



# The ICAS Bulletin

## Institute for China America Studies

### A Survey of Scholarship on U.S.-China Relations

January 19, 2022

#### What's Going On? ↓

### Boycotts and Surveillance Concerns Loom Over Upcoming Olympics



Protest von Tibetern und Uiguren vor dem Brandenburger Tor gegen die Olympischen Spiele Beijing 2022 (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

- On January 18, it was reported that Poland's President Andrzej Duda will attend the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and its officials said it's no longer in Poland's interests to continue criticising China simply to please the Americans.
- On January 16, it was reported that some Olympic sponsors like Allianz and Intel are taking steps to divest from Xinjiang or raise the issue with the International Olympic Committee. However, the majority of sponsors have not responded to challenges from activists and, in the case of Coca Cola, an angry letter from House Republicans demanding their divestment from Xinjiang and a statement on other Chinese controversies.
- On January 14, the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee advised athletes participating in the upcoming Winter Olympics to leave their phones at home citing the possibility of surveillance by Beijing during the games.

Associated News Sources:

["Poland's president to attend Beijing Olympics amidst U.S. boycott," Reuters, January 18 \[Paywall\]](#)  
["The U.S. government is boycotting the Beijing Olympics over human rights. Coke and Airbnb are still on board," The Washington Post, January 16 \[Paywall\]](#)

### Beijing Appeals to Multilateralism to Challenge 'U.S. Hegemony'



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and State Councilor of the People's Republic of China Wang Yi Signing the Iran-China 25-year Cooperation Program in Tehran on March 27, 2021 (Erfan Kouchari/Tasnim News Agency)

- On January 18, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said China is preparing to send supplies to Tonga as soon as flights resume and The U.S. international aid agency also said that it is working with partners to provide relief supplies.
- On January 17, Chinese President Xi Jinping used his video appearance at The Davos Agenda to urge countries away from a "Cold War mentality," warning that "Acts of containment, suppression or confrontation arising thereof do all harm, not the least good to world peace and security."
- On January 15, Beijing reiterated its opposition to the U.S.' unilateral sanctions on Iran at an announcement of a 25-year cooperation agreement with Tehran focusing on the areas of energy, infrastructure, agriculture, health care, culture, and cyber security.

Associated News Sources:

["Tonga covered in thick layer of ash, photos after volcano eruption and tsunami show," NBC News, January 18](#)  
["Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian's Regular Press Conference on January 18, 2022 \(Tonga assistance\),"](#)

[“The United States could lose all flights to China ahead of the Beijing Winter Olympics,”](#) CNN, January 14  
[“Letter to James Quincey, Chairman and CEO of the Coca Cola Company,”](#) Committee on Energy and Commerce of the U.S. House of Representatives, January 13  
[“Team USA Advises Athletes Heading to Beijing Olympics to Leave Their Phones at Home,”](#) *The Wall Street Journal*, January 14 [Paywall]

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, January 18  
[“China’s Xi says countries must abandon ‘Cold War mentality,’ warns against confrontation,”](#) CNBC, January 17  
[“China reaffirms opposition to US sanctions on Iran,”](#) *Al Jazeera*, January 15

## U.S. Reinforces Allies in Europe, Asia Against Perceived Chinese Aggression



Secretary Blinken meets with Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis (Source: State Department photo by Ron Przysucha)

- On January 7, The U.S. and Japan resolved to “work together to deter and, if necessary, respond to destabilising activities” by China in the Asia-Pacific.
- On January 6, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin responded to U.S. support for Lithuania by accusing Washington of trying to create “one China, one Taiwan...and put together a small clique condoning the Taiwan independence forces.”
- On January 5, United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai expressed the U.S continuing support for Lithuania to address “economic coercion” from China in a call with Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis.

