



# The ICAS Bulletin

## Institute for China America Studies

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

March 30, 2022

#### What's Going On? ↓

### Direct U.S.-China Diplomacy and Actions Underway



President Joe Biden participates in a virtual bilateral meeting with President Xi Jinping in November 2021. (Official White House Photo by Cameron Smith)

- On March 21, the U.S. Department of State announced that it is imposing travel bans on several Chinese officials that it accuses of “repressive acts” against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang and anti-government dissidents in China and abroad.
- On March 17, U.S. President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping held a virtual meeting covering a wide array of topics. Headlines focused on each nations’ differing approaches to the war in Ukraine as Biden reportedly warned Xi during the meeting that there would be “consequences” if Beijing attempted to help Moscow by circumventing U.S. sanctions on Russia.
- The Chinese readout of the call reported that Xi told Biden that “he who tied the bell to the tiger must take it off,” arguing that the U.S. and Europe played a role in forcing Putin’s hand. Xi also made it clear that China was ready to send humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and promote negotiations between Moscow and Kyiv.
- On March 14, Washington and Beijing both provided positive assessments of a meeting between National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and Central Foreign Affairs Commission Director Yang Jiechi with each government calling the discussions “substantial” and “constructive,” respectively.

### U.S.-China Trade and Technology Interactions Persist



The front door of the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, DC. Credit: Flickr/Rob Pegoraro, CC2.0

- On March 30, at a House Ways and Means Committee hearing, USTR Katherine Tai signaled that a good-faith effort to engage with China’s government on trade may be hitting its limits, marking a notable shift in tone.
- On March 25, a COVID-19 lockdown was imposed in Shanghai leading several plants to shut down amid delays at the city’s port, a critical part of global supply chains.
- On March 25, it was reported that Chinese companies and government officials are pressing Washington for details on how to comply with U.S. sanctions on Russia while continuing to conduct business there.
- On March 23, a U.S. judge freed the fourth-largest maker of telecommunications equipment—China’s ZTE Corp.—from its probation for violating U.S. sanctions on Iran.
- On March 23, USTR restored tariff exemptions for 352 categories of goods from China after a year-long review.
- On March 18, it was reported that many Chinese consumer technology firms—untouched by sanctions—have continued to operate in Russia despite the mass exodus of Western firms in the wake of the Ukraine war.
- On March 17, the Federal Communications Commission revoked its authorization for Chinese telecom firm Pacific Networks to operate in the U.S., citing security concerns.

Associated News Sources:

[“US hits Chinese officials with travel bans over ‘repressive acts’”, Al Jazeera, March 21](#)

[“Biden warns Xi of global backlash if China helps Russia’s attack on Ukraine”, CNBC News, March 18](#)

[“Biden warns China’s Xi not to help Russia on Ukraine”, The Washington Post, March 18 \[Paywall\]](#)

[“Biden warns Xi against helping Russia as US-China relations face ‘crossroads’ over Ukraine invasion”, USA Today, March 18](#)

[“Biden, Xi to speak as U.S. warns about China military aid for Ukraine war”, Reuters, March 17 \[Paywall\]](#)

[“U.S. Says China Talks on Russia Were a ‘Substantial Discussion’”, Bloomberg, March 14 \[Paywall\]](#)

Associated News Sources:

[“Tai: U.S. must ramp up trade defense against China”, Politico, March 30](#)

[“Shanghai Covid-19 Lockdown Poses Fresh Test to Supply Chains”, The Wall Street Journal, March 28 \[Paywall\]](#)

[“China Damps U.S. Concern on Russian Sanctions by Drilling Into Their Details”, Bloomberg, March 25 \[Paywall\]](#)

[“Judge Frees China’s ZTE From Some U.S. Oversight”, The Wall Street Journal, March 23 \[Paywall\]](#)

[“U.S. Renews Tariff Exemptions for Some Chinese Imports”, The Wall Street Journal, March 23 \[Paywall\]](#)

[“Chinese Tech Companies Deepen Roots in Russia in Spite of U.S. Sanctions”, Lawfare, March 18](#)

[“FCC revokes U.S. authorization of Chinese telecom firm Pacific Networks”, Reuters, March 17 \[Paywall\]](#)

## China Weighs in on Ukraine



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi is seen on screens as he holds a press conference at the Media Center on March 07, 2022 in Beijing, China. (Photo by Andrea Verdelli/Getty Images)

