



How to Hug a Panda:

Responding to Chinese Geopolitical Contestation With the West



Alexander Yen

Alexander is a doctoral student in international relations at the University of Oxford where he concentrates on the sociology of rising powers through the lens of diplomatic language at the United Nations. This follows successful Master's (Distinction) and Bachelor's (First-Class Honours) degrees at the same institution which nurtured his interest in Chinese history and politics which remains a core part of his research. He retains a lively interest in other aspects of international and domestic politics.



Aron Roosberg

Aron Roosberg (*2001) currently studies at the National Defense College in Stockholm and has a background in the armed forces. He is particularly interested in the interaction between politics and the military, seeking to understand the full spectrum of security policy. He also has a long-standing history of civilian involvement with Swedish-EYP and the United Nations Association of Sweden.

Introduction

China's rapid rise has prompted an extensive reevaluation of national security, technological competition, and trade dependencies in the West. China's status as the world's second-largest economy and its global ambitions have stirred concerns, particularly its "new assertiveness" in areas such as the South China Sea, sponsorship of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and the Belt-and-Road Initiative (World Bank, 2022; Johnston, 2013, p.7). Recent strategy documents published by major Western nations all name China and Chinese actions as of geopolitical concern (USG 2022, HMG 2023; Republique Francaise 2022).

This article seeks to address how the West is influenced by China and how it can effectively respond to the challenges this influence poses. It begins by examining recent flashpoints that underscore China's geopolitical competition with the West and then outlines the current challenges across various fronts, including the West's relationship with developing countries, institutions, markets, and civil society. It then proposes policy solutions focused on leveraging the attractiveness of Western society to tackle these challenges effectively.

1. Flashpoints

This section highlights recent flashpoints. These flashpoints underscore how China seeks to redefine the rules-based world order that has enabled the West to influence international affairs. Consequently, the flashpoints provide an illustration of the increasing tensions between the West and China (Blinken, 2022).

A recent flashpoint can be found in the 2023 BRICS summit in South Africa. The sum-

mit highlighted the importance China attributes to its relations with the Global South in challenging the West, seeing these potential allies as allegiances to be denied to the West in the future. With around 40 countries allegedly interested in joining BRICS (Reuters, 2023), this could further strengthen the case for a redefined international order, making good reason for worry in the West.

China is also further strengthening what Foreign Minister Wang Li called its "better than allies"-partnership with Russia (Apps, 2021, para.1). Besides being authoritarian states with little interest in the prevailing international order, combining their resources and narratives allows for a more permissive environment for authoritarian practices in international affairs. This is demonstrated by China's relativization and support for the Russian invasion of Ukraine, for example by spreading conspiracy theories through state run media regarding Russian war crimes in Bucha (Mozur et.al., 2022), as well as exporting "dual-use" equipment, like drone parts, body armour and navigation equipment (Rettman 2023; Banco & Aarup 2023; Faucon & Talléey 2023; Kyodo News 2023).

While gathering support for the organisational overhaul of the rules-based order, China also demonstrates its contempt for international law through its own conduct in global affairs, especially in the South China Sea (hereafter SCS). Despite having its historical claim to the region, often referred to as the "nine-dash line", declared void by the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Hague (PCA, 2016), China continues to strengthen its bid for regional dominance. The Paracel Islands alone now host around 20 military outposts, some equipped with airfields and advanced radar stations (Mandhana, 2023).

Furthermore, by constructing these bases, China violates the sovereign territories of the littoral states in the region, as dictated by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) of which China is a signatory (UN, 1982).

Contestation:

Contestation refers to the act of challenging or disputing something, often a belief, idea, or authority. It involves engaging in debates, arguments, or protests to assert an alternative viewpoint or to question the validity of established norms or structures. Contestation can occur in various contexts, including politics, academia, social movements, and legal proceedings.

sizing that “there is only one China in the world, and Taiwan is an inalienable part of China” (Cook, 2023, para.8). Taiwanese sovereignty has become a vital interest for the West in the region, partly because of Taiwan's geopolitical role as the largest island in the so-called first island chain (Holmes, 2014). As a part of the first island chain, Taiwan contains China’s access to the Pacific. Furthermore, Taiwan is the world's largest producer of semiconductors, producing vital components supplying most industries globally. With the US vowing to defend Taiwan, the US and China are poised to militarily clash over Taiwan should China seek “reunification” with the island (Ray, 2022).

