



The ICAS Bulletin

Institute for China America Studies

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

March 27, 2024

What's Going On?

U.S. Domestic Legislative Barriers and Restrictive Trade Policies Persist



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, joined by White House adviser John Podesta, at the plenary session of the sixth U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue in Beijing, China on July 10, 2014. (Source: U.S. Department of State, Flickr)

- BIO, the world's largest trade group for the biotechnology industry, supports U.S. legislation severing ties with Chinese healthcare firms, leading to WuXi AppTec, a key player in the pharmaceutical supply chain, withdrawing from BIO.
- On March 14, the new chief U.S. climate negotiator John Podesta argued that China should make a faster transition away from coal given the country's status as the largest emitter of greenhouse gasses.
- The U.S. House China committee urged the Biden administration to impose higher tariffs on Chinese drones, citing national and economic security threats.
- On March 21, Georgia House of Representatives passed SB420, a bill prohibiting "agents" of China from purchasing farmland or land near military installations, with a 97:67 vote.
- Chinese students traveling to the United States are increasingly encountering difficulties at U.S. border control, including lengthy interrogations and visa cancellations, leading to growing skepticism about studying abroad in the U.S. among Chinese families.

From Supply Chain Struggles to Corporate Negotiations



An Apple store located in Shanghai's Pudong region. (Source: Unsplash)

- China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology asked EV carmakers ranging from BYD Co. to Geely Automobile Holdings Ltd. to significantly increase their purchases from local auto chipmakers to reduce reliance on Western imports and boost China's domestic semiconductor industry.
- On March 15, Apple agreed to settle a class-action lawsuit for \$490 million after Apple shareholders alleged that CEO Tim Cook defrauded shareholders by concealing falling iPhone demand in China.
- The owner and officials of New York-based tech company Aventura Technologies Inc. were found guilty of a scheme from 2006 to 2019, falsely labeling Chinese-made security equipment as "Made in the USA."
- Apple has been reportedly holding preliminary discussions with Baidu regarding the potential use of the Chinese company's generative artificial intelligence (AI) technology in Apple devices in China.
- At the China Development Forum on March 24, Apple CEO Tim Cook emphasized the importance of artificial intelligence in helping businesses reduce their carbon footprint and highlighted Apple's commitment to

- Brad Setser and other U.S. economists are openly cautioning that the ramped-up mass production of various products, including cars, appliances, computer chips, and electronics, by Chinese factories in global markets may trigger new trade tensions with the United States and Europe.

Associated News Sources:

["Biotech Trade Group Will Support a US Bill Limiting China Ties"](#) Bloomberg, March 14 [Paywall]

["New US climate envoy wants China to speed up coal transition"](#) France 24, March 14

["US lawmakers ask Biden administration to increase tariffs on Chinese-made drones"](#) Reuters, March 20

["Land purchases by Chinese 'agents' would be limited under Georgia bill; Democrats say it's racist"](#) AP, March 21

["Chinese students, academics say they're facing extra scrutiny entering U.S."](#) The Washington Post, March 14 [Paywall]

["Flood of Chinese imports could renew trade tensions, threaten U.S. jobs"](#) The Washington Post, March 18 [Paywall]

environmental sustainability.

- China Evergrande Group has decided to abandon its efforts to restructure billions of dollars in offshore debt in the United States, following a Hong Kong court's order for the heavily indebted developer to liquidate.

Associated News Sources:

["China Urges EV Makers to Buy Local Chips as US Clash Deepens"](#) Bloomberg, March 15 [Paywall]

["Apple reaches \\$490 million settlement over CEO Cook's China sales comments"](#) Reuters, March 15

["New York tech company admits selling Chinese security products as American-made"](#) The Washington Times, March 20

["Apple Held Talks With China's Baidu Over AI for Its Devices"](#) The Wall Street Journal, March 22 [Paywall]

["Apple's Cook Tells China Forum AI Is Key for Climate Battle"](#) Bloomberg, March 24 [Paywall]

["China Evergrande Drops Debt Restructuring Applications in U.S."](#) MSN, March 25

Statements and Comments Influence Activities and Perceptions



(Source: Unsplash)

