

INFORM. INSPIRE. DEVELOP CIVIC LEADERS.

THE POLICY CIRCLE

FOREIGN POLICY: ASIA PACIFIC



➤ WHAT IS FOREIGN POLICY? ◀

FOREIGN POLICY IS GENERAL OBJECTIVES THAT GUIDE THE ACTIVITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS OF ONE STATE IN ITS INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER STATES. THE DEVELOPMENT OF FOREIGN POLICY IS INFLUENCED BY DOMESTIC CONSIDERATIONS, THE POLICIES OR BEHAVIOUR OF OTHER STATES, OR PLANS TO ADVANCE SPECIFIC GEOPOLITICAL DESIGNS. LEOPOLD VON RANKE EMPHASIZED THE PRIMACY OF GEOGRAPHY AND EXTERNAL THREATS IN SHAPING FOREIGN POLICY, BUT LATER WRITERS EMPHASIZED DOMESTIC FACTORS. DIPLOMACY IS THE TOOL OF FOREIGN POLICY, AND WAR, ALLIANCES, AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE MAY ALL BE MANIFESTATIONS OF IT.

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IS CRAFTED PRINCIPALLY IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH. AT THE CABINET LEVEL, THE SECRETARIES OF STATE AND DEFENSE ALSO PLAY KEY ROLES IN SHAPING POLICY, DETERMINING PRIORITIES, AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY. THE U.S. FOREIGN SERVICE, UNDER THE STATE DEPARTMENT, TRAINS AND EMPLOYS DIPLOMATS WHO ARE POSTED AT U.S. DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO CARRY OUT U.S. FOREIGN POLICY. IN THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, LAWMAKERS IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE DO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN FOREIGN POLICY; ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS HAVE CONSTITUTIONALLY-MANDATED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.



➤ FACTS TO KNOW ◀



THE U.S. AIMS TO COUNTER CHINESE INFLUENCE IN THE PACIFIC REGION AND MITIGATE ITS AGGRESSION TOWARDS ITS NEIGHBORS, ESPECIALLY TAIWAN, JAPAN, AND THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS, WHILE ALSO MAINTAINING MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TRADE RELATIONS AND SHARED SECURITY INTERESTS, SUCH AS ENACTING SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREA.

ASIA MAKES UP ABOUT 37% OF THE WORLD'S GDP AND THREE OF ITS COUNTRIES ARE THE U.S.'S 2ND, 4TH AND 6TH LARGEST TRADING PARTNERS (CHINA, JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA, RESPECTIVELY). A PARTICULAR CONCERN FOR THE U.S. IS CHINA'S AGGRESSIVE ATTEMPTS TO EXPAND ITS ECONOMIC POWER AND INFLUENCE IN THE REGION AND GLOBALLY.

NON-GOVERNMENT CHINESE HACKERS' BREACHES OF U.S. GOVERNMENT DATABASES COMPROMISED 22.1 MILLION PEOPLE IN RECENT YEARS. NORTH KOREAN HACKERS HAVE "TARGETED THE MEDIA, AEROPSPACE, AND FINANCIAL SECTORS, AS WELL AS CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE UNITED STATES AND GLOBALLY" FOR YEARS.

CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE "INVOLVES CHINA UNDERWRITING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT" IN COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD. MANY ANALYSTS SEE THIS AS AN EXPANSION OF CHINESE POWER. SIXTY COUNTRIES REPRESENTING TWO-THIRDS OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION HAVE AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN INFRASTRUCTURE DEALS.

➤ GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES ◀

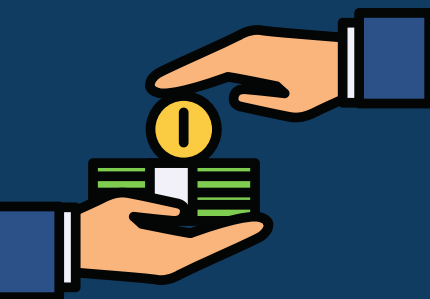


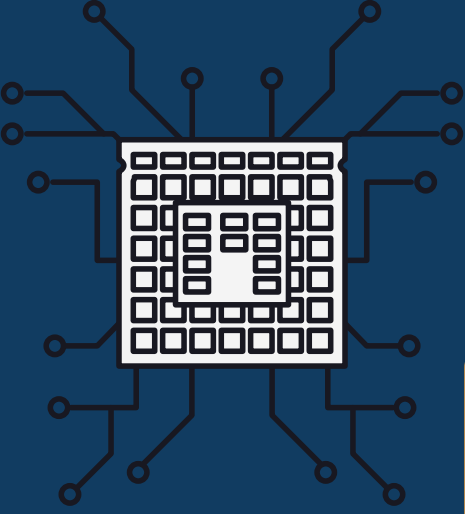
IN MARCH 2020, THE U.S. INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND ASKED FOR \$20 BILLION IN ADDITIONAL SPENDING BETWEEN 2021 AND 2026. IN MAY 2020, THE PACIFIC DETERRENCE INITIATIVE WAS INTRODUCED AS “A MASSIVE EFFORT PUSHED BY CONGRESS TO ADD MORE MILITARY HARDWARE TO THE INDO-PACIFIC AREA AND WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH PARTNERS AND ALLIES.”