In summary, the flashpoints illustrate China’s strategy in challenging the West. China systematically weakens the rules-based world order and highlights its shortcomings. With the rules-based order weakened, China uses the void to increase its power and present itself as a feasible alternative.

Figure 1
The South China Sea and the Nine-Dash Line



Note: Reproduced from the public domain (VOA, 2012).

The geopolitical significance of China’s conduct in the South China Sea must also be viewed in light of the natural resources found in the region. An estimated 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas lie beneath its seabed (CPA, 2023). Moreover, the South China Sea accounts for 10% of global fishing (Varley et.al., 2020) and serves as a vital trade route connecting eastern Asia with Europe and Africa, facilitating one-third of all global trade (UNCTAD, 2016). Though the US is not a signatory of UNCLOS, it is now its main enforcer in the region, painting an ironic picture where a non-signer of the international “constitution of the oceans” is reminding a ratifier of its commitments to international law (Hayton, 2021).

China’s long-standing political objective of reunification with Taiwan, also places it in contestation with the West (Bush, 2019). In June 2023, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning reiterated China’s position, empha-

2. Particular Arenas of Competition

In this next section, we move from specific cases and incidents in recent headlines to a thematic examination of the challenges China poses to the West. The aforementioned flashpoints highlight how China poses a geopolitical challenge to the West through its recent actions abroad, but our presentation here highlights more long-term areas of competition and contestation. We present three major themes: competition from China in the field of international development and support for developing countries, challenges posed to Western public institutions and markets, and challenges posed to Western civil societies.

2.A Developing Countries

China and the West are competitors in the field of international development and support for developing countries to the detriment of Western resource supplies and support for Western political initiatives in international institutions. At the moment, China is “eating [the West’s] lunch” when it comes to international development in Africa, illustrated for example with reference to net capital flows between the US and Africa (Dev-erment, 2018, para. 2).

What this means is that China gains an edge in political and economic influence in

Figure 2
Chinese FDI vs. US FDI to Africa, Flow



Note: Graphic produced from data by CARI (2024).

these countries, including in terms of access to mineral resources such as cobalt, lithium, and rare earth metals which are vital for continued Western economic development and technological advancement. These minerals

are critical to the green energy transition and the West is poised to spend “hundreds of billions of dollars to try to catch up” (Burrier and Sheehy, 2023; Dempsey and Cotterill, 2023, para. 8). But China can also leverage its influ-

ence in these countries to garner “support of African countries...to legitimise its global aspirations through the UN-based international system” (Yu, 2022, para. 19). This risks creating an à la carte world order of countries that stand with the West sometimes and against it at other times (Russell, 2023, para. 5), with fracturing consensus on a Western-led rules-based international order (Handy and Djilo, 2022; Murithi, 2023), that disadvantages the West. Together, the prospect seems to be for the diminishing of the West’s influence over developing countries, access to material resources—especially those required for critical projects such as the green energy transition—and support for Western positions on the international stage.

Why has China been so successful? Chinese capital is said to be attractive because of a “no questions asked” orientation, free from any ideologically rooted criteria on democracy or respect for human rights (Batty, 2019). Compared, as Ross (2023) argues, to Western states and their representatives who are often freighted with the baggage of colonialism and perceived as preachy, the “legacy of 1960s and 1970s Third-Worldism” and its winds of anti-colonialism and anti-racism which animates some African leaders and populaces means China and other international partners, such as Russia, are perceived more favourably (Handy and Djilo, 2022, para. 6). China’s growing international political influence, garnered from developing countries, produces disadvantages for the West by increasing her resources for broader strategic competition.

But recognition of the disadvantages of relying on China appear to be materialising. A study has shown that China’s interest in Africa, proxied by foreign direct invest-

ment by sector, remains in resource exploitation: resource-rich countries receive an overwhelming share of Chinese FDIs in Africa (Yu, 2022). Tang (2016) concedes that it is not inaccurate to say that Chinese enterprises in Africa employ disproportionate numbers of expatriate workers, pay low wages and are reluctant to spend on improving working conditions. Such practices that do not conduce domestic development may be said to lie behind labour disputes, sometimes fatal, between African employees and Chinese investors past (BBC, 2010) and present (Chingono, 2020). Even at the supranational level, questions can be asked about the advantages of China-backed development, as shown by the allegations of integration of electronic espionage equipment into the Chinese-funded and -constructed headquarters of the African Union (Tiezzi, 2018). Shifts in both popular and elite perceptions of China are only tantalising (Kinyodo, 2019; Rapanyane, 2021), but an appropriate strategy that exploits these shortcomings in Chinese investment and developmental assistance may tilt the balance back in the West’s favour and secure the strategic advantages that political influence over the developing world may bring.