- On March 29, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi met in Beijing and issued a joint statement cementing ties and condemning sanctions imposed on Moscow for invading Ukraine.
- On March 24, it was reported that there is much diversity of opinion in China regarding the war in Ukraine. Debates among experts and common people are revolving around whether the perceived threat of NATO justifies force.
- On March 20, Wang Yi told the press that China’s position on the Ukraine war – premised in opposing “external coercion or pressure...maintaining peace and opposing war” – is “in line with the wishes of most countries” and on “the right side of history.”
- On March 20, China’s Ambassador to the U.S., Qin Gang, appeared on CBS where he reiterated China’s hope for a peaceful resolution in the Ukraine war and added that condemnation of Russia “doesn’t solve the problem.”
- On March 16, thousands of Chinese WeChat users flocked to the comments of a translated version of Amb. Qin Gang’s op-ed in the Washington Post on the Ukraine war. Many netizens expressed dismay over the apparent contradictions in China’s stance before the comments on

## Indo-Pacific Maritime Movements and Security Developments



French navy frigate FS Vendémiaire maneuvers alongside the US Navy littoral combat ship USS Charleston during exercises in the Philippine Sea on March 28, 2022. (U.S. Navy photo by Mineman 1st Class Philip Dalton)

- On March 28, the Biden Administration requested \$773 billion for the Pentagon, up 4% from the previous fiscal year, to focus on the “pacing” threat of China and the “acute” secondary threat of Russia.
- On March 28, the Philippines and the U.S. began their annual ‘Balikatan’ joint military exercise. Featuring 8,900 troops and amphibious operations, this will be the largest iteration of the exercise since 2015.
- On March 25, the Solomon Islands confirmed that it is in the process of drafting a security deal with China which could allow Beijing to deploy forces to protect its ventures or for policing operations at Honiara’s behest.
- On March 22, the Biden Administration named former senior diplomat Joseph Yun as Special Presidential Envoy for negotiating economic assistance with three Pacific island nations in Compacts of Free Association with the U.S. – the Marshall Islands, Palau, and Micronesia – that have also been targeted for investments by China.
- On March 21, U.S. Indo-Pacific commander Adm. John C. Aquilino said that China has fully militarized three of its controlled islands in the Spratlys, according to images captured by a U.S. reconnaissance plane.

the post were hidden the following day.

*Associated News Sources:*

["China, Russia 'more determined' to boost ties, Beijing says"](#), *Reuters*, March 30 [Paywall]  
["China hammers home its message of US blame for Ukraine war to domestic audience"](#), *South China Morning Post*, March 28 [Paywall]  
["China on the right side of history over Ukraine war, foreign minister says"](#), *Reuters*, March 20 [Paywall]  
["Ambassador says China promotes peace but won't condemn Russia"](#), *Politico*, March 20  
["On China's Internet, Rare Flash of Anger at Beijing's Position on Ukraine"](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, March 17 [Paywall]

*Associated News Sources:*

["Pentagon Seeks Higher Military Spending to Keep Pace With China, Russia"](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, March 28 [Paywall]  
["Philippines, U.S. hold biggest military exercises in seven years"](#), *Reuters*, March 28 [Paywall]  
["Solomon Islands confirms China security draft, alarming Australia"](#), *BBC News*, March 25  
["To counter China influence, U.S. names envoy to lead Pacific Island talks"](#), *Reuters*, March 22 [Paywall]  
["US admiral says China fully militarized isles"](#), *AP News*, March 21

## Taiwan Again in the Spotlight



A view of the capital city of Taipei, Taiwan at sunset. Source: Getty Images

- On March 24, a report from the German Marshall Fund of the United States argued that the U.S. must act to push back against Beijing's efforts to quietly shut Taiwan out of the United Nations system.
- On March 18, Xi once again warned Biden during their virtual meeting that "if the Taiwan issue is not handled properly, it will have a subversive impact on the relationship between the two countries."
- On March 18, China sailed an aircraft carrier through the Taiwan Strait, shadowed by an American destroyer, just hours before Biden was to meet virtually with Xi.
- On March 16, Beijing berated Taipei for "taking advantage of others' difficulties" after it announced that it was sending increased humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

