



The ICAS Bulletin

Institute for China America Studies

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

May 8, 2024

What's Going On?

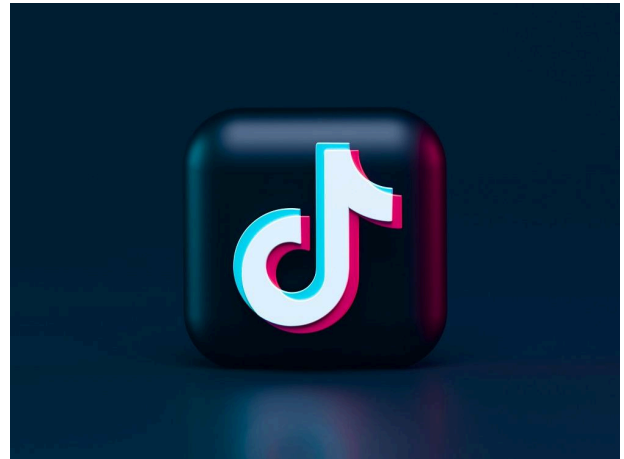
Eyes on Secretary Blinken in a Late-April Visit to Shanghai and Beijing



Secretary of State Antony Blinken holds a meet and greet with U.S. Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns (center) at the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai, China on April 25, 2024. (Official State Department photo by Chuck Kennedy, Public Domain)

- At the end of April, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Shanghai and Beijing for three days, meeting with several Chinese officials as well as American citizens in his second visit to the country in less than a year.
- On April 26, Blinken met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing to discuss a lengthy list of timely and contentious topics—including Russia’s military support from China—emphasizing to President Xi that the U.S. is “committed to maintaining and strengthening lines of communication” to prevent “any miscommunications, any misperceptions and any miscalculations.”
- President Xi, among other remarks, told Blinken that the U.S. inability to accept China’s development “in a positive light” is a “fundamental issue” that needs to be addressed. President Xi also noted the positive progress made since last November and how the U.S. and China “should be partners, not rivals.”
- Blinken also met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi for five and a half hours, during which Wang Yi noted

Chatter Abounds After Congress Clears U.S. Domestic ‘Ban-or-Sell’ TikTok Bill



(Source: UnSplash)

- Despite legislative movement in the U.S. and its own protective measures against Chinese technology, officials in Europe are not looking to apply a blanket TikTok ban, which one called “quite American,” as they have their Digital Services Act and other methods to address their situation.
- As the pile of lawsuits accusing social media platforms—such as TikTok—of addicting American youth continues to grow, along with accusations of differing levels of protections based on country, TikTok’s Beijing-based owner ByteDance is reportedly not sharing information with U.S. lawyers on the basis that such information is irrelevant to their cases.
- 58% of the responders to a two-day *Reuters/Ipsos* poll agreed with a statement that the Chinese government uses TikTok to “influence American public opinion” while 13% disagreed and the remainder were either unsure or did not respond.
- On April 24, U.S. President Joe Biden signed a foreign aid package into law that included a long-debated bill

U.S.-China relations is “beginning to stabilize” but negativity and “disruptions” are still growing and interfering. Both sides expressed a desire to be clear and direct about their countries’ stances on relevant issues.

- Secretary Blinken also met with members of the U.S. business and university communities in Shanghai, spent time at a basketball game, and explored the city with U.S. Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns.

Associated News Sources:

[“In Beijing, Blinken and Xi stress need for continued U.S.-China dialogue to avoid ‘any miscommunications.’”](#)

CBS News, April 26

[“China’s Xi says the U.S. needs to accept Beijing’s rise for bilateral relations to improve.”](#) CNBC, April 26

[“China warns US not to step on its ‘red lines.’”](#) BBC, April 26

[“Xi tells Blinken that China and the US should be ‘partners, not rivals.’”](#) France 24, April 26

[“Blinken meets with Xi as U.S. objects to China’s support of Russia.”](#) Axios, April 26

[“Xi Warns Blinken Against ‘Vicious Competition’ Between US, China.”](#) Bloomberg, April 25 [Paywall]

giving TikTok’s owner ByteDance one year to sell TikTok or have the app be banned from operating within the U.S. on the grounds of protecting U.S. user data and national security.