*Associated News Sources:*

[“Japan and U.S. vow more defence cooperation to counter Chinese threat,”](#) *Reuters*, January 7 [Paywall]  
[“China lashes out at U.S. for supporting Lithuania in feud with Beijing over Taiwan,”](#) *National Public Radio*, January 6 [Paywall]  
[“Readout of Ambassador Katherine Tai’s Call With Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis,”](#) Office of the United States Trade Representative, January 5

## Chinese Soft Power Efforts Reach Several Continents



Stone with the name of AIIB (Source: Wikimedia Commons )

- On January 10, the President of the Chinese-backed Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) announced that the bank will continue to focus on financing health care systems over infrastructure in its partner countries until the Covid-19 pandemic is over.
- On January 6, China announced that it will be appointing a peace envoy in the Horn of Africa to help broker an end to the ongoing conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia and coordinate the reconstruction of crucial regional infrastructure.
- Latin America watchers are ringing alarm bells after a late 2021 meeting of the China-Latin America-Caribbean Forum (CELAC) resolved to deepen cooperation on several fronts including digital infrastructure and foreign investment. This was followed up on December 25 with a formal cooperation plan between China and Cuba to promote the Belt and Road Initiative in the region.

*Associated News Sources:*

[“Belt & Road encircles Latin America and the Caribbean,”](#) *Asia Times*, January 8  
[“China plans peace envoy for conflict-riven Horn of Africa,”](#) *Reuters*, January 6 [Paywall]  
[“China-backed AIIB offers vaccine loans to help partners tackle Covid-19 as it expects pandemic to linger,”](#) *South China Morning Post*, January 10 [Paywall]

## Covid Surge in China Limits Domestic Movement and International Travel



Air China plane grounded at an airport gate (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

- On January 16, Shenzhen reported its first cases of the Covid-19 Omicron variant, joining several other Chinese metropolises – Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Zhengzhou, and Xi’an – in a surge in advance of the upcoming Lunar New Year and Winter Olympics.
- For the last few weeks, China has been cancelling inbound flights from the U.S. due to increased fears of Covid-19.
- As of January 12, 20 million people in China have been placed under mandatory isolation in an attempt to curb the spread of Covid-19.

*Associated News Sources:*

- [“China aviation regulator suspends eight more incoming U.S. flights.”](#) Reuters, January 18 [Paywall]
- [“Covid-19 in China: Shenzhen, Beijing and Tianjin in Omicron containment race ahead of Lunar New Year and Winter Olympics.”](#) South China Morning Post, January 16 [Paywall]
- [“Hong Kong suspends transit flights from most of the world due to COVID-19.”](#) Reuters, January 14 [Paywall]
- [“Omicron Deepens Uncertainty Surrounding Beijing Olympics.”](#) The New York Times, January 12 [Paywall]

## - In Other News -



(Getty Images)

- [“Autocracies outdo democracies on public trust - survey,”](#) Reuters, January 18 [Paywall]
- [“China builds its own movie empire.”](#) Axios, January 18
- [“China’s coal production hit record levels in 2021.”](#) The Guardian, January 13
- [“Denmark accuses Russia, China, Iran of espionage threat.”](#) Reuters, January 13 [Paywall]
- [“Huawei on a 5G roll in US ally Thailand.”](#) Asia Times, January 7 [Paywall]
- [“China to remain renewable energy leader with strong capacity growth in 2022, despite subsidies phase-out,”](#) South China Morning Post, January 2 [Paywall]
- [“‘We’re falling behind’: 2022 seen as a pivotal lap in the space race with China,”](#) Politico, December 31