IN JANUARY OF 2018, THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PROPOSED TARIFFS THAT WOULD COUNTER CHINA’S “UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES.” CHINA RESPONDED IN KIND, RESULTING IN A “TARIFF WAR” THAT HAS LED THE ADMINISTRATION TO ENGAGE IN TRADE TALKS TO REACH A DEAL FOR THE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF STEEL, ALUMINUM, FINANCIAL, TECHNOLOGY, AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS EXCHANGED AS WELL AS PROTECT U.S. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND END “THE FORCED TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY FROM U.S. COMPANIES TO THEIR CHINESE COUNTERPARTS.”

THERE ARE ABOUT 50,000 U.S. TROOPS IN JAPAN. THE U.S. ALSO HAS OVER 28,000 TROOPS STATIONED IN SOUTH KOREA, AND THE TWO COUNTRIES HOLD JOINT MILITARY AND TRAINING EXERCISES.

THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (CSIS) ESTIMATES CHINA’S DEFENSE BUDGET WAS ABOUT \$240 BILLION IN 2021, SECOND ONLY TO THE U.S. IN MILITARY SPENDING.





➤ FRAMING THE ISSUE ◀

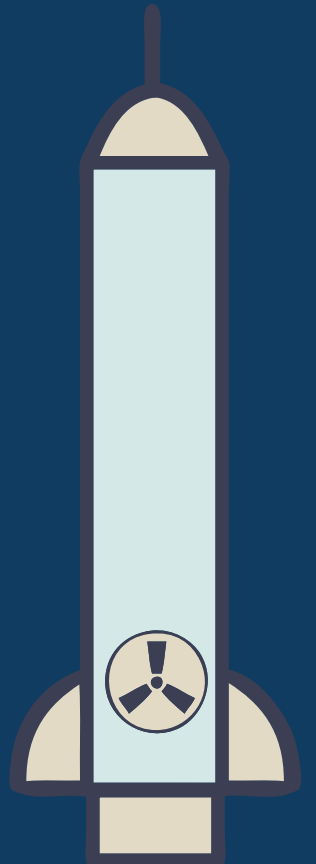


“CHINA INCREASINGLY IS A NEAR-PEER COMPETITOR, CHALLENGING THE UNITED STATES IN MULTIPLE ARENAS – ESPECIALLY ECONOMICALLY, MILITARILY, AND TECHNOLOGICALLY – AND IT IS PUSHING TO CHANGE GLOBAL NORMS.” MEANWHILE, “NORTH KOREA WILL BE A DISRUPTIVE PLAYER ON THE REGIONAL AND WORLD STAGES.”

THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY’S ANNUAL THREAT ASSESSMENT, RELEASED IN SPRING 2021, INDICATES “CHINA’S EFFORT TO EXPAND ITS GROWING INFLUENCE REPRESENTS ONE OF THE LARGEST THREATS TO THE UNITED STATES,” PARTICULARLY WITH CHINA’S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE. THE U.S. HAS RESPONDED WITH THE BUILD ACT TO ENGAGE IN GLOBAL INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDING, BUT IN TERMS OF SPENDING IT IS A MUCH SMALLER ENDEAVOR THAN CHINA’S INITIATIVE.

HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN NORTH KOREA HAVE LONG GARNERED INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION. THE U.S., CANADIAN, AND EUROPEAN UNION HAVE ALSO IMPOSED SANCTIONS AGAINST CHINA IN REGARDS “TO WHAT U.S. OFFICIALS SAY IS A GENOCIDAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST UYGHUR MUSLIMS,” WHICH ALSO CAME AMIDST “CRACKDOWNS ON DEMOCRACY IN HONG KONG.”

SOME EXPERTS CALL FOR MORE MILITARY STRENGTH IN THE PACIFIC TO COUNTER CHINA’S INCREASING EXPANSION AND NORTH KOREA’S NUCLEAR THREAT. OTHERS MAINTAIN THAT MULTILATERAL APPROACHES WITH COUNTRIES THAT SHARE U.S. VALUES AND COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY ARE KEY TO ADDRESSING TRANSNATIONAL THREATS LIKE CLIMATE CHANGE AS WELL AS POWER RIVALRIES.





