy propagated by Beijing: à la carte, based on self-interest, and without Western interference.”^H

Although SCO’s fundamental goal was in security fields, cooperation between countries expanded to the economic arena, with the PRC interest mainly focused on widening access to Central Asian countries’ energy resources to diversify PRC imports.^H The SCO positions itself as a catalyst for regional economic integration and development as it encompasses 42% of the global population and 32% of global GDP, and places future emphasis on economic cooperation and connectivity, particularly through projects like the BRI.^{HH} The SCO’s expansion highlights Beijing’s growing influence in Central Asia and the subcontinent, marking significant achievements in China’s long-term agenda and establishing it as a key founder and leader of a regional organization critical to its national interests.^H

The Lowy Institutes 2024 Diplomatic Power Rankings highlight the PRC’s ascent to becoming the world leader in diplomatic presence was swift; by 2019, it had overtaken the U.S. to possess the largest diplomatic network globally.^H PRC diplomatic presence exceeds the United States’ presence in Africa (60:56 posts), East Asia (44:27), the Pacific Islands countries (9:8), and Central Asia (7:6).^H Despite the narrow margin, the report underscores the PRC’s successful effort to broaden its



[People’s Republic of China World Diplomatic Presence](#)

sway during a period of escalating geopolitical rivalry with the U.S.^H PRC Foreign Minister Wang Yi stated “the PRC will consolidate and expand our global network of partnerships, promote a new type of international relations, promote mutual respect and learning between civilizations, as well as strive for stability in major-country relations,

common progress with its neighbors, and rejuvenation with fellow countries in the Global South.”^H

For the GDI specifically, Sen Gong, a professor at the School of Public Affairs and Director of the Centre for International Studies on Development and Governance, Zhejiang University, stated in December 2024, “the GDI’s interplay with other significant frameworks, such as the BRI, will influence its trajectory; the PRC is likely to navigate the interplay between its GDI and BRI initiatives by employing a strategic combination of ‘hard connectivity’ in infrastructure development and ‘soft connectivity’ in rules and standards.”^H See^H for more information on GDI, GSI and GCI.

Despite China's ambitious drive to shape a connectivity-based world order, its approach faces criticism over concerns like debt-trap diplomacy and transparency issues. U.S. Secretary of Treasury Janet Yellen expressed her concerns in March 2023 that “some of the activities that the PRC engages in globally leave countries trapped in debt and don’t promote economic development.”^{HH} “The New Silk Road project, which finances the construction of port, rail and land infrastructure across the globe, has created much debt to China for participating countries.”^H Determining whether a project or asset is under the ownership, financing, construction, or operation by a PRC entity can be challenging due to inconsistent, non-detailed, and non-disaggregated information, which hampers accurately assessing the extent, scale, and impacts of these ventures.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized internet sources from the PRC whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. Finally, the analyst used AI as a predictive tool for connectivity associated with the PRC’s multiple initiatives. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Nicholas P. Panepinto

People's Republic of China Likely To Become A Global Leader In Smart Cities Development In The Next Ten Years; Successful Domestic And Continued International Development Driving Efforts To Shape Global Standards

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is likely (56-70%) to become a global leader in smart cities development in the next ten years due to application of emerging technologies in domestic city development and pilot projects, export of smart cities globally through the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as on-going efforts to shape international standards in its favor. Despite import restrictions on key hardware that support smart city development, the PRC plans to accelerate domestic R&D and diversify its supply chain.

Discussion

PRC companies are well advanced in most of the technologies at the core of smart cities to date that include artificial intelligence (AI), facial recognition, big-data analysis, Internet of Things (IoT) and 5G network.^H 'China Standards 2035' strategy aims to create a blueprint for the PRC government and leading tech companies to set global standards for technologies such as 5G, Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence (AI).^H

The development of the PRC's surveillance system, led by the Ministry of Public Security and private firms, began with intelligent buildings and evolved into smart cities enhanced with extensive sensor networks; this progression culminated in the creation of the "city brain," a concept devised by Alibaba's Chief Technology Officer Wang Jian, which serves as a central command center for urban management.^H The PRC vision to create a "world brain" includes:



[AI Powered "City Brain" in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province](#)

The digital brain will gradually expand from the city brain to the provincial brain, national brain, and finally the [world digital brain or a world digital nervous system]. The construction of the world's digital brain will be the third

important opportunity to establish the world's technological ecological standards and systems.^H

The PRC has some of the most sophisticated cities in the world thanks to cloud computing and artificial intelligence.^H Smart cities in the People's Republic of China, specifically Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Hangzhou, are at the forefront of utilizing cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), big data, and cloud computing that are being applied across multiple sectors, including transportation, public safety, environmental management, and manufacturing.^M By April 2020, the PRC had initiated close to 800 smart city pilot projects, marking its position as the world's leading country in the development and implementation of smart city infrastructure.^H

While implementing various smart city technologies domestically, the PRC has also started exporting these systems globally as a component of its Digital Silk Road strategy, which is an integral part of the Belt and Road Initiative.^{HH} Hikvision and Huawei are the PRC's leading global suppliers, with Dahua and ZTE also serving as major providers.^{HH} In a 2017 speech, the President Xi Jinping said that “the PRC's involvement in the development of smart cities in other countries was an opportunity to expand their economic cooperation with the PRC.”^H



[People's Republic of China Smart City Investment Around The World](#)

Most smart city exports are to countries in the Global South, including countries participating in One Belt One Road, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), and members of the China-Africa Cooperation Forum.^H For example, the PRC is responsible for supplying around 70% of the African continent's digital infrastructure, with 22 nations implementing Huawei's surveillance technologies.^H In Kenya, ZTE and Huawei have initiated the installation of optical fiber networks and are preparing to collaborate on surveillance systems and digital government projects.^H Huawei and ZTE Corp have helped countries “like Pakistan, Egypt, Uganda, Mozambique, Guyana, Kenya

and Laos to build internet-connected classrooms, national broadband, e-government networks and e-commerce platforms.”^H

The PRC has guided standardization processes from their inception to full maturity.^H One example of this is the development of smart city standards in International Standardization Organization ISO: China recommended the formation of a Smart City Study Group, led said Study Group, and then proceeded to hold every leadership role in the ISO body for smart cities from its formation until the present.^H Smart cities are a focus of this standards diffusion effort because they incorporate so many emerging technologies: the facial recognition systems, big data analysis, 5G telecoms and AI cameras that go into creating smart cities are all technologies for which standards remain up for grabs.^H Thus, smart cities, which streamline various municipal operations, stand as a significant goal in the People's Republic of China's push for standardization.^H “The PRC is setting standards from the bottom up through widespread export and foreign adoption of its technology,” says Jonathan Hillman, an analyst at CSIS, a Washington-based think-tank.^H

Despite import restrictions on key technology hardware that supports smart city development, the PRC is adapting. Last year, restrictions imposed by the U.S. government prevented Nvidia, the most valuable chipmaker globally, from exporting its two most sophisticated AI chips to customers in PRC.^H PRC technology companies are facing, in the short term, direct negative consequences of the ban but will benefit indirectly from U.S. decisions, given the crisis will lead the PRC to accelerate R&D investment and take measures to broaden its supply chain to reduce dependence on U.S./European technology components in the coming years.^H Additionally, as the PRC government has started to promote civil-military integration in the AI industry, and the PRC defense industry is increasing its interest in smart cities, research in the field will increasingly be supported by substantial state funding, with concrete focus on smart city development.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized two internet sources from the PRC whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Nicholas P. Panepinto

People's Republic Of China External Economic Development Highly Likely To Remain Flat For The Next Ten Years Due To Projected Decreases In The Stock Market, Exports, External Loans, And Foreign Investment

Executive Summary

External economic growth in the People's Republic of China (PRC) is highly likely (71-85%) to remain flat for the next ten years due to projected decreases in the stock market, exports, external loans, and foreign investment. Despite the ability to use stimulus programs to increase external economic drivers, the PRC is likely (56-70%) to concentrate on much larger internal economic issues.

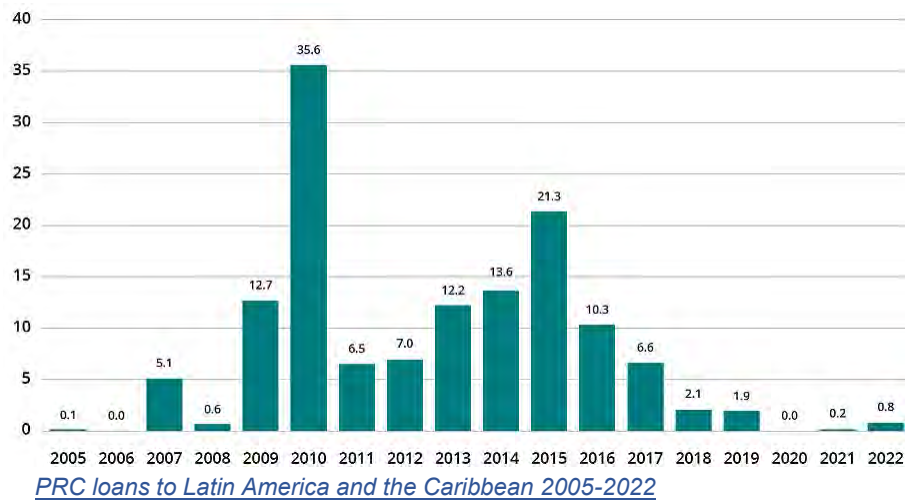
Discussion

Morgan Stanley cut its 12-month forecast in late January 2024 for the MSCI China index to no change, breaking with other banks that still expect a rally this year.^M More than \$6 trillion has been reduced in the value of Chinese and Hong Kong stocks since a peak in 2021.^H Chinese markets lifted during February 2024 following a report suggesting that Beijing policymakers are scrambling to mobilize billions of yuan from state-owned enterprises to reverse the recent stock market rout (\$291B).^M The PRC is also intervening to prop up the stock market, which has fallen more than 20 percent in the past year, with restrictions on short selling, tighter capital controls, and mobilizing state-owned enterprises to buy back stock.^H Deflation will start biting into PRC growth as Beijing looks at another three to six months of a “very painful economy,” according to one analyst who covers the country. “This is something investors need to be cautious of. The economy here is bad, it's pretty ... it's really bad. I've been in China for 27 years, and this is probably the lowest confidence I've ever seen,” Shaun Rein, founder of the China Market Research Group, told CNBC's “Squawk Box Europe” in early February.^M

PRC's consumer prices fell at the fastest annual rate in 15 years in January 2024, losing 0.8 percent, while the country's producer price index dropped 2.5 percent from 2023. Few economists expect developed economies to record similar outright price falls. Still, many think PRC economic deflation could significantly impact emerging markets, particularly those with major trading relationships with Beijing.^M Beijing has mandated debt-ridden provinces to restructure their debt and rein in spending as local governments grapple with falling revenues and a protracted property sector downturn.^M Some of China's most indebted regions have set conservative economic growth targets for 2024 after being told to concentrate on defusing the debt bomb. China's overall economy grew by 5.2 percent in 2023, while the national target for 2024 is widely estimated to be around 5 percent. Lithium miners are cutting costs and scaling back plans to expand production after slowing demand in PRC for electric vehicles dropped the price of the

battery metal.^H Goldman Sachs estimates a surplus of 200,000 tons of lithium carbonate equivalent, or 17 percent of global demand in 2024, which will require “substantial supply cuts” to balance the market.^H

China’s household wealth index was 96.1, and its income index was 94.1 in the fourth quarter of 2023, indicating a fall from the previous quarter, according to the



survey results released in February 2024.^M The index scales are based on surveys with a level of 100 representing the division between contraction and expansion. Liquidation of property developer China’s Evergrande raises the alarm over Beijing’s economic malaise.^M An important risk now is that Evergrande’s crisis — which has already acted as a drag on PRC’s overall economic growth — will continue to have spillover effects.^M One of these is that PRC developers are listed both on the mainland. Offshore may lack the money to deliver at least some of their unfinished housing units, which Gavekal Dragonomics, a consultancy, has valued at 7.5 trillion RMB (\$1tn).^M Here again, the numbers are huge: listed developers collectively owed 3.4 trillion Rmb in payables to their suppliers as of mid-2023, according to Gavekal.^M The China Development Bank and Export-Import Bank of China have collectively deployed \$138 billion in 117 loans in Latin America and the Caribbean. The lending accelerated following the 2008 global financial crisis, which limited financing options for developing economies such as Argentina, Ecuador, and Venezuela. Beginning in 2020, the PRC changed course, sharply reducing state-to-state lending. But by then, it had become a major creditor in this region. For example, Ecuador, which restructured its debt to China in 2023, still owes Beijing nearly \$5 billion, or 11 percent of Ecuador’s total external debt.^M

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Patrick L. Ryan

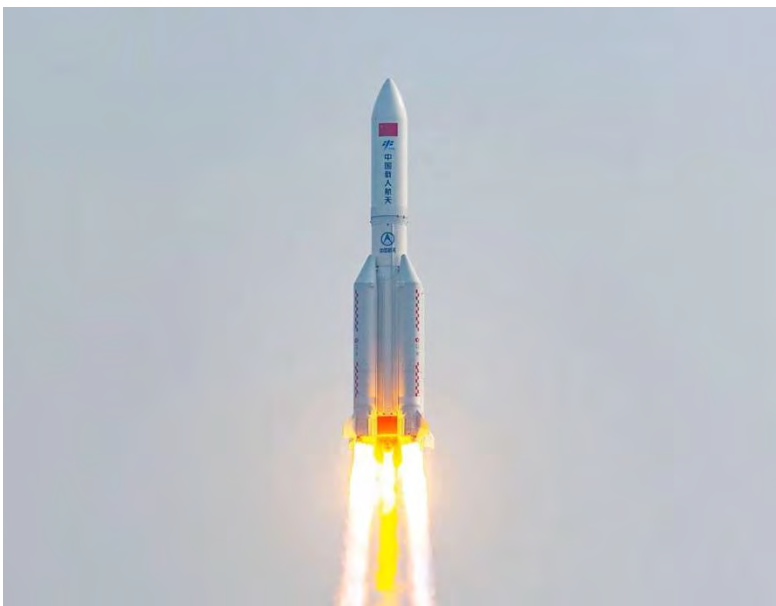
People's Republic Of China Highly Likely To Increase Presence And Capability In The Space Domain Within Ten Years

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) increased presence and capability in space will likely increase (56-70%) within the next ten years. China continues modernizing its military, emphasizing the Peoples Liberation Army Space Strategic Support Force. China has increased its satellite launches in the past five years. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) now has satellites dedicated to position, navigation, and timing (PNT), as well as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and communications. China continues to modernize its military and increase its capacity in space by increasing tactically responsive space launch (TRSL) platforms in space. China's space architecture is now second only to the United States. Despite the United States leveraging the commercial launch enterprise, China continues to close the space gap.

Discussion

The People's Republic of China (PRC) rapidly expands space capabilities and capacity through sizeable annual launch increases.^M President Xi Jinping has pushed to increase



[*A Long March 5B rocket lifts off from the Wenchang Space Launch Centre in China's Hainan Province*](#)

satellite launches for communications, navigation and sensing.^M The number of commercial launches by China increases yearly, with a new record of 67 orbital launches in 2023.^M This was more than any other nation except the United States.^M China continues to increase its earthbound space infrastructure with ground stations worldwide.^M These ground stations perform

critical telemetry, tracking and command functions that support an ever-expanding presence of Chinese spacecraft in low earth orbit.^M

China has made substantial investments in modernizing its military in all warfighting domains.^H The PLA now has dedicated low earth orbit platforms for secure, long-range

communications and command networks.^M China has also focused on providing assured positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) for its military forces.^M These new capabilities and space-based deep-sensing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) constellations give the PLA capabilities second only to the United States.^M

The PLA has developed new space capabilities through its modernization initiatives.^M The Chinese developed the Peoples Liberation Army Strategic Support Force (PLASSF) in 2015 to develop and manage their military's electronic, cyber, and space warfighting functions.^M The United States did not establish its own Space Force until 2019.^M The Chinese have established a pipeline of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) degrees into commercial and military space domains.^H China has challenged the United States to dominate in research and development expenditures.^H China is spending \$200 billion more annually on research and development as part of its space industrial base.^H

China has surpassed the United States' tactically responsive space launch (TRSL) capabilities.^M TRSL is the ability to launch or affect satellites through offensive or defensive methods.^M The nation that can control low earth orbit has a decided tactical advantage on the ground.^M China has more than doubled its number of low earth orbit satellites over the past 4 years.^M China's investment in these launches will likely continue at present levels or even increase in the next several years.^M China is planning one hundred space launches in 2024, a new national record.^M

China is the major competitor to the United States in the space domain.^H Strategic competition in space is a vital concern; China looks to displace the United States as the dominant space power by 2045, possibly sooner.^H In a relatively short time China has surpassed every other space-capable nation except the United States in annual launches and space infrastructure.^H China will continue to leverage its economic gains and advances in research and development to produce a more robust and capable space force in direct competition with the United States.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. The sources used were all 'open source', which, given the subject matter, hinders the level of detail used throughout. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Andi Tallman

People's Republic Of China Shipbuilding Industry Poised To Assert Dominance And Likely Shift Global Standards Towards A Chinese-Led Market In The Next Decade Due To Advancements In Naval Technology

Executive Summary

China's shipbuilding capabilities have emerged as a strategic asset that is likely (56-70%) to advance its goal of establishing a China-led alternative world order. People's Republic of China's (PRC) dominance in shipbuilding, its strategic investments, and advancements in naval technology will influence global maritime dynamics and contribute to reshaping the existing world order. China's shipbuilding industry (commercial and military), driven by surging profits and strategic advancements in naval modernization, positions the country as an influential partner in the global maritime arena. The industry's growth trajectory underscores China's evolving role as a key player in shaping the future of naval capabilities and international maritime trade dynamics. China's shipbuilding industry maintains a dominant position globally due to its sheer scale and efficiency, despite potential challenges like economic slowdown, competition, and resistance from major powers like the United States.