2.B Western Institutions and Markets

Closer to home, Chinese influence over institutions and governments in Western countries has been growing. In the higher education sector in the United Kingdom, a 2023 study has highlighted the “strategic dependence” of British universities on Chinese-linked funding (Clark, 2023). Investments stemming from sources linked to the Chinese military-industrial complex have also raised the prospect of

Western technological breakthroughs being used to advance Chinese military capability (UKCT, 2023). Other avenues of Chinese state influence include the much-touted Confucius Institutes, where efforts to conceal Chinese state involvement appear to be linked to efforts to impede the freedom of academic and campus-based expression (Dunning & Kwong, 2022).

Outside academia, the Chinese state is actively infiltrating the Western private sector, bolstering its influence and undermining Western countries. By utilising capital markets, Chinese entities, often state-backed or supported by state-run banks, are acquiring Western high-tech assets and research facilities, aiming to propel China ahead of foreign competitors (Le Corre and Sepulchre, 2016; Braw, 2020, para. 8). In instances where direct acquisition faces obstacles due to increased government scrutiny, Chinese capital is directed towards collaborations in research and development, facilitating technology and expertise transfers beneficial to China’s state and military (Kratz et al., 2020). Looking at academia and the private sector, the deep penetration of Chinese capital into Western public institutions and markets can be seen. The direct consequence of this is to raise the prospect of access to cutting-edge technology, funded in part by Western publics and governments and made possible by innovative environments in Western laboratories and Western-trained scientists, being acquired and deployed by the Chinese state. Though this may not be the industrial espionage touted in Western governmental or think-tank reports (US Senate, 2019; CSIS 2023) or briefings by intelligence officials (Siddiqui, 2023), even as a “benign”, or at least legal, form of technology, knowledge, and expertise acquisition, such activity may tend to diminish

the technological or military advantages of the West. A loss of geopolitical advantage in the form of hard power superiority and soft power attractiveness due to such activities would certainly lead to the weakening of the West’s position vis-à-vis China in any coming geopolitical conflict.

Indirectly, the importance of Chinese trade and Chinese capital in Western markets, societies, and institutions may mean Western officials and politicians are wary of the consequences of alienating China. Exemplifying this, a recent report co-authored by a former UK universities minister highlighted the need to be wary of the entrenched reliance of UK universities on income from Chinese international students and research funding (Adams et al., 2022) The ownership of Western companies by agents of the Chinese state may lead to concerns that decisions detrimental to Western societies, such as closures or redundancies, could be made should Western politicians take a harsher stance towards China. With regard to research, there might be legitimate concerns that “he who pays the piper calls the tune”: alignment of academics and other civil society institutions with China and Chinese interests with attendant negative consequences for domestic pressure for foreign policy against Western national interests. It is apparent that Chinese involvement in Western institutions, societies, and markets can be a source for concern against the backdrop of geopolitical contestation.

But countervailing trends are now appearing. Increasing attention is being paid to these engagements and collaboration and securitisation of these activities is now underway. Decisional paralysis in the past, especially post the 2008 Financial Crisis, when Western governments reluctant to lose out on the

temptation of Chinese capital faced a coordination problem in de-risking from China, has given way to growing agreement on the need to address the prospect of geopolitical contestation. As a result, increasing attention is being paid to these engagements and collaboration and securitisation of these activities is now underway.

2.C Western Civil Society

But Western societies also face challenges from less organised private activity, particularly involving Chinese investment. Firstly, Chinese demand has had a big role in the growth of house prices in desirable Western locations. A recent study by the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania highlights that between 2012 and 2018, "house prices grew 8 percentage

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points more in U.S. zip codes with high foreign-born Chinese populations" (Gorback and Keys, 2022, p. 2). Though the American statistics show that foreign buyers only account for slightly more than 2% of overall residential property transactions by dollar volume (Christopherson, 2023), these transactions are concentrated in already oversubscribed locations; Chinese buyers moreover have, since 2013, contributed the most by dollar amount to those purchases. According to leading UK estate agent Winkworth, the same phenomenon can be seen in the UK (Winkworth, 2023). What does this imply for

Western societies? The fraying of domestic political stability owing to growing inequality, as seen in the rise of populism in Europe and North America, is supercharged by investment from abroad which has the additional effect of displacing locals from the housing market.