## What Are We Reading? ↓

- Council on Foreign Relations: [“The United States and Japan Should Prepare for Chinese Aggression Against Taiwan”](#) by David Sacks (January 18, 2022)
- Hinrich Foundation: [“Data sovereignty and trade agreements: Three digital kingdoms”](#) by Henry Gao (January 18, 2022)
- *The New York Times*: [“China’s Economy Is Slowing, a Worrying Sign for the World”](#) by Keith Bradsher (January 16, 2022) [Paywall]
- *Foreign Affairs*: [“Washington’s Missing China Strategy”](#) by Richard Fontaine (January 14, 2022) [Paywall]
- *Foreign Policy*: [“Biden Can No Longer Ignore Growing Iran-China Ties”](#) by Bradley Bowman and Zane Zovak (January 13, 2022) [Paywall]
- *Forbes*: [“China And Russia Make Critical Mineral Grabs in Africa While the U.S. Snoozes”](#) by Ariel Cohen (January 14, 2022) [Paywall]
- *The Wall Street Journal*: [“China Looks to Secure Supplies as Strains With U.S. and Its Allies Grow”](#) by Lingling Wei (January 13, 2022) [Paywall]
- *Foreign Policy*: [“China’s Redrawn Maritime Map Is Out of Line”](#) by Jack Detsch and Robbie Gramer (January 13, 2022) [Paywall]
- *The National*: [“How China’s role in the global economy is changing in 2022”](#) by Shirley Yu (January 12, 2022)
- *Foreign Policy*: [“Can the United States Really Decouple From China?”](#) by Jeffrey Kucik (January 11, 2022) [Paywall]
- *South China Morning Post*: [“The days of US multinationals in China ‘keeping quiet while making a fortune’ are numbered – just ask Tesla or Walmart”](#) by Wang Xiangwei (January 8, 2022) [Paywall]
- *Washington Post*: [“Opinion: In Asia, China fills an economic void the United States left”](#) by Editorial Board (January 4, 2022) [Paywall]
- *Consumer News and Business Channel*: [“Asia’s top risk in 2022 will be U.S.-China tensions over Taiwan, says political risk analyst”](#) by Sumathi Bala (January 4, 2022) [Paywall]
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: [“China’s New AI Governance Initiatives Shouldn’t Be Ignored”](#) by Matt Sheehan (January 4, 2022)
- Wilson Center: [“On the Horizon | What to Watch in 2022: Asia”](#) by Wilson Center Asia Program (January 12, 2022)

## What’s Happening Around Town? ↓

### *- Past Events -*

- [Containing Crisis: Strategic Concepts for Coercive Economic Statecraft on China](#)  
January 7 hosted by Center for a New American Security
- [A conversation with Intel CEO, Patrick Gelsinger](#)  
January 10 hosted by Atlantic Council
- [Walking the Walk After the New U.S.-China Climate Declaration](#)  
January 13 hosted by Wilson Center
- [Twists and Turns of the DOJ’s China Initiative](#)  
January 13 hosted by 21st Century China Center

### *- Upcoming Events -*

- [Global Energy Forum](#)  
January 18-21 hosted by Atlantic Council
- [Future Foreign Policy series featuring Ambassador Robert Zoellick](#)  
January 19 hosted by Atlantic Council
- [EWC Insights: Asia- Pacific Political Transitions](#)  
January 19 hosted by East-West Center
- [Why China Matters to the Heartland](#)  
January 25 hosted by United States Heartland China Association
- [CCP Decision-Making and the 20th Party Congress](#)  
January 27 hearing by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission

## What ICAS Is Up To

---Letter from ICAS Executive Director Nong Hong---



Dear Friends,

I am excited to share with you this brief snapshot of our accomplishments and engagements with the world in 2021. Currently in its seventh year of existence, ICAS has established itself as a fresh voice in the Washington, D.C. think tank community.

Throughout 2021, ICAS continually strived to provide a window into the worldviews of both the United States and China, and thereby serve as a vehicle to promote greater understanding between these two countries and societies through our various research programs. I am eager to see what we can continue to achieve with your support in 2022!