Discussion

China has established itself as a global leader in shipbuilding, with an extensive network of shipyards capable of constructing both military and civilian vessels.^H The country's ship-building prowess is underscored by its substantial investments in the industry, including subsidies that support rapid expansion and technological advancements with 20 large shipyards and 140 dry docks to enable rapid expansion.^H Chinese shipyards have

Table 3. Numbers of Chinese and U.S. Navy Ships, 2020-2040

Figures for Chinese ships are from U.S. Navy, reflecting data as of October 2020

Ship type	2020	2025	2030	2040	2040 change from 2020
Ballistic missile submarines	4	6	8	10	+6
Nuclear-powered attack submarines	6	10	14	16	+10
Diesel attack submarines	47	47	46	46	-1
Aircraft carriers	2	3	5	6	+4
Cruisers and destroyers	41	52	60	80	+39
Frigates and corvettes	102	120	135	140	+38
LHA-type amphibious assault ships	0	4	4	6	+6
LPD-type amphibious ships	7	10	14	14	+7
LST-type amphibious tank landing ships	30	24	24	15	-15
TOTAL for China of types shown above	239	276	310	333	+94
TOTAL number of U.S. Navy battle force ships	297	286	290	329 or 331 or 352	+32 or +34 or +55

[Numbers of Chinese and U.S. Navy Ships, 2020-2040](#)

demonstrated resilience even under the pressure of U.S. sanctions, showcasing their ability to thrive and expand despite external challenges.^M

The United States, historically a dominant force in naval capabilities, faces increasing competition from China due to its robust shipbuilding industry. China's focus on enhancing its naval power through advanced ship-building technologies poses a significant challenge to U.S. naval supremacy.^H China's ability to rapidly produce large and sophisticated vessels, including specialized ships for offshore construction and dredging, has

enabled the Belt and Road Initiative's (BRI) expansion across maritime regions, extending China's economic and political influence.^M As the world's largest shipbuilder, China has the ability to shape global shipping trends, influence pricing, and potentially leverage its position to advance its economic and political interests.^M



[China's shipyards are achieving rapid growth despite US sanctions, thanks to technological progress and a complete industrial chain](#)

The global major shipbuilding industry has shifted to the Asian market, mainly to China (40%), South Korea (31%), and Japan (22%) market shares, with China winning the bid for 51% of all new shipbuilding orders.^M According to a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), China's shipbuilding industry is expected to grow at around 10% annually over the next decade, with total output reaching 100 million tons by 2030.^H China's growing naval capabilities have broader geopolitical implications, especially within the context of the BRI serving as a platform for China to expand its economic and strategic influence across regions through infrastructure projects, including ports and maritime facilities.^H The synergy between China's shipbuilding capabilities and the BRI enhances its capacity to exert influence over key maritime routes and bolster its presence in critical geopolitical hotspots.^H There is no clear evidence presented that China is specifically using its shipbuilding capabilities to

create military alliances with partner countries.^M The focus appears to be more on China's broader strategy of using economic tools to advance its interests.^M

China's pursuit of a China-led world order involves leveraging its naval capabilities for diplomatic leverage, shaping international norms and institutions, and facing challenges from the United States and its allies.^H This approach has enabled China to create a network of strategic partnerships, particularly in developing regions crucial for its alternative world order vision.^H China has exported Jianghu-class frigates to Thailand and Pakistan in recent years. However, the search results note that many of China's former naval clients in the region have shifted to buying ships and weapons from non-Chinese sources in recent years.^M China uses its military and economic support to create strategic partnerships in developing regions crucial for its vision of an alternative world order.^H By influencing international norms and institutions through its economic and military might, and China aims to reform the existing international system to reflect its interests better, potentially leading to a more multipolar world order.^H

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. The analysis also utilized internet sources from the PRC whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Troy Johnson

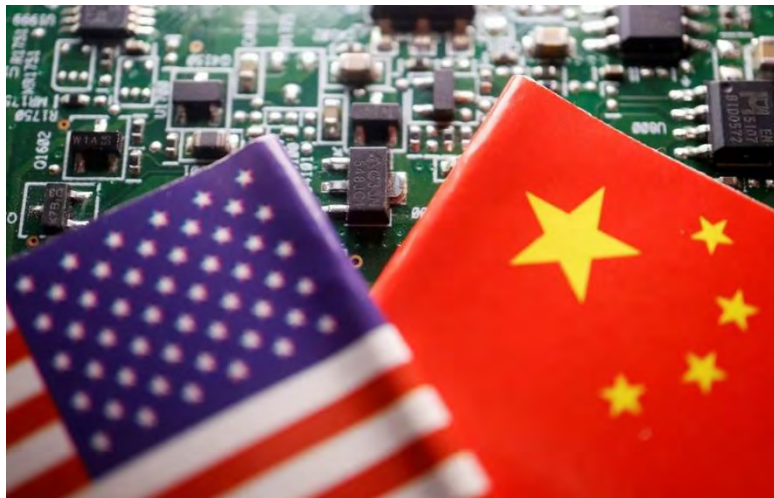
China Highly Likely To Invest Billions Of Dollars Annually Over The Next Ten Years To Become A Global Leader In Artificial Intelligence, Biotechnology, And Quantum Computing With The Goal Of Setting Global Standards

Executive Summary

China is actively pursuing a strategy to become a global leader in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), biotechnology, and quantum computing. It is highly likely (71-85%) that they will invest billions of dollars over the next 10 years. Skeptics are likely (56-70%) to raise unfair trade practices and protection of intellectual property rights. China is highly likely to focus on setting global standards in these critical sectors to further drive its influence in emerging technologies and impact the global technological landscape. Many new technologies are dual use with both civilian and military applications. These may enable hard-to-detect advances aiding its military modernization goals in areas like AI-enabled weapons, biological warfare defense, and quantum sensor evasion.

Discussion

China is heavily investing in various emerging technologies, and it is highly likely that these investments will continue to grow over the next 10 years. In the field of quantum technologies, China is making significant strides, with a focus on quantum mechanics for breakthroughs in sensing, communication, and computing.^M The Chinese



[Flags of China and U.S. are displayed on a printed circuit board with semiconductor chips](#)

government has launched the largest-ever semiconductor fund under the China Integrated Circuit with a target of \$40 billion and a focus on chip manufacturing equipment.^M The PRC is establishing key research institutions like the Key Laboratory of Quantum Information at the University of Science and Technology of China.^M

In economic investment, China accounted for nearly one-fifth of global private investment funding, attracting \$17 billion for AI start-ups.^M The Chinese government has projected the value of core AI industries in China to rise, with a value of over \$1 trillion

when accounting for specialized research institutes and centers and funding AI-related projects.^M The Belt Road Initiative has led to a pivot in financing as China looks to secure critical raw minerals for industrial advancement in fields such as semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and electric vehicles.^{ML} China's commercial and technology practices create strategic risk, and the country has been pursuing technology transfers that aid its pursuit of dominance in dual-use technologies.^M The country is determined to become a leading player in biotechnology. It invests heavily in various applications, including developing medical treatments, agricultural products, and biological weapons.^M The People's Liberation Army (PLA) uses AI to develop unmanned combat systems, facilitate battlefield situational awareness and decision-making, and conduct multi-domain operations.^M

China's President Xi Jinping has stated, "We must regard science and technology as our primary productive force," China is now making good on that pledge through significant investments in these key technology areas.^M China's sponsorship of research on gene editing, human performance enhancement, and other biotechnological applications for military purposes has raised concerns about the potential for biological warfare and the ethical implications of human enhancement in a military context.^H

The search results indicate that China is making major investments and policy commitments to become a global leader in these critical technology areas in the coming years, intending to set global standards:^M

- China has identified these frontier technologies as strategic priorities, enshrining them in its latest 5-year economic plan.^H
- China is closing the gap on the US in areas like quantum computing and AI, and is viewed as the global leader in quantum communication.^M
- The Chinese government has pledged significant increases in R&D spending, up over 7% annually, to achieve "major breakthroughs" in these technologies.^H
- This investment push is driven by China's desire to reduce reliance on foreign technology and build domestic capabilities in strategic industries.^M

China has intensified its efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in key technology sectors, emphasizing indigenous innovation and leapfrogging the United States.^H The Chinese government has put large funds from the national government and provincial and local governments and state-owned enterprises behind priority technology sectors, including AI.^{HM} China's reliance on imported inputs for production has decreased in several high-tech sectors, reflecting the country's efforts to increase self-reliance in critical technology areas.^M The country aims to develop the world's most advanced technology on its own as Western countries step up restrictions on chip-making equipment sales to China.^L

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Troy Johnson

People's Republic Of China's Digital Silk Road Will Likely Increase Control Of The Information Domain In Next Ten Years

Executive Summary

Using diplomatic and trade initiatives, the People's Republic of China's (PRC) presence and control of the information domain will likely increase (56%-70%) within the next ten years. The PRC's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was launched in 2013 as a trade initiative that included infrastructure and cultural exchanges with over 140 countries. The Digital Silk Road (DSR) is a component of the BRI, focusing on information networks and granting the PRC access to or control of digital pathways in this "Silk Road of information." The DSR has three main components: digital infrastructure, smart city, and cross-border e-commerce. These data pathways are cross-border fiber optical cables, relay stations, and satellite information channels to foster data cooperation. China will likely continue to compound its gains in the information domain through increased diplomatic and trade measures. These Nations that accept part of the PRC's "Digital Silk Road" may heedlessly allow an adversary access to their data, a modern-day "Trojan Horse." Despite the United States' burgeoning technology industry, China continues to advance by focusing on emerging markets.

Discussion

The People's Republic of China (PRC) continues to increase its access and control of data through the Digital Silk Road (DSR), a component of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).^M Chinese President Xi Jinping proclaimed at the Belt and Road Forum in 2017 that China should "intensify cooperation in frontier areas such as digital economy, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and advance the development of big data, cloud



[People take selfies in front of an Ethiopian satellite antenna that was launched by China](#)

computing, and smart cities to turn them into digital silk road of the 21st century".^M Developing nations welcome China's cyber governance, seeing liberal Western influence as threatening their values and reign.^M On the African continent, Chinese information and communications

groups have financed more than 155 billion in the technology infrastructure than the funds from all African nations, G7 nations, or agencies combined.^{MM}

The Chinese tech companies have helped other governments implement surveillance capabilities against opposition groups and stifle personal freedoms.^M Nations that adhere to the DSR could find these same programs leveraged against themselves and China, using the data for blackmail and coercion of officials.^M Democratic nations are concerned that China will use the DSR capabilities to assist totalitarian regimes in enabling technological authoritarianism against its populace.^M Chinese firms building or upgrading fifth-generation (5G) networks in some third-world countries are becoming more commonplace, increasing their influence, and giving access to valuable data.^M

The Chinese DSR has programs or current projects in Africa, Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.^M The DSR agreements or projects are often ambiguous and vary from country to country.^M These programs allow China to compile data for surveillance and strategic programs.^M The DSR is spreading across entire regions and has the potential for future nefarious or aggressive actions by China.^M The United States Congress recently drafted a resolution criticizing South Africa's use of Chinese technology.^M The PRC remains concerned about the United States dominating global tech and will continue to leverage programs such as the DSR to combat this.^H

China will continue to leverage diplomatic programs such as the BRI and DSR to achieve its strategic goals abroad.^H The PRC continues offering new transportation or infrastructure projects and digital hardware often paired under the guise of cooperation and charity.^M America must confront the BRI and DSR in emerging nations or allies abroad.^M China will continue to target impoverished, third-world countries and then move on to more stable regions to consolidate its influence.^M

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. The sources used were all 'open-source' which given the subject matter hinders the level of detail used throughout. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Andi Tallman

People's Republic Of China Will Increase Control Of Information And Media Globally Within The Next Ten Years

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) increased control of state-run media, and information warfare will likely increase (56%-70%) within the next ten years through propaganda and clamping down on domestic information. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has always valued using the cognitive domain as part of their larger political strategy. The PRC continues to assemble a confederation of authoritarian allies, Russia, North Korea, and Iran, that all view information warfare as a key component of their political strategy. Chinese security continues to ramp up, and foreign diplomats report that they are losing access to information and officials necessary to perform their duties. Despite technological innovations designed to share the flow of information, China continues to work to control or subvert information to prolong the regime's reign of power. As China's population expands, it will seek new ways to control its people by deliberately manipulating the information and the media.

Discussion

The People's Republic of China (PRC) continues to value the manipulation and control of information to suit its own needs.^M United States Representative Mike Wallace explained



[President Xi addressing his constituents](#)

domestically and abroad.^M

this challenge to Congress, “In Xi Jinping’s view, the war has already started on the most important battlefield: your mind. The CCP calls it the cognitive warfare, part of their larger political warfare strategy.”^M The leadership within the CCP understands how information was used to depose communist regimes in Europe and will continue to tighten the flow of information both

The PRC leadership fears its populace more than any foreign adversary and will take great measures to maintain the regime at any cost.^M

The Chinese government continues to invest billions in its state media outlets and increase its control of all Chinese-language media worldwide.^{MM} State media outlets such as Xinhua and its network China Global Television Network (CGTN) reinforce and carry the regime's message around the globe.^M The PRC continues to invest in information vessels such as 5G networks, satellite relay facilities, space infrastructure, and undersea cables to support their control of information.^M The PRC leverages all social media platforms to push its information.^M A study by Stanford's Cyber Policy Center found that Chinese State media paid for ads that created impressions for users, casting doubt that these are genuine interactions with real social media users.^M

China continues to go to great lengths to control information around the globe.^M The PRC leadership has worked to discredit or even jail reporters and editors who are deemed politically wayward.^M China's rapid economic development and its need for information infrastructure is weighed against its need to manage and control the data by the authoritarian regime.^M China must increase its flow of information to support its population and still control it. ^M China invests billions annually into a deliberate campaign of disinformation aiming to control criticism of its policies at home or abroad.^M The Chinese government learned in the Tiananmen Square protests in June 1989 that managing advanced telecommunication is difficult but paramount to maintaining information control.^M China has the most robust phone network in the world due to its large population and this is a growing challenge to monitor and control by the Communist Party.^M

The PRC continues to clamp down on access to party leadership by the media through controlling access to leadership.^M The Chinese National People's Congress convened in March 2024 and has delivered new legislation that provides more control for President Xi and additional focus on national security.^M In 2024 the PRC canceled the premier's post-parliament news conference, breaking with thirty years of tradition.^M This event was the only time journalists could ask China's top leader questions about the country's state, giving a rare glimpse into the opaque nature of the Chinese government.^M Foreign journalists report increasingly rigid bureaucratic issues and prolonged visa requests by the Chinese government, making their job more difficult.^M President Xi demands that journalists working for state-run media not only report the facts but also "love and protect the Communist Party."^{MM}

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. The sources used were all ‘open-source’ which given the subject matter hinders the level of detail used throughout. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Andi Tallman

People's Republic Of China Technology Companies Likely To Achieve Dominance To Shift Global Technology Standards To A Chinese-Led Market In The Next Ten Years Due To Micro-Chip Production, Continued Majority Market Share In Telecom Equipment And Smart Cities Technologies

Executive Summary

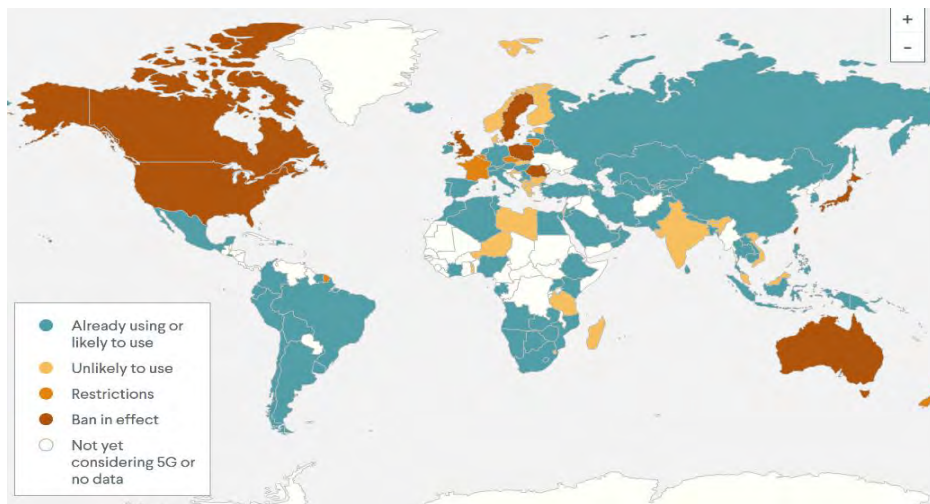
People's Republic of China (PRC) technology companies are likely (56-70%) to create new global technology standards in the next ten years due to increasing and evolving micro-chip production in the PRC, continued majority market share in telecommunication equipment and networks, and continued expansion and export of smart cities technologies. Despite sanctions, restrictions, and export controls by the U.S. and some allies, the PRC technology companies are likely (56-70%) to continue investments in further improvements to capabilities to increase market share.

Discussion

Recent news that Huawei and Semiconductor Manufacturing International Company (SMIC) will mass-produce 5-nanometer processor chips in new Shanghai production facilities in mid-2024 increased fears about PRC's capabilities in next-generation chip manufacturing.^H According to a document released by the U.S-China Economic and Security Review Commission, between January and August 2023, the PRC imported \$3.2 billion worth of semiconductor manufacturing machines from the Netherlands.^H The PRC's imports of semiconductor equipment from all countries totaled \$13.8 billion over the first eight months of 2023.^H The finding comes as U.S. technology experts worry about how Huawei was able to produce an advanced 7-nanometer chip to power its Mate 60 Pro smartphone, despite the U.S. export controls announced in October 2022.^H PRC-made RAM chips and processors in Huawei's Mate 60 series are an indication of the growing reliance on the local PRC supply chains.^M

Despite efforts by the U.S. government to limit Huawei's total addressable market and access to the best silicon, Huawei still leads the global telecom equipment market as the #1 supplier in 2022 with 34% market share.^H Nokia, Ericsson, and Huawei were the top three suppliers outside of PRC in 2022, accounting for 56% of the total market.^H In addition, Huawei is the sixth largest Smartphone manufacturer company in the world with a 4% smartphone market share in July 2023.^M PRC telecommunications manufacturers like Huawei and ZTE raise fears of espionage and intellectual property theft in the U.S. and other countries.^H In response, the U.S. and its allies have imposed sweeping restrictions on Huawei as part of sanctions on PRC technology companies to reduce risks.^H Despite the U.S. restrictions in place, many low-income countries still chose Huawei to build their 5G networks, many times with PRC financing.^H The PRC

has also become a leading writer of international rules for emerging technologies,



[Huawei Worldwide Telecom Equipment Market 2023](#)

particularly 5G wireless, as part of a national effort to shape the market in its favor.^M The PRC is drafting a medium-term strategy nicknamed “China Standards

2035”, complementing the “Made in China 2025” industrial modernization plan that includes such fields as 5G and artificial intelligence.^M

The development of smart cities integrates advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, the internet, big data, and cloud computing in various areas, such as transport, public security, the environment, and manufacturing.^M The COVID-19 pandemic also highlighted the tracking technologies with a code that tracked a person’s travel history.^M The PRC has upgraded smart cities — urban environments with a lot of sensors — to include a command center: the city brain, a concept conceived by Alibaba chief technology officer Wang Jian.^H Alibaba’s city brain has already been exported to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia as sold by Alibaba.^H The prime purpose is to increase the efficiency of traffic management in the city.^H Policymakers in the U.S. and allies should note the thinking emerging in the PRC research community, industry, and the CCP, as well as the nature of PRC smart city construction projects abroad.^M

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Patrick L. Ryan

People's Republic Of China's Internal Economic Development Highly Likely To Remain Flat For The Next Ten Years With Minimal Growth By 2035

Executive Summary

Economic growth in the People's Republic of China (PRC) is highly likely (71-85%) to remain flat for the next ten years with minimal growth by 2035. Despite the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) efforts to shift the economy from a manufacturing-based economy to a consumption economy, they must stimulate domestic demand by encouraging urbanization, stabilizing the housing market, increasing household income, and reducing unemployment.

