THE TELEGRAM IV

SPECIAL REPORT

SARWAR A. KASHMERI

DECEMBER, 2024

MAKE THE U.S.-CHINA RELATIONSHIP GREAT AGAIN

TO: Donald Trump, President-Elect of the United States, and Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China

FROM: Your Well Wishers, Global Thought Leaders, With Respect

Including the author's conversations with:

Prof. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Indonesia
PRP-BRIN

Marc Chandler, USA
Bannockburn Global Forex

Prof. Peter Cloutier, USA
Joint Special Operations Univ.

Dr. ZHA Daojiong, China
Peking University

Chris Fenton, USA
Business Entrepreneur

Ambassador Chas Freeman, USA
Diplomat and writer

Bonnie Glaser, USA
German Marshall Fund of the United States

Chuck Hagel, USA
Former U.S. Defense Secretary

Amir Farid Abu Hasan, Malaysia
Counsel General of Malaysia in New York

Ambassador Jorge Heine, Chile
Boston University

Prof. Flora Huang, UK
University of Derby

Dr. David Daokui Li, China
Tsinghua University, Beijing

Dr. Zonguan Zoe Liu, USA
Council on Foreign Relations

Elina Noor, Malaysia
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Dr. Janka Oertel, Germany
European Council on Foreign Relations

Luv Puri, India
Independent Analyst/Writer

A FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION REPORT

The Foreign Policy Association, founded in 1918, is the first independent national organization established to provide global affairs learning opportunities in all regions of the United States. Working to develop awareness, understanding, and informed public opinion on key current international challenges, the Foreign Policy Association is widely recognized as a **leader in stimulating broader and more effective participation in world affairs**. As FPA advances international affairs education, the organization enriches national debates about America's role in the world and strengthens U.S. democracy.

Nonpartisan and not-for-profit, FPA develops authoritative, balanced programs for geographically and demographically diverse audiences. These programs include events and meetings that draw community, regional, and national participation. FPA's Great Decisions community and campus programming in virtually all U.S. states **builds knowledge of the world, while providing lifelong tools** for studying and analyzing global affairs. International affairs learning materials produced by FPA engage general and specialized audiences, including decision-makers from the highest levels of both government and the private sector.

In today's world, as globalization accelerates and its complexities and consequences deepen and expand, the **experience and expertise of the Foreign Policy Association** are needed more than ever.

THE TELEGRAM IV

Make U.S.-China Relations Great Again

December 2024

Sarwar A. Kashmeri

Copyright © 2024 by Sarwar A. Kashmeri

All rights reserved

No part of this report may be reproduced in any form, or by any means, without permission in writing from the author.

The author is responsible for factual accuracy and the views expressed. The Foreign Policy Association itself is nonpartisan and takes no position on partisan issues.

Contents

Introduction 8
How To Make the U.S.-China Relationship Great Again 10
Professor Dewi Fortuna Anwar 10
Marc Chandler 11
Peter Cloutier 12
Dr. ZHA Daojiong 13
Chris Fenton 14
Ambassador Charles "Chas" Freeman 15
Bonnie Glaser 16
Chuck Hagel 17
Amir Farid Abu Hasan 18
Ambassador Jorge Heine 19
Flora Huang 20
David Daokui Li 21
Dr. Zonguan Zoe Liu 22
Elina Noor 23
Dr. Janka Oertel 24
Luv Puri 25
Sarwar A. Kashmeri 26
Contact Information 26

"It behooves us to continue in these paths, doing what lies in our power to foster feelings of goodwill, and leaving no effort untried to work out the great policy of full and fair intercourse between China and the nations, on a footing of equal rights and advantages to all."

President Theodore Roosevelt

State of the Union Address

Washington, D.C.

December 3, 1901

Introduction

The relationship between the United States and the Peoples Republic of China is the most consequential in the world. The two richest and the most powerful countries in the world account for some 43% of the world's economy. Together, their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exceeds $36 trillion ($36,000 billion). Together, they have the capability to do enormous good for the earth and the people who live on it, most of whom are poor and do not have the means to help themselves.

But that handshake between the two giant powers does not appear imminent. As Bonnie Glaser, Managing Director of the German Marshall Fund's Indo-Pacific Program, one of the expert interlocutors for this report says, "…the U.S.-China relationship is currently in a period of structural strategic competition; the relationship is *not* likely to improve."