*Associated News Sources:*

["China's Push to Isolate Taiwan Demands U.S. Action, Report Says"](#), *The New York Times*, March 24 [Paywall]  
["Xi tells US to handle Taiwan 'properly' to avoid damaging ties"](#), *Al Jazeera*, March 19  
["Chinese aircraft carrier sails through Taiwan Strait ahead of Biden, Xi call"](#), *The Hill*, March 18  
["China says Taiwan 'taking advantage' of Ukraine as island sends more aid"](#), *US News*, March 16

## - In Other News -



Source: Getty Images

["Xi Battles Distrust by Global Investors Burned in China Before"](#), *Bloomberg*, March 29 [Paywall]  
["While China Initiative may have ended, foreign influence remains DOJ enforcement priority"](#), *Reuters*, March 28 [Paywall]  
["Huawei still fighting for 'survival' as Meng Wanzhou returns to corporate stage"](#), *CNN Business*, March 28  
["Taiwan's leader to emulate Zelensky in case of China conflict"](#), *Financial Times*, March 28 [Paywall]  
["Marco Rubio Leads G.O.P. Push for a More Combative Stance on China"](#), *The New York Times*, March 28 [Paywall]  
["Shanghai Lockdown Experiment Begins as Officials Race to Clear Covid-19"](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, March 28 [Paywall]  
["China Looks to Salvage Relationship With Europe"](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, March 25 [Paywall]  
["China Launches Investigation Into Official Who Promoted Respect for Islam"](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, March 19 [Paywall]  
["Justice Department accuses China of spying on, intimidating dissidents living in U.S."](#), *Reuters*, March 16 [Paywall]  
["China Doubles Down on Zero-COVID in the Face of Its Worst COVID-19 Outbreak Since Wuhan"](#), *Time Magazine*, March 16 [Paywall]

## What Are We Reading?

- *The Economist*: [“China has honed its justifications for taking Russia’s side”](#) by Chaguan (March 26) [Paywall]
- *Reuters*: [“Chinese sanctions would be a warning versus a slap”](#) by Gina Chun (March 24) [Paywall]
- German Marshall Fund of the United States: [“The Distortion of UN Resolution 2758 and Limits on Taiwan’s Access to the United Nations”](#) by Jessica Drun and Bonnie S. Glaser (March 24)
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: [“What Island Nations Have to Say on Indo-Pacific Geopolitics”](#) by Darshana M. Baruah (March 23)
- *China File*: [“Will China Set Global Tech Standards?”](#) by Graham Webster, Helen Toner, Jeffrey Ding, Blake Berger, Daniel R. Russel, Daniel R. Russel, Patrick Lozada, Tim Rühlig, and John Seaman (March 22)
- Council on Foreign Relations: [“Don’t Pivot From the Pivot to Asia”](#) by David Sacks (March 21)
- *NBC News*: [“U.S. has a clear warning for China: Don’t come to Russia’s aid. Will Beijing heed it?”](#) by Jennifer Jett (March 17)
- *Reuters*: [“Chinese military aid to Russia would be major role reversal, analysts say”](#) by Greg Torode and Martin Quin Pollard (March 17) [Paywall]
- Stanford University Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence: [“China and the United States: Unlikely Partners in AI”](#) by Edmund L. Andrews (March 16)
- U.S. Department of State: [Report to Congress on Access to Tibetan Areas: Section 4 of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018](#) by the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (March 16)
- *The Washington Post*: [“Chinese ambassador: Where we stand on Ukraine”](#), by Qin Gang (March 15) [Paywall]
- Council on Foreign Relations: [“What’s at Stake for China’s Economic Relationship With Ukraine?”](#) by Zongyuan Zoe Liu (March 2)
- European Council on Foreign Relations: [“Mapping China’s Rise in the Western Balkans”](#) by Vladimir Shopov (March)
- Stimson Center: [“Ukraine: Did China Have a Clue?”](#) by Yun Sun (February 28)
- *Just Security*: [“China’s Nuclear Buildup is About More Than Nukes”](#) by Jacob Stokes (January 4)

## What’s Happening Around Town?

### - Past Events -

- [The past, present, and future of US-China relations](#)  
March 29 hosted by American Enterprise Institute
- [U.S.-China Relations One Year Into the Biden Presidency](#)  
March 23 hosted by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- [Ukraine and Taiwan: Parallels and Early Lessons Learned](#)  
March 22 hosted by the Center for Strategic & International Studies
- [China’s Russia Strategy: The Ukraine Crisis and Beyond](#)  
March 17 hosted by the German Marshall Fund of the United States
- [China’s Energy Plans and Practices](#)  
March 17 hearing by U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission

