

REPORT XX, YEAR III

OCTOBER 14, 2020

Online discussion panel via Zoom

Coordinator: Tatiana Rosito

Report by: Kamila Aben Athar

# CONFLICT AND COOPERATION IN ASIA: GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES



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The Brazilian Center for International Relations (CEBRI) is an independent think tank that contributes to building an international agenda for Brazil. For over twenty years, the institution has engaged in promoting a pluralistic and proposal-oriented debate on the international landscape and Brazilian foreign policy.



In its activities, CEBRI prioritizes themes with the greatest potential to leverage the country's international insertion into the global economy, proposing pragmatic solutions for the formulation of public policies.

It is a non-profit institution, headquartered in Rio de Janeiro and internationally recognized. Today, its circa 100 associates represent diverse interests and economic sectors and mobilize a worldwide network of professionals and organizations. Moreover, CEBRI has an active Board of Trustees composed of prominent members from Brazilian society.

# ASIA PROGRAM

The Program promotes a systematic monitoring of matters relevant to international relations and Brazilian development, particularly those related to China. Special attention has been given to monitoring the ongoing economic reforms and political transformations in China, considering their global effects and impacts in Latin America and Brazil. This continuous examination allows CEBRI to provide information and analysis to its members and partners and to the Brazilian government, contributing to the construction of Brazil's strategic position towards China, as well as helping increase knowledge about China within Brazilian society.

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Member of CEBRI's Board of Trustees and Director of the Institute for Brazil-China Studies (IBRACH). She is currently Visiting Professor of the Public Policies, Strategy and Development Program at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). She has previously worked at the United Nations, in New York, and as a consultant for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in Geneva.



SENIOR FELLOW

**Tatiana Rosito**

CEBRI's Senior Fellow and China Analysis Group Coordinator. She is a diplomat and an economist, having worked over ten years in Asia, where she served at the Brazilian Embassies in Beijing and Singapore. She was Petrobras' Chief-Representative in China and General Manager for Business Development in Asia from 2017 to 2019. Previously, she was Executive Secretary at the Brazilian Foreign Trade Board (CAMEX) and Special Advisor to the Ministers of Finance and Planning, among other roles in the public service. She is also an invited member of the Consultative Committee of the Brazil-China Business Council. She holds a Master's degree in International Development from the Harvard Kennedy School and an Executive MBA from INSEAD and Tsinghua University.



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**Julia Dias Leite**

Julia Dias Leite is CEO at CEBRI. She has 20 years of experience in the area of International Relations. Previously, she was Executive Secretary of the Brazil-China Business Council (CEBC). She is a Fellow of the Inter-American Dialogue and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Piemonte Holding.

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**Coordinator:** Tatiana Rosito

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# CONFLICT AND COOPERATION IN ASIA: GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES

**Report by:** Kamila Aben Athar

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# Introduction

Asia is a vast continent in which coexist some of the first and most enduring human settlements and civilizations, several of the most populous countries, and a diverse amalgam of religions, ethnicities and political regimes, whose influence sprawls across the globe. Economically, the continent includes some of the richest and most advanced economies, as well as some of the least developed ones, but also several of the very few countries that have managed to escape the middle-income trap. Just as in the second half of the 20th century, Japan's rapid growth followed by the Asian tigers have consolidated a new pattern of integration into the world economy via export platforms that generated sustained increases in productivity and structural transformations. In parallel, China's rise in the past two decades has been reshaping global value chains and the world. Meanwhile, India is also bound to bring significant influence on the continent and the world in the next decades.