This is a continuing tragedy in human terms. Consider just a small example of the consequences of this rift: tuberculosis (TB) kills over a million people every year. Almost all are outside the United States and China where TB is no longer a threat. Peter Cloutier, another expert quoted in this report, says that it would cost an additional $6 billion to run a joint U.S.-China project to wipe out TB from the earth. A rounding error given the combined GDP of the two superpowers. This is but one example of what a thaw in the U.S.-China relationship could accomplish.

But the two countries today continue on a path of duplication and confrontation. According to the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration, America will spend an estimated $650 billion over the next 25 years to modernize its nuclear arsenal and China will spend hundreds of billions to increase its nuclear arsenal from today's 500 warheads to more than 1,000, most of which the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency believes will be able to reach the United States. Similar expenditures will be needed to compete on the development of new and advanced technologies including artificial intelligence, electric vehicles, space exploration, and medicine.

So far, however, the best efforts to find common ground between China and the United States have not been very successful. Some of the best-intentioned politicians in both counties have tried, with unimpressive results. And that is what sparked the idea behind this report.

What if we could harness some of the keenest minds from around the world and ask them to answer one specific question: If they had a few moments in private with the President of China and the President of the United States, what specific actions would they recommend to lessen the daggers-drawn standoff between them? A single step such as this may not change the course of history, but, as the Chinese proverb has it, the journey of a thousand miles begins with but a simple step.

We wanted to launch this project as a new administration with fresh and different ideas takes the helm of the United States. At the same time, China faces its first economic slowdown since rocketing from a middling economy to superpower status in a mere three decades. Perhaps, we thought, voices from around the world, harnessed in this *Telegram*, the fourth in the Foreign Policy Association's series, could trigger some new thinking by the mandarins in both countries. The cover of this report lists the global experts that took the time to help provide input for this report.

Some of the experts polled for this report were asked to answer this question via email; other responses were culled from interviews on Polaris-Live.com, my on-line live Internet channel. Responses were edited to fit in the report's space.

Is there one overarching theme that emerged from the interlocutors? Yes. In the words of Chris Fenton who has lived and done business in China for dozens of years, "Keep the lines of communication open. No matter how tense or verbally combative the environment gets…the two of you keep talking." It is a sentiment that any one of the advisors in this report might have made.

Former U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel came to the same conclusion from a slightly different direction: we ought to find projects that both countries can work on together for the benefit of all, projects from which neither side will get any advantage over the other. Projects on which we can work together, and even if we're competitors, we're not enemies.

I want to thank my friend and editor Anna Typrowicz, who edited this manuscript and polished the language, and Douglas Blais, producer of the Polaris-Live.com programs, for his design expertise. I appreciate their time, patience, and understanding as I pulled them in to help create the report without any advance notice and with a very short schedule. Without Anna's and Doug's extraordinary help, the idea behind this report would have been stillborn.

The FPA of New York has been my intellectual home for over three decades. Uniquely in a world of agenda-driven think tanks, the mission of the FPA today is, as it has been for its 104-year history, to serve as a catalyst for developing awareness, understanding, and informed opinion on U.S. foreign policy and global issues.

It goes without saying that the views and conclusions expressed in this report are entirely those of the interlocutors, as well as mine, and do not reflect those of the Foreign Policy Association or its Board of Directors.

Sarwar A. Kashmeri

December 2024

How To Make the U.S.-China Relationship Great Again

Indonesia

Professor Dewi Fortuna Anwar

Research Professor at Research Centre for Politics-National Research and Innovation Agency (PRP-BRIN)

Well, coming from Indonesia, I would like here to echo President Prabowo Subianto when he was minister of defense. He reiterated a number of times that both the United States and China are great civilizations; they have contributed a lot to the progress of humankind. And both countries have responsibility as great powers to ensure international peace, stability, and prosperity.

Both presidents need to take a pause and think very seriously about the real danger of open conflict if the rhetoric and escalating tensions between the two countries are not managed properly. I do not think that Beijing and Washington really want to go into open conflict with each other, but if they do go into open conflict, the likely area of conflict for that will be East Asia, particularly in Southeast Asia. And we in Southeast Asia do not want to be another theater of great power conflict.