### - Upcoming Events -

- [The Ukraine Crisis: Implications for U.S. Policy in the Indo-Pacific](#)  
March 30 hearing by the House Foreign Affairs Committee
- [China’s Role in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)  
March 30 hearing by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
- [The Assault on Freedom of Expression in Asia](#)  
March 31 hearing by Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
- [How Hong Kong and Taiwan Impact the Future of U.S. Policy toward China](#)  
March 31 hosted by George H.W. Bush Foundation for U.S.-China Relations
- [US-Indo-Pacific Conference](#)  
April 5 hosted by the Center for Strategic & International Studies

# What ICAS Is Up To

## ---BCCC Inaugural Event Successfully Concluded---

**ICAS**  
Institute for China-America Studies

Thursday, March 24, 2022  
8:00pm - 9:30pm EDT (UTC-4)  
Virtual (Zoom)

### The Blue Carbon & Climate Change Program Inaugural Event

~Roundtable~

<p><b>Quentin HANICH</b> Associate Professor &amp; Fisheries Governance Program Leader, Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security <i>University of Wollongong</i></p>	<p><b>Tabitha MALLORY</b> Affiliate Professor, Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies <i>University of Washington</i> Founder and CEO <i>China Ocean Institute</i></p>
<p><b>CHEN Ling</b> Associate Professor, School of Public Policy and Management &amp; Deputy Director, Center for Industrial Development and Environmental Governance <i>Tsinghua University</i></p>	<p><b>Keita FURUKAWA</b> Affiliated Research Fellow, Ocean Policy Research Institute <i>Sasakawa Peace Foundation</i></p>

Moderated by  
**Nong HONG**  
Executive Director  
*Institute for China-America Studies*

Opening Remarks by  
**WANG Sheng**  
President  
*National Institute for South China Sea Studies*

**BCCC**

On March 24, 2022, the Institute for China-America Studies (ICAS) officially launched its Blue Carbon & Climate Change (BCCC) Program. The inaugural event of the BCCC program brought together expert scholars from the United States, China, Japan, and Australia to discuss each country's practices and perspectives on blue carbon and its potential role in building global relations.

We thank our audience for their engagement and our expert speakers—Quentin Hanich, Keita Furukawa, Tabitha Grace Mallory, and Chen Ling—for sharing their insights, research, and potential solutions for the novel blue carbon issue and its potential to form global connections. We also thank President Wang Sheng of the National Institute for South China Sea Studies for his participation and kind remarks.

[Watch the Full Recording on YouTube](#)

## ---ICAS Academic Engagement---

### Who Owns Antarctica? The Geopolitics of the Seventh Continent

Tuesday, April 5, 2022  
6:00am – 8:00am EST

On April 5, 2022, ICAS Executive Director Dr. Nong Hong will be participating in a Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies conference “Who Owns Antarctica? The Geopolitics of the Seventh Continent” alongside other expert speakers. She will be discussing the important question: “Will China Compete for the Poles?”

Learn more about the event and the other speakers through the embedded links below.



### WHO OWNS ANTARCTICA ? The Geopolitics of the Seventh Continent

TUESDAY 5 APRIL 2022 | 12:00 - 14:00 (CET) | ROOM 58 | HYBRID EVENT  
MAISON DE LA PAIX | THE GRADUATE INSTITUTE, GENEVA | CHEMIN EUGENE-RIGOT 2, 1202 GENEVA



Event programme & Registration: <https://igrcs.de/bciffR>

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---ICAS Report---

March 2022



**The Biden Administration's Emerging Economic Approach on China:**  
Trade, Technology, and Strategic Industrial Policy in the Age of "Extreme Competition"

By Sourabh Gupta



**The Biden Administration's Emerging Economic Approach on China**  
Trade, Technology, and Strategic Industrial Policy in the Age of "Extreme Competition"

By Sourabh Gupta  
March 28, 2022

On January 20, 2022, President Joseph Biden marked his first year in office as the 46th president of the United States. At this time last year, observers had likened his 'Build Back Better' agenda to President Franklin Roosevelt's 'New Deal'. Both were forged at a time of record unemployment and economic despair. Both paid obeisance to the firm hand of an activist state. The 'New Deal' aimed to pull the U.S. out of the Great Depression through massive government programs; the 'Build Back Better' agenda aims to spend trillions of dollars to—quoting the President—“rebuild the backbone of the country” and “grow the economy from the bottom up and the middle out.” One year in, President Biden hasn't quite been the second coming of Franklin Delano Roosevelt but he has been the closest thing to him in almost eight decades.