An economic-centered vision is fundamental to understand the rebalancing of the world's center of gravity from West to East towards Asia in the 21st century, but it is far from enough to try and ponder over all its implications and chances of success. Asia is partially home to Russia, the heir of former Soviet nuclear power, and also to other nuclear states such as China, India and Pakistan, in addition to states with varying degrees of nuclear ambitions such as North Korea and Iran, not to mention non-state actors. East Asia still bears unsettled Cold War issues in the Korean Peninsula, but also the delicate balance of the legacy of World War II with the strong presence of the United States as an Asian-Pacific power itself. Towards the South, the Sino-Indian border remains disputed since the war of 1962, with recent skirmishes aggravating the rebalancing of forces. The India and Pakistan conflict adds uncertainties to the region, and Central Asia has been a source of concern with regard to extremism.

Meanwhile, China's rise sheds light on its own unfinished reunification with Taiwan and a growing presence in the South China Sea, which China sees as a natural vital space for the protection of its interests. That view frequently clashes with the preceding decades' status quo and, most of all, with the issue of the balance of power with the interests of the United States and of its allies in the region. Those two issues probably pose the highest danger of uncalculated risks and the potential for generating hot wars or hard power manifestations in Asia.

At the same time, there are spaces for cooperation that could lead the way to more rational discussions and the emergence of compromises. The creation of ASEAN in the 1960s has offered an important dialogue space for Southeast Asian countries, later expanding into a broader framework for the participation of other regional and non-regional partners. The establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1994 represented an important step. It was created with the objectives of fostering constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern; and making significant contributions to efforts towards confidence-building and preventive diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region. ARF's members include, besides all the ASEAN members, Australia, Canada, the European Union, India, Japan, North and South Korea, Russia, and the United States, among others.

In 2001, China and five other countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Russia) established the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), with the goal of ensuring security and maintaining stability across the vast Eurasian region, joining forces to counteract emerging challenges and threats, and enhancing trade, as well as cultural and humanitarian cooperation. Today, SCO also has India and Pakistan as full members, besides six other dialogue partners.

ARF's very broad group of members, where none of the non-regional powers has a clear lead, poses a challenge to its effectiveness. On the other hand, the SCO has a more geographically connected group of members and seems more cohesive, but it is not free of important cleavages in terms of narrow and broad geopolitical long-term interests. Other alliances or special relationships that compound the geopolitical map are the Five Eyes intelligence alliance comprised of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand; the formal alliances between the United States and Japan, and the United States and Korea; the trilateral cooperation between the United States, India and Japan, which includes defense, security, maritime and

cyberspace security; and the bilateral relationships between China and Russia, and China and Pakistan.

The hardening of the China-US rivalry along 2020 adds risks to the overall geopolitical balance in Asia and may pose new challenges to the continent and the Asia-Pacific or Indo-Pacific security landscape. Militarily, although China remains globally very distant from the United States, with a defense budget of around 25-30% of that of the US and only one overseas military base - in Djibouti, there are estimates that China's naval power may already be capable of deterring US maritime offensives. And there is no doubt that China and Russia are strategic rivals to be contained according to the United States' 2017 National Security Strategy.

Not only does the economic rise of China and East Asia impact Western views concerning the world order's transformations, it also provides the awakening and reordering of cooperation and conflict forces in the Asian continent itself, which are fundamental to the global order's evolution, largely in light of how the presence of the US is evolving.



# Guiding Questions

To help us navigate these uncertain and complex waters, at its 20th Meeting, the China Analysis Group proposed three main themes and questions to our speakers and audience:

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## 1. Conflict and Cooperation: A long-term vision of China's role in the region

- Do China policies and attitudes support the commitment to a peaceful rise?
  - What are the main challenges and opportunities for China to consolidate a benign environment in Asia? Is it a core objective for China? What role for Russia?
  - What could be short, medium, and long-term geopolitical objectives for China in Asia?
- 

## 2. Regional and bilateral agreements in Asia/Eurasia and security policies

- How effective have ARF and SCO been and what to expect from them ahead?
  - How does India's rise change the security landscape in Asia?
  - Whither China-India cleavage? Does it have an impact on organizations such as SCO and groups such as BRICS?
- 

## 3. The evolving role of the United States in the Indo-Pacific

- How does the policy of the "pivot to Asia" compare to the "free and stable Indo-Pacific"?
- Does the US have a clear strategy towards Asia? How could the US play a benign cooperation strategy in Asia?
- Are the US and China "destined for war"?