It's very important that they should be willing to sit back and exercise some restraint and really talk heart-to-heart about the red lines for both countries that are truly non-negotiable, and make sure that each side is conscious about not really pushing the boundaries too much over the red lines. But, on the other hand, they could identify the negotiable issues on which both countries have equal responsibility to work together—the issues of climate change, food security, energy security. These are the issues that cause so many other conflicts in many parts of the world

ASEAN has its centrality and agency and we want to ensure our strategic autonomy. We want to work with both countries; we do not want to be forced to choose one or the other when the stability of Southeast Asia is at stake.

Right now, however, I think that China is testing the United States; it has become much more aggressive in the South and East China Seas. But to be fair here, I would tell the American President that America has still not ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and if you respect international law so much then you should be part of it. You can't simply say that China has ratified it but is not respecting it, while we are not party to it but are respecting it. If you respect it so much then you should be a party to it, and ratify it, so that you would strengthen your case.

United States of America

Marc Chandler

Managing Director & Chief Market Strategist, Bannockburn Global Forex

The one overarching point I would make to U.S. and China leaders is that the most pressing issues each society faces are not to be found in the realm of foreign affairs. The middle-income trap that China has arguably entered will not be resolved in Washington, Moscow, or Taipei, but rather in Beijing. Similarly, the solutions to the U.S.'s falling life expectancy, the disparity of wealth and income, and the fact that almost one-in-five American children rely on government food assistance, for example, will not be found in Beijing, Moscow, or Brussels.

If I had the privilege of sitting down with the U.S. President-Elect, I would make three recommendations:

1. Adopt a "Warp Speed" initiative to challenge lithium battery technology with a solid-state battery alternative. Just like VHS and Betamax competed a few decades ago, the U.S. could give China the "Betamax experience"—not by competing with lithium, but by bypassing it and developing a different technology.

2. Drawing from the insight of Sun Tzu, consider giving China a way out, similar to how Japan was accommodated a generation ago. Japanese companies were encouraged to develop a direct investment strategy: "build locally, sell locally." The U.S. has been more reluctant than several countries in Europe and emerging markets to adopt this approach.

3. Encourage Chinese students to attend American universities and work in the U.S. after earning their degrees. One dimension of the U.S.-China competition is winning hearts and minds.

If I had the privilege of sitting down with President Xi, I would make three recommendations:

1. Adopt better macroeconomic data reporting mechanisms. For example, a recent Bloomberg story suggested that Chinese auto subsidies have been exaggerated and that some Western auto companies, like Volkswagen, have received more government assistance than firms like BYD. So, part of the problem is that China does not know how to effectively tell its story.

2. Recognize that while much of the developing world is buying Huawei phones and Chinese-made electric cars, China's brand has been tarnished. Even some nations friendly to Beijing, like Brazil, have slapped anti-dumping duties on Chinese steel. China can ease trade friction and enhance the flexibility of its economy by making the yuan convertible, allowing the exchange rate to act as a shock absorber.

3. Embrace soft power. China should create a society that others can aspire to or fantasize about living in. Innovating culturally is a different challenge than efficiently producing widgets.

United States of America

Peter Cloutier

Professor, Joint Special Ops University

I would recommend to both President-Elect Donald Trump and President Xi Jinping that they take the initiative to start a joint project to rid the earth of tuberculosis (TB). TB is no longer a threat in the U.S. and China, but still kills approximately one million people elsewhere *every year*. Ending TB is a United Nations Sustainable Development Goal for 2030. The estimated *additional* cost to run this project, published by the Copenhagen Consensus Center, is around $6.2 billion per year, pin-money for the two largest economies in the world.

In 2023, a consensus from over 100 researchers and experts determined an end to TB at this additional investment to be one of the twelve most efficient solutions for the world's poorest. In addition to China's contribution, a crowd-sourced investment leveraging the U.S. private sector would eliminate the world's leading cause of death by a single infection in 2023. We know that TB is curable and preventable. We also know that TB is our most lethal microbial pathogen.

Ending TB would be a substantial achievement for both presidents. It will not separate one from the other nor result in any bilateral advantage. It will demonstrate to the world that both the U.S. and China are good global leaders capable of doing the right thing for the greater good. More importantly, in such mirroring we will find the goodness in each of our societies to find peaceful resolution for any crisis or emergency we face in the coming years. Who knows where such a collaboration could lead?

