

Of ‘Guardrails’ and ‘Floors’: Biden-Xi Meeting and Outlook for U.S.-China Relations and the Taiwan Question

Wednesday, November 30, 2022
9:00am - 10:20am EST
Virtual (Zoom)

Twenty-two months after being sworn into office, and after having declared China to be the “most consequential geopolitical challenge,” President Biden held his first in-person leaders meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Bali, Indonesia. Earlier in mid-October and early-November, President Xi was confirmed to a norm-bending third term in office while President Biden emerged more-or-less politically unscathed from a bruising mid-term election.

At a time when U.S.-China relations continue to tread water, what are the key takeaways of the 20th Party Congress and the Midterm Elections for bilateral ties in 2023? In Bali, did Presidents Biden and Xi manage to set a ‘floor’ beneath their relationship and stabilize ties? Did they achieve the 3Rs — re-establish a baseline of communications; restart dialogue channels; reassure the other of their strategic intentions? How does the centralization of power in President Xi impact the politics of cross-strait relations as well as the timeline of a potential Taiwan Strait conflict? Will the slim but emboldened Republican majority in the House have an impact on the U.S.’ Taiwan policy in 2023-24? To listen to these and other answers to pressing U.S.-China questions, tune in to the event on November 30th.

Panelists

Robert SUTTER

Professor of Practice of International Affairs, Elliott School
George Washington University

Zhiqun ZHU

Professor of Political Science and International Relations
Bucknell University

Denis SIMON

Professor of China Business and Technology &
Senior Advisor to the President for China Affairs
Duke University

Yawei LIU

Senior Advisor on China
The Carter Center

Moderator

Sourabh GUPTA

Senior Fellow & Head, Trade ‘n Technology Program
Institute for China-America Studies

Welcoming Remarks

Nong HONG

Executive Director
Institute for China-America Studies

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ICAS Trade ‘n Technology Program



Robert SUTTER is Professor of Practice of International Affairs at the Elliott School of George Washington University (2011-Present). He also served as Director of the School’s main undergraduate program involving over 2,000 students from 2013-2019. His earlier full-time position was Visiting Professor of Asian Studies at Georgetown University (2001-2011). Sutter’s government career (1968-2001) saw service as senior specialist and director of the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division of the Congressional Research Service, the National Intelligence Officer for East Asia and the Pacific at the US Government’s National Intelligence Council, the China division director at the Department of State’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research and professional staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. A PhD graduate in History and

East Asian Languages from Harvard University, Sutter has published 22 books, over 300 articles and several hundred government reports dealing with contemporary East Asian and Pacific countries and their relations with the United States.



Zhiqun ZHU is Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Bucknell University. He was Bucknell’s International Relations Department Chair (2017-2021), inaugural Director of the China Institute (2013–2017), and MacArthur Chair in East Asian politics (2008–2014). He previously taught at University of Bridgeport, Hamilton College, University of South Carolina, and Shanghai International Studies University. In the early 1990s, he was Senior Assistant to Consul for Press and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai. Professor Zhu’s teaching and research interests include Chinese politics and foreign policy, East Asian political economy, U.S.-Asian relations, and international relations theories. He is the author and editor of a dozen books and has received many research fellowships and grants in the U.S. and across East Asia. A noted scholar on Chinese foreign policy, Dr. Zhu is a

member of the National Committee on United States-China Relations and is frequently quoted by international media on Chinese and Asian affairs. He maintains a popular column for *ThinkChina* in Singapore.



Denis SIMON is Senior Adviser to the President for China Affairs at Duke and Professor of China Business and Technology at Duke’s Fuqua School of Business. He is also a Senior Advisor to the Institute for China-America Studies Trade ‘n Technology Program. Fluent in Mandarin Chinese, Simon has more than four decades of experience studying business, competition, innovation and technology strategy in China. He was awarded the China National Friendship Award by Premier Wen Jiabao. Prior to returning to Duke, Dr. Simon served as Executive Vice Chancellor at Duke Kunshan University in China (2015-2020). Simon has served as senior adviser on China and global affairs in the Office of the President at Arizona State University; vice-provost for international affairs at the University of Oregon; and professor of international affairs at Penn State University’s School of International Affairs. He also has had extensive

leadership experience in management consulting having served as General Manager of Andersen Consulting in Beijing (now Accenture) and the Founding President of Monitor Group China. Simon is the author of several books including *Corporate Strategies Towards the Pacific Rim*; *Techno-Security in an Age of Globalization*; and *China’s Emerging Technological Edge: Assessing the Role of High-End Talent*.

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Yawei LIU manages the China Focus at the Carter Center and has been a member of numerous Carter Center missions to monitor Chinese village, township, and county people’s congress deputy elections since 1997. Dr. Liu has written extensively on China’s political developments and grassroots democracy, including three edited book series: “Rural Election and Governance in Contemporary China” (Northwestern University Press, Xi’an, 2002 and 2004), “The Political Readers” (China Central Translation Bureau Press, Beijing, 2006), and “Elections & Governance” (Northwestern University Press, Xian, 2009). He is the co-author of the popular Chinese book *Obama: The Man Who Will Change America* (October 2008) and the founder and editor of the China elections and governance website www.chinaelections.org. Dr. Liu is also an adjunct professor of political science at Emory University and has been associate director of the China Research Center in Atlanta since 2007.



Nong HONG holds a PhD of interdisciplinary study of international law and international relations from the University of Alberta, Canada and held a Postdoctoral Fellowship in the University’s China Institute. She was ITLOS-Nippon Fellow for International Dispute Settlement (2008-2009) and Visiting Fellow at Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (2019), the Center of Oceans Law and Policy, University of Virginia (2009) and at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law (2007). She is concurrently a research fellow with China Institute, University of Alberta, Canada, and the National Institute for South China Sea Studies, China. Her research takes an interdisciplinary approach to examining international relations and international law, with focus on International Relations and Comparative Politics in general; ocean governance in East Asia and the Arctic; law of the sea; international security, particularly non-traditional security; and international dispute settlement and conflict resolution. Her selected publications include *China’s Role in the Arctic: Observing and Being Observed* (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), *UNCLOS and Ocean Dispute Settlement: Law and Politics in the South China Sea* (Routledge, 2012).



Sourabh GUPTA is a senior Asia-Pacific international relations policy specialist with two decades of Washington, D.C.-based experience in a think tank and political risk research and advisory capacity. His key area of expertise pertains to the intersection of international law, both international maritime law (Law of the Sea) and international trade and investment law, with the international relations of the Asia-Pacific region. His areas of specialization include: analysis of major power relationships (China-U.S., China-Japan, China-India, U.S.-Japan, U.S.-India, Japan-India; Russia-Japan relations) and key flashpoint issues in the Asia-Pacific region; analysis of outstanding territorial disputes and maritime law-related developments in Asia; and analysis of developments in World Trade Organization and Asia-Pacific investment, trade and economic regionalism-related policy and politics. He is a member of the United States Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (USCSCAP) and was a 2012 East Asia Forum Distinguished Fellow. He holds master’s degrees in security studies and international relations from the Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University and the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, respectively.