# XX Meeting Report

CEBRI's XX China Analysis Group Meeting presented an enlightening and provocative debate about geopolitical issues at play in Asia, which involve challenges and opportunities mainly regarding China's rise and its impact on relations with neighboring countries and the United States. Despite warnings of growing tensions and sobering risks of military conflicts, the debate also allowed for inspiring discussions around the desirability of new policies and commitments on the part of major actors in the region, which could lay the basis for a more human-centered approach for future generations.

## 1. Conflict and cooperation: A long-term vision of China's role in the region

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**T**he rise of China has created new challenges in Asia, and the risk of conflict in the cross-strait relations with Taiwan is higher than before. According to participants, Taiwan may pose a military risk to US strategies in Asia. From an ideology and governance perspective, the Chinese scholar Yan Xuetong has written that the key to international power is political power, and the key to political power is a morally informed political leadership. The moral level of a state is dependent on the quality of its leaders. There would be three levels of interstate leadership, namely humane authority, hegemony, and tyranny. Humane authority is essential to exert power in the future. US behavior now lacks it and is in between the other two levels, which is not the best position to be if a country wants to have power in the long run.

In parallel, from a Chinese philosophical viewpoint, the Chinese scholar Xunzi affirmed in simple terms that personnel are key to policymaking, which means that people in positions of responsibility determine policy and its outcomes. In

the US case, there is currently a mismatch between the skills and abilities that are needed to govern and those that are needed to be selected in elections for positions of political responsibility. Political analysts in the USA recognize that there is a crisis of individual morale, group cohesion, and leadership.

In terms of military leadership, there are more problems. There is a lack of confidence from enlisted personnel in their leadership and also from military personnel in the political leadership.

Participants equally mentioned other military challenges regarding US Navy operations, such as high operating tempo, long and repeated deployments, maintenance issues, and poor infrastructure, which have raised questions about its operational readiness in the region. This situation creates the possibility of asymmetrical surprises caused by operational predictability, for instance adversaries being able to predict US Navy carriers' position in the future. This is a military risk to be considered.

All these points mentioned above are one of the reasons for the withering of military and non-military instruments of US power.

From a larger geopolitical context, participants argued that, if there is a military conflict between China and the USA over Taiwan, this may be a turning point to US military prestige. The possibility of a tactical defeat would offer a window of opportunity for Russia, Iran, and other nations to make some opportunistic gains elsewhere. This thinkable situation would reset the strategic environment and raise questions beyond military geostrategic issues, such as on the future of the dollar and its economic implications for the USA, the global financial system, and all countries - including Brazil - that have relied on the US payment system and the dollar hegemony.

Participants also agreed that the risk of a conflict between the USA and China over Taiwan is higher than in the past. This is mainly because of changes in the US position, now relying on bipartisan consensus to push back against China. At the same time, Beijing has made clear that there are some red lines that cannot be crossed. Taiwan is a non-negotiable issue for China. For example, in a recent visit to the South of China, President Xi Jinping stated that China should be ready to fight.

Taking into consideration all the current features of US leadership and the possible scenarios for its decline, participants argue that Taiwan, a well-recognized potential flashpoint, might be the event that breaks the dominance of US military power in Asia, possibly resulting in calamitous consequences.



*The key to international power is political power, and the key to political power is a morally informed political leadership. ”*

## 2. Regional and bilateral agreements in Asia/Eurasia and security policies

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Participants debated the recent China and India clashes in the Himalayas and stressed that bilateral relations are now in their worst moment since the Sino-Indian war in 1962. The recent dispute between Indian and Chinese armed forces has caused a change in the direction of India's strategic position, which, according to some participants, is the most important geopolitical transformation of the year, especially after the Covid-19 outbreak.