People's Republic of China

Dr. ZHA Daojiong

Professor of International Political Economy, School of International Studies, Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development, Peking University

- The nature of the relationship between the two countries—societies made up of individuals and entities with diverse interest, rather than elite opinion groups focused on geostrategic reasoning—is versatile: if either party begins treating it as a competition, then it will move towards one. But framing the nature of the relationship being a competitive one is in denial of the two countries' respective efforts at self-strengthening in an ever-changing world landscape.

- China and the United States each has a stake in the current international order or world worder. Either country's action, if designed to drastically alter the existent order, will lead to consequences beyond their bilateral realm. China is not an adversary of the United States of America, neither is the USA an adversary of China.

- Restrictions on people-to-people contact and academic exchange between China and the United States must be removed. The quality of studies, in each country, of the other's policies—domestic and external—suffers from having to rely on desk research. Rhetorical projection of mutual hostility only works to lock in hostility, which is in turn costly and even risky, bilaterally and beyond.

United States of America

Chris Fenton

FENTON International Business Strategy & Communications, Informal Advisor to the U.S. Congressional Select Committee on the CCP

Three specific actions:

1. Keep the lines of communication open. No matter how tense or verbally combative the environment gets between your militaries or various divisions of your governments, make sure the two of you keep talking.
2. Commit to visiting the other's nation once per year — both for your own person-to-person contact and to also assure the citizens of the world that there's a glass ceiling limiting escalation.
3. Abandon any further expansion initiatives. The world is big enough for both nations, but only if both remain contained to their current stasis.

United States of America

Ambassador Charles "Chas" Freeman

Retired diplomat and writer

There can be no improvement or cooperation in Sino-American relations without a restoration of diplomatic dialogue. Such dialogue depends on mutual assessment of current trends, followed by shared analysis of their impact on each side's national interests, followed by a discussion of where efforts to prevent adverse trends or assure mutually agreeable outcomes might be undertaken by each side, either cooperatively or in parallel.

Three suggestions:

1. Authorize the intelligence communities of both sides to confer at length to produce joint assessments of current global trends, including clarifying disagreements where they exist.

2. Take these findings as the basis of a discussion between authorized interlocutors on both sides of how each might contribute to advancing mutually desirable outcomes or preventing mutually unwanted outcomes. Involve prominent citizens on both sides in joint reporting on these discussions.

3. Agree on regulatory meetings to review progress or the lack of it and to enhance the prospects for mutually advantageous results.

United States of America

Bonnie Glaser

Managing Director Indo-Pacific Program, German Marshall Fund; Nonresident Fellow Lowy Institute in Sydney, Australia; and Senior Associate Pacific Forum

Well, I think that the U.S.-China relationship is currently in a period of structural strategic competition. They are vying for power and influence and their interests diverge in a large number of areas. The competition is in many domains: we have competition in not only economic and military realms, but also increasingly in the technological realm, and to some extent in the ideological realm. I'd like to make these points to each of them.

My first point is that the relationship is *not* likely to improve. It is not going to return to the relationship of the past that we had, for example, in the 1990s or even early 2000s. So, I think the advice that I would give would focus on the need for both countries to manage the friction and tensions in the relationship to prevent them from escalating into a real hot war and military conflict.

In order to do that, the United States and China need to maintain communication channels and they need to do this at all levels. So, it will be important for Donald Trump when he is inaugurated to maintain a regular dialogue with Xi Jinping. They should talk virtually and might even exchange letters occasionally, and certainly meet in person.

But top-level leader-to-leader engagement is not enough. The strategic channel between the United States and China, which has been between national security advisor Jake Sullivan on the U.S. side and Wang Yi, the top diplomat and member of the Politburo on the Chinese side, that dialogue channel should continue.

I would also endorse the continuation of ongoing working-level exchanges with the Treasury, Commerce, and Defense Departments, to minimize the risk of strategic misunderstandings. The way to do that is not only to maintain these dialogue channels but also to open talks about things that China has up till now refused to talk about.

For instance, China has refused to discuss nuclear weapons, and its inventory is growing. They now have about 500 nuclear weapons and will have 1500 by 2035 according to the Defense Department. The Chinese don't want to talk about not only nuclear weapons but space and cyber with the US military.