That this happens due to the movement of those who may be hostile to Western national ideals and projects (but who are attracted purely to the convenience - in terms of capital

or social environment - of living in the West) is doubly concerning. This is a point obliquely made by observing the rise in state-directed political activity of Chinese international students in Western universities, such as when talks by public figures such as the Dalai Lama (Saul, 2017), or protests in sympathy with

the people of Hong Kong (Zhou, 2019), were subject to pro-China agitation. This demonstrates the potential for the extension of Chinese state influence via seemingly innocuous civil society organisations because many of these activities are coordinated or take a lead from Chinese Students and Scholars Associations (CSSAs), which exist in universities across the Western world. Though often disclaiming it, CSSAs are, according to US State Department Research, intimately connected to the ruling Chinese Communist Party via the United Front Work Department (USG, n.d.; Bowe, 2018, p. 11).

What such observations prompt are questions about what happens to these students post-education. Where a sojourn at a Western university leads, perhaps via employment, to the acquisition of residency, permanent residency, or citizenship, a hidden or overlooked constituency of potential agents of Chinese state influence emerges (Satter and Singh, 2023). It must be borne in mind that Chinese origin/ethnicity is not a prerequisite for bad faith advocacy for the interests of the Chinese government in the West. This is amply demonstrated by the recent high-profile case of Belgian politician Frank Creyelman, who accepted bribes from a Chinese Ministry of State Security official to influence European Union discussions (Sevastopulo, 2023). But bad faith political participation and incompatibility with Western values of certain forms of government-influenced associations and peoples may prove problems for an open, liberal society that is by that token more easily infiltrated and subverted, becoming concerning when placed against the background of heightened geopolitical contestation.

3. Ways to Respond

How can Western societies and governments respond? This section argues that the advantages of favourable capital and social environments of Western society should be harnessed to counter China's challenge. However, the ensuing section also highlights that for an effective response, the West has to increase the coordination of its efforts.

3.A Advantages: Capital and Social Environment

The main advantages of Western society are those that make it attractive to those in non-Western states, in particular the elites of those states: the capital and social environment in the West.

Revealed preferences show that Western or Western-adjacent jurisdictions continue to be the safest places to situate capital. This can be seen by affluent Chinese transferring their money to Western countries. The urge to do so is marked by the fact that some are even turning to unregulated, unofficial, and informal facilitation mechanisms to circumvent Chinese capital outflow restrictions (Chen, 2023). Physical movement also shows this: the high-net-worth movement consultancy Henley & Partners reported that China recorded in 2022 and is poised to record in 2023 the biggest outflows of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) of any country (Henley & Partners, 2023). Of the top five destinations of HNWIs Australia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Singapore, the US, and Switzerland, two are Western countries, one is European, and plausibly in the West, and one touts a Western (and indeed English) common law system. Of course, this environmental favorability is not solely impressionistic but is reflected in rule of law and property rights metrics, including freedom from corruption metrics, where the West (a representative sample taken of Australia, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States) and Western-adjacent (Singapore, Japan) states lead China by a large amount (Valev et al., 2024). These metrics are important because those who possess capital are interested in its growth and preservation (Fontinelle, 2023): security from arbitrary confiscation, predictability of redistributive policy, ease of capital movement, and freedom from corruption are hence important. "At least when I'm here, I know my money is mine" seems to be a familiar and oft-repeated sentiment (AFP, 2023, para. 16).

Closely allied to the capital environment is the social environment, including educa-

tional, work, and legal aspects. First among the relevant metrics are the rule of law and social freedom, on which the West again leads China (Freedom House, 2024). Recent events such as the prolonged COVID-19 societal control measures, which far outstripped Western counterparts in severity (Huang and Han, 2022; Lyu et al., 2023), have highlighted differences in the rule of law and social freedom (Chen, 2023). Trends such as the “lying flat” (tangping) (BBC, 2021) or “we are the last generation” (women shi zuihou yidai) (Yu, 2023) betray the high pressure environment of studying (Hao, 2019) and working (Li, 2017) in China. These sentiments are perceived to be in contrast to that of Western societies, which not only offer more legal protection, but also a welfare perspective. Recalling our earlier focus on the higher education sector, universities located in the West also rank higher and offer more prestigious diplomas (THE, 2024).