- ByteDance denied foreign media reports that the company was looking to sell TikTok, clarifying that there are no such plans.

Associated News Sources:

[“Europe is nowhere close to banning TikTok,”](#) Politico, May 3

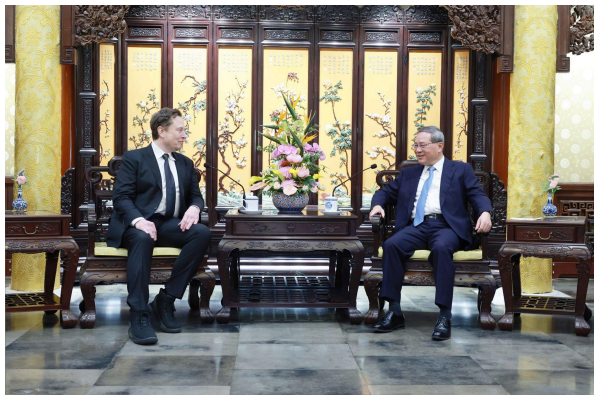
[“TikTok Fights to Keep China Platform Out of US Addiction Suits,”](#) Bloomberg, May 2 [Paywall]

[“Most Americans see TikTok as a Chinese influence tool, Reuters/Ipsos poll finds,”](#) Reuters, May 1

[“Here’s more details about the access ByteDance had to U.S. TikTok user data,”](#) Fortune, April 30 [Paywall]

[“ByteDance says it won’t sell TikTok business in US,”](#) The Hill, April 26

The U.S.-China Electric Vehicles Market: Collaborating or Competing?



Chinese Premier Li Qiang meets with Elon Musk, CEO of the U.S. electric carmaker Tesla, in Beijing, capital of China, April 28, 2024. (Photo by Wang Ye/Xinhua via Getty Images)

- Chinese EV makers Nio and BYD have made a deal to source batteries for a new, lower-priced EV brand, to be called “Onvo” in English and “Ledao” in Chinese, which is designed to directly compete with Tesla’s Model Y.

- Tesla CEO Elon Musk made an unannounced visit to Beijing, during which he met with Chinese Premier Li Qiang and gained approval from local authorities for Tesla cars regarding Chinese data security rules.

- During Musk’s visit Tesla’s ‘Full Self-Driving’ technology also received backing and Tesla and Chinese search engine Baidu agreed to partner on

The U.S. 2024 Presidential Election Bleeding into U.S.-China Relations



President Joe Biden delivers remarks on March 20, 2024 at the Intel Ocotillo Campus in Chandler, Arizona, announcing CHIPS and Science Act grants to Intel to expand U.S. semiconductor production. (Official White House Photo by Adam Schultz, Public Domain)

- Speaking at a campaign fundraising event in Washington, D.C., President Joe Biden called China, Japan and Russia “xenophobic” countries, reflecting similar remarks he made last month in reference to China’s unwillingness to accept immigration.

- Speaking in an exclusive interview with Fox, former president and presumptive presidential candidate Donald Trump talked several times about how “China is taking all our business” and that “it’s got to be stopped.”

- A group of seven Senate Democrats sent a letter to

developing mapping and navigation systems for Tesla's autonomous driving system, though other Chinese automakers are keeping competition hot.

- Leaders at U.S.-based General Motors (GM) continue to say GM is "committed to China" over the long term in spite of major shifts in consumer sentiment and local competition.

- Two Chinese automobile firms—self-driving firm Momenta and Geely-owned Zeekr—have filed to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

- A group of graphite miners are asking Washington to impose a 25% tariff on three China-sourced graphite products used in automobile batteries.