- Chinese students are increasingly opting against studying in the United States, with concerns about safety and rising costs being cited as key factors.
- On March 18, a People's Liberation Army social media account accused the United States of threatening global security after a report that SpaceX's Starshield unit is developing the satellite network under a classified \$1.8 billion contract with the National Reconnaissance Office.
- U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken praised the strengthening of U.S.-Philippines defense ties during a visit to Manila and emphasized that the U.S. was engaged in intense diplomacy to reaffirm international law.
- China foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian stated that the U.S. had "no right" to intervene in the South China

Shifting Geopolitical & Security Dynamics in U.S.-China Relations



(Source: Getty Images, Royalty-Free)

- During a trade mission to Manila, U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo announced plans to invest over \$1 billion in the Philippines' tech sector, aiming to double semiconductor factories and reduce reliance on China.
- According to former U.S. officials, former President Donald Trump reportedly authorized a covert CIA operation in 2019 to influence Chinese public opinion against its government by spreading negative narratives online and leaking disparaging intelligence to news outlets.
- Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian criticized U.S. ambassador Nicholas Burns for his negative comments about China and warned that the remarks of Burns risk undermining recent efforts to improve the

Sea, following Secretary of State Antony Blinken's assertion of U.S.-Philippines defense ties.

- China expressed strong opposition to U.S. assertions that Arunachal Pradesh belongs to India as tensions over the disputed border shared by both countries continue.
- Top U.S. admiral Admiral John Aquilino testified that China is building its military and nuclear arsenal and appears committed to the ambition of potentially invading Taiwan by 2027, highlighting the surge of China's official defense budget by 16% despite economic challenges.

Associated News Sources:

["After the pandemic, young Chinese again want to study abroad, just not so much in the US"](#) AP, March 16

["China's military, state media slam U.S. after Reuters report on SpaceX spy satellites"](#) Reuters, March 18

["Blinken lauds 'extraordinary' expansion of defense ties with the Philippines amid China tensions"](#) NBC News, March 19

["China Says US Has 'No Right' To Interfere In South China Sea"](#) Barrons, March 19

["China firmly opposes US remarks on Arunachal Pradesh, foreign ministry says"](#) Reuters, March 21

["China on Track to Be Ready for Taiwan Invasion by 2027, US Says"](#) Bloomberg, March 20 [Paywall]

relationship between the two nations.

- Baimadajie Angwang, a former New York City Police (NYPD) officer, is suing the NYPD for ending his employment after federal prosecutors charged him for allegedly spying for China and then dropped the charges.
- After the U.S. State Department called the new Hong Kong security law "poorly defined and incredibly vague," the Chinese embassy in the U.S. expressed strong dissatisfaction and opposition to the comment, labeling it as "denigration and smearing."

Associated News Sources:

["Observers: US Investments in Philippines Seen Easing Reliance on China"](#) Voice of America, March 14

["Exclusive: Trump launched CIA covert influence operation against China"](#) Reuters, March 14

["China hits out at US ambassador Nicholas Burns for making negative comments 'on multiple occasions'"](#) South China Morning Post, March 19 [Paywall]

["A police officer was accused of spying for China. The charges were dropped, but the NYPD fired him"](#) The Washington Post, March 20 [Paywall]

["China hits back at US for criticising new Hong Kong security law"](#) Reuters, March 21

TikTok and Evolving Global Trade Dynamics



Container cranes along an unspecified port.
(Source: Unsplash)

- On March 13, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill by a vote of 352:65 that could result in a U.S. ban of TikTok unless it separates from its Chinese parent company, ByteDance.
- U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen is scheduled to meet representatives of American businesses in Guangzhou, China to address their overcapacity and intellectual property concerns before traveling to Beijing in early April for face-to-face meetings with Chinese counterparts.
- Leaders in the emerging Western nuclear fusion industry

- In Other News -



Four IDF soldiers standing at a hill near Gush Etzion in the West Bank in 2018.
(Source: Unsplash)

["China protests Taiwan minister's role at Seoul summit backed by U.S."](#) Reuters, March 18

["US resolution on Gaza ceasefire and hostage deal vetoed by Russia and China"](#) The Guardian, March 22

["China and Russia challenge US claim to mineral-rich stretches of seabed"](#) Financial Times, March 25 [Paywall]

["Bad Haircut? A Hot Chinese App Is Giving Americans Blunt Advice"](#) The Wall Street Journal, March 23 [Paywall]

["Chinese and western scientists identify 'red lines' on AI risks"](#) Financial Times, March 18 [Paywall]

are meeting in Washington D.C., the last week of March to address funding challenges and avoid falling behind China in the race to develop and build commercially viable reactors.