Historically, India has tried to maintain itself equidistant between China and United States and to act in a balanced way. With China's emergence, India was already developing closer ties with the USA, but always mindful not to annoy Beijing. However, things may change now, since India seems to be more decisively moving to an anti-China camp. Participants emphasized that this is a significant change, because of the possible impacts for the balance of power in the region, which might favor the USA.

Participants predicted some trends and additional changes in India's behavior within the following months. Firstly, India might continue tilting towards the USA, a phenomenon that was already underway in military issues, since

they signed a nuclear agreement in the mid 2000's. Secondly, India might get closer to Japan, Australia, and other US allies in the region. Thirdly, India might be more likely to engage in military exercises and seek new bilateral and trilateral partnerships. Lastly, India can be inclined to use technology as a geopolitical tool, such as the recent case of TikTok's ban in the country. This could indicate that India's new behavior might also influence the Quad - a forum including the USA, India, Australia, and Japan. Participants affirmed that, even after a high-profile meeting in October, Quad's talks are still weak. However, they believe that, although it may not become an Asian NATO, we might see more Quad-plus initiatives in the future.

With these new configurations emerging, participants see dilemmas for China and the USA. For China, it must consider how hard it wants to push its interests, because if it pushes too harshly and quickly, it will bring on more reactions, like the Quad. The assertiveness from the Chinese government in different domains has brought about the formation of counterbalancing coalitions. Some participants remembered that China's stance during the pandemics has influenced other foreign policies' forays, such as Hong Kong. This case has sparked reactions in other parts of the world, thus weakening China's strategic position in the region. The European Union, for instance, is developing a tougher stance towards China.

On the other hand, the US dilemma is different. The current US posture in Asia lacks other instruments that would create a full orchestra, because it has very little to say about Asia's economic agenda and infrastructure. Participants say that the former pivot to Asia under the Obama administration was a more complete strategy to Asia, because it provided a full spectrum for US cooperation in Asia, with the US commitment to free-trade and the creation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Now, after the US withdrawal from the TPP's negotiations for example, the current policies towards Asia focus more on defense matters, which pose limitations to the US presence in the region. There remains a question for post-US election: how to build a broad and functional coalition of like-minded countries, not focusing only on military issues?

Participants highlighted ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)'s challenges amidst China's growing assertive stance and the Quad's responsive measures. The organization has explicitly defended neutrality on increasing tensions by welcoming both the US and China's roles in Southeast Asia. The members acknowledge that China is the main economic partner of several countries in the region. They also recognize that the USA has an important role in the region's security issues. Thus, they prefer a political architecture in

Asia in which the US and China can cooperate. Nevertheless, it is now getting harder to not choose sides, geopolitics are transforming these spaces into narrow spaces, according to participants. Prospects of tech decoupling, the debate around Huawei, and the fragmentation of regional relationships are complicating neutral voices' choices in the region. Participants believe that none of the Southeast Asian countries want to live under Chinese hegemony, so they might welcome the US presence as relevant.

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*The US posture in Asia lacks other instruments that would create a full orchestra, because it has very little to say about Asia's economic agenda and infrastructure. ”*

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*How to build a broad coalition of like-minded countries, not focusing only on military issues? ”*

### 3. The evolving role of the United States in the Indo-Pacific

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The Pivot to Asia, one of the Obama Administration's foreign policy central initiatives, meant to be a strategic "re-balancing" of US interests from Europe and the Middle East toward Asia. Under Trump's administration, the intent is to "create a free and open Indo-Pacific, where sovereign and independent nations with diverse cultures and different dreams could all prosper side by side and thrive in freedom and peace."<sup>1</sup> Although the strategy can be considered as more comprehensive and balanced than prior policy attempts, participants argued that it is still deeply undermined by the fundamental contradictions between its structure and the broader political and policy context. While its focus is theoretically described in multilateral terms, the policy options are explicitly unilateral. This tension between narrative and execution undermines the trust and credibility required to make it work.