At this time last year when Mr. Biden assumed office, a number of questions had also swirled on the horizon of U.S.-China trade and technology ties. Would President Biden rescind or modify the technology controls that his predecessor had imposed from May 2019-on in order to constrain, if not suppress, China's rise? Would he steer the U.S. government away from its decoupling-based theories and press China

instead to keep structurally opening up and reforming its domestic marketplace? And more broadly, would the Biden administration's China trade, technology and investment policy approach mark a break from the Trump administration's hostile approach towards Beijing?

In the event, the Biden administration's policy approach towards China bears large similarities with the Trump administration's approach. The elements of continuity far outweigh the points of divergence. Only in the area of strategic industrial policy (i.e., state activism and intervention to steer the industrial economy towards specific industries) does the Biden administration's approach differ markedly from that of its predecessor. Fixated as the Trump presidency was on a punitive, leverage-based strategy vis-à-vis Beijing, it failed to pay due attention to making the necessary strategic industrial policy investments at home...

Link to Full Report: <https://chinaus-icas.org/research/the-biden-administrations-emerging-economic-approach-on-china/>

---ICAS Issue Brief---

**Facts Over Headlines: Reading Between the Lines of U.S.-China Engagements Amid the Ukraine Crisis**

By Matt Geraci and Yilun Zhang  
March 24, 2022

Key Takeaways:

- Media coverage on both sides of the Pacific mischaracterized the most recent sets of high-level engagements between the United States and China. For example, western sources typically overemphasized discussions

surrounding the Ukraine crisis even though it was only one major part.

- Both the White House and Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs readouts of the Yang-Sullivan meeting in Rome on March 14 and Biden-Xi virtual call were more than just “warning of consequences” or “reiteration of positions”, but rather an engaging process that revealed both the differences and shared views between the two countries.
- While western media searches for evidence proving that China has formally sided with Russia, China has so far maintained a consistent, albeit murky, position on the Ukraine crisis. China’s messaging has been conveyed messily in the West due to a lack of clarity from China itself and a lack of reporting on China’s perspective from western media. Nevertheless, misinterpreting China’s position will have serious negative implications for the development of a productive U.S.-China relationship.
- For its part, China has done little to ease the West’s fears, beginning with its decision to abstain from a key U.N. Security Council vote at the outset of the invasion that aimed to officially condemn Russia for infringing upon Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty. The West’s frustrations have grown over Chinese media pushing propaganda, such as disinformation campaigns initiated by Russia. On the other hand, western media have also overly focused on the negative side of the U.S.-China engagement over the crisis, further muddling China’s stance.
- The Biden administration recognizes it will be able to, and in some cases need to, work with China, but can only do so in the areas where interests intersect. Anything more than that will require significant negotiation and potential concessions if China is to be convinced to act outside of its self-interest. Biden must determine whether securing Xi’s potential ability to rein in Putin and bring him to the negotiating table in a meaningful way to end the bloodshed is worth the costs.
- Contrary to the image portrayed by the media, the two recent engagements between China and the U.S. are, in fact, more constructive than they have been in a long time. Overlooking a positive trend, no matter how small a step it might be, risks missing a crucial moment of restoring healthy bilateral engagement between the world’s two largest economies and militaries...

Link to Full Issue Brief: <https://chinaus-icas.org/research/facts-over-headlines/>

### ---ICAS In the News---

On Friday, March 18, 2022, Research Associate & Program Officer Matt Geraci was quoted in *Newsweek* on the intricacies of U.S.-China engagement as it relates to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

- Read the Article: <https://www.newsweek.com/us-wants-challenge-china-now-biden-needs-xis-help-end-russias-war-1689312>



On Thursday, March 17, 2022, Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta discussed the implications of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) on regional trade in Asia with *CGTN America*’s Gerald Tan.

- Watch the Discussion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mm3YDZfGxU4>

On Friday, March 11, 2022, ICAS’ Trade ‘n Technology (TnT) event “When Data Universes Collide: U.S. and China’s Rival Approaches to Data-linked Decoupling” was highlighted and summarized by *China Daily*.

- Read the Article: <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202203/11/WS622ab40fa310cdd39bc8bf66.html>