Associated News Sources:

[“Live updates: House passes bill that could lead to US ban of TikTok”](#) CNN, March 13

[“China’s Protest of TikTok Bill ‘Supremely Ironical,’ US Envoy Says”](#) Bloomberg, March 14 [Paywall]

[“The contrasting tales of TikTok and Nippon Steel”](#) Financial Times, March 19 [Paywall]

[“Nuclear fusion backers meet in US capital as competition with China looms”](#) Reuters, March 20

[“Exclusive | On return trip to China, Treasury head Janet Yellen to hear US firms: sources”](#) South China Morning Post, March 25 [Paywall]

What Are We Reading?

- Bloomberg: [“China’s Water Cannons Test US-Philippines Pact in Disputed Sea”](#) by Andreo Calozzo (March 25, 2024) [Paywall]
- The Wall Street Journal: [“U.S.-China Decoupling Poses Supply-Chain Risks for Drug Companies”](#) by David Wainer (March 23, 2024) [Paywall]
- The New York Times: [“‘Cherry on the Cake’: How China Views the U.S. Crackdown on TikTok”](#) by Ravi Mattu (March 23, 2024) [Paywall]
- The Hill: [“Congress is ignoring ‘reciprocity’ in US-China economic relations”](#) by Jeff Moon (March 22, 2024)
- The New York Times: [“In One Key A.I. Metric, China Pulls Ahead of the U.S.: Talent”](#) by Paul Mozur and Cade Metz (March 22, 2024) [Paywall]
- Brookings Institution: [“Who is America’s top commercial partner? \(Hint: It’s not China.\)”](#) by Daniel S. Hamilton (March 21, 2024)
- The Wall Street Journal: [“Huawei’s Return Is Case Study in U.S. Power—and Its Limits”](#) by Jacky Wong (March 20, 2024) [Paywall]
- Financial Times: [“The contrasting tales of TikTok and Nippon Steel”](#) by the Financial Times Editorial Board (March 19, 2024) [Paywall]
- The Wall Street Journal: [“American CEOs Get Ready to Go to Beijing. But Who Will Receive Them?”](#) by Lingling Wei (March 19, 2024) [Paywall]
- Foreign Policy Research Institute: [“China’s Two Meetings and What They Mean for the United States”](#) by June Teufel Dreyer (March 18, 2024)
- The Wire China: [“Nancy Pelosi on Fighting the Fight over China - The Wire China”](#) by Bob Davis (March 17, 2024)
- The Wall Street Journal: [“From the Deep Sea to D.C.—How China Fears Have Put Ocean-Floor Mining on Washington’s Radar”](#) by Yusuf Khan (March 15, 2024) [Paywall]
- Foreign Affairs: [“Playing Both Sides of the U.S.-Chinese Rivalry”](#) by Sheena Chestnut Greitens and Isaac Kardon (March 15, 2024) [Paywall]
- The Washington Post: [“Chinese students, academics say they’re facing extra scrutiny entering U.S.”](#) by Lily Kuo and Cate Cadell (March 14, 2024) [Paywall]

What's Happening Around Town?

- Past Events -


- [BRI, Ports, and Debt: Getting the China Facts Straight](#)
March 26 hosted by Wilson Center
- [The global economy: America up, China down](#)
March 21 hosted by *The Economist*
- [Symbiosis or Standoff: U.S.-China relations and climate action](#)
March 20 hosted by CERAWEEK by S&P Global

- Upcoming Events -

- [U.S.-China Scholarly Recoupling: The Path Forward | CSIS Events](#)
March 28 hosted by Center for Strategic & International Studies
- [New Horizons: Navigating the Future of US-China Educational Exchanges](#)
April 4 hosted by China Institute

What ICAS Is Up To

---Upcoming TnT Program Event---



ICAS
Institute for China-America Studies


The United States, China and AI: What Does Cooperation Look Like

Wednesday, April 10, 2024
9:30am - 10:30am EST
Virtual (Zoom)

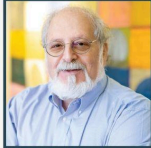
Artificial Intelligence has emerged as an unlikely area of U.S.-China cooperation amid their race for supremacy in cutting-edge technologies. In November 2023, President Biden and President Xi agreed to establish a gov't-to-gov't mechanism to discuss AI at their summit in Woodside, California, and a US-China working group on AI is expected to hold talks later this spring. Alongside, American AI companies have engaged in discussions with Chinese AI experts, and leading scientists of both nations have jointly put out calls for tighter controls on the technology.