I know the Chinese don't like to look back at the models that that existed in the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States. Then, even though the U.S. and the Soviet Union had an adversarial relationship, they found a way to continue to have some dialogue and to reach agreements that prevented their strategic competition from veering into conflict.

United States of America

Chuck Hagel

Former U.S. Defense Secretary

First, the leaders of both China and the United States need to understand the dramatic consequences for the world because of the way the relationship between these two countries turns out. This relationship will impact, and is already impacting, the world economically through trade and impacting the world through issues of security and military relationships.

Second, the United States and China should manage the issues, challenges, and differences that face them by finding areas where they can agree for the benefit of both countries as well as the world. Where disagreement exists, they need to find mechanisms to address those in a smart and peaceful way for both countries. There will be differences; there always are differences. It's part of the history of mankind. But it's how you manage those differences that makes the difference between prosperity and war.

Possible areas for cooperation might include space exploration and Arctic exploration—for the good of the entire world, as well as both countries. Rather than politicize such efforts, help bring nations together. It’s worth noting that despite the space race during the Cold War, Russian and U.S. cosmonauts have been up in space together working on research projects for many years.

If we continue in the direction we are headed, countries around the world will move toward either China or the United States, and you don't want a world that is divided between two superpowers. That makes for a very dangerous world. It also makes it a less prosperous world because then countries are forced to only do business with, or trade with, the people in the countries with which they are allied.

Malaysia

Amir Farid Abu Hasan

Consul General of Malaysia, New York

Should I get a private moment with the presidents of the U.S. and China, which, you know, I don't think I'll ever get the opportunity to do, but regardless, in an ideal world I think the main thing that I would say is to for them to talk.

The U.S.-China relations continue to be tense given the rhetoric by the U.S. President-Elect in his campaign. So, I think continuous engagement is something that we would like them to have. They should also maintain a strategic channel of communication so that communication between the two countries will continue to flow. I think the worst part is not to talk and have an assumption of what the other party is doing because that would create animosity among them.

The talks held between both countries last year between President Biden and President Xi Jinping were a step in the right direction, and I hope somehow this will continue under the leadership of President-Elect Trump.

Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim also mentioned the importance of helping China and the U.S. keep open this line of communication during his 2023 visit to China, and to continue to engage with each other. After all, communication is the essence of diplomacy.

Increasing student exchange programs between China and U.S. is another initiative they could take. Both countries have some of the best universities in the world so this could be another area they can look into. American students going to China, meeting Chinese students, learning about each other's culture and values is an important way to realize that there's not much difference between both of you. At the end of the day that's one area that that that they can look into—to enhance the student exchange population further both in the U.S. and in China.

Chile

Ambassador Jorge Heine

Professor at Boston University, diplomat, lawyer, scholar

Well, I would say that the enormous challenges facing the world are a significant concern in the countries of the Global South. These challenges arise from climate change, water scarcity, massive human displacements, food scarcity, mass migration, and international organized crime. These are very important global challenges that are coming together. There's a recent book out called *Navigating the Polycrisis* arguing that you have all these simultaneous crises which feed on each other.

Yet, here we have China focusing on expanding its footprint in the South China Sea and adding more military bases in the South China Sea and the United States focusing on banning Chinese electric vehicles from the United States. I think it's madness you know; they are not focusing on the big picture. China and the United States together represent 40% of the world's GDP: four out of every ten goods and services produced in this world come out of China and the United States. So, if they were to put their minds together and try to solve and address some of these problems instead of focusing on the petty squabbles, the world would make tremendous progress.

United Kingdom

Flora Huang

Professor of Law and Business at University of Derby, EU Chairperson for Arbitrations and Trade-and-Sustainable-Development Expert Panels at European Commission

1. Reduce tariffs and promote economic cooperation. The tariffs are a continuation of the tough-on-China trade policies from the Trump and Biden administrations, resulting in higher consumer prices, a long-run GDP reduction of 0.2 percent and a loss of 142,000 full-time equivalent jobs, according to an analysis from the nonpartisan Tax Foundation. China has also announced higher temporary tariffs on some imports from the U.S. and EU as tit-for-tat measures continue. An escalation of trade and tariff tensions between the U.S. and China would have "costly" economic consequences around the world, as warned by the IMF. Deepening economic cooperation and alleviating trade tensions can yield significant benefits for both the U.S. and China, fostering a more stable and prosperous relationship that can positively impact the global economy.