Discussion

The anticipated downturn in the PRC internal economy over the next five years, driven by a lag in consumer spending, is influenced by various factors beyond unemployment and the real estate market downturn.^{[H](#)} The PRC's economic challenges stem from a structural imbalance, heavy reliance on government spending and commercial investment rather than consumer spending, declining foreign direct investment, weakening consumer confidence, and struggles with youth unemployment.^{[H](#)} The country's stock market performance, declining consumer sentiment, and subdued consumer demand have also contributed to the economic slowdown. Experts emphasize the need to boost domestic consumer spending, implement market-oriented reforms, and shift focus toward innovation and technology to address these pressing issues.^{[H](#)}

The continued economic downturn is expected to be significantly impacted by issues within the housing market and urbanization.^{[H](#)} The real estate crisis, characterized by a prolonged slump in property sales and housing starts, substantially threatens the PRC's economic stability.^{[H](#)} The collapse of the housing bubble, high housing prices relative to income, excess housing inventory, and a decline in speculative demand all contribute to the challenges faced by the housing sector.^{[H](#)} Urbanization trends, coupled with demographic changes such as a declining population and slowing urbanization rates, further, exacerbate the strain on the housing market and overall economic growth.^{[H](#)} The CCP's efforts to manage the disposal of bad loans, restructure debt in the real estate sector, and address financial risks associated with the property market downturn will be crucial in navigating these economic challenges.^{[H](#)}



[The PRC's economy grew more slowly in 2023 than before the pandemic](#)

High unemployment across multiple demographics will continue to slow the economy.^{[H](#)} The PRC's job market has become a new problem, with joblessness rising for the third straight month. Youth unemployment, in particular, has become so severe that the government has stopped publishing the data. The widespread unemployment, coupled with declining foreign direct investment and weakening consumer confidence, has contributed to the economic challenges facing the PRC.^{[H](#)} Experts warn that without major market reforms, the country could be stuck in a "Middle Income Trap," with slowing growth and limited control over the direction of its economy.^{[H](#)} Addressing these labor market issues, along with structural imbalances and the need to shift towards innovation and technology, will be crucial for the PRC to navigate this anticipated economic downturn.^{[H](#)}

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Patrick L. Ryan

Shanghai Cooperation Organization Highly Unlikely To Form Military Alliance In The Next Decade; Highly Likely To Remain Regionally Focused Based On People's Republic of China-Influenced Security Development

Executive Summary

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is highly unlikely (16-30%) to form a military alliance in the next decade due to the permanent member's respect for non-alignment and motivations that align with the SCO goals of being an inclusive regional entity that seeks to address not only security concerns but also economic, cultural, and environmental issues while striving for a cooperative and integrated Eurasia. Despite that the SCO is highly likely (71-85%) to remain Eurasia-focused based on the People's Republic of China (PRC)-led security and economic initiatives, internal decision-making complexities and varied member interests will create operational effectiveness challenges.

Discussion

The SCO operates as a regional intergovernmental body, providing Eurasian countries that support a multipolar global structure with a platform to align their interests in an era of escalating worldwide geopolitical conflicts.^{[M](#)} The goals of the SCO



[Shanghai Cooperation Organization Membership](#)

are to: “1) strengthen mutual trust, friendship and good-neighborliness between the Member States; 2) to encourage effective cooperation between the Member States in such spheres as politics, trade, economy, science and technology, culture, education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection; 3) to jointly ensure and maintain peace, security and stability in the region; and 4) to promote a new democratic, fair and rational international political and economic international order.”^{[HHH](#)}

In May 2023, SCO Secretary General Zhang Ming rejected any comparison between the SCO and NATO, saying that “the Shanghai Club never sought to compare itself with the transatlantic alliance, it is not a political or military bloc, and it follows its path and strives to promote peace.”^{HH} PRC President Xi Jinping stated during the last SCO summit in July 2023 that “we should keep in mind the overall and long-term interests of our region, and make our foreign policies independently, and be highly vigilant against external attempts to foment a new Cold War or camp-based confrontation in our region.”^H

Dr. Mohammadbagher Forough, a research fellow at The German Institute of Global and Area Studies in Hamburg, Germany^H, stated:

“Western references to the SCO reduce security to a commonsensical notion of geopolitics as “hard,” or military power (hence, the NATO comparisons). The conception of security at the core of the SCO’s mission is much broader. Driven by the PRC’s multi-faceted discourse on security, this conception subsumes not only hard geopolitical security but also geoeconomic development. The latter is a long-term strategy that might be called “security through development” that affects all SCO member states’ global and regional strategies.”^{HH}

Motivations for all other current permanent SCO members are as follows:

- **India** - India sees the opportunity to partner with SCO members to enhance regional trade ties and establish itself as a dependable trading partner, particularly as East Asia emerges as the forthcoming hub for global economic development.^{HH} India and the PRC, as two of the globe's rapidly expanding economies, offer growth benefits to other SCO members through enhanced economic collaboration.^H
- **Iran** - Iran is seeking to use SCO participation to show the West that it has options in this multipolar world order.^H Recent membership supports Iran’s main objective in seeking global connections despite growing criticism and the United States and European Union’s efforts to isolate it.^{HH} Iran's inclusion will also ease trade activities with India, boost imports from the PRC, and “attract foreign investment through the SCO Interbank Consortium and by establishing free trade zones, which could enhance the viability of non-dollar payment systems”; these prospective trade dealings could provide a valuable boost to Iran's contracting economy and dwindling national currency.^{HH}
- **Kazakhstan** - Kazakhstan assumed SCO presidency in July 2023.^H Its priorities focus on enhancing regional security by combating what President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev describes as the “three evils – extremism, terrorism, and separatism – as well as protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and non-interference in internal affairs.”^H
- **Kyrgyzstan** - Igor Shestakov, an expert political scientist from Kyrgyzstan, stated in an October 2023 interview that “the SCO can be a stabilizing factor in ensuring the

resolution of issues concerning energy resources, water, food, and the economy.”^H Within the SCO's collaborative framework, the PRC and Kyrgyzstan are jointly dedicated to advancing the SCO's healthy and stable growth and rallying other regional entities to support the creation of new international relations and a worldwide community with a shared future.^H

- **Pakistan** – Pakistan aims for the SCO to advance the Shanghai Spirit^H, strengthen the SCO's mission^H, and minimize conflict risks.^M The PRC contributed to diffusing tensions between Iran and Pakistan by adopting a neutral position and swiftly stabilizing the situation through diplomatic efforts in response to Pakistan's cross-border strikes in January 2023.^H
- **Russia** – For Russian policymakers, the SCO's role has heightened as a means to combat diplomatic isolation and a decrease in global influence after the Ukraine invasion.^{HH} Following the Ukraine conflict, each SCO member either withheld support for or directly refrained from voting on United Nations sanctions against Russia.^H
- **Tajikistan** - Priority focus areas include fostering regional collaboration in politics, security, economics, humanitarian efforts, and other sectors of mutual interest.^M Chinese Premier Li Qiang stated on October 2023 that “Tajikistan is willing to work with the PRC to consolidate traditional friendship, promote the Belt and Road cooperation, deepen cooperation in such fields as industry, agriculture, transportation, energy, infrastructure, and digital economy, and push for further in-depth development of bilateral relations.”^H
- **Uzbekistan** – During his chairmanship of the SCO, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev outlined Uzbekistan’s priority areas such as “strengthening collaborative efforts for peace and stability within the SCO region, enhancing trade, economic, and investment ties, broadening transport and communication connections, collaborating on reducing poverty, guaranteeing food security, maximizing the existing potential in healthcare, cultural, and humanitarian fields, and combating climate change.”^H Uzbekistan and the PR are joining forces on three new hydropower initiatives that are expected to be functional by 2030.^H

Despite the high likelihood of the SCO shaping a regional order, the complexities and nuances of its decision-making, and varied membership and interests within the organization will create challenges.^{HH} Dr. Vali Kaleji, a Tehran-based expert on Central Asia and Caucasian Studies, argues that “the rapid and significant horizontal and vertical expansion of the Shanghai Cooperation SCO has had a negative impact on the coherence, coordination, efficiency and especially the executive guarantee of the organization's policies and decisions.”^H The rivalry between the PRC, Russia, and India for leadership and influence in the SCO has somewhat eroded its sense of cohesion and the smaller and mid-sized nations of the SCO, especially the four Central Asian states that gained

independence after the Soviet Union fell, place a high premium on their sovereignty and self-interest, hesitant to cede further authority to the SCO.^{[H](#)}

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized internet sources from the PRC, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Nicholas P. Panepinto

People's Republic Of China Likely To Continue Joint Military Exercises Within Ten Years 2024-2035, Promoting Interoperability With Other Nations

Executive Summary

Multinational actors' collaboration in joint military exercises with China is likely (56-70%) to continue within the next ten years (2035) in the INDOPACOM region with China to promote cooperation and interoperability among partners. China will likely continue to increase partnership and security cooperation with Laos and Cambodia. China has partnered with Russia in a No Limit Partnership despite the United States continuing to sanction Russia. Still, it is likely China and Russia will continue to provide mutual support to each other and will conduct joint military exercises to counter NATO operations in Europe. China's joint military exercises might not continue if treaties with the United States are signed; however, this seems unlikely within the foreseeable future.

Discussion

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has conducted joint and multinational joint military exercises with several neighboring nations in the region to increase partnership and interoperability. ^M China has sought to strengthen relationships with Cambodia, Vietnam,



[*Beijing launched 10-day joint military drills on November 13 with Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam – the most countries to take part in Aman Youyi exercises*](#)

Laos, and Singapore.^M China sees multinational exercises and bilateral operations exerting soft power as part of its strategy.^M Investments in multinational exercises can help China improve its global image and enhance its military capabilities.^M The PLA conducted 11 exercises in 2023 with regional nations.^M China and Thailand conducted the “Golden Dragon” joint military exercise in early 2023.^M In November 2023, the PRC executed “Aman Youyi” with Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Chinese security forces conducted the first-ever joint patrol with Vietnamese forces in the Beibu Gulf in 2023.^M These operations support China's regional security while increasing interoperability.^M China will continue to deepen partnerships with regional nations to secure its interests and counter the United States' efforts in Asia.^M The PRC will court other nations as the

partner of choice rather than the United States.^H Multinational exercises and bilateral operations are diplomatic tools China will continue to wield to support its foreign policy.^M China's investment in these operations will increase as they look to build coalitions for future partnerships.^L

China will likely seek new strategic partners abroad and develop additional opportunities for cooperation through either military exercises or their Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).^M In 2023, the Chinese military conducted the "Falcon Shield" joint air exercise with the United Arab Emirates (UAE).^H This was the first-ever military drill between the two nations.^M China continues increasing its influence in a Gulf nation through military partnership and training.^L

China's ability to increase its partnerships shows it can be an alternative provider of regional security goods to the United States.^M The PRC will continue consolidating influence in emerging nations through the Belt and Road Initiative and assistance.^L Military partnerships and exercises are methods to increase the PLA's interoperability, capabilities, and capacity.^M Nations such as Laos and Cambodia that are comfortable accepting assistance from China could feel obligated to partner with its military.^M

China and Russia entered a military and diplomatic "No Limit" partnership in 2022.^H This agreement was to support each other in response to the war in Ukraine and a potential future conflict with Taiwan.^M The two nations conducted joint air and sea drills in July 2023 throughout the Sea of Japan.^H China and Russia continue to seek cooperation and solidarity against the United States and NATO.^M An alliance between China and Russia of any sort is problematic for the United States.^M China, Russia, and Iran conducted a maritime and aviation joint exercise in March 2024.^M Russia and China made economic and diplomatic endeavors for mutual benefit.^M The two nations do not have a codified defense pact but have conducted military exercises for training purposes.^M This relationship seems to be an inevitable response to the United States' policies in Europe and Asia.^M

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Andi Tallman

People's Republic of China-Russia Bilateral Ties Highly Likely to Deepen Through 2035 With Energy Security and Military Cooperation Are Key Drivers; A Military Alliance Is Highly Unlikely

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of PRC (PRC) is highly likely (71-85%) to deepen bilateral ties with Russia due to Russia being an important part of the PRC's energy strategy. This strategy seeks to avoid overdependence on Middle East energy resources transported via ocean maritime routes that are at risk during a conflict with the United States (U.S.), and instead utilize alternate land and sea routes that are less costly and shorten the delivery lead times. Deeper ties are also due to the interoperability and training benefits the PRC receives from defense cooperation areas such as joint exercises and military-techno collaboration. Despite the fallout from Russia's war in Ukraine, the PRC's drive to deepen ties with Russia at this moment when its value as a partner is so clearly diminished indicates the level of importance Beijing places on Moscow as a partner, however, a formal military alliance is highly unlikely (16-30%) due to PRC defense policy that opposes military blocs and advocates partnerships rather than alliances.

Discussion

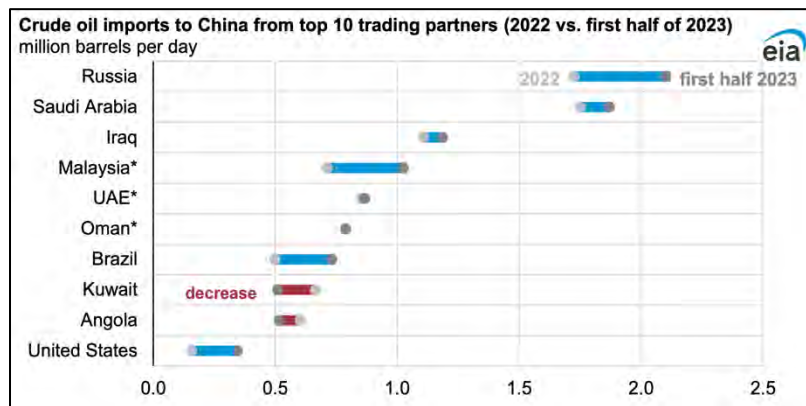
The PRC's bilateral relationship with Russia is the only one that qualifies as a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for a New Era' – the PRC's highest level of foreign partnership.^H In March 2023 President Vladimir and President Xi Jinping signed a joint statement on the Development Plan for Key Directions of PRC-Russia



[*Presidents Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin shake hands after signing a Joint Statement of Key Directions of Sino-Russian Economic Cooperation by 2030*](#)

Economic Cooperation by 2030 that outlines strategies to enhance bilateral relations through expanded trade and investment, improved infrastructure and logistics, increased financial cooperation, strengthened energy partnerships, and advancements in technology, industry, and agriculture to ensure mutual benefit and development.^{HH}

Russia is an important part of the PRC's energy security strategy, which aims to avoid overdependence on energy from the Middle East delivered via the Indian and Pacific Ocean maritime routes, where — in the event of conflict with the United States — the PRC is vulnerable.^H The PRC's crude oil imports from Russia reached a record high of 2.01 million b/d in February 2023 and set the stage for further energy cooperation.^H



[Crude Oil Imports to the People's Republic of China from Top 10 Trading](#)

Russia plans to use the major East Siberia Pacific Ocean pipeline, transit through Kazakhstan and via tanker to the PRC, as well as develop the Northern Sea Route, which runs through Russian territorial waters in the Arctic and has shorter delivery times, lower costs, and less geopolitical risk than traditional routes.^H Another component of the PRC's energy imports from Russia is natural gas. Russian natural gas exports to the PRC via the Power of Siberia 1 pipeline exceeded 22 billion cubic meters (bcm) in 2023 and are due to reach the planned peak of 38 bcm by 2027.^{HH}

The PRC and Russia have also built a remarkably close defense cooperation relationship that spans joint exercises and military-technical cooperation.^H Joint exercises have allowed both sides to increase trust and cooperation at the operational level which include efforts to integrate the use of each other's military equipment and facilities, as well as the establishment of temporary joint command centers to conduct specific exercises and operations that have include naval and air patrols in the Sea of Japan and South China Sea.^{HH} The symbolic benefits of military cooperation are particularly important for Russia as it seeks to counter the perception that it is isolated internationally as a result of its invasion of Ukraine.^H

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has long used military exercises to learn from its Russian counterparts and to improve operationally as it has not engaged in large combat operations since its 1979 incursion against Vietnam.^H Despite, Russia's performance over the last year in its war with Ukraine, the drills give the PLA opportunities to learn from the more experienced Russian forces, who have conducted relatively recent military

campaigns in the North Caucasus, Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria to deploy and maneuver large air, ground, and special forces units in expeditionary operations.^{HH}

Regarding military-technical cooperation, John F. Plumb, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, stated in March 2023 that “the PRC and Russia have placed nuclear weapons and space warfare at the center of their strategies to counter the United States and its allies and partners.”^H House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX) stated in March 2023 that “Russia’s state-owned nuclear energy corporation, Rosatom, is helping PRC acquire enough weapons-grade plutonium to fuel its strategic nuclear breakout.”^H Russian President Vladimir Putin, in November 2023, encouraged Gen. Zhang Youxia, second-in-command of the PRC’s military, to “strengthen their nations’ military cooperation by collaborating on cutting-edge defense technologies that include high-orbiting space assets, and new prospective types of weapons.”^M

The PRC and Russia have also agreed to consult and coordinate with each other on the military use of artificial intelligence, a technology that is becoming a new front in Beijing’s rivalry with Washington.^M

Elizabeth Wishnick, an expert in Chinese foreign policy, stated “the partnership with Russia is a big priority for the PRC despite the fallout for certain foreign policy goals from the war in Ukraine, and that’s because there’s a certain amount of interdependence between PRC and Russia, shared goals, despite differences in many areas....the limits to the partnership have always been apparent, but sometimes I think we underestimate its staying power.”^H The PRC’s drive to deepen ties with Russia at this moment when its value as a partner is so clearly diminished also indicates the level of importance Beijing places on Moscow as a partner.^H However, a formal military alliance is highly unlikely due to PRC defense policy that opposes military blocs and advocates partnerships rather than alliances;^H and Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu in January 2024 stated, “Unlike some Western countries, our two countries do not form a military bloc.”^{HH}

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized internet sources from the PRC whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Nicholas P. Panepinto

People's Republic Of China Highly Likely To Intensify Military Diplomacy With Economically Dependent Countries Within Next Ten Years To Increase Global Influence And Support Narratives

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is highly likely (71-85%) to significantly increase military diplomacy with targeted countries over the next ten years. China is likely (56-70%) to focus on the Global South, where it has been most successful. Despite challenges such as domestic economic slowdowns and tensions with the United States, the PRC will continue to target countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East that are economically dependent on China or receptive to its foreign policy narratives. While China may face challenges with countries closely aligned with the U.S. or are wary of its intentions, the PRC's military diplomacy supports its foreign policy objectives to counterbalance U.S. influence, promote its narrative, secure its economic and strategic interests, and solidify China's global position.