As the U.S.-China working group on AI convenes later this spring, what are the set of priority areas to be discussed? Have the parameters of their discussion been established? What are the areas of common interest that are drawing the two sides together? Do the U.S. and China share a common vision of the core 'red lines' that powerful AI systems should not cross? Do they trust their counterpart enough to limit their own capability voluntarily? Can the U.S.-China talks, along with their discussions with the EU, serve as a building block for a multilateral treaty, say, on the lines of the 1960s-era Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty? Furthermore, what is the particular Chinese interest in these talks? And where does AI sit within the larger scheme of China's technological advancement aspirations? To listen to these and other answers and insights on pressing U.S.-China AI policy questions, tune in to the event on April 10th.

Panelists



Paul TRIOLO
Associate Partner for China and
Technology Policy Lead
Albright Stonebridge Group



Denis SIMON
Distinguished Fellow
Institute for China-America Studies

Moderator: **Sourabh GUPTA** - Senior Fellow & Head of Trade 'n Technology Program
(*Institute for China-America Studies*)

Welcoming Remarks: **Nong HONG** - Executive Director (*Institute for China-America Studies*)

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RSVP: https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_Z8ZQuG1QStyuvv8ooCkg

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[View the Event Program](#)

[View & Share Poster](#)

[RSVP](#)

[Learn More](#)

---Upcoming MAP Event---

The United States and China's Global Maritime Relations: Inevitable Competition or Feasible Collaboration?

Thursday, April 18, 2024

10:00am - 11:30am EST

In-Person (Washington, DC) & Online (Zoom)

As science and technology continue to advance, the ocean, covering 71% of the Earth's surface, is undeniably assuming an increasingly vital role for humanity. Consequently, nations are diligently pursuing their respective maritime interests, revealing both commonalities and distinctions. The United States and China, widely recognized as major powers in contemporary international politics and prominent maritime nations, are increasingly focusing their attention on global maritime domains.

How do the maritime policies of China and the United States differ in terms of strategic objectives and priorities? What are the primary areas of competition between China and the United States in global maritime affairs? How do the maritime disputes, such as those in the South China Sea, impact the overall relations between China and the United States? Are there any ongoing cooperative efforts between China and the United States in global maritime security or environmental protection? What role do international law and institutions play in shaping the interactions between China and the United States in global maritime relations? How do the military doctrines and strategies of China and the United States intersect or diverge in the maritime domain?

In her new book *US-China Global Maritime Relations*, Dr. Nong Hong explores the U.S.-China maritime relationship within the global context and investigates six key maritime regions: the South China Sea, the Northeast Asia waters, the Indian Ocean, the South Pacific Ocean, as well as the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Through detailed observations, this book offers a comprehensive exploration of these regions and their significance in shaping the dynamics between the two nations.

This event will feature the author of *US-China Global Maritime Relations*, who will discuss the evolution and execution of maritime strategies pursued by both the United States and China. Moreover, three panelists will provide their insights on this subject, representing perspectives from the United States, China, and a third-party viewpoint.

[RSVP \(Online\)](#)

[RSVP \(In-Person\)](#)

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ICAS
Institute for China-America Studies



THE CHINA INSTITUTE
阿尔伯塔大学中国学院

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Introduction

Philippe RHEAULT
Director
The China Institute,
University of Alberta

Book Talk

Nong HONG
Executive Director &
Senior Fellow
Institute for China-America Studies

Panelists

Gregory POLING
Director, Asia Maritime
Transparency Initiative
Center for Strategic and
International Studies

Dingli SHEN
Professor Emeritus and Former
Executive Dean, Institute of
International Studies
Fudan University

Gilang KEMBARA
Research Fellow,
S. Rajaratnam School of
International Studies
Nanyang Technological University

Learn More & RSVP: chinaus-icas.org/event/the-united-states-and-chinas-global-maritime-relations-inevitable-competition-or-feasible-collaboration/

---ICAS Expert Voices Initiative Interview---

Expert Voices Initiative Interview - Wu Shicun
March 15, 2024



On March 15, 2024, the Institute for China-America Studies (ICAS) Expert Voices Initiative (EVI) conducted an interview with Dr. Wu Shicun, Chairman of the ICAS Academic Advisory Board, to discuss the current state of the U.S.-China bilateral relationship, summarize the trending topics at the 2024 Munich Security Conference, assess the situation in the South China Sea as tensions rise between China and the Philippines, and examine the value of people-to-people exchanges following the joint vision of the San Francisco Summit between President Xi Jinping and President Joe Biden. The interview was hosted virtually via Zoom by Research Associate Yilun Zhang.