Associated News Sources:

["Exclusive: China's Nio turns to rival BYD to power new EV brand."](#) Reuters, May 7

["Tesla Faces Strong Self-Driving Rivals in China."](#) The Wall Street Journal, May 7 [Paywall]

["U.S. automakers like GM are rapidly losing ground in China, once an engine for growth."](#) CNBC, May 6

["GM-Backed Self-Driving Firm Momenta Said to File for IPO in US."](#) Bloomberg, May 6 [Paywall]

["A Tesla rival in China is eyeing a \\$5 billion IPO in the U.S."](#) Quartz, May 6

["Graphite miners lobby US govt to impose levy on China-sourced EV material."](#) Reuters, April 30

["Musk makes surprise visit to Beijing as Tesla's China-made cars pass data security rules."](#) CNBC, April 29

President Biden urging him to raise tariffs on China, arguing that "any reduction...allows China to gain a competitive advantage over hardworking Americans."

- The newly-restructured House select committee on U.S.-China competition is closely examining China's use of "discourse warfare," or propaganda, especially as it relates to foreign elections.

- In an interview following his three-day trip to China, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the U.S. has seen "evidence of attempts [by China] to influence and arguably interfere" with the U.S. election, which breaks a commitment made by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Associated News Sources:

["Biden Says Japan 'Xenophobic' Along With China, Russia,"](#) Bloomberg, May 3 [Paywall]

["Exclusive: Donald Trump's claims on abortions, Biden policies, China,"](#) Fox 2 Detroit, May 2

["Schumer, at-risk Dems ask Biden to hike tariffs on China,"](#) Politico, May 1

["China committee eyes supply chain, biotech as Moolenaar takes helm,"](#) Roll Call, April 30

["Blinken tells CNN the US has seen evidence of China attempting to influence upcoming US elections,"](#) CNN, April 26

Other U.S. Private Sector Shifts Within the China Market



A large Starbucks logo posted on the side of a building in Yangpu District, Shanghai, China, taken in April 2024. (Credit: Declan Sun via Unsplash)

- After losing ground with its core customer base in the U.S., Starbucks sets its eyes on expanding in China, reportedly planning to open stores at an average of one every nine hours through 2025.

- Apple announces a problematic 4% drop in sales in the

- In Other News -



A panda lounging in a tree at the San Diego Zoo in December 2014. (Credit: MattCC716 via Flickr, CC2.0)

["China's climate envoy to visit Washington this week, the State Department says."](#) Reuters, May 7

["China's cheating threatens to wreck Paris Olympics, US anti-drugs chief says."](#) Politico, May 6

["New US strategy looks to blunt Russian and Chinese](#)

first quarter of 2024, with that percentage doubling in China during the same time period amidst a resurgence in popularity from its Chinese competitor Huawei.

- On May 2, U.S. law firm Mayer Brown announced plans to separate from its current Hong Kong operations and then form a new partnership "to continue its presence in Hong Kong with a practice that aligns with our strategic priorities."

- U.S. fast food chain McDonald's announced plans to nearly double its number of locations in China to more than 10,000 by the end of 2028 as it continues to release regional-specific menu items and create unique store features to draw Chinese customers away from its China-based competitors such as Tastien.

Associated News Sources:

["Starbucks Is Running Out of Americans to Drink Its Expensive Coffee,"](#) *The Wall Street Journal*, May 3 [Paywall]

["Apple Reports Decline in Sales and Profit Amid iPhone Struggles in China,"](#) *The New York Times*, May 2 [Paywall]

["US law firm Mayer Brown to split from Hong Kong partnership,"](#) *Reuters*, May 2

["McDonald's Supersizes China Bet as Corporate America Pulls Back,"](#) *The Wall Street Journal*, April 29 [Paywall]

[influence in cyberspace,"](#) *CNN*, May 6

["Blinken: US delivering for Pacific islands despite China's reach,"](#) *Voice of America*, May 4

["New US-Backed Defense 'Squad' to Counter China in Indo-Pacific,"](#) *Bloomberg*, May 3 [Paywall]

["U.S. officials wary of Chinese plans for floating nuclear plants,"](#) *The Washington Post*, May 2 [Paywall]

["US, Philippines Eye Agreement to Cut China Nickel Dominance,"](#) *Bloomberg*, May 1 [Paywall]

["Binance crypto boss Changpeng Zhao sentenced to 4 months in prison,"](#) *BBC*, May 1