For more independently-minded individuals, legal protections of freedom of speech and expression may be important: protest, either against the Chinese government or Western governments, is less likely to bring sanctions. Being in the West may also confer the advantage of relative immunity from persecution by the Chinese government. Because of the government’s outsized role in all aspects of society in China (McGregor, 2019), guanxi (connections) and corruption are often important ways to amass capital (Dai, 2017). But if officials are purged, then such persons who have benefited may become targets for enforcement action. Residency or even citizenship in the West would appear, then, to be an advantage.

And collectively, the West maintains several advantages over China. While China has

surged ahead of the US in patent applications, other metrics such as research and development (R&D) spending by GDP indicate Western nations’ continued outperformance (World Bank, 2023). Demographically, the United States has sustained a higher population growth rate since 1991, a lower median age since 2021, and a more balanced age distribution (StatisticsTimes, 2024). The triple challenges of “deflation, debt, and demographics” facing China post-COVID-19 have diminished its competitiveness and appeal (Hanlon, 2023, para. 1).

Despite China’s rise, the West still possesses key advantages. Effectively leveraging these strengths, while addressing outlined weaknesses, is essential in navigating the geopolitical competition with China.

3.B Political Disadvantages

The challenges facing the West are predominantly political: foremost, coordination. Since China’s accession to the WTO in the 2000s, and particularly over the past decade, Western nations have grappled with a classic prisoner’s dilemma. The allure of cheap imports and capital from China, along with the lucrative Chinese market for Western companies, has often led to a situation where prioritising geopolitical contestation out-of-step with other Western nations could result in retaliatory actions detrimental to the domestic economy, national interests, and even political careers (Cha, 2023). Conversely, leaders like Prime Minister David Cameron of the UK, who pledged to foster a “golden era” of UK-China relations, could expect investment and trade benefits (Reuters, 2015).

With a “hiding and biding” China appearing less threatening from a geopolitical front, this may have seemed a good idea. But

Western countries that have enabled China’s rise by contributing both capital and technology are now finding that this is to their chagrin as China threatens to overtake them and cement a strengthened geopolitical position from which tough competition, or even hard conflict, may result. Concerted action at an earlier stage in the process may have been able to delay or even prevent this.

Another aspect of the lack of political commitment has been an unwillingness to face up to the realities of Chinese infiltration, as seen in the Christine Lee incident where the British Security Service warned of a Chinese agent in Parliament (Corera and Scott, 2022, para. 1). This particular individual had been well known to China-watchers as a political agent of the CCP since 2020, where she, and her activities and connections, is mentioned by name (Hamilton and Ohlberg, 2020, p. 125). That two diligent academics knew more than the nation’s security services seems unlikely. What is more likely is that the official hand was stayed by countervailing concerns. Western societies, often proud of their commitment to liberal values, have in the past struggled with addressing the paradox of liberalism and conceiving of or instituting distinctions based on geopolitical enmity.

A lack of coordination and unwillingness to be hard-headed, it would seem, are the main disadvantages of the West in acting against Chinese contestation. A strategy that ameliorates these two fundamentally political aspects, therefore, would be of immense use.

3.C The Response

As illustrated above, the West boasts an advantage over China regarding the social and capital environment. Nevertheless, coordination between Western states remains insufficient. Consequently, the next section

seeks ways to improve coordination, enabling Western states to capitalise on their advantages and present a united front against China.

As highlighted throughout this article, China effectively harnesses its vast resources and institutions towards its economic and geopolitical goals, yet its solitary approach limits its potential to its own means. By contrast, Western multilateral organisations such as the EU and NATO can leverage the diverse strengths of their members, resulting in an edge if only members could coordinate seamlessly. But achieving the necessary coordination against the headwinds of the allure of trade and cooperation with China will require political will on the part of Western states. Managing the needs that leave Western societies open to this, such as by “de-risking” and “friend-shoring”, will be conducive to the strengthening of political will as well by reducing the pull factors that attract the West to China (EUP, 2023, para.1). Introducing coordination mechanisms that create incentives for compliance (such as free movement of peoples and capital, access to markets) and disincentives for non-compliance with a unified policy on China would also strengthen the Western position in dealing with Chinese geopolitical contestation.