Discussion

PRC President and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Xi Jinping, stressed the importance of military diplomacy in a January 2015 speech at an All-Military Diplomatic Work Conference.^H He stated it should support the overall national foreign policy and align with the 'correct political direction'.^H Greater military diplomacy is a key part of Xi Jinping's new vision for "great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics."^H Despite a brief drop due to COVID-19, it is highly likely that China will increase military diplomacy through high-level dialogues, joint exercises, base access agreements, arms sales, and training programs over the next five years.^H

In 2017, China opened its first overseas military base in Djibouti. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) built the base to support its counter-piracy mission near Somalia, which was a significant milestone in Xi Jinping's vision of developing a world-class military by 2050.^H Since 2015, the PLAN Marine Corps (PLANMC) remained in



[*Satellite imagery of the Chinese naval base in Djibouti – Capable of supporting aircraft carriers, assault carriers or other large warships*](#)

Djibouti and has conducted training with Thai, Pakistani, Saudi, South African, and Djiboutian forces.^{[H](#)}

In 2018, The Xiangshan Forum, initially a platform for Asia-Pacific security dialogue co-hosted by the China

Association of Military Science (CAMS) and the China Institute of International Strategic Studies (CIISS), transformed into the Beijing Xiangshan.^{[H](#)} A

Chinese alternative to the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore,^{[M](#)} it is now a high-level security and defense forum with more international influence. More than 90

countries and international organizations, including 22

senior defense minister-level officials and 14 military chief-of-staff level representatives,^{[H](#)} as well as Cynthia Carras, U.S. DoD principal director for China, Taiwan, and Mongolia, attended the Beijing Xiangshan Forum in October 2023.^{[H](#)}



[Defense ministers from 19 countries and Chiefs of Defense forces from 14 countries attended the 10th Beijing Xiangshan at Beijing International](#)

Since 2018, the PLA continually emphasizes the roles of defense attachés,^{[H](#)} and offers professional military education (PME) opportunities by China to foreign military officers.^{[H](#)} Nearly half of China's 70 military academies accept foreign students. The PLA National Defense University's College of Defense Studies offers the highest level of foreign PME training and has partnerships with over 100 countries, including Eurasia nations, Latin America and Africa.^{[H](#)} Admiral Faller, former Commander of U.S. Southern Command, stated during a congressional hearing in January 2020 that the number of Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) students attending a Chinese war college is more than five times the number of LAC students attending a U.S. war college.^{[H](#)}

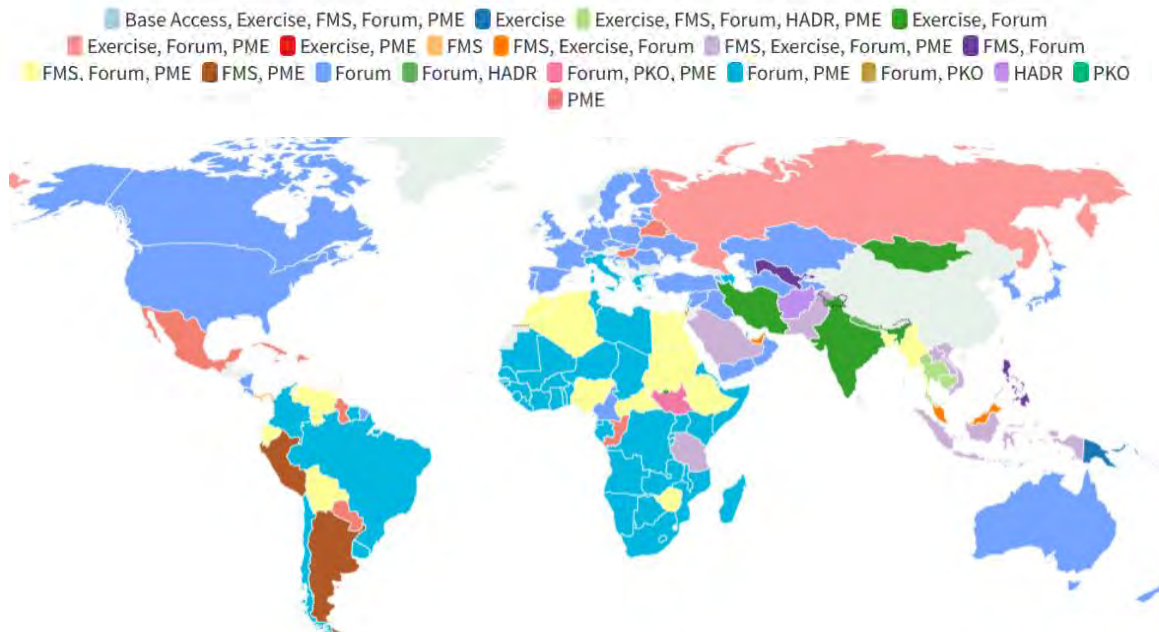
Although the PLA still engages countries in Europe and North America, it is highly likely to prioritize its military diplomacy in Asia, with a growing emphasis in the Global South.^{[H](#)} In 2023, China participated in 14 joint military cooperation engagements in Southeast Asia alone.^{[H](#)} China will likely use military diplomacy in these areas to achieve specific political goals, such as building relationships with nations in Central and South America or the Middle East to increase its arms sales, show political support to a certain regime, or strengthen its relationships with developing countries in Africa.^{[H](#)}

The PRC will also likely leverage China's economic power, including Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects, as incentives for military cooperation.^H

PLA Target Countries for Military Diplomacy, Joint Exercises and Exchanges:

2023 Key PLA Military Diplomacy Activities

Base Access, Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief (HADR), Joint Exercises (Exercise), PLA-Hosted Forums (Forum), Professional Military Education (PME), Peacekeeping Operations (PKO)



[Joint Exercises](#), [Professional Military Education \(PME\)](#), [Foreign Military Sales \(FMS\)](#), [Peacekeeping Operations \(PKO\)](#)

- **Southeast Asia:** The PRC is highly likely to focus on Southeast Asian nations like Philippines,^H Vietnam,^H Thailand,^{HHH} Indonesia,^{HH} Singapore,^H Cambodia,^{HHH} Laos,^H and Malaysia^H due to their strategic and economic significance.
- **South Asia:**
- Pakistan^{HHH} and Sri Lanka^H are likely targets for military exchanges given their historical ties with China and shared interests in regional security.
- **Central Asia:** China will continue to work with Russia^H and deepen its military cooperation with Belarus, Kyrgyzstan,^H and Tajikistan,^H where it has a strong economic and security footprint.
- **Africa:** The PRC is highly likely to target African nations for strategic advantages and natural resources like South Africa,^H Tanzania,^H Angola,^{HH} Algeria,^H Djibouti^H Gabon,^H Cameroon,^H Nigerian,^{HH} and Kenya.^H Eritrea,^{HH} Togo^{HH} and Zimbabwe^{HH} support China's views on Taiwan and human rights.^{HH}

- **Middle East:** Countries like Iran^H and Saudi Arabia^H serve China's interests of securing resources and countering U.S. influence. China held first ever military exercise with United Arab Emirates^H in August 2023.^{HH}
- **Latin America:** China's military diplomacy in Latin America is part of its broader engagement strategy. The Global Security Initiative specifically lists security sector activities as one pillar of its engagement with Latin America.^H Venezuela,^{HH} is the top Chinese arms purchaser in Latin America, and China continues to target Argentina,^H Ecuador,^H Bolivia,^H and Peru.^H

Even with its military diplomatic efforts, the PRC is unwilling to replace U.S. security guarantees.^H Therefore it will likely face challenges trying to undermine U.S. alliances and partnerships, and in countries where they have territorial disputes with like India, Japan, and Vietnam.

Additionally, China will likely face challenges with European allies who are aligned with the U.S. or are suspicious of its intentions.^{HH} Despite these challenges, China's military diplomacy has managed to achieve some success in the Global South by balancing its military diplomacy with its economic initiatives.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized internet sources from China, Taiwan, Singapore, and Sudan, whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. Finally, the analyst used AI as a predictive tool for PRC use of military diplomacy. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Michael Flury

People's Republic of China Highly Unlikely To Establish Security Alliances In The Next Ten Years; Partnerships Are Highly Likely The Alternative

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is highly unlikely (16-30%) to establish security alliances in the next ten years due to its enduring view that alliances undermine the international order and impose the risk of PRC entrapment. Instead, the PRC will highly likely (71-85%) continue its reliance on forming partnerships of varying degrees that focus on common interests, offer flexibility and autonomy, and limit PRC risk exposure. Despite the appearance of an alliance-like partnership with Russia, the PRC remains non-committed to any formal alliance.

Discussion

The People's Republic of China (PRC) currently possesses the capability and influence necessary to create an alternative to the Western liberal world order model.^{[H](#)} However, even as it vies for influence against the United States (U.S.), the PRC has avoided pursuing military alliances and political patronage overseas; it has opted instead to navigate the influence generated by its global economic strength through adaptable strategic partnerships.^{[H](#)} The PRC has a military alliance with only one country - the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea - which dates back to the Korean War. Despite this alliance, "in the near to medium term, the PRC will likely continue to forgo any formal bilateral or multilateral military alliances and instead seek to develop partnerships that allow it access to its expanding interests."^{[H](#)}

The PRC has consistently dismissed the idea that alliances contribute positively to the global order; rather, they view them as detrimental; additionally, the PRC refutes the idea that the transatlantic alliance, or any other alliance, can validate military interventions using force, a strategy that NATO has attempted in the past.^{[H](#)} Speaking at a September 2023 press conference in Beijing, PRC Foreign Minister Wang Yi Wang said the PRC would "oppose the wanton expansion of military alliances and the squeezing of the security space of other countries; instead, it would seek to resolve differences and disputes among countries through dialogue and consultation."^{[H](#)}

A policy paper released by Beijing in September 2023, entitled "A Global Community of Shared Future: China's Proposals and Actions," delineates the PRC's perspective on global governance and pinpoints what it perceives as the root causes of present-day worldwide challenges.^{[H](#)} It states that "some countries' hegemonic, abusive, and aggressive actions against others are causing great harm and putting global security and development at risk."^{[M](#)} Under Xi Jinping's "global community of shared future,

economic development, and stability are prioritized as countries treat each other as equals to work together for common prosperity, and in that future they would also be free of bloc politics, ideological competition, and military alliances, and of being held responsible for upholding universal values defined by a handful of Western countries.”^H

The PRC has opted for creating a worldwide network of strategic partnerships, emphasizing flexible political cooperation founded on informal relationships rather than establishing broad, formal alliances, which typically focus on external adversaries through defense agreements; traditional alliances could place PRC diplomatic efforts at greater risk, whereas partnerships are viewed as more adaptable and oriented towards mutual interests.^H

The PRC lacks stringent and clear criteria for labeling different diplomatic relationships as “partnerships;” instead, this designation is primarily established through discussions, reflecting the preferences of both involved parties and emphasizing adaptability and independence.^H

Xiang Haoyu, a research fellow at the Chinese Institute of International Studies, describes the following typology of The PRC’s diplomatic partnerships –

Not all partnerships are created equal
Hierarchy of China's diplomatic partnerships, in order of closeness

TYPE OF PARTNERSHIP	DESCRIPTION	COUNTRIES
1. Strategic Partnership of Coordination 战略协作伙伴关系		
Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for a New Era (新时代全面战略协作伙伴关系)	China's highest level of foreign partnership; cooperation on all issues, including international affairs, military and technological development.	Russia
2. Strategic Cooperative Partnership 战略合作伙伴关系		
2.1 All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership (全天候战略合作伙伴关系)	Wide-ranging coordination and cooperation - both political and economic - with strategically important countries. Pakistan tops the list, ranked as an "all-weather" partner.	Pakistan
2.2 Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership (全面战略合作伙伴关系)		11 countries, all in Southeast Asia and Africa
2.3 Strategic Cooperative Partnership (战略合作伙伴关系)		Six countries, mostly in South Asia (including India)
3. Strategic Partnership 战略伙伴关系		
3.1 All-round Strategic Partnership (全方位战略伙伴关系)	Strategic partners are countries China considers strategically important for political, economic or geopolitical reasons. They warrant a higher level of engagement from Beijing, though relations are not without friction.	Germany
3.2 Permanent Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (永久全面战略伙伴关系)		Kazakhstan
3.3 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (全面战略伙伴关系)		40 countries, including eight EU member states and the UK
3.4 Friendly Strategic Partnership (友好战略伙伴关系)		Austria
3.5 Strategic Partnership (战略伙伴关系)		16 countries, including Canada and the Czech Republic
3.6 Innovative Strategic Partnership (创新战略伙伴关系)		Switzerland
4. Cooperative Partnership 合作伙伴关系		
4.1 All-round Cooperative Partnership (全方位合作伙伴关系)	Cooperative partnerships focus mainly on economic cooperation. Even if relations are friendly, cooperation is limited to specific issue areas.	Singapore
4.2 Comprehensive Friendly Cooperative Partnership (全面友好合作伙伴关系)		Romania, Maldives
4.3 Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership (全面合作伙伴关系)		Six countries, including South Korea and the Netherlands
4.4 Friendly Cooperative Partnership (友好合作伙伴关系)		Japan
4.5 New-Type Cooperative Partnership (新型合作伙伴关系)		Finland
5. Partnership 伙伴关系		
Innovative Comprehensive Partnership (创新全面伙伴关系)	Other partnerships tend to signify that, though relations may not be close, there is a wish to improve them.	Israel

Note: as China's only treaty ally, North Korea is not included in this partnership framework.

Sources: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, MERICS

[People’s Republic of China List of Partnerships](#)

“They range from strategic partnerships (the most common type, held with at least 80 countries) to all-weather or permanent partnerships, describing very close ties with countries such as Pakistan, Venezuela, and Belarus”; Xiang contrasts Beijing’s pursuit of partnerships to the “zero-sum” alliance network of the West, and suggests partnerships are a powerful diplomatic tool for Beijing that can be flexibly adapted to the counterpart country’s conditions and needs.^H

Despite the appearance of an alliance-like partnership with Russia, the PRC remains non-committed to allying. Since assuming office, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin have convened forty-two times, marking significantly more encounters than the Chinese president has had with other global leaders.^H The nations have also joined forces within international organizations to counteract U.S. global influence and have founded their entities, such as the BRICS (together with Brazil, India, and South Africa) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), to gain backing from emerging economies.^H However, this "no limits" relationship between the two countries is not an official alliance, nor do they share a mutual defense obligation; rather, the PRC and Russia engage in a mutually advantageous partnership of convenience founded on a shared alignment of strategic interests and goals.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. U.S. sources were very reliable and tended to corroborate one another. However, the analysis also utilized an internet source from the PRC whose reliability is more difficult to ascertain. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Nicholas P. Panepinto

People's Republic Of China Highly Likely To Significantly Increase Peacekeeping And Pursue Conflict Resolution Leadership Roles Within Next Ten Years

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China's (PRC's) increased actions in conflict resolution and peacekeeping training for other nations make it highly likely (71-85%) that the PRC will take an active leadership role in international conflict resolution and increase its participation in peacekeeping missions over the next ten years. The United States is likely (56-70%) to balk at the PRC's increased participation in peacekeeping operations and leadership in conflict resolution. However, it is highly likely that the volatile and complex nature of the strategic environment and the limited capacity of the United States will allow the PRC to assume these new roles.

Discussion

The PRC is positioning itself as a global leader in conflict prevention and stability. Examples of recent PRC actions include:^{[H](#)}

- Released a 12-point Russia-Ukraine peace proposal in February 2023.^{[HH](#)}
- Established special envoys focused on Syrian civil war and Palestinian-Israeli conflict.^{[H](#)}
- Engaged in conflict mediation in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sudan, and the Great Lakes region of East Africa.^{[H](#)}
- Established overseas military base in Djibouti.^{[H](#)}
- Created \$200 million United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund and Secretary-General's Peace and Security Sub-Fund.^{[H](#)}
- Showcased capabilities in reducing the risks of 'color revolutions' to Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) members.^{[H](#)}
- Reached agreements with the Solomon Islands to allow Chinese security forces to support the nation's social order and law enforcement.^{[H](#)}
- Released a position paper on the political settlement of Russia's war in Ukraine.^{[H](#)}
- Hosted talks between Saudi Arabia and Iran that culminated in a joint statement announcing the resumption of Saudi-Iran diplomatic relations.^{[H](#)}



[China uses regional organizations like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, led by Xi Jinping, Narendra Modi, and Vladimir Putin, to promote its conflict prevention approach](#)

The PRC adopts a neutral stance when leading conflict resolutions, aiming to maintain positive relations with all involved parties.^H This approach reflects a consistent balance strategy and avoidance of extreme positions. Although the PRC does not actively support any particular side, it is well-positioned to take on the increased leadership role as a mediator.^H

The PRC's State Council Information Office recently published a white paper titled "China's Armed Forces: 30 Years of U.N. Peacekeeping Operations".^H According to the report, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is implementing the pledges announced by President Xi Jinping during the U.N. Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping to increase support for and participation in the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs).^H As of 2023, the PRC contributed more troops to PKOs than any permanent U.N. Security Council member, and was the 10th largest contributor to U.N. peacekeeping missions.^H

Despite its ambitions for a greater leadership role, the PRC's top priority seems to be limiting risks to its peacekeepers.^H As the PRC is playing a larger participation role in peacekeeping activities, it is likely due to its changing state identity or desire to be seen as a responsible world power.^H The PRC's approach to peacekeeping is unique and does not directly challenge the existing liberal norms, however, the PRC is trying to move peacekeeping away from the liberal language of human rights.^H China relies on a "developmental peace" model that prioritizes economic reconstruction and views poverty and unemployment as the root causes of unrest.^H Wang Jingwu (王京武), Dean of the China's National University of Defense Technology's School of International Relations, wrote that China's participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) is based on four principles.^H According to Wang, these principles are:

- “Chinese concept” (中国理念, Zhongguo Linian): China promotes the development of the international political and economic order in a more just and reasonable direction and supports the peace and development of all countries in the world.^H
- “Chinese standpoint” (中国立场, zhongguo lichang): China emphasizes that UNPKO should not interfere in the internal affairs of the party concerned. China resists the hegemonic policies and double standards of certain Western countries and supports the rights and interests of developing countries.^H
- “Chinese contribution” (中国贡献, zhongguo gongxian): China provides funding to the U.N. peacekeeping budget, sends troops to mission areas, supports the China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund, and helps the African Union.^H

- “Chinese power” (中国力量, zhongguo liliang): China is the mainstay of U.N. peacekeeping. From the beginning of its involvement with peacekeeping, China has gradually increased the number and variety of its peacekeeping personnel.^H

The Chinese vision of peacekeeping restricts UNPKO's intervention in humanitarian disasters, and views the human rights violations in Hong Kong, Tibet, and Xinjiang as part of China's "internal affairs."^H The United States is concerned that China may attempt to shift the focus of UNPKO away from promoting human rights and democratic processes, and may use UNPKO to support leaders who are sympathetic to their agenda.^H

Despite being the largest financial contributor to UNPKO, the United States has limited capacity for direct troop contribution.^H This allows the PRC to increase participation in peacekeeping operations by increasing financial contributions, troop deployments, and thereby promote its narrative and strategic vision for peacekeeping and global governance.^H

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: COL Michael Flury

China Highly Likely To Use Economic Alliances And Partnerships To Pursue A New World Order Within The Next Ten Years

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China (PRC) will highly likely (71-85%) drive towards a new world order through economic alliances and partnerships representing a strategic effort to realign global power structures. China's strategic vision for global influence is growing through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), positioning it as a key player in reshaping the international order. These initiatives reflect China's ambition to transition the world's geoeconomic center from the North Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific, leveraging its development stage and economic prowess. China aims to guide international community responses to contemporary challenges, promoting a vision that contrasts with Western-led global governance frameworks. The international community continues to grapple with balancing development opportunities while safeguarding against overreliance on Chinese investment.