["US imposes sanctions on more than a dozen companies in China for support of Russia's war in Ukraine,"](#) *CNN*, May

1

["US labor official calls on companies to exit China's Xinjiang,"](#) *Reuters*, April 30

["San Diego Zoo will receive two new giant pandas from China after nearly all pandas in U.S. were returned,"](#) *CBS News*, April 29

["Chinese professors warn of 'culture of fear' in Florida after DeSantis' hiring restrictions,"](#) *Politico*, April 29

["US Creates Team to Counter China's Trade 'Coercion' Tactics,"](#) *Bloomberg*, April 28 [Paywall]

["Key Solar Panel Ingredient Is Made in the U.S.A. Again,"](#) *The New York Times*, April 25 [Paywall]

What Are We Reading? ↓

- *Foreign Affairs*: ["America's China Strategy Has a Credibility Problem"](#) by Emily Kilcrease (May 7) [Paywall]
- *Foreign Policy*: ["Washington Keeps Choosing the Wrong Moment to Challenge China"](#) by Andrei Lungu (May 6) [Paywall]
- *NPR*: ["China makes cheap electric vehicles. Why can't American shoppers buy them?"](#) by Camila Domonoske (May 6)
- *The Wire China*: ["U.S. Big Tech in China: Too Big to Bail"](#) by Ngor Luong, Sam Bresnick and Kathleen Curlee (May 5) [Paywall]
- *Business Insider*: ["China has a lot more missiles – with US warships and bases in its sights"](#) by Chris Panella (May 4)
- *Financial Times*: ["Can Elon Musk's Tesla keep straddling the US and China?"](#) by Edward White, Stephen Morris and Peter Campbell (May 3) [Paywall]
- *The Wall Street Journal*: ["How China Sees U.S. Campus Protests"](#) by Liyan Qi (May 3) [Paywall]
- *The Washington Post*: ["The dangerous new call for regime change in Beijing"](#) by Fareed Zakaria (May 3) [Paywall]
- *Bloomberg*: ["China Has 350 Warships. The US Has 290. That's a Problem."](#) by James Stavridis (May 1) [Paywall]
- *Pew Research Center*: ["Americans Remain Critical of China"](#) by Christine Huang, Laura Silver and Laura Clancy (May 1)
- *The Wall Street Journal*: ["Beijing Braces for a Rematch of Trump vs. China"](#) by Lingling Wei (May 1) [Paywall]
- *The Washington Post*: ["How China's ruling party fuels the U.S. fentanyl crisis"](#) by Mike Gallagher and Raja Krishnamoorthi (May 1) [Paywall]

- *The Washington Post*: [“Is Bougainville the next battleground between China and the U.S.?”](#) by Michael Miller (May 1) [Paywall]
- Center for Strategic & International Studies: [“Legacy Chip Overcapacity in China: Myth and Reality”](#) by Paul Triolo (April 30)
- Center for a New American Security: [“Beyond China's Black Box”](#) by Jacob Stokes (April 30)
- *Foreign Policy*: [“How Washington Should Manage Rising Middle Powers”](#) by Christopher Chivvis and Beatrix Geaghan-Breiner (April 30) [Paywall]
- *Semafor*: [“AI in Africa opens up new battlefield for China, US”](#) by Martin K.N Siele (April 30)
- United States Institute of Peace: [“Blinken’s China Trip Shows Both Sides Want to Stabilize Ties”](#) by Rosie Levine, Carla Freeman and Andrew Scobell (April 30)
- *The Wall Street Journal*: [“China Has Crossed Biden’s Red Line on Ukraine”](#) by Matt Pottinger (April 30) [Paywall]
- *Bloomberg*: [“TikTok, Tesla Show US-China Battle Over Data Is Just Beginning”](#) by Sarah Zheng and Josh Xiao (April 29) [Paywall]
- *Bloomberg*: [“Xi Is on a Mission to Drive a Wedge Between US and Europe”](#) (April 29) [Paywall]
- *Financial Times*: [“China’s problem is excess savings, not too much capacity”](#) by Michael Pettis (April 29) [Paywall]
- *The Wire China*: [“How to Bridge the Transatlantic Gap on China”](#) by Andrew Cainey (April 28) [Paywall]
- *The New York Times*: [“A Chinese Firm Is America’s Favorite Drone Maker. Except in Washington.”](#) by Kate Kelly (April 26) [Paywall]