Execution must be according to the interests of the region, which can be expressed by current shared challenges facing all countries of the world: inclusive economic growth, notably job creation in the context of automated systems, food and water security, environmental issues, pandemics, among others. Innovation may have an important role in solving these problems, and Artificial Intelligence may be an important tool. The creation of more technological clusters around the world interests all countries and should be taken into consideration when creating policies toward Asia. To include these issues is crucial to a successful US strategy for the region, instead of a zero-sum thinking. Thus, participants said that there is an opportunity for the US to craft a new strategy for the Indo-Pacific, which involves creating a physical, economic, and digital space, governed by an agreed set of rules with compelling and visible benefits to its participants. This is different from what has been done until now and creates real and transparent economic partnerships.

Participants believe that the burden to avoid war now is on the US side, which should build a strategy in the region focused on benefits to all and, thus, make conflicts against the interests of the parties unthinkable. The USA should lead a human strategy, centered on human-centric benefits. Countries would come

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1. <https://share.america.gov/trump-renews-u-s-partnership-with-asian-economies/>

together to create regional public goods for their citizens in transparent ways that would become a magnet to others to join and stabilize the region.

Moreover, participants discussed the possibility of a war between the United States and China and highlighted three points. First, current policies favoring decoupling creates more possibilities of war. Second, the current US domestic crisis and the prospect of a constitutional crisis with the upcoming elections might provoke miscalculations. With the continuation of the crisis, US and China actors can miscalculate actions or discourses and act erroneously. Third, historically, it is usually a third power provocation that forces great powers to act, and a wider conflict starts. Nowadays, starting points can be in Taiwan, India vs. Pakistan, India vs. China, North Korea etc. Although discussing possible reasons for the beginning of a war, participants affirmed that an open conflict is unlikely, because costs are high and catastrophic. However, cyber warfare and information/(de)cognitive domain (social media) competition are already underway.

Discussing future scenarios, participants stated that Asia's geopolitical environment may be influenced by the outcome of the US election. In the event that the Republican candidate Donald Trump is reelected, US-China relations may face an escalation of tensions and hostilities and the continuation of the ongoing trade and tech wars. If the Democrat candidate Joe Biden wins, he seems to be inclined to strengthen ties with the European Union on rules cooperation, aiming at counteracting China's global presence. Participants argued that there is skepticism on Trump's and Biden's policies towards Asia. No matter who wins the elections, he will have the task of devising imaginative statecraft tools to deal with current conflictual trends. In any case, two dilemmas remain unanswered: China's capacity to lead the international system, and the United States' ability to build a broader agenda beyond military matters in the Asian region.



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*The US should lead a human strategy, centered on human-centric benefits. Countries would come together to create regional public goods for their citizens in transparent ways that would become a magnet to others to join and stabilize the region. ”*

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*Two dilemmas remain unanswered: China's capacity to lead the international system, and the United States' ability to build a broader agenda beyond military matters in the Asian region. ”*

# Attachments

## Biographies



### **Tatiana Rosito, CEBRI**

CEBRI's Senior Fellow and China Analysis Group Coordinator. She is a diplomat and an economist, having worked over ten years in Asia, where she served at the Brazilian Embassies in Beijing and Singapore. She was Petrobras' Chief-Representative in China and General Manager for Business Development in Asia from 2017 to 2019. Previously, she was Executive Secretary at the Brazilian Foreign Trade Board (CAMEX) and Special Advisor to the Ministers of Finance and Planning, among other roles in the public service. She is also an invited member of the Consultative Committee of the Brazil-China Business Council. She holds a Master's degree in International Development from the Harvard Kennedy School and an Executive MBA from INSEAD and Tsinghua University.