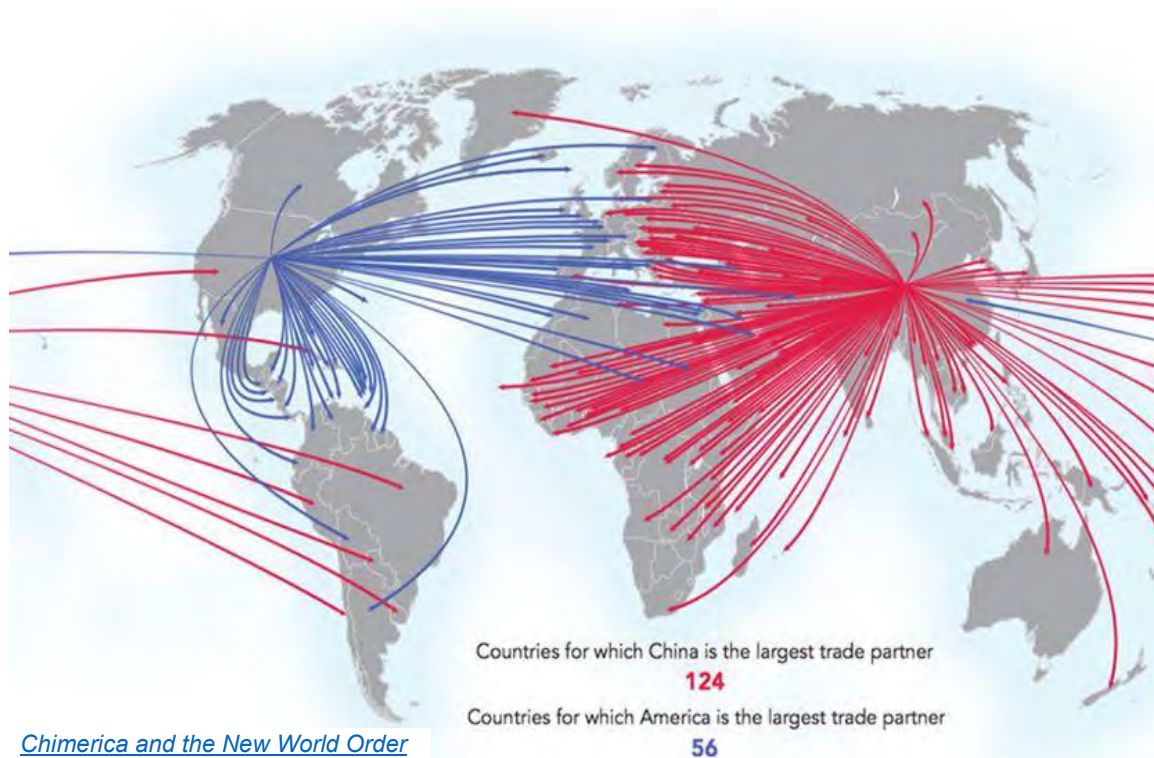
Discussion

The People's Republic of China is actively building a global community of shared future through various economic alliances and partnerships. It has become the main trading partner of more than 140



countries and regions, including U.S. allies like Greece, Italy, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, as well as countries that align with China geopolitically like Cambodia and Laos.^M China is using economic tools and partnerships, rather than military force, as the primary means to expand its influence globally.^M This includes initiatives like the Belt and Road program, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and deepening economic ties with countries in the "global South".^{HM} China's economic engagement is often framed in terms of shared development and prosperity rather than imposing ideological conditions.^M

China has deepened cooperation with international organizations and developing countries by expanding its participation in high-standard economic agreements like the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.^M The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership spans 15 countries, including Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam, covering over 2.2 billion people, or nearly 30% of the world's population, with a combined GDP of roughly \$26 trillion, accounting for nearly 28% of global trade.^H These efforts are part of China's strategy to reshape the global economic and geopolitical landscape. By forging closer economic ties with countries around the world, China aims to reduce Western influence, promote its development model, and position itself as a leader in shaping the rules of the international system.^M



BRI members account for 40% of global GDP and 63% of the world's population, and

these initiatives have expanded to include countries in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and beyond.^H The PRC BRI has been extending its reach into Latin America, signaling a significant shift in the region's economic and geopolitical landscape.^{HH} With an array of projects spanning from infrastructure development to digital investments, the PRC aims to deepen its ties with Latin American countries by fostering enhanced regional connectivity and trade.^{HH} The PRC BRI in Africa signifies an expansion into infrastructure development, aimed at enhancing economic interconnectivity and growth across the continent.^H Spanning various sectors, including rail transport, mining, and

energy, BRI projects like the Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway and the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway highlight China's commitment to boosting Africa's infrastructure.^{HH}



Shanghai Cooperation Organization Membership

The PRC can leverage The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and its economic heft to deepen trade, investment, and financial ties within the SCO, likely creating an alternative economic bloc to the U.S.-led order.^M The goals of the SCO are to: “1) strengthen mutual trust, friendship and good-neighborliness between the Member States; 2) to encourage effective cooperation between the Member States in such spheres as politics, trade, economy, science and technology, culture, education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection; 3) to jointly ensure and maintain peace, security and stability in the region; and 4) to promote a new democratic, fair and rational international political and economic international order.”^{HHHH}

Although the PRC is almost certain to continue using economic tactics to put pressure on countries in the Global South, it is also highly likely (71-85%) that the PRC will use economic warfare in an attempt to disrupt the economies of U.S. allies, particularly Taiwan, to isolate them globally and advance the PRC's policy positions.^{HH} Many countries, especially in the developing world, are willing to partner with China to diversify their relationships and avoid having to choose sides between the U.S. and China.^M The U.S. is seen as not doing enough to offer an alternative to China's economic engagement in the developing world, which could allow China to gain more influence in

regions traditionally aligned with the U.S.^M China's efforts to promote a "multipolar" world order split between itself and the U.S. could succeed in the long run if its economic partnerships continue to grow, potentially leading to a more decentralized global system less dominated by the U.S.^M The combination of concerns over China's unfair economic practices, the strengthening of U.S. alliances and partnerships, and the growing awareness of the risks associated with China's economic initiatives are key factors that are working against China's efforts to disrupt the economies of U.S. allies and gain more global influence.^M China has responded by defending its economic model and practices, emphasizing the importance of U.S.-China economic ties, and criticizing U.S. efforts to counter its global economic influence.^M

Analytic Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. The analyst used AI as a predictive tool. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and did not use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Troy Johnson

People's Republic Of China Highly Likely To Use BRICS To Counter G7 World Influences For A China-Led Alternative World Order By Reshaping Global Governance Structures, Challenging Western Dominance, And Promoting A Multipolar International System

Executive Summary

The People's Republic of China will highly likely (71-85%) influence the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) countries by enhancing economic ties and infrastructure development to counter the G7 world influence and advance a China-led alternative world order by reshaping global governance structures, challenging western dominance, and promoting a multipolar international system. The People's Republic of China has strengthened economic ties and promoted infrastructure development among the BRICS countries through initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The PRC's influence aimed at advancing a China-led alternative world order by reshaping global governance structures, challenging Western dominance, and promoting a multipolar international system. China's efforts through initiatives like the BRI have played a significant role in shaping economic ties within the BRICS countries and promoting a shift towards a multipolar international system. The potential benefits include greater diplomatic influence and economic opportunities, while challenges involve maintaining unity, addressing concerns about China's dominance, and managing risks associated with BRICS expansion.

Discussion

The BRICS countries, with the addition of the six new members (Saudi Arabia, Iran, Ethiopia, Egypt, Argentina, UAE), have a massive combined population of over 3.7 billion people (46% of the world population), cover a third of the world's land surface, and account for nearly \$30.8 trillion, 29% of global GDP when the new members.^H Joining BRICS will provide countries with greater diplomatic coordination, influence in global financial institutions, and an alternative to Western-dominated structures.^H Membership in



BRICS will also offer economic opportunities through increased trade, investment, and financial cooperation among the member states.^H

For countries like Russia and China, expanding BRICS membership is seen as a way to challenge Western hegemony and promote a more multipolar ^H international system.^H

Unlike the World Bank Group, the group lacks deeper institutionalization beyond establishing the New Development Bank (NDB) and faces challenges due to its members' divergent interests and development trajectories.^M The group continues to grapple with its member countries' diverse priorities and development paths, which hinders its ability to function as a more cohesive and effective economic and political bloc. China's dominance in BRICS trade is evident, with significant trade volumes between China and Russia and a focus on energy and agricultural products.^M China's economic indicators 2023 point to

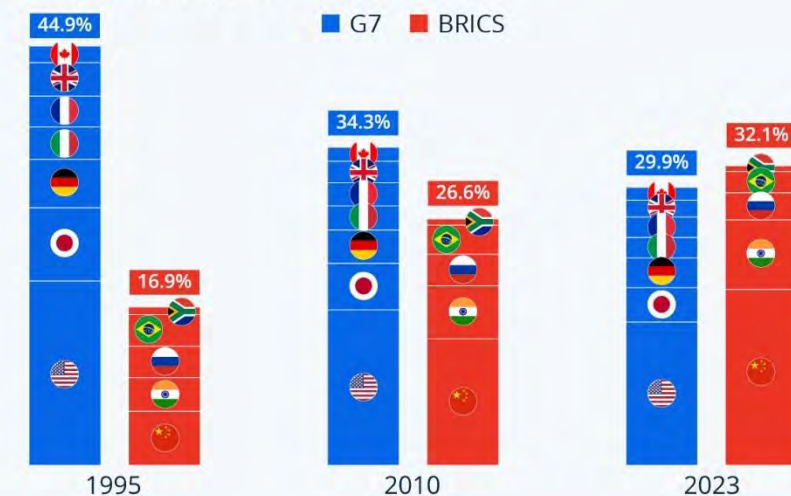
measures aimed at stimulating economic growth, attracting foreign investment, and expanding domestic demand.^M China's influence extends beyond economic realms to potentially reshaping global governance structures through initiatives like the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).^M

The expansion of BRICS will lead to increased economic

cooperation and competition with established groups like the G7.^H China is a key player there are implications for how a China-led alternative world order might shape global economic and political landscapes.^M The countries that have expressed interest in joining BRICS include Cuba, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, Gabon, and Kazakhstan.^H

The Rise of the BRICS

G7 and BRICS countries' share of global GDP at purchasing power parity



2023 data based on IMF estimates as of April 2023

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook



statista

[The Rise of the BRICS](#)

The combined GDP of the BRICS countries (including the new members) is now more significant than that of the G7, representing a shift in the global economic balance of power.^M This will diminish the G7's traditional dominance and influence in shaping global economic policies and norms as the BRICS bloc gains more financial clout and representation.^H The BRICS expansion poses a potential challenge to the Western economic and geopolitical dominance traditionally represented by the G7.^H The BRICS expansion aims to reduce reliance on the U.S. dollar and Western-dominated financial institutions to undermine the G7's role in maintaining the current international monetary system.^H The expansion of BRICS+ diminishes the traditional dominance and influence of the G7 in shaping global economic policies as the new grouping gains more economic clout and representation.^H

The potential benefits include more significant diplomatic influence and economic opportunities, while challenges involve maintaining unity, addressing concerns about China's dominance, and managing risks associated with BRICS expansion.^H By diversifying perspectives, enhancing economic cooperation, and increasing geopolitical influence, the expanded BRICS group seeks to establish a global economic system where nations can freely trade using their own currencies, reducing reliance on foreign organizations and currencies.^H This expansion strengthens the collective influence of BRICS on global affairs, providing a platform for negotiations and decision-making regarding international economic issues.^H The increased geopolitical significance of BRICS Plus enables the group to wield greater leverage in shaping global economic policies and challenging Western dominance.^H

A China-led alternative world order challenges the long-standing dominance of the Western-led global governance structures, offering a new paradigm for international relations.^M The rise of BRICS as a counterweight to traditional Western powers could lead to shifts in global economic and political dynamics impacting existing institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.^M The expansion of BRICS and the push for a multipolar world order by China and Russia signal a desire to challenge Western hegemony and promote greater cooperation among emerging powers.^M

Analytical Confidence

The analytic confidence for this estimate is *moderate*. Sources were generally reliable and tended to corroborate one another. There was adequate time, but the analyst worked alone and needed to use a structured method. Furthermore, given the lengthy time frame of the estimate, this report is sensitive to change due to new information.

Author: LTC Troy Johnson

Annex A

Terms of Reference
Chinese-led International Order Estimate 2035

For:

Gen Charles A. Flynn
CDR, U.S. Army Pacific

By:

Pacific Warrior Scholars (PAWS)
USAWC

November 17, 2023

Terms of Reference:

Chinese-led International Order Estimate 2035

Requirement:

How will China likely attempt to develop and shape a China-led alternative to the US-led rules/norms-based international order through 2035?

- Is there an ideological “unifying principle” for a Chinese-led order leading to a “new Cold War”?
- What will the political, economic, and military structures look like that underpin an alternative order?
 - What existing organizations does China currently belong to, what do they do, and could any of them perform similar functions as NATO or other international orders?
 - What countries would China work with to build an alternative order?

Methodology:

In general, the team expects to gather information through various means, including open-source outlets, interviews with academia, interest area experts, political scientists, military strategists, and international analysts.

The team expects to execute this project in the following four steps (Note: This is a notional timeline only that serves as an initial guide. The team will accelerate effort if/when possible and attempt to mitigate any unforeseen constraints that might limit progress):

- Step 1: Data collection from open-source outlets and subject matter expert interviews: (November 2023 – January 2024)
 - Gain approval of the Terms of Reference (ToR) from GEN Flynn
 - Identify and evaluate China’s current political, economic, and military structures.
 - Identify and evaluate the current relationships between China and Russia, Democratic People’s Republic of North Korea, and Iran.
 - Assess trends in which structures are most valuable to China.
 - Assess cooperation trends and the value China places on them.
- Step 2: Synthesize (February – March 2024)
 - Evaluate the research findings to understand which structures and country relationships would help shape a China-led world order.
 - Describe what a China-led world order would look like given these structures and relationships.

- Step 3: Compile concepts and prepare report (March 2024)
 - Compile a professional report that includes the team's findings regarding the instrument of power structures and nation cooperation/support that will help China shape a China-led alternative to the U.S.-led rules/norms-based international order.
 - Create out-brief presentation to communicate findings.

Step 4: Out-brief GEN Flynn and his team (April 2024)

Challenges:

- The team's personnel are executing this study to complete a US Army War College requirement in addition to a full course load for a graduate degree.
- This estimate must be completed by late April 2024.
- The amount of information on this topic is currently unknown as we explore the future environment.
- Due to time and equipment constraints, the team can access only open-source information, and the final product will be unclassified.
- Limited funding is available to support travel and other related expenses.
- Some research may require translation as no team member is fluent in Chinese.

Resources:

- The team will use the US Army War College databases and resources along with other commercial and educational resources available.
- The team will identify and connect with government, international, organizational, and private subject matter experts.
- The team will use open-source media and published information from academic and professional institutes.
- The team includes Army officers with diverse backgrounds in logistics, financial management, medical human resources and military law enforcement.
- The team will leverage personal and professional relationships with domestic and international colleagues spanning military, government, academic, organizational, and institutional entities.

Administration:

- The final written product will be provided in PDF format for the sole use of GEN Charles A. Flynn, Commanding General of United States Army Pacific, and those he so designates.
- The out-brief will be ready for presentation upon completion of peer review, with the final out-brief in April 2024. The optimal time for the out-brief is between 22 and 26 April 2024.
- The research team includes (all phone numbers are personal cell):
 - Team Point of Contact:
 - COL Mike Flury, michael.k.flury.mil@armywarcollege.edu, (202) 607-3912
 - Alternate Team Point of Contact:
 - LTC Nick Panepinto, nicholas.p.panepinto.mil@armywarcollege.edu, (202) 336-3704
 - Team Members
 - COL Andi Tallman, susan.m.tallman.mil@armywarcollege.edu, (304) 617-2931
 - LTC Patrick Ryan, patrick.l.ryan.mil@armywarcollege.edu, (563) 570-0910
 - LTC Troy Johnson, troy.s.johnson3.mil@armywarcollege.edu, (804) 385-8492
 - Official Mailing Address
 - Center For Strategic Leadership
c/o COL Mike Flury
US Army War College
Carlisle, PA 17013

Annex B

Peterson's Analytic Confidence Worksheet

<i>PETERSON TABLE OF ANALYTIC CONFIDENCE ASSESSMENT</i>	Points Possible	Example Points
Use of Structured Method(s) In Analysis	(1-10)	7
<i>For example: ACH, IPB, Social Networking, Bayes, Simulation, etc...</i>		
<i>10 indicating highest possible score when considering factors below</i>		
<i>Consider:</i>		
Number of methods used		
Applicability of methods to the analysis		
Level of robustness of method		
Degree to which methods' results coincide		
Overall Source Reliability	(1-10)	7
A rating of 10 indicates the highest reliability		
Source Corroboration/Agreement: <i>Level of conflict amongst sources</i>	(1-5)	4
5: No conflict amongst sources		
4: Very little conflict amongst sources		
3: Moderate conflict amongst sources		
2: Significant conflict amongst sources		
1: Sources conflict on nearly all points		
Level Of Expertise On Subject/Topic & Experience	(1-5)	2
5: Deep, intimate knowledge and understanding & 3+ years experience with topic		
4: Wide knowledge & 1-3 years experience with topic		
3: Moderate knowledge & 6-12 months experience with topic		
2: Minimal knowledge & 0-5 months experience with the topic		
1: No knowledge & no experience with the topic		
Amount of Collaboration:	(1-5)	2
5: Part of aggregated individual analyses		
4: Worked on a team		
3: Worked with a partner		
2: Casual discussion		
1: Completely individual work		
Task Complexity	(1-5)	3
5: Minimally complex & challenging		
4: Somewhat complex & challenging		
3: Moderately complex & challenging		
2: Quite complex & challenging		
1: Very complex & highly challenging		
Time Pressure: <i>Time given to make analysis</i>	(1-5)	4
5: No deadline		
4: Easy to meet deadline		
3: Moderate deadline		
2: Demanding deadline		
1: Grossly inadequate deadline		
	Score:	29
	Total Possible:	45
	Score:	0.644444444
		x 10
	Analytic Confidence	
	Adjusted Score:	6.4

Annex C

Friedman Corollaries

Two questions a researcher should ask oneself in order to reassess bias and improve validity to an estimate.