Kind regards,  
ICAS Executive Director Nong Hong

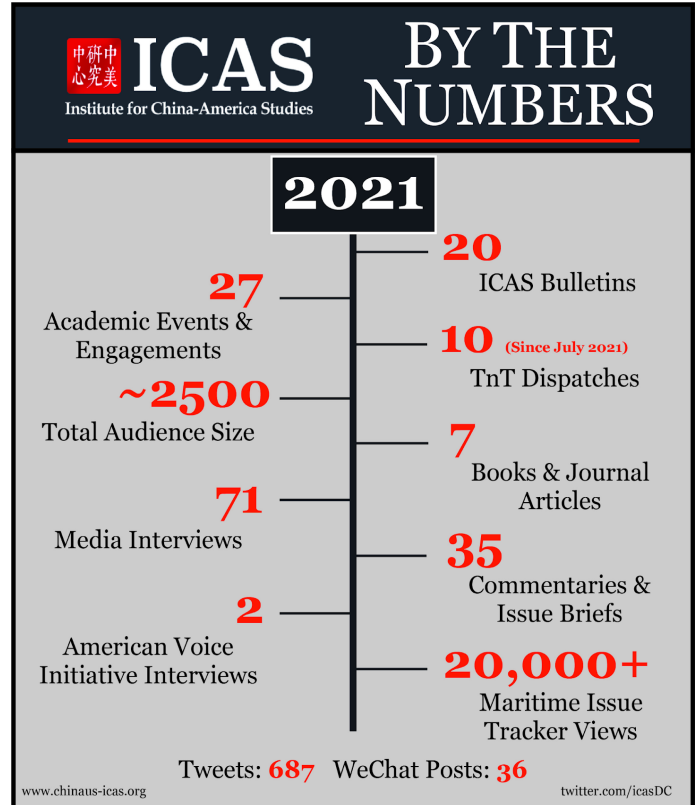
---ICAS Commentary---

### China's Improving IP Protections Too Late to Stop Tech Rivalry with U.S.

By Dr. Sara Hsu  
January 11, 2022

The U.S.-China trade war began, in part, because Chinese joint venture firms were allegedly demanding that their American partners turn over critical technology to them as part of the cooperation. American companies complained about losing ownership of their intellectual property to Chinese counterparts for years before the trade war, and during the trade war, China passed the Foreign Investment Law which prohibits forced technology transfer. China has also improved intellectual property rights protection in recent years, but the U.S.-China technology conflict has moved beyond the intellectual property issue to a broader confrontation surrounding different approaches to technology uses and values...

Link to Full Post: <https://chinaus-icas.org/research/chinas-improving-ip-protections-too-late-to-stop-tech-rivalry-with-us/>



---ICAS Issue Brief---

**Having its Cake and Eating it Too: U.S. and State Practice in Outlying Archipelagos**

By Alec Caruana  
January 18, 2022

**Key Takeaways:**

- The *State Practice Supplement to Limits in the Seas no. 150*, released by the U.S. State Department on January 12, advances a critique of China's maritime claims in the South China Sea that departs from Washington's previous rationale.
- While the U.S. has historically interpreted UNCLOS as prohibiting continental states from applying straight baselines to their outlying archipelagos across the board, the *State Practice Supplement* instead engages Chinese maritime claims on the level of *de-facto* state practice and its capacity to generate customary international law which contradicts the Convention.
- The supplement relies primarily on drawing distinctions on the bases of archipelagic geography and *opinio juris* in an attempt to isolate Beijing's claims as unique in their excesses and reliance on customary norms.
- This document demonstrates the Biden Administration's willingness to bring the U.S. position on international maritime law away from a 'purist' reading of UNCLOS and more in line with the sensitivity to general state practice seen in the rest of the world.
- This new formulation seems to be motivated by a desire in Washington to allow for some more pragmatically lax interpretations of UNCLOS while still maintaining the United States' credibility as a champion of international maritime law, a useful tool in its campaign against Beijing's 'excessive maritime claims.'
- While the supplement is a step in the right direction, several argumentative flaws still undergird where the U.S. draws the line between 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' baseline practice. These contradictions must be resolved if China is going to respond to U.S. criticism in good faith.

Link to Full Post: <https://chinaus-icas.org/research/having-its-cake-and-eating-it-too/>

---ICAS In the News---



On Tuesday, **January 11, 2022**, Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta joined a discussion regarding RCEP on RT America's *Boom Bust*.

- View the Discussion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dU1SyV5hkE&t=987s>

On Monday, **January 10, 2022**, Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta joined a discussion on Wang Yi's Trip to Africa and South Asia on CGTN America's *The World Today*.

- View the Discussion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MpGOAQI7LOo>