### **Andy Mok, CCG**

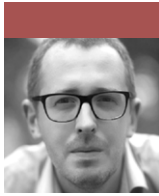
Andy earned his stripes in Greater China as an investor, entrepreneur and policy analyst. He was one of the first investment professionals to join Morningside Ventures in the early 1990s where he helped formulate the group's investment strategy and played a key role in the post-investment management of portfolio companies in health care, media and education. Subsequently, he joined the RAND Corp where, under the leadership of Zalmay Khalilzad (former US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Iraq and the UN), he helped research and publish the influential and widely cited monograph "The United States and a Rising China: Strategic and Military Implications".

Andy is currently a Senior Research Fellow at the Center for China and Globalization (CCG), ranked as one of the top 100 think tanks in the world by the Think Tank and Civil Societies Program at the Lauder Institute of the University of Pennsylvania. At CCG, he concentrates on technology and its impact on great power relations and the rise and fall of empires.

In addition, Andy has advised family offices and other institutional investors on business and real estate investment opportunities in China, including representing the family office of a well-known Seattle entrepreneur in discussions with their peers in Asia.

Andy holds an MBA from the Wharton School in Philadelphia and an MA in China Studies from the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies, where he was awarded the Loe Fellowship for Excellence in China Studies. He is also a CPA and has a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from the University of Maryland.

His views on developments in artificial intelligence, drones, China's mass innovation/entrepreneurship policies, robotics and other subjects related to innovation and entrepreneurship in China are regularly sought by AP, Bloomberg, CCTV, CNBC, India Today, Reuters, South China Morning Post and other leading media platforms.



## **James Crabtree, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy**

James Crabtree is a Singapore-based author and journalist, and an Associate Professor of Practice at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. His best-selling book, “The Billionaire Raj: A Journey Through India’s New Gilded Age”, was released in mid-2018. It was short-listed for the FT / McKinsey book of the year. Prior to academia, James worked for the Financial Times, most recently leading coverage of Indian business as Mumbai bureau chief, between 2011 and 2016. He is now a columnist for Nikkei Asian Review, and also a non-resident fellow at the Asia-Pacific programme at Chatham House. Prior to journalism, James was a senior policy advisor in the UK Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit under Prime Ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. He has worked for various think tanks in London and Washington DC, and spent a number of years living in America, initially as a Fulbright Scholar at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government. Before joining the FT, James was a senior editor at Prospect, Britain’s leading monthly magazine of politics and ideas. He has written for a range of global publications, including the New York Times, the Economist, Wired, and Foreign Policy. At the Lee Kuan Yew School, James teaches graduate courses on leadership and communication, as well as the impact of the 2008 financial crisis, and innovation in public policy. He is also a fellow at the school’s Centre on Asia and Globalization.



## **Rudolph Lohmeyer, Kearney National Transformations Institute**

Rudolph Lohmeyer leads Kearney’s National Transformations Institute, part of our Global Business Policy Council – our internal think tank dedicated to helping business and government leaders worldwide anticipate and plan for the future. He also co-leads the International Affairs platform of the firm’s Government and Economic Development practice. His recent work has included a focus on multilateral policy and national strategy with respect to cross-border digital issues. Previously, Mr. Lohmeyer served in government for five years in a non-political role as the Senior Advisor for Long-Term Strategic Planning at the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Strategic Planning, where he was responsible for all long-term strategic planning initiatives including development of the joint Department of State/USAID Strategic Plan. In that role, he also conceived, designed and led Project Horizon – a joint 3-year, 15-agency scenario-based strategic planning initiative that included the NSC, State, Defense, Treasury and more than 10 other globally active departments not traditionally included in national security planning. This project was unprecedented in its scale, scope, and innovation-driven approach, and for it, Mr. Lohmeyer was awarded a Superior Honor award. He then designed and directed the subsequent Department of State 2025 project in support of the Secretary of State’s bipartisan Advisory Committee on Transformational Diplomacy. This year-long effort applied analytical foresight techniques to assess the future of diplomacy. Mr. Lohmeyer advised the Dutch Foreign Ministry on several long-term strategic planning projects, and designed and moderated the second “Foreign Ministry of the Future” conference in Brussels. He advised the Greek Foreign Ministry on institutionalizing anticipatory policy and strategic planning in the context of severe fiscal austerity, and authored a paper on “Next Generation Strategic Management” for the Swedish Foreign Ministry. Mr. Lohmeyer also designed and led the strategic foresight module of the National Security Executive Leadership Seminar at the Department of State’s Foreign Service Institute. Mr. Lohmeyer received his BA from Stanford University, his MBA from The University of Chicago Booth School of Business and a Masters of International Policy from The University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy Studies, with honors for his work on the China-US strategic relationship.