1. Is my estimate within the range of reasonable opinion surround the question?
2. How likely is it that new information will change my estimate?

Source: [Jeffrey A. Friedman](#)

Annex D

Standard Primary Source Credibility Scale

Source reliability is noted at the end of each citation as low L, moderate M, or high H. The citation is hyperlinked to the source, unless the source is a paid subscription; in that instance a footnote is provided at the end of each writing illustrating the source for credibility. Source reliability is determined using the Trust Scale and Website Evaluation Worksheet found in Annex F.

Standard Primary Source Credibility Scale (<i>"The Paul Scale"</i>)			
<u>Importance</u>	<u>Factor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Satisfies Criteria (Yes /No)</u>
HIGH	Has a good track record	Source has consistently provided true and correct information in the past	
	Information can be corroborated with other sources	Information provided by the source corroborates with information from other primary and/or secondary sources	
	Information provided is plausible	High probability of the information being true based on the analyst's experience of the topic/subject being investigated	
	Information is consistent and logically sound	Information provided is consistent when queried from different angles and is logically sound	
	Perceived expertise on the subject	Source is perceived to be an expert on the subject / topic being investigated and/or is in a role where subject knowledge is likely to be high	
	Proximity to the information	Source is close to the information – a direct participant or a witness to the event being investigated	
	Perceived trustworthiness	Source is perceived to be truthful and having integrity	
MEDIUM	No perceived bias or vested interest in the subject / topic being investigated or on the outcome of the research	Source has no perceived bias or vested interest in the subject / topic being investigated or on the outcome of the research	
	Provides complete, specific and detailed information	Information provided is specific, detailed and not generic	
LOW	Is articulate, coherent and has a positive body language	Source is articulate, coherent, has a positive body language and does not display nervousness or body language that can be construed to be evocative of deceptive behavior	
	Recommended by another trusted / credible third party	Source is recommended by others the analyst trusts but the analyst herself does not have any direct experience working with the source	
	Sociable	Source comes across as outgoing and friendly. Easy to get along with and talk to	
	Perceived goodwill to the receiver	Perceived intent or desire to help the receiver or the analyst	

Annex E


Trust Scale and Website Evaluation Spreadsheet

Trust Scale and Web Site Evaluation Worksheet (Updated OCT 2013)												
Piece of Evidence #:												Score:
Criteria	Tips	Value	Y or N	Y or N	Y or N	Y or N	Y or N	Y or N	Y or N	Y or N	Y or N	Trust Scale:
Content can be corroborated?	Check some of the site's facts	2										15-20 High
Recommended by subject matter expert?	Doctor, biologist, country expert	2										11-15 Moderate
Author is reputable?	Google for opinions, ask others	2										6-10 Low
You perceive site as accurate?	Check with other sources; check affiliations	1.5										5-0 Not Credible
Information was reviewed by an editor or peers?	Science journals, newspapers	1.5										
Author is associated with a reputable org?	Google for opinions, ask others.	1.5										
Publisher is reputable?	Google for opinions, ask others.	1.5										
Authors and sources identified?	Trustworthy sources want to be known	1										
You perceive site as current?	Last update?	1										
Several other Web sites link to this one?	Sites only link to other sites they trust	1										
Recommended by a generalist?	Librarian, researcher	1										
Recommended by an independent subject guide?	A travel journal may suggest sites	1										
Domain includes a trademark name?	Trademark owners protect their marks	1										
Site's bias is clear?	Bias is OK if not hidden	1										
Site has professional look?	It should look like someone cares	1										
Total		20										

10 Dec 2001: The criteria and weighted values are based on a survey input from 66 analysts. For details see: <http://dasnorman.googlepages.com/analysis>. Edited for simplicity by Kristian J. Wheaton, OCT 2013.
 3 Feb 2012: Excel Spreadsheet which adds auto-sum was produced by Bill Welch, Deputy Director, Center for Intelligence Research Analysis and Training, Mercyhurst College.
 26 Jan 2013: Trust Scale and Web Site Evaluation Worksheet is in the PUBLIC DOMAIN.

Annex F

Words of Estimative Probability

Kesselman List of Estimative Words		
Certainty 100%		
Almost Certain	86-99%	 Likelihood
Highly Likely	71-85%	
Likely	56-70%	
Chances a Little Better [or Less]	46-55%	
Unlikely	31-45%	
Highly Unlikely	16-30%	
Remote	1-15%	
Impossibility 0%		

Annex G

Expert Interview Notes

COL Tallman interview with COL Ben Ogden, Asst Prof Strategic Space Studies, Army Space, 17 January 2024.

Q1. How could China use space to leverage superiority over the U.S. and its allies?

A 1. China has beaten the U.S. in launches two years in a row. China is a fast follower of the U.S. China launched its first prototype testing a space-based internet. The prototype was just a satellite to gauge faster internet. China has its own GPS network. In space, the launching state is responsible for the rocket launches. It is important to know where the rockets are launched from.

Q2. What is the process to launch rockets?

A2. EX// Elon Musk dominates the space internet market (Starlink); his launches have 60-70 satellites per rocket. China has 10-20 satellites per rocket. China is trying to mirror the U.S. in everything it does in space. The U.S. took 10 years to put a space station in space, while China took 3 years, and they are doing it all on their own. China wants to be the World's Space Power by 2049, and they have hit every mark they said they would. China wants to be the dominant power in space, maintain more communication satellites, and have and/or get information from anywhere in the world.

Q3. How could being dominant in space be advantageous to China?

A3. The Pentagon stated that space is now the “most essential” for the U.S. military. If China launches the same or more satellites than the U.S., they could sell the information to other countries for (favors, trades, partnerships). Could elevate them higher in the diplomacy arena. China could use its dominant position only to allow specific information to its (customers and/or partners).

Q5. What resources would you recommend for further research?

A5. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) challenges in securing space.

Additional sources from email: I've attached the syllabi from last year's space electives. The readings contain several good, reliable resources that can give you a solid foundation for the space domain and initiate thoughts about China's view.

The newest Space Primer was published by Air University. It is essentially a "Space 101" that you can reference. Here's the

link: <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/AUPress/Display/Article/3363308/au-18-space-primer/>

The DIA report on the Challenges to Security in Space that I mentioned as well: https://www.dia.mil/Portals/110/Documents/News/Military_Power_Publications/Challenges_Security_Space_2022.pdf

Summary of Group Interview with Dr. Zenel Garcia, 28 February 2024

The interview with Dr. Zenel Garcia explores the potential for China to create an alternative to the U.S.-led international order, focusing on China's strategies, preferences, and long-term goals within a global context.

Here are the key points:

- **Timeline and Transition:** Dr. Garcia suggests that a decade may be too narrow for China to fundamentally alter the global order. By 2035, the characteristics of any changes should be identifiable, emphasizing that normative shifts and order transitions take significant time.
- **China's Approach:** China benefits from the current international order and seeks not a complete overhaul but to promote a multipolar world, reducing U.S. unilateral dominance. This approach aligns with China's preference for a more fragmented international system over a unipolar one dominated by the U.S.
- **Foreign Policy and Discourse:** China utilizes discourses of non-interference and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence to appeal to other nations, advocating for a multipolar order and critiquing American universalism. This strategy allows China to present an attractive, low-cost alternative to aligning strictly with U.S. preferences.
- **Military Exercises and Alliances:** China's military engagements, like joint exercises with Russia and Iran, serve more as political signaling than practical interoperability. China remains cautious about committing to formal alliances, emphasizing flexible partnerships over binding commitments.
- **Economic Strategies and Influence:** China focuses on economic engagement, leveraging initiatives like the Belt and Road to expand its influence, especially in the Global South. By offering development financing and infrastructure projects, China aims to create dependencies and challenge the existing international financial institutions indirectly.
- **Technology and Standards:** China aims to set international standards in technology, including 5G and smart city technologies, to assert its dominance and shape the future of global governance. This strategy includes gaining market penetration in developing regions where Chinese brands and standards can become dominant.
- **Space and Satellite Communication:** China invests significantly in space technology and satellite communication, aiming to become a leading provider and potentially control global communication infrastructures.

- **Smart Cities and Surveillance Technology:** China's advancements in smart city technologies and surveillance are seen as both a domestic tool for social control and a potentially exportable model that could appeal to various regimes worldwide.
- **Pragmatism in Partnerships:** China's global strategy is pragmatic, focusing on building relationships with countries regardless of their political systems, as long as they do not align closely with U.S. policies. This approach allows China to expand its influence through economic and political engagements without committing to ideological alliances.

Overall, Dr. Garcia views China's strategy as one of cautious engagement, focusing on economic influence, non-interference, and multipolarity to gradually shape a global order more favorable to its interests, while avoiding direct confrontations or commitments that could limit its flexibility

Annex H

Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) – Critical Technology Tracker





<https://www.aspi.org.au/report/critical-technology-tracker>

Top 5 country visual snapshot

Below is a visual snapshot showing the top 5 countries ranked by their (%) proportion of high-impact research output across 44 technologies. We have added a column (far right), which we've called 'Technology monopoly risk'. This metric seeks to highlight concentrations of technological expertise in a single country.

It includes: • number 1 country's share of world's top 10 institutions • number 1 country's lead over closest competitor (ratio of respective share of top 10% publications) • a traffic-light rating:–high = 8+/10 top institutions in no. 1 country and at least 3x times research lead–medium = 5+/10 top institutions in no. 1 country and at least 2x times research lead–low = medium criteria not met


























Advanced materials and manufacturing

Technology	Top 5 countries					Technology monopoly risk
Nanoscale materials and manufacturing	 58.35%	 6.73%	 4.90%	 4.06%	 3.84%	10/10 8.67 high
Coatings	 58.47%	 7.34%	 5.97%	 3.22%	 2.84%	8/10 7.96 high
Smart materials	 42.57%	 8.13%	 6.96%	 6.69%	 3.27%	7/10 5.24 medium
Advanced composite materials	 40.82%	 14.03%	 7.30%	 4.04%	 3.93%	8/10 2.91 medium
Novel metamaterials	 45.56%	 16.90%	 4.01%	 3.89%	 3.01%	7/10 2.70 medium
High-specification machining processes	 36.21%	 13.84%	 11.75%	 3.59%	 2.85%	6/10 2.62 medium
Advanced explosives and energetic materials	 47.10%	 21.31%	 4.88%	 3.96%	 3.23%	5/10 2.21 medium
Critical minerals extraction and processing	 36.68%	 13.39%	 4.47%	 2.79%	 2.68%	4/10 2.74 low

ASPI's Critical Technology Tracker

Advanced magnets and superconductors	 33.36%	 16.37%	 7.54%	 7.09%	 5.01%	4/10 2.04 low
Advanced protection	 35.05%	 18.72%	 5.26%	 4.74%	 3.04%	6/10 1.97 low
Continuous flow chemical synthesis	 24.64%	 13.90%	 5.73%	 5.10%	 3.85%	4/10 1.77 low
Additive manufacturing (incl. 3D printing)	 20.41%	 20.25%	 6.38%	 5.27%	 4.34%	5/10 1.01 low

Artificial intelligence, computing and communications

Technology	Top 5 countries					Technology monopoly risk
Advanced radiofrequency communications (incl. 5G and 6G)	 29.65%	 9.50%	 5.18%	 4.89%	 4.83%	8/10 3.12 high
Advanced optical communications	 37.69%	 12.76%	 5.64%	 3.88%	 3.48%	6/10 2.38 medium
Artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms and hardware accelerators	 36.62%	 13.26%	 4.20%	 4.15%	 3.48%	7/10 2.76 medium
Distributed ledgers	 28.38%	 11.32%	 8.94%	 5.54%	 4.81%	6/10 2.51 medium
Advanced data analytics	 31.23%	 15.45%	 6.02%	 4.19%	 3.92%	8/10 3.02 medium
Machine learning (incl. neural networks and deep learning)	 33.20%	 17.93%	 4.87%	 3.87%	 3.32%	7/10 1.85 low
Protective cybersecurity technologies	 23.33%	 16.80%	 7.67%	 5.71%	 5.20%	5/10 1.33 low
High performance computing	 29.31%	 25.57%	 6.34%	 4.68%	 3.98%	3/10 1.15 low

ASPI's Critical Technology Tracker

Advanced integrated circuit design and fabrication	 24.18%	 21.19%	 7.16%	 4.46%	 3.57%	4/10 1.34 low
Natural language processing (incl. speech and text recognition and analysis)	 25.73%	 23.57%	 5.74%	 4.55%	 3.37%	5/10 1.09 low

Energy and environment

Technology	Top 5 countries					Technology monopoly risk
Hydrogen and ammonia for power	 60.43%	 6.74%	 4.71%	 2.83%	 2.80%	9/10 8.97 high
Supercapacitors	 64.19%	 7.28%	 4.89%	 4.78%	 2.03	10/10 8.81 high
Electric batteries	 65.44%	 11.87%	 3.81%	 2.80%	 2.43%	10/10 5.51 high
Photovoltaics	 39.33%	 9.18%	 5.40%	 4.90%	 3.30%	7/10 4.28 medium
Nuclear waste management and recycling	 35.95%	 16.55%	 6.51%	 4.51%	 4.39%	8/10 3.17 medium
Directed energy technologies	 39.09%	 19.08%	 5.88%	 5.34%	 2.85%	7/10 3.08 medium
Biofuels	 23.15%	 15.48%	 5.48%	 4.42%	 3.65%	5/10 1.50 low
Nuclear energy	 26.83%	 20.45%	 6.11%	 4.39%	 4.26%	4/10 1.31 low

ASPI's Critical Technology Tracker

Quantum

Technology	Top 5 countries					Technology monopoly risk
Quantum computing	 33.90%	 15.03%	 6.11%	 5.52%	 4.13%	6/10 2.26 medium
Post-quantum cryptography	 30.98%	 13.30%	 6.41%	 4.73%	 3.69%	4/10 2.30 low
Quantum communications (incl. quantum key distribution)	 31.47%	 16.66%	 7.58%	 6.45%	 3.81%	5/10 1.89 low
Quantum sensors	 23.70%	 23.27%	 7.76%	 4.29%	 4.20%	2/10 1.02 low

Biotechnology, gene technology and vaccines

Technology	Top 5 countries					Technology monopoly risk
Synthetic biology	 52.42%	 16.75%	 3.32%	 3.07%	 2.91%	9/10 3.13 high
Biological manufacturing	 26.01%	 10.35%	 9.08%	 3.85%	 3.17%	6/10 2.51 medium
Vaccines and medical countermeasures	 28.31%	 12.57%	 6.18%	 6.06%	 5.14%	8/10 2.25 medium

Sensing, timing and navigation

Technology	Top 5 countries					Technology monopoly risk
Photonic sensors	 42.72%	 12.52%	 5.74%	 3.61%	 3.06%	8/10 3.41 high

ASPI's Critical Technology Tracker

Defence, space, robotics and transportation

Technology	Top 5 countries					Technology monopoly risk
Advanced aircraft engines (incl. hypersonics)	 48.49%	 11.69%	 6.96%	 3.93%	 3.60%	7/10 4.15 medium
Drones, swarming and collaborative robots	 36.07%	 10.30%	 6.13%	 5.15%	 4.53%	5/10 3.30 medium
Small satellites	 24.49%	 17.32%	 7.82%	 4.36%	 4.11%	5/10 1.41 low
Autonomous systems operation technology	 26.20%	 21.01%	 5.28%	 5.11%	 3.55%	3/10 1.25 low
Advanced robotics	 27.89%	 24.64%	 5.49%	 4.81%	 3.79%	4/10 1.13 low
Space launch systems	 19.67%	 18.24%	 9.81%	 8.18%	 6.53%	1/10 1.08 low

Annex I

Multi-Criteria Analytic Model

The question: What countries might China collaborate with to develop and shape a China-led alternative to the US-led rules/norms-based international order?

This is a low-confidence estimate due to the number of countries in the world and the complexity of the question.