2. Engage in regular high-level dialogues. Establish a framework for regular dialogues at multiple levels, including economic, security and climate discussions. This could involve annual summits focused on mutual interests and conflict resolution.

3. Expand programs that facilitate people-to-people exchanges, such as granting visa-free entry to U.S. citizens as China does for many other countries, along with scholarships for students and academic collaborations, to foster understanding and reduce misconceptions.

Peoples Republic of China

David Daokui Li

Professor of Economics, Director Center for China in World Economy at Tsinghua University

Well, I would tell the new president of the U.S. the following: number one, please think from the perspective of China. The perspective of China is super, super-simple. China does not want to replace the U.S. and has no intention of doing so. China wants unification with Taiwan and wants its economy to continue to grow. Those are the major objectives of Chinese policymakers. So, please President Trump, understand Chinese intentions and perspectives. Based on these, let's talk about other issues. Let's talk about economic collaboration, for example, the idea of China making investments in Detroit. China will also open up its own market for American high tech, for American products, and for investment from the U.S., and so on. So, the two countries can really collaborate with each other. But above all, President Trump, please understand that what China really wants is its own domestic issues to be resolved and its economy to continue to grow.

Now Xi Jinping, what I will tell him also in very simple language, is that the United States is a complicated democracy. The U.S. is not monolithic—no one person can represent the U.S. So please be patient and don't take the words of a few congressmen, a few cabinet members, or some White House officials as the final verdict of the whole country. Instead, try to reach out to ordinary American people, to American businesses, and to American scholars and academics, and then explain to them what China really is and what China really wants.

United States of America

Dr. Zonguan Zoe Liu

Maurice Greenberg Chair, Council on Foreign Relations

If I were to advise President Xi Jinping, first of all, policy certainty and policy stability are very important. I would also hope that he could make decision-making transparent inside the Chinese policy-making system, because the lack of transparency leads to feeding rumors and rumors sometimes do not necessarily help in maintaining a healthy relationship.

And then I would also hope that President Xi Jinping and perhaps the next President of the U.S. would both step up and make a commitment to people in the two countries, promising to not stoke up nationalism unnecessarily, not just because the use of nationalism can be a double-edged sword, but also because nationalism, especially when economic growth is slowing down becomes this channel that makes people express extreme views against each other, and that is ultimately not helpful.

Malaysia

Elina Noor

Senior Fellow Indo-Pacific Program, Carnegie Corporation for International Peace

Well, if I had that privilege and if I were actually listened to, I would encourage both leaders to reinstate exchanges at the scholarly and academic levels. We saw a stop to that, particularly with Fulbright exchanges, in 2020 under President Trump. And right after COVID we saw a stop on exchanges within the scientific community between U.S. and Chinese researchers. I think a lot of these on-the-ground exchanges really help cement the ties that will carry through countries during difficult times. Unfortunately, with the halting of these types of cooperation and collaboration on things that matter in education and scientific research, we're going to see less familiarity, less cordial ties, and less knowledge of how just both types of communities in the United States and China operate on a daily basis. I think just really getting to know someone or a whole community on a working operational level can really make a difference and improve political ties.

We've seen a lot of knee-jerk reactions which have translated into, quite unfortunately, certain kinds of policy decisions from Washington. I would say that if the new president in the White House steps up and becomes the bigger person so to speak, and extends a hand of cooperation again, then I expect that the Chinese will welcome that warming of ties once again. I do think that a lot of the blame lies on the U.S. side. I'm not sure that we're going to see a dialing down of those frosty approaches from Washington regardless of who becomes president in the White House. And if that's the case, then maybe the Chinese need to extend their hands in the hopes that the U.S. will reciprocate.

The phrase that we've heard in Southeast Asia is that China does not seek to be a hegemon in the region let alone the world, and that China is going to rise to be a very different power from the United States. Unfortunately, I think what we are seeing, particularly with regard to the South China Sea dispute, but also on other issues such as economic and trade ties with the United States, that disappointingly, China is starting to act like the United States in a number of ways.