Another way to create a unified approach to the EUs “systemic rival” (EEAS, 2023, para.1) is to establish a set procedure for interactions with China. If the EU is to have a unified approach, then the respective diplomatic shuttle traffic between its members and Beijing must become channelled through the established institutions of the EU. Despite this demanding substantial diplomatic autonomy from the EU member states, it would certainly paint a better and more coherent picture than that of the Macron- and der Leyen visit

in 2023. The visit, aiming to display European unity instead turned into damage control following Macron's comments regarding the European need for independence towards China, as well as the US (Benner, 2023).

Building on improved capacities for collective action, the West could win back developing countries through a programme of international engagement that highlights the disadvantages of Chinese engagement. This also demands attentiveness to the views of developing country populations and elites, and does all this while imposing conditions that advance Western interests not only for states, but for citizens. If the views of the countries in question are not addressed at their root, then Western ambitions of gaining new partnerships will become ultimately fruitless, and China will remain unchallenged in these regions and free to enjoy the benefits undisturbed.

Beginning from an agreement that each country must pursue its own developmental path, a simultaneous recognition of freedom of action in terms of developmental assistance, investment, or other activity should balance out these considerations. Coupled with an account of Chinese actions in Africa and Latin America that also pursues a narrative-framing campaign that highlights equivalences to historical activity by Western powers, or even emphasises a greater severity due to recency and directness, may conduce a shift in attitude in developing-country publics and elites.

Western countries should also consider the imposition of similar qualifications, highlighted below, on the elites and publics of those countries it wishes to influence who decide to move or make a life in the West due to the attractiveness of life there. As long as unity is

preserved against disunity, geopolitical influence could return to the West through the assertive, instead of passive, use of both hard and soft power.

This brings us to the crux of this article. Namely, that if Western governments are alive to the attractiveness of Western societies, they must be prepared to harness them in geopolitical contestation. This would be aimed at addressing the impacts of China's rise and shift into geopolitical contestation on Western institutions, societies, and markets by ensuring that adverse influences are either excluded, are mitigated, or self-selecting. One of the ways that such a resource could be harnessed is by bearing in mind that citizenship, or indeed residency, does confer advantages and that those advantages should not be shared like gym memberships: to all those who can pay the fees.

Rather, additional qualifications might be necessary and contributions may be sought from new entrants. International immigrants from politically sensitive states or states in geopolitical contestation with the West might be required to prove positive alignment with Western values and interests before naturalisation or the granting of residency. Or they may be required to do the same before employment or engagement in areas or roles with high access to economic power, political power, or high technology. For example, this proof could come in the form of open advocacy for sanctions on their home government.

Those who see the West as havens for capital might be required not only to purchase property or invest in companies, which continue to be possessions, but to make a percentage-based contribution of possessed wealth to Western treasuries to alleviate income inequality and build infrastructure. Tal-

ent-based entrants may be required to perform research tasks that are government priorities or advance Western power. In the previously-discussed field of higher education, altering funding formulas to make international students less tempting or relied on to make up budgetary shortfalls could be conjoined to restricting politically sensitive international students to non-national security-critical fields, such as the humanities. Collaboration on research and development might also be restricted to activities without immediate military applications such as the amelioration of climate change or waste disposal.

These criteria would either prevent individuals seeking to harm Western societies from entering, ensure they contribute positively upon entry, or result in self-selection of those willing to comply. Such a policy orientation would also encourage vigilance against bad faith political engagement, particularly by organisations like CSSAs that serve as conduits for Chinese political influence. Vigilance must be accompanied by stricter enforcement measures, including proscribing organisations or imposing criminal penalties. Importantly, these

actions stem from recognising certain states as geopolitical competitors and no other criteria, and flow from our earlier identification of the attractions of Western society.

4. Conclusion

Western states have increasingly engaged in geopolitical contestation with China in recent years. This article has highlighted recent conflicts and long-term trends in Chinese activities impacting the West's global position. It has analysed the West's strengths and weaknesses with a view towards harnessing the former and mitigating the latter. In its main part, this article has argued that the advantages of favourable capital and social environments of Western society should be harnessed as both an incentive and a disincentive, and that Western governments must develop and maintain instruments of international coordination and cohesion in order to do so effectively. While external events may be beyond control, domestic actions are not, and it is hoped that this article encourages Western states to take proactive measures in response to China's challenge.

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