Maps were created at <https://app.flourish.studio>

Countries were evaluated using the following categories:

Ally – North Korea is China's sole ally through written agreement

BRICS member

SCO member

AIIB Member

ASEAN Member

Huawei 5G Network

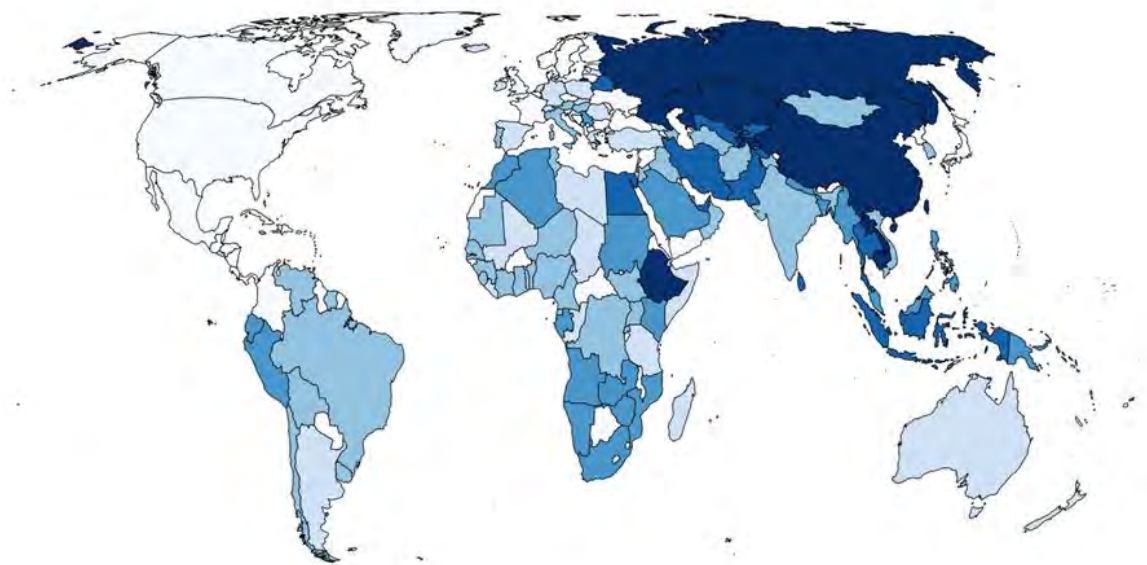
FMS recipient

BRI

Loans from Chinese Banks

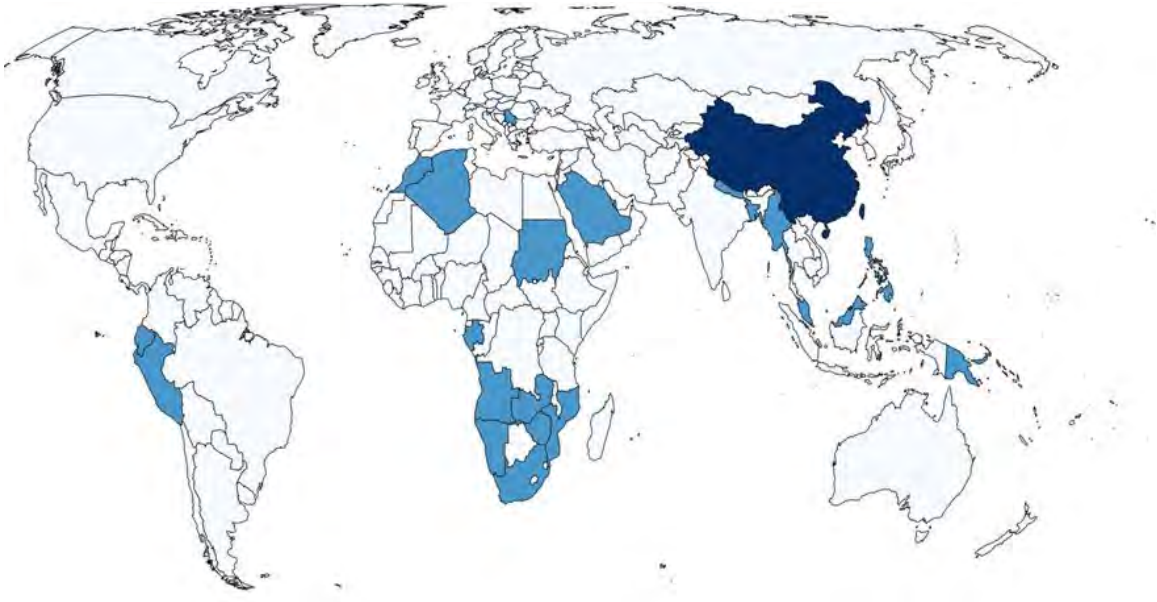
All variables were graded on a binary scale – yes (1) or no (0). The totals were scaled and sorted from highest to lowest with the following countries scoring either five or six with higher numbers indicating greater alignment with China:

Cambodia	Indonesia
Ethiopia	Iran
Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan
Laos	Pakistan
Russia	Sri Lanka
Tajikistan	Thailand
Belarus	United Arab Emirates
Brunei	Uzbekistan
Egypt	



The following countries had a total of four on a scale of zero to six and comprised countries that China will target next to create an alternative world order.

Algeria	Namibia
Angola	Nepal
Bahrain	Papua New Guinea
Bangladesh	Peru
Ecuador	Philippines
Gabon	Qatar
Kenya	Saudi Arabia
Malaysia	Serbia
Maldives	South Africa
Morocco	Sudan
Mozambique	Zambia
Myanmar	Zimbabwe



Country	Ally	BRICS member	SCO member	AIIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	IBRI	loans	Total	Total
Cambodia				1	1	1	1	1	1	6	Favorable
Ethiopia		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	6	Favorable
Kazakhstan			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	Favorable
Laos				1	1	1	1	1	1	6	Favorable
Russia		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	6	Favorable
Tajikistan			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	Favorable
Belarus				1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Brunei				1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Egypt		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Indonesia				1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Iran		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Kyrgyzstan				1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Pakistan			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Sri Lanka				1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Thailand				1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
United Arab Emirates		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable
Uzbekistan			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	Favorable

Country	Ally	BRICS member	SCO member	AIIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	BR	loans	Total	Total
Algeria				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Angola						1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Bahrain				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Bangladesh				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Ecuador				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Gabon						1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Kenya						1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Malaysia				1	1		1	1	1	4	Favorable
Maldives				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Morocco				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Mozambique						1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Myanmar				1	1		1	1	1	4	Favorable
Namibia						1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Nepal				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Papua New Guinea						1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Peru				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Philippines				1	1	1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Qatar				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Saudi Arabia				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Serbia				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
South Africa		1		1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Sudan				1		1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Zambia						1	1	1	1	4	Favorable
Zimbabwe						1	1	1	1	4	Favorable

Country	Ally	BRICS member	SCO member	AIIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	BR	loans	Total	Total
Afghanistan				1			1	1		3	Agnostic
Austria				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
Azerbaijan				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
Benin				1			1	1		3	Agnostic
Bolivia						1	1	1		3	Agnostic
Brazil		1		1		1				3	Agnostic
Cameroon							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Chile				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
Côte d'Ivoire				1		1	1			3	Agnostic
Cyprus				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
Djibouti							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
DR Congo							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Equatorial Guinea							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Ghana				1			1	1		3	Agnostic
Guinea				1			1	1		3	Agnostic
Hungary				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
India		1		1						3	Agnostic
Iraq				1			1	1		3	Agnostic
Italy				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
Jamaica						1		1	1	3	Agnostic
Jordan				1		1	1			3	Agnostic
Malta						1		1		3	Agnostic
Mauritania				1		1		1	1	3	Agnostic

Country	Ally	BRICS member	SCO member	AIIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	BR	loans	Total	Total
Mongolia				1				1	1	3	Agnostic
Montenegro						1		1	1	3	Agnostic
Niger							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Nigeria						1	1	1		3	Agnostic
Oman				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
Portugal				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
Rwanda				1			1	1		3	Agnostic
Samoa				1				1	1	3	Agnostic
Senegal							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Seychelles						1	1	1		3	Agnostic
Sierra Leone							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Singapore				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
South Korea				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
South Sudan							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Suriname						1		1	1	3	Agnostic
Togo				1				1	1	3	Agnostic
Tonga				1				1	1	3	Agnostic
Trinidad & Tobago						1	1	1		3	Agnostic
Tunisia				1		1		1		3	Agnostic
Turkmenistan						1	1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Uganda						1	1	1		3	Agnostic
Uruguay				1		1		1		3	Agnostic

Country	Ally	BRICS member	SCO member	AIIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	BR	loans	Total	Total
Vanuatu				1				1	1	3	Agnostic
Venezuela							1	1	1	3	Agnostic
Vietnam				1	1			1		3	Agnostic
Antigua & Barbuda								1	1	2	Agnostic
Argentina				1		1				2	Agnostic
Australia				1			1			2	Agnostic
Cabo Verde								1	1	2	Agnostic
Chad							1	1		2	Agnostic
Congo								1	1	2	Agnostic
Croatia				1				1		2	Agnostic
Dominica								1	1	2	Agnostic
El Salvador						1		1		2	Agnostic
Fiji				1				1		2	Agnostic
Georgia				1				1		2	Agnostic
Germany				1		1				2	Agnostic
Greece				1				1		2	Agnostic
Iceland				1		1				2	Agnostic
Ireland				1		1				2	Agnostic
Kuwait						1		1		2	Agnostic
Latvia						1		1		2	Agnostic
Lebanon						1		1		2	Agnostic
Lesotho						1		1		2	Agnostic
Liberia				1				1		2	Agnostic

Country	AIly	BRICS member	SCO member	AIIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	BRI	loans	Total	Total
Libya				1				1		2	Agnostic
Luxembourg				1				1		2	Agnostic
Madagascar				1				1		2	Agnostic
Mali							1	1		2	Agnostic
Netherlands				1		1				2	Agnostic
New Zealand				1				1		2	Agnostic
Poland				1				1		2	Agnostic
Romania				1				1		2	Agnostic
Slovakia							1	1		2	Agnostic
Somalia							1	1		2	Agnostic
Spain				1		1				2	Agnostic
Switzerland				1		1				2	Agnostic
Tanzania							1	1		2	Agnostic
Timor-Leste				1				1		2	Agnostic
Turkey						1		1		2	Agnostic
Albania								1		1	Agnostic
Armenia								1		1	Agnostic
Bahamas							1			1	Agnostic
Barbados								1		1	Agnostic
Belgium				1						1	Agnostic
Bosnia & Herzegovina								1		1	Agnostic
Botswana						1				1	Agnostic
Bulgaria								1		1	Agnostic
Burundi								1		1	Agnostic
Canada				1						1	Agnostic
Central African Republic							1			1	Agnostic

Country	Ally	BRICS member	SCO member	AIIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	BRI	loans	Total	Total
Colombia						1				1	Agnostic
Comoros								1		1	Agnostic
Costa Rica								1		1	Agnostic
Cuba								1		1	Agnostic
Czech Republic								1		1	Agnostic
Denmark				1						1	Agnostic
Dominican Republic						1				1	Agnostic
Eritrea									1	1	Agnostic
Estonia								1		1	Agnostic
Finland				1						1	Agnostic
France				1						1	Agnostic
Gambia									1	1	Agnostic
Grenada									1	1	Agnostic
Guyana								1		1	Agnostic
Israel				1						1	Agnostic
Kiribati									1	1	Agnostic
Lithuania									1	1	Agnostic
Malawi							1			1	Agnostic
Mauritius						1				1	Agnostic
Mexico						1				1	Agnostic
Micronesia									1	1	Agnostic
Moldova									1	1	Agnostic
Monaco						1				1	Agnostic
North Korea	1									1	Agnostic
Norway				1						1	Agnostic
Panama								1		1	Agnostic

Country	AIly	BRICS member	SCO member	AIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	BRI	loans	Total	Total
Slovenia								1	1	1	Agnostic
Solomon Islands								1	1	1	Agnostic
Sweden				1						1	Agnostic
Syria							1			1	Agnostic
Ukraine								1	1	1	Agnostic
United Kingdom				1						1	Agnostic
Yemen								1	1	1	Agnostic
Andorra									0	0	Agnostic
Bhutan									0	0	Agnostic
Burkina Faso									0	0	Agnostic
Guinea-Bissau									0	0	Agnostic
Honduras									0	0	Agnostic
Japan									0	0	Agnostic
Liechtenstein									0	0	Agnostic
Nauru									0	0	Agnostic
Nicaragua									0	0	Agnostic
North Macedonia									0	0	Agnostic
San Marino									0	0	Agnostic
Sao Tome & Principe									0	0	Agnostic
State of Palestine									0	0	Agnostic
United States									0	0	Agnostic
Belize									0	0	Agnostic
Eswatini									0	0	Agnostic
Guatemala									0	0	Agnostic
Haiti									0	0	Agnostic
Holy See									0	0	Agnostic

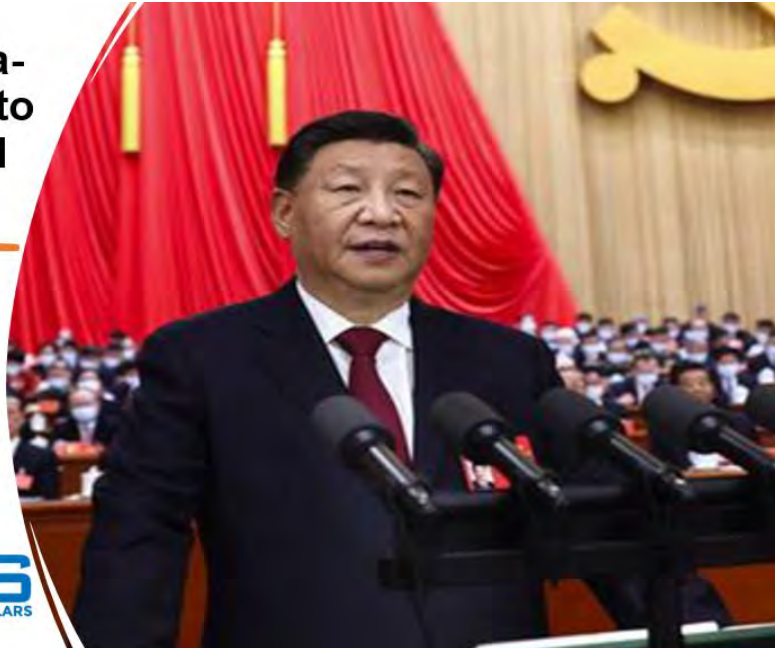
Country	Ally	BRICS member	SCO member	AIIB Member	ASEAN Member	Huawei 5G Net	FMS recipient	BR	loans	Total	Total
Marshall Islands										0	Agnostic
Palau										0	Agnostic
Paraguay										0	Agnostic
Saint Kitts & Nevis										0	Agnostic
Saint Lucia										0	Agnostic
St. Vincent & Grenadines										0	Agnostic
Tuvalu										0	Agnostic

Annex J
Slide Deck Presentation

**Shaping a China-
Led Alternative to
the International
Order**



PAWS
PACIFIC WARRIORS AND SCHOLARS



Team PAWS

Pacific Warriors and Scholars



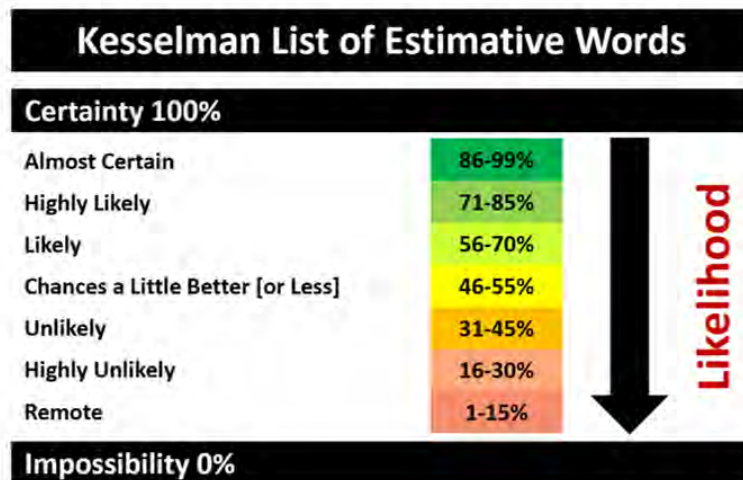
COL Andi Tallman

COL Michael Flury

LTC Troy Johnson

LTC Nicholas Panepinto

LTC Patrick Ryan



Overall Analytic Confidence of

Moderate



Chinese-led International Order Estimate 2035

Question:

How will China likely attempt to develop and shape a China-led alternative to the US-led rules/norms-based international order through 2035?

- Is there an ideological “unifying principle” for a Chinese-led order leading to a “new Cold War”?
- What will the political, economic, and military structures look like that underpin an alternative order?
 - What existing organizations does China currently belong to, what do they do, and could any of them perform similar functions as NATO or other international orders?
 - What countries would China work with to build an alternative order?

Key Finding 1:

How will China likely attempt to develop and shape a China-led alternative to the US-led rules/norms-based international order through 2035?



Economic Warfare



Dr. Victor Cha Testifying Before Congress in May 2023

Economic Coercion



"Interact with Taiwan"

"Support Hong Kong Democracy"

"Oppose Xinjiang genocide"

"Offend China's core interests"



"Discriminatory non-WTO sanctions"

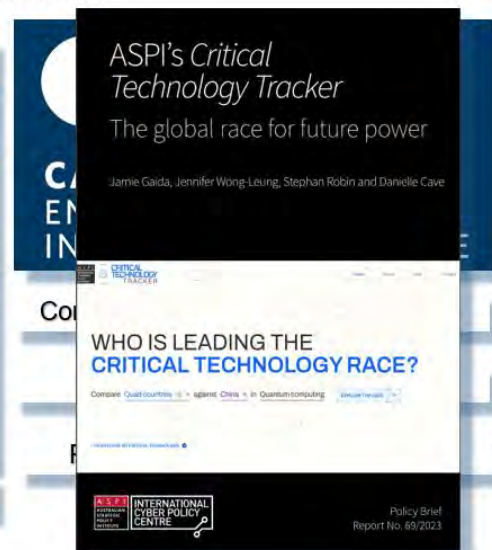
Tech Standards Research and Creation

Defence, space, robotics and transportation

Technology	Top 5 countries				
Advanced aircraft engines (incl. hypersonics)					
	48.49%	11.69%	6.96%	3.93%	3.60%
Drones, swarming and collaborative robots					
	36.07%	10.30%	6.13%	5.15%	4.53%
Small satellites					
	24.49%	17.32%	7.62%	4.36%	4.11%
Autonomous systems operation technology					
	26.20%	21.01%	5.28%	5.11%	3.55%

% Proportion - High Impact Research Publications

37 of 44 Critical Technologies



LOWY INSTITUTE

"It is not that China flagrantly violates international law—it is that it does so while simultaneously creating a veneer of legal legitimacy for its position "

Political and Legal Warfare

Weaponizing
Legal Systems + Institutions

Achieve Political or Military
Objectives

Cyber Warfare

Single most capable cyber threat

Targeting U.S. infrastructure

"The CCP's dangerous actions—China's multi-pronged assault on our national and economic security—make it the defining threat of our generation."