Germany

Dr. Janka Oertel

Director of the Asia program and Senior Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations

The two presidents probably don't want to hear from a European, so I will refrain from providing concrete advice. I can only say though that how the relationship between China and the United States develops in the next five years is going to be decisive not only for European prosperity but also for European security, and I do think that there needs to be a level of understanding in both Beijing and in Washington about the gravity of the consequences of an even further deterioration of the relationship… But I also think that Europeans have a role to play in this by signaling very, very clearly to Beijing that the support to Russia and the support for the Russian invasion of Ukraine is something that deeply violates European security interests and thereby forever changes the relationship between Europe and China, as well, without any sort of reference to the United States.

With respect to one actionable recommendation, to Mr. Xi Jinping I would say limit the support to Russia; you can do that today. It would be an enormous signal to Europe, and it would have an enormous impact. I am a bit at a loss on what to advise the Trump administration because I don't know yet what their goals are going to be. But one advice I can offer is the importance of maintaining a level of civilized leader-to-leader conversation at all levels between European leaders and China and between the U.S. and China. I do think that these conversations are crucial for maintaining a kind of stability that is needed to avoid military escalation as well.

India

Luv Puri

Political analyst on peace and security issues, violent extremism; experience in human rights and mediation

China's WTO entry in 2001, aided significantly by the U.S., accelerated its rise as a global power. Now the largest economy by Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) and a P5 member, China's growth reflects its deep integration into the global economy.

The U.S. and China share a deeply intertwined economic relationship. American consumers rely on affordable Chinese goods, while U.S. companies benefit from China's vast manufacturing base. Despite mutual benefits, trade imbalances and market access remain contentious.

Messages for Xi Jinping:

- The U.S. highlights issues like China's alleged currency manipulation, unfair trade practices, and cybersecurity threats. Addressing these requires transparency from China to foster trust and mitigate tensions.

Messages for Donald Trump:

- The "bring back jobs" reality: Calls to reshore U.S. manufacturing jobs overlook automation's role in job displacement. While tariffs aim to address trade deficits, they risk inflating U.S. consumer prices without restoring significant manufacturing employment.
- Strategic global engagement: In regions like the Middle East and Ukraine, U.S. policy must account for China's growing influence. Understanding China's interests and leverages is essential to crafting balanced and effective strategies in the present context.

Sarwar A. Kashmeri

Sarwar Kashmeri, a Senior Fellow of the Foreign Policy Association, is an international relations specialist, author, and commentator. He is noted for his expertise on U.S. global strategy and national security. He is founder (2021) and host of *Polaris-Live.com: United States and China in the World*, an internet video channel (www.polaris-live.com) featuring thirty-minute live conversations (over a hundred as of the date of this report) with experts from around the world on the business and geopolitical impact of China's rapid rise to superpower status.

He is the author of the Foreign Policy Association reports *The Telegram: A China Agenda for President Biden* (2021); *The Telegram II: The Business of America* and *China is Business* (2022); *The Telegram III: Present at this Creation (2024)*; and this report, *The Telegram IV: Make U.S.–China Relations Great Again* (December 2024). His third book, *China's Grand Strategy: Weaving a New Silk Road to Global Primacy* (Praeger, 2019) was released on November 7, 2019, in Washington, D.C., with former U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel. Kashmeri's earlier publications include *America and Europe after 9/11 and Iraq: The Great Divide* (Praeger, 2006) and *NATO 2.0: Reboot or Delete?* (Potomac, 2011).

Sarwar Kashmeri is an Applied Research Fellow of the Peace and War Center of Norwich University in Vermont, USA. He also served four terms as a non-resident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council's Brent Scowcroft Center for International Security in Washington, D.C., and he is a frequent speaker at the United States Military Academy at West Point. In addition, he has written for major international print media, as well as appeared on television media.

Formerly the CEO of a New York-based international technology company, Sarwar Kashmeri has also served as a communications advisor for several Fortune 100 companies. He earned a B.S. in Aerospace Engineering (AE) and a M.S. in Engineering both from Saint Louis University where he was on the faculty and the founding director of the AE school's computation center. He was also a founding director of the Regional Justice Information Service (REJIS) that provides computer services to the Saint Louis Metropolitan area's criminal justice agencies through one of the largest IBM computer networks in the country at the time.

Contact Information

Sarwar@kashmeri.com

X: @sarwar_kashmeri