What’s Happening Around Town? ↓

- Past Events -

- [Policy Matters: Congress’s Role in Countering China](#)
May 7 hosted by Hudson Institute
- [Made in China: When US-China Interests Converged to Transform Global Trade](#)
May 6 hosted by Wilson Center
- [World Stage China: Dmitri Alperovitch](#)
April 30 hosted by *The Washington Post*
- [Beyond China’s Black Box: Trends Shaping China’s Foreign and Security Policy Decision-Making under Xi Jinping](#)
April 30 hosted by Center for a New American Security
- [Exposing the PRC’s Distortion of UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 to Press its Claim Over Taiwan](#)
April 29 hosted by The German Marshall Fund of the United States
- [Reuters NEXT Newsmaker Interview: Janet Yellen](#)
April 25 hosted by *Reuters*

- Upcoming Events -

- [Two years into the Biden administration’s Indo-Pacific Strategy: A conversation with Assistant Secretary Daniel Kritenbrink](#)
May 14 hosted by Brookings
- [The Pernicious Impact of China’s Anti-Secession Law](#)
May 15 hosted by Hudson Institute
- [Redefining Multilateralism: Shaping the Future of Global Governance](#)
May 17 hosted by *Foreign Policy* and United Nations University
- [Can China offer a real alternative to liberal democracy?](#)
May 22 hosted by Brookings
- [The Senate Perspective on the US-China Rivalry with Bill Hagerty](#)
May 23 hosted by Hudson Institute
- [Wilson China Fellowship Conference 2024](#)
June 3 hosted by Wilson Center

What ICAS Is Up To ↓

---MAP Commentary---



Rivalries aside, it's vital for US and Chinese navies to keep talking

*By Nong Hong
April 30, 2024*

April 23 marked the 75th anniversary of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy in China, celebrated with various activities showcasing its achievements, capabilities and contributions to national defence and maritime security...

...The 19th Western Pacific Naval Symposium provided a good example of a forum for dialogue and cooperation among naval officials from diverse nations, including the US and China.

[Continue Reading](#)

This commentary was [originally](#) released by South China Morning Post on April 30, 2024.

---TnT Commentary---

Rebooting China's High-Quality Growth and Development

*By Sourabh Gupta
April 30, 2024*

With China's post-COVID economy slow-to-attain takeoff velocity, Western detractors have been quick to pour scorn on China's near and longer-term growth prospects. Much like the overstated growth prospects of 1950s Soviet Union and 1980s Japan, China's prospects have been greatly exaggerated...

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This commentary was [originally](#) released by China-US Focus on April 30, 2024.

---Commentary---

US must Cooperate with China, Lone Ranger Mentality Outdated

*By Denis Simon
April 28, 2024*

Recently, several senior American officials visited China, bringing positive signals to the China-US relationship. However, at the same time, the US side is still pushing forward its strategy of containing China, with negative factors in the relationship still prominent.

Denis Simon (Simon), a distinguished researcher at the Washington-based Institute for China America Studies, said in an interview with Global Times (GT) reporters Qian Jiayin and Xing Xiaojing that the US needs to realize that China and the US must become partners and deal with conflicts and changes in the international system together. In today's world of innovation and technological development, there is no such thing as a lone ranger, and the era of going it alone is outdated...

[Continue Reading](#)

This article was [originally](#) released by Global Times on April 28, 2024.

---TnT Commentary---

Biden's New Trade Row with China is more than just Election Gimmicks

By Yilun Zhang
April 26, 2024

It sounds as if the Trump-era U.S.-China trade war—which technically has never reached an epilogue—is back again. On the same day, the Biden administration called for a tripled tariff on Chinese steel and aluminum and initiated a Section 301 investigation on Chinese maritime logistics and shipbuilding practices.