Information and Cultural Influence

Expand Information and Cultural Influence Operations



Research Report

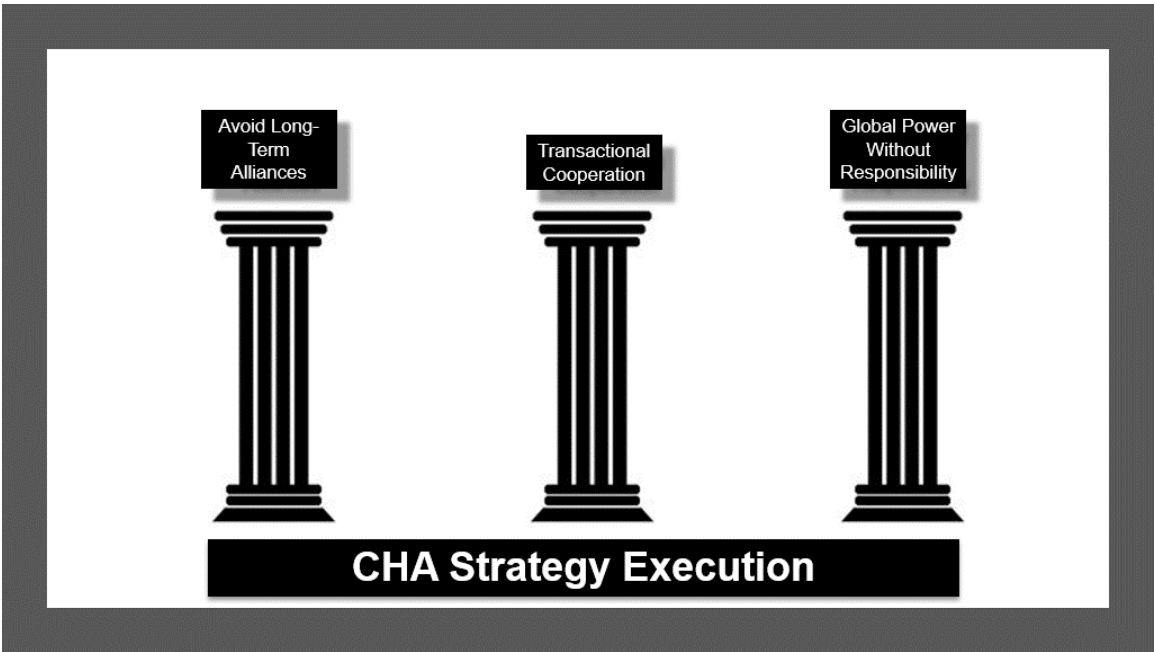
RUSSELL HANSON, ADAM R. DINEEN, CHRISTOPHER A. SCOTTREY

The Future of Indo-Pacific Information Warfare

Challenges and Prospects from the Rise of AI



In the face of growing geopolitical tensions, the PRC has been increasingly opportunistic in its approach to subversion. China views modern warfare as being centered on the struggle for information dominance, which is considered the most important of the traditional "three dominances," along with air dominance and sea dominance.⁷ Psychological warfare, a key





Transactional Cooperation

One for you,
two for me

Disproportionately Benefit
Chinese Interests



AIDDATA

A Research Lab at William & Mary

Aid Allocation Correlation

Recipient Diplomatic Support

10% increase in UN voting =
86% increase in aid

Global Power Without Responsibility



BROOKINGS

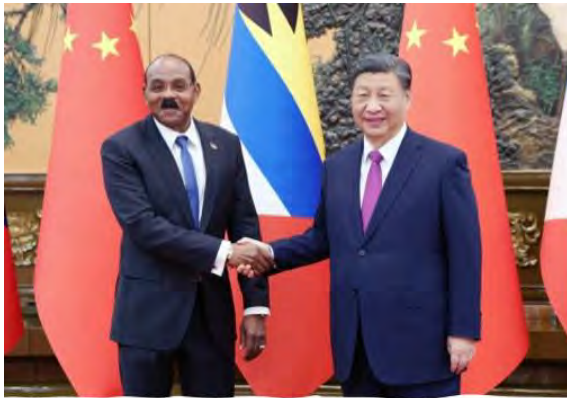
China is an active player in global economic institutions, it has been careful to define itself as a developing country and to avoid taking on the responsibilities of rich countries. Examples of China's reluctance to take on new responsibilities abound in every domain.

China at The Center of Fintech Networks

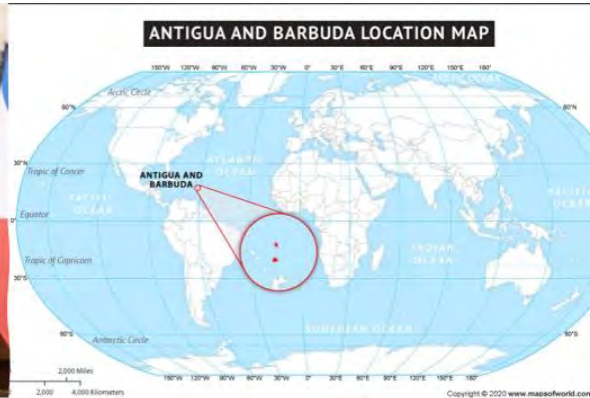
Multi-Criteria Analytic Model

Actions	Screening Criteria #1	Screening Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #1	Evaluation Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #3
	Alignment with Xisim	Positive Domestic Response	Avoidance of Long-Term Alliances	Transactional Cooperation	Global Power without Responsibility
Promote Digital Silk Road	Y	Y	3	3	3
Attempt Peacefully Reunify Taiwan	Y+	Y	3	2	3
Expand in Antigua	Y	Y	2	3	3
Enhanced UN Engagements	Y	Y	2	3	3
Expand BRI Developments	Y	Y	2	3	2
Expand SCO	Y	Y	2	3	2
Expand Actions in South China Sea	Y	Y	3	2	2
Expand BRICS	Y	Y	2	2	2
Establish AIIB	Y	Y	1	2	2
Ban All Foreign Tech In CI	Y	Y	2	1	1

Actions	Screening Criteria #1	Screening Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #1	Evaluation Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #3
	Alignment with Xisim	Positive Domestic Response	Avoidance of Long-Term Alliances	Transactional Cooperation	Global Power without Responsibility
Forgive Debt in BRI Countries	N	N	2	0	1
Reunify Taiwan Forcefully	Y+	N	1	1	1
Obtain Full G7 Membership	N	N	0	1	1
Join Trans-Pac Partnership	Y	Y	0	1	1
Join Paris Climate Agreement	Y	N	0	1	1
Adopt Intl Cyber Sec Standards	Y	Y	0	1	1
Condemn North Korea Publicly	N	N	1	1	0
Military Alliance with Russia	Y	Y	0	1	1



Xi Jinping Meets with Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Gaston Browne in January 2024



Case Study: Antigua

Hypothetical Scenarios

Actions	Screening Criteria #1	Screening Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #1	Evaluation Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #3
	Alignment with Xiism	Positive Domestic Response	Avoidance of Long-Term Alliances	Transactional Cooperation	Global Power without Responsibility
Attempt Peacefully Reunify Taiwan	Y+	Y	3	2	3

Peaceful

Actions	Screening Criteria #1	Screening Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #1	Evaluation Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #3
	Alignment with Xiism	Positive Domestic Response	Avoidance of Long-Term Alliances	Transactional Cooperation	Global Power without Responsibility
Reunify Taiwan Forcefully	Y+	N	1	1	1

Forceful

Actions	Screening Criteria #1	Screening Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #1	Evaluation Criteria #2	Evaluation Criteria #3
	Alignment with Xiism	Positive Domestic Response	Avoidance of Long-Term Alliances	Transactional Cooperation	Global Power without Responsibility
Attempt Peacefully Reunify Taiwan	Y+	Y	3	2	3

Peaceful

Preferred Outcome



Commitment to Territorial Integrity



China and Taiwan are destined for 'reunification', Xi tells former president

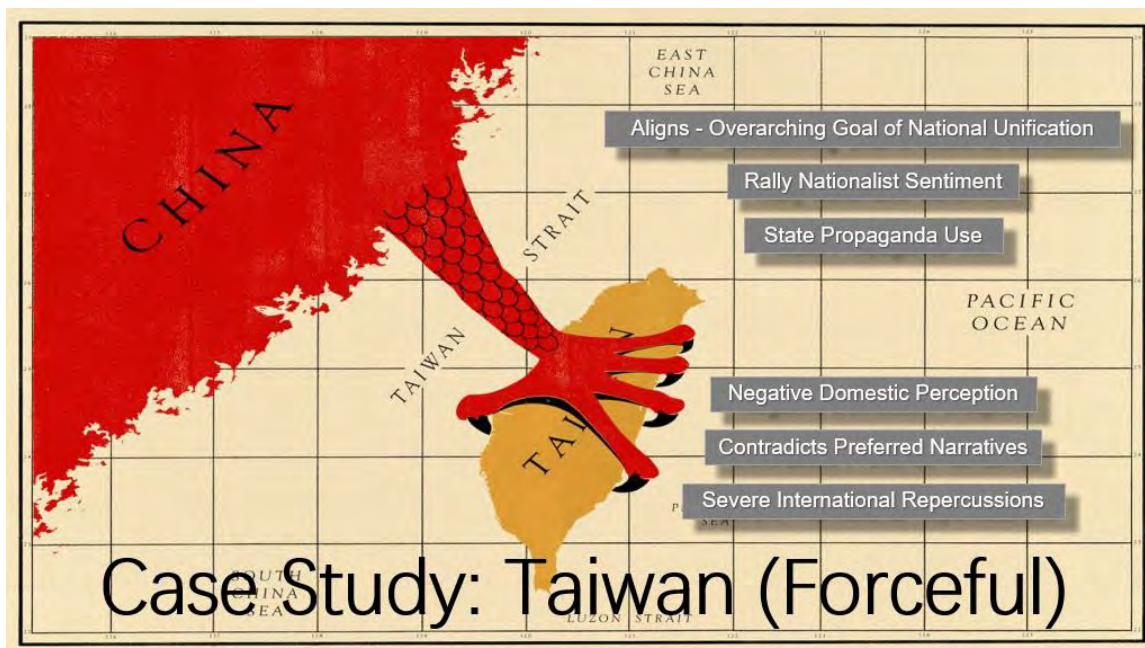


Xi Jinping meets the former Taiwanese president Ma Ying-jeou in Beijing on 10 April 2024

"External interference cannot stop the historical trend of reunion of the country and family" – Xi Jinping

"War would be an unbearable burden for the Chinese Nation" – Ma Ying-jeou

Case Study: Taiwan (Peaceful)



Key Finding 2

Is there an ideological “unifying principle” for a Chinese-led order leading to a “New Cold War”?

Unifying Principle

Community of Common Destiny for Mankind



“Mankind, by living in the same global village in the same era where history and reality meet, has increasingly emerged as a community of common destiny in which everyone has in himself a little bit of others. .”

Statement by H.E. Han Zheng Vice President of the People's Republic of China in September 2023



Xi Jinping delivers a speech at the closing meeting of the first session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC)

Mutual Respect

Economic Progression

Political Autonomy



Challenge: Alternative Path to Development

Need Not Adopt Western-Style Democracy

Authoritarian Rule is a Counterexample

Democracy Not a Prerequisite for Development

Challenge: Non-Interference and Sovereignty



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Wang Yi Shares Four Commitments of the Chinese Way to Address Hotspot Issues

2024-03-07 23:57

On March 7, 2024, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister Wang Yi shared the Chinese way to address hotspot issues when he met the press during the NPC and CPPCC sessions.

Wang Yi said constructive engagement in settling international hotspot issues is a due responsibility for China as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council. China learns from international practices and draws wisdom from Chinese culture, and have found the Chinese way to address hotspot issues. The

First, a commitment to non-interference in internal affairs. China always respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries concerned,

Official statement from Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in March 2024



Challenge: Cultural and Civilization Diversity



THE STATE COUNCIL INFORMATION OFFICE
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

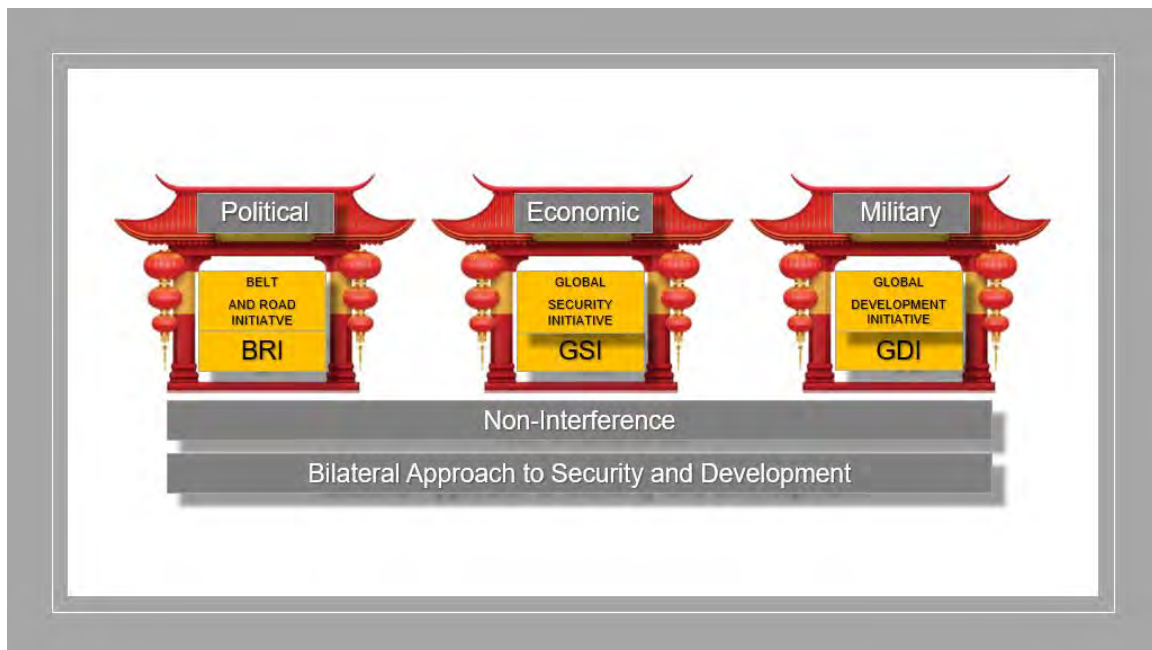
Values diversity of cultures
and civilizations




Video of the GCI from the Chinese State Council Information Office, April 2024

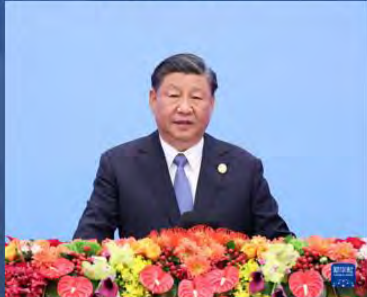
Key Finding 3:

What will the political, economic, and military structures look like that underpin an alternative order?





Belt and Road Initiative



Xi Jinping Attends the Opening Ceremony of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and Delivers a Keynote Speech, October 2023

Backbone

Bilateral Negotiation

Ties and Dependencies

Global Security Initiative

Diplomacy

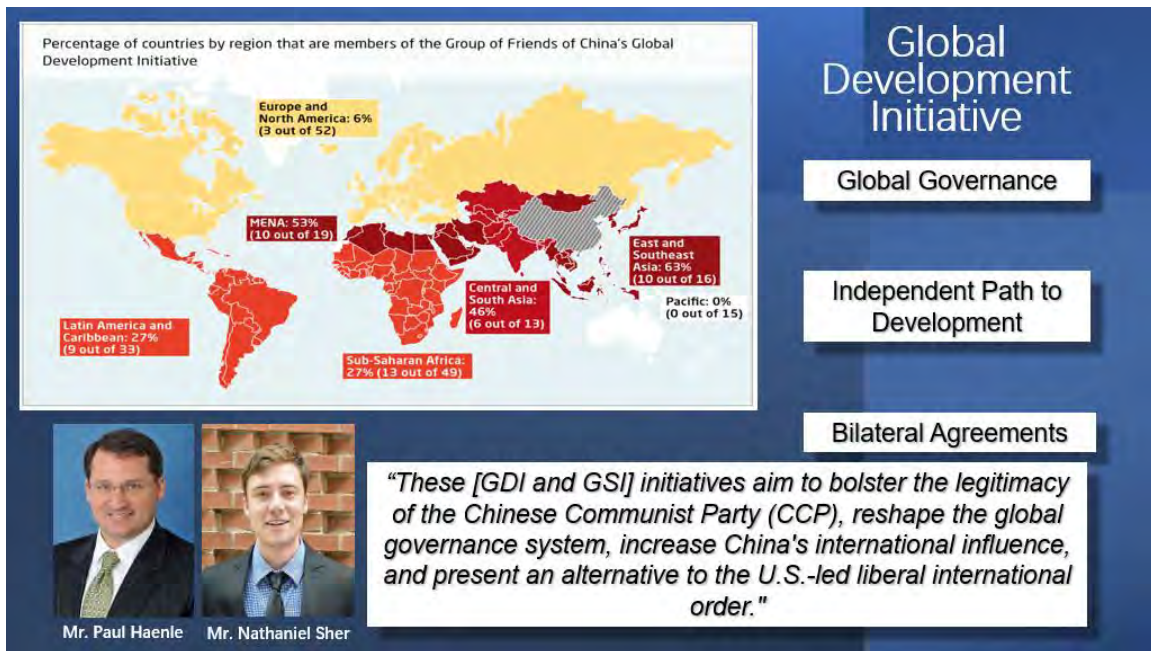
Non-Interference

Oppose Bloc Confrontation

Arms Sales

Security Cooperation





Key Finding 4:

What existing organizations does China currently belong to, what do they do, and could any of them perform similar functions as NATO or other international orders?



Remote Likelihood 



Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Political Dialogue	X	X
Collective Defense	X	
Crisis Management	X	
Cooperative Security	X	X
Promote Democratic Values	X	

Non-Alignment

Broadening
Economic Focus

Free of Western
Influence



Mr. Ties Dams



Shanghai Cooperation Organization




SCO Secretary General
Zhang Min

"The SCO shows how lots of significant ideological differences can be overcome. It is not the kind of diplomacy propaganda, based on self-interest, interference."

"The Shanghai Club never sought to compare itself with the transatlantic alliance. It is not a political or military bloc, and it follows its path and strives to promote peace."

Key Finding 5:

What countries would China work with to build an alternative order?



Daoist Parable

Zhuangzi

The Useless Tree

Find Ways to Work with Different Countries

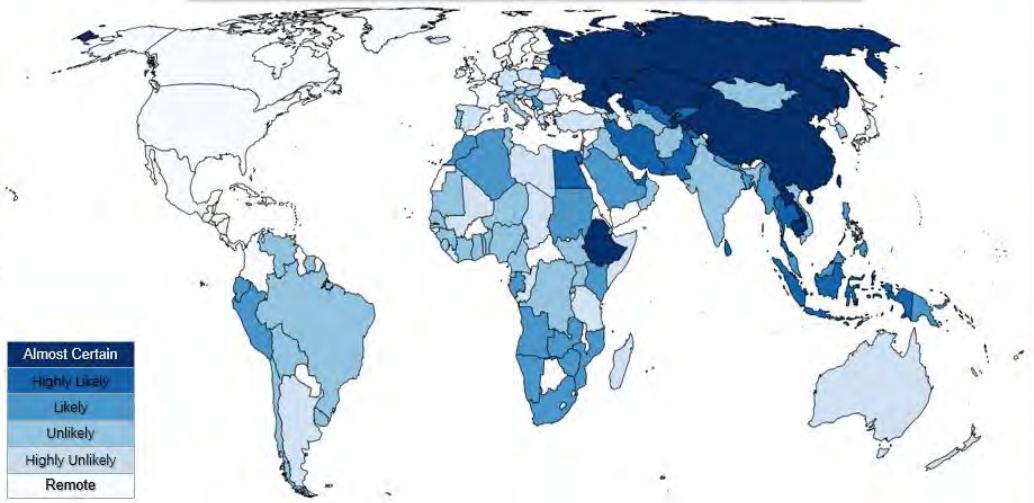
Countries Aligned with China's Vision

Evaluation Criteria

Low Confidence Estimate

Alliances
BRICS
Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)
Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)
Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB)
ASEAN Member
Loans from Chinese Banks
Huawei Network
Foreign Military Sales

Country Likelihood of Working with China



Targets of Opportunity