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## Andy Mok's presentation

### **Just how fragile is the US military and what does this mean for Taiwan and the world**

**Andy Mok**  
Center for China and Globalization

October 2020

**With the withering of the non-military  
instruments of American power,  
much depends on this remaining  
tool. If it should break, the  
consequences may be calamitous**

**Taiwan may be that event**

While the tip of the spear may be sharp, the shaft is brittle and the hand wielding it is weak



#### DefenseNews

- In the wake of the Trump administration's rollout of the National Defense Strategy, Mattis talked about the need to stop overextending the carrier force, and spoke specifically about needing to get away from operational predictability where an adversary could predict years in advance where the U.S. Navy's carriers would be.
- "That's a great way to run a shipping line," Mattis told the House Armed Services Committee on April 12, 2018. "It's no way to run a Navy."



## **Ideology and governance**

- Yan Xuetong: The key to international power is political power, and the key to political power is morally informed political leadership
- Moral level of a state determined by quality of its leaders
- Three levels of interstate leadership
  1. Humane authority
  2. Hegemony
  3. Tyranny

## **Ideology and governance**

- Xunzi: The personnel requirements for the rise of a great power are not for technicians but for politicians and officials who have the ability to invent systems or regulations, because a pronounced ability to invent systems and regulations is the key to ensuring the rise of a great power
- US has profound mismatch between skills and abilities required to govern and those needed to be selected
- In China, harder to join civil service than to get into Harvard

## **The people**

- Individual morale
- Group cohesion
- Leadership
- Matt Bai: My deepest fear is that the American people get the government they deserve

## **Military leadership**

- The Modly/Crozier affair
  - Confidence of enlisted personnel in their leadership
  - Confident of military leadership in political leadership

## **Logistics and operations**

- Bryan Clark, a former senior aide to the chief of naval operations and now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute: It's hard for people outside the Navy to recognize how much of a readiness debt it is to deploy an older ship like the Eisenhower like that.
- When you force the ship deploy more than it was designed to deploy, especially a complicated ship like a carrier, so many things that fail or get degraded that it just takes a long time to dig out of that hole. And because the carriers are so large and complex, and because it's hard to do the maintenance for them underway, the debt is very real and needs to be repaid

## **Logistics and Operations**

- Also long and repeated deployments breaking families and morale

## Logistics and operations

friend who is in the naval reserve tells me on the Ike's last cruise, the toilet lines backed up 4 times in 3 weeks



whole ship smelled like poo

steam catapults started wearing out... effective sortie rate was halved

nuclear coolant system sprang a leak

anchor was so rusted it could barely be used

...and in one of the scariest eqpt failures, one of the Phalanx fire control radars kept displaying phantom returns

so it kept trying to lock on to random spots in the sky and pump them full of 20mm depleted uranium rounds



## The day after

- The US's Suez moment?
- Taiwan propping up US prestige
- A significant tactical defeat offers Russia, Iran, others a window of opportunity but also resets strategic environment
- Future of the dollar

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## XX Meeting Participants

The meeting had **185** attendees, including representatives from the government, companies, banks, third sector and academic institutions, who joined the event either via Zoom or the YouTube live stream.





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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Adriano Proença  
Ana Célia Castro  
Ana Paula Tostes  
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Carlos Milani  
Clarissa Lins  
Daniela Lerda  
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Vera Thorstensen  
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Kelly C. Lima



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