The Biden administration’s decisions did not come out of nowhere. The term “overcapacity” may be a relatively fresh soundbite that the White House recently pulled out of the dictionary to address its concerns over China’s industrial policies and growth strategy, but Washington’s grievance towards China’s industrial subsidies that fuel “excessive capacities” and its subsequent “anti-dumping” measures against Chinese products, such as solar panels, has been a long-standing theme in the bilateral trade relationship that can be traced back to the 2010s—and earlier...

[Continue Reading](#)

---Academic Engagement---

Xinhua Institute Delegation Discusses U.S.-China Relations with ICAS Scholars

April 25, 2024

On Thursday, April 25, 2024, a delegation from the Xinhua Institute (XHInst) met with ICAS scholars to discuss a variety of topics related to U.S.-China relations.

The XHInst delegation was led by Mr. Cui Feng (Vice President, XHInst), accompanied by other Research Fellows.

The discussion included the exchange of perspectives and opinions on the current trend in the U.S.-China bilateral relationship, the economic and trade relations between the world’s two largest economies, the Belt and Road Initiative and U.S. responses to that initiative, U.S. legislative actions that could have a long-term impact on China, and the importance of encouraging fact-based, in-person, cultural and civilization exchanges between the two countries to promote deeper and more accurate bilateral understanding that can improve the U.S.-China bilateral relationship.



[Learn More](#)

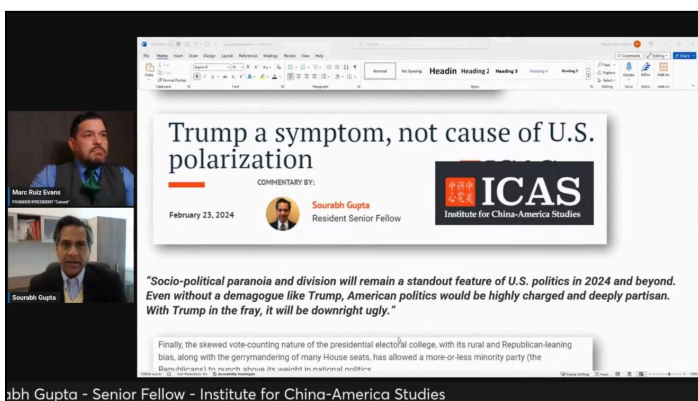
---Academic Engagement---

Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta Discusses Political Polarization in America with Vlogger Marcus Ruiz Evans

April 24, 2024

On Wednesday, April 24, 2024, ICAS Senior Fellow & Head of the ICAS Trade ‘n Technology Program sat down remotely with independent vlogger Marcus Ruiz Evans to discuss Political Polarization in America.

[Watch the Interview Discussion](#)



sbh Gupta - Senior Fellow - Institute for China-America Studies

---ICAS In the News---



On Tuesday, May 1, 2024, Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta [discussed](#) the potential expansion of the BRICS grouping on *CGTN America's The Heat*.

- "I think [the BRICS expansion over time] has been a significant evolution. Perhaps there was an expectation of...tighter inter-group cooperation, some of which has not fructified, but that being said this is a grouping with significant players and with significant appeal."

On Monday, April 29, 2024, Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta [discussed](#) the outcomes of Secretary Antony Blinken's visit to China on *CGTN America's The World Today*.

- "Blinken's visit allowed them to maintain their lines of communication. And the relationship has moved forward and stabilized and, therefore, the two sides don't need to talk only about the overall tenor of the relationship, but they can go about trying to problem solve aspects within the relationship."
- "And we did see that certain movement forward on counternarcotics cooperation...are going to see movement forward on artificial intelligence...anti-money laundering...and a more broader exchange on macroeconomic policy between the two sides..."

On Wednesday, April 25, 2024, Senior Fellow Sourabh Gupta was [quoted](#) by *China Daily* on Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to China.

- "So Blinken's goal right now, I think, is to continue to move that relationship on the track with the momentum, not to do great new things, but try to maintain that momentum and try to maintain those lines and channels of communication and possibly deepen it..."