The interview began with an overview of the current state of the U.S.-China bilateral relationship and how the election result in Taiwan and the upcoming 2024 U.S. elections may impact the bilateral relationship in the near term. Among other topics, Dr. Wu Shicun also provided a comprehensive review of his in-person experience at the 2024 Munich Security Conference where Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi delivered a speech outlining China's vision to the western countries. Following a lengthy discussion on South China Sea perspectives, Dr. Wu Shicun stressed the critical value of people-to-people exchanges, especially Track-II dialogues, during a time when domestic politics is trumping foreign policymaking. The discussion concluded on a positive note that the two countries should correct their misunderstanding about each other and embrace positive views that allow coexistence.

[Watch the Full Interview](#)

[Learn More about the ICAS Expert Voices Initiative](#)

---MAP Commentary---

Taking Down “Made-in-China” Cranes Cannot Address U.S. Weakness in The Shipping Industry

By Yilun Zhang
March 19, 2024

Just a little more than a year since the notorious “Chinese balloon incident,” a congressional probe of Chinese-built cargo cranes revealed the shocking finding last week that there was communications equipment emplaced within the cranes that did not appear to support normal operations. The Chinese company that produced the cranes, the Shanghai Zhenhua Heavy Industries (ZPMC), denied the findings and called the probe “misleading.”

[Read the Commentary](#)

---MAP Commentary---

How Ukraine war and sanctions on Russia put Arctic cooperation on ice

By Nong Hong
March 17, 2024

Over the last two years, there has been a big shift in Arctic geopolitics. After the Ukraine war broke out, Sweden and Finland departed from their long-standing military non-alignment policy and applied to join Nato. Sweden officially became a member of the transatlantic security alliance this month, while Finland joined last April. With Nato extending its northern reach, Russia has been keeping a close eye on the Nordic Response, military drills between Finland, Norway and Sweden that represent the Arctic arm of the Nato-wide Steadfast Defender military exercise this year, its largest ever...

[Read the Commentary](#)

---Blog Post---

Event Summary: Taking On the China Challenge with Congressman Kevin Hern, Hudson Institute

*By Amanda Jin
March 14, 2024*

On March 8, 2024, the Hudson Institute held an event where U.S. Rep. Kevin Hern (OK-1) and Hudson's Senior Fellow Rebecca Heinrichs had a conversation about "how Congress can restore America's advantage over the People's Republic of China in the new cold war." The event was titled "Taking On the China Challenge with Congressman Kevin Hern." The event occurred shortly after Rep. Hern introduced the Counter Communist China Act and after the House Committee on Energy and Commerce advanced a bill to require ByteDance to divest interests and influence from TikTok. Rep. Hern was also a co-sponsor of the TikTok bill.

During the event, Rep. Hern and Ms. Heinrichs primarily discussed their concerns for China and ongoing congressional actions to address these concerns—most notably through the TikTok bill and the Counter Communist China Act...

[Read the Post](#)

---ICAS In the News---

On Monday, March 18, 2024, Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta was [quoted](#) by *China Daily* on TikTok and its future fate in Congress and the courts.

- "TikTok's situation is unique because it engages the US Constitution's First Amendment rights too. This could lead to it stalling in the US Senate, as senators examine the underlying national security argument as well as the precedent of potentially banning a platform of information and exchange of views. And it takes very few in the Senate to stall a piece of legislation."

On Monday, March 18, 2024, Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta was [quoted](#) by *People's Daily* on the Global Civilization Initiative. [In Chinese]

On Thursday, March 14, 2024, Distinguished Fellow Denis Simon was [quoted](#) by *The Wall Street Journal* on the U.S.-China Science & Technology agreement extension.

- The thorniest problem, Simon said, has been the data issue, since it involves different players across China's government.

On Wednesday, March 13, 2024, Research Associate & Administrative Officer Yilun Zhang was [quoted](#) in *South China Morning Post* on the delay in China-Japan-ROK trilateral dialogue.

- "Holding the summit now will only produce two possible outcomes: tangible outcomes that are too small to change anything, or an impasse that undermines confidence of the very platform itself."