SOLUTIONS



SOUTH KOREA IS ONE OF THE U.S.'S MOST IMPORTANT ALLIES IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION, ESPECIALLY IN TERMS OF WORKING TO CONTAIN A NUCLEAR NORTH KOREA. THE ALLIANCE SERVES "TO DETER ANOTHER NORTH KOREAN ATTACK ON SOUTH KOREA," AND ALSO PROVIDES "A CONTINENTAL BASE FOR U.S. FORCES TO FACE CHINA AND RUSSIA AND TO PROVIDE A FRONT-LINE DEFENSE FOR JAPAN." THE U.S. INCLUDES SOUTH KOREA IN THE "NUCLEAR UMBRELLA," A POLICY OF EXTENDED DETERRENCE IN WHICH THE U.S. PROMISES TO USE ITS NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO PROTECT ALLIES. THE U.S. HAS OVER 28,000 TROOPS STATIONED IN SOUTH KOREA, AND THE TWO COUNTRIES HOLD JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES AND TRAINING.

JAPAN'S ALLIANCE WITH THE U.S. IS CONSIDERED "ONE OF THE REGION'S MOST IMPORTANT MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS" AND "AN ANCHOR OF THE U.S. SECURITY ROLE IN ASIA." ABOUT 50,000 U.S. TROOPS ARE STATIONED IN JAPAN. THIS RELATIONSHIP HAS ASSUMED HEIGHTENED IMPORTANCE IN RECENT YEARS IN LIGHT OF CHINA'S INCREASED AGGRESSION — PARTICULARLY ITS MARITIME ACTIVITIES IN DISPUTED TERRITORIES — AND NORTH KOREA'S MISSILE AND NUCLEAR TESTS.

U.S. TIES WITH INDIA ARE ALSO ASSUMING A GREATER SIGNIFICANCE IN THE FACE OF CHINA'S EXPANSION. STARTING IN 2017, INDIA ALONG WITH JAPAN AGREED "TO DEEPEN DEFENSE TIES AND PUSH FOR MORE COOPERATION WITH AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED STATES, AS THEY SEEK TO COUNTER GROWING CHINESE INFLUENCE ACROSS ASIA." THE U.S., INDIA, AND JAPAN HAVE ALSO SIGNED INFRASTRUCTURE DEALS TO ATTEMPT TO COUNTER CHINA'S GROWING GEOPOLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INFLUENCE WITH ITS BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE.

➤ WHAT YOU CAN DO ◀

MEASURE -

FIND OUT HOW YOUR STATE AND DISTRICT ARE AFFECTED BY FOREIGN POLICY. ARE THERE MANY VETERANS IN YOUR CITY OR COMMUNITY? DOES YOUR CITY OR COMMUNITY HAVE A LARGE IMMIGRANT POPULATION? SEARCH ON YOUR STATE OR MUNICIPALITY'S WEBSITE FOR A COMMUNITY OR HUMAN SERVICES TAB, OR SEARCH FOR TERMS SUCH AS "IMMIGRATION," IN THE SEARCH BAR.



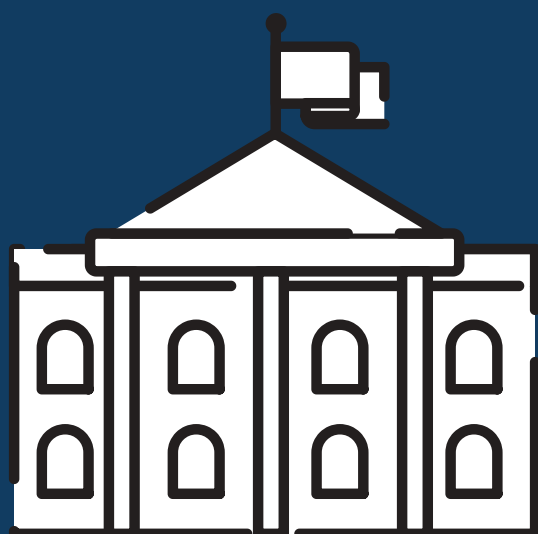
IDENTIFY -

WHAT STEPS HAVE YOUR STATE'S OR COMMUNITY'S ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS TAKEN? DOES ONE OF YOUR REPRESENTATIVES SERVE ON ONE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES ADDRESSING FOREIGN AFFAIRS?



REACH OUT -

FOSTER COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS, YOUR LOCAL AND STATE LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS.



PLAN -

SET MILESTONES BASED ON YOUR STATE'S LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR OR LOCAL COMMUNITY CALENDAR.



EXECUTE -

KEEP TRACK OF BILLS IN CONGRESS RELATED TO THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION. KNOW WHO DECIDES POLICY IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION: STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH INFORMATION FROM THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS. THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS IS THE POINT OF CONTACT FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AT THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE ADMINISTRATION. SEE IF YOUR CITY OR STATE HAS COMPANIES THAT ENGAGE INTERNATIONALLY. IF POSSIBLE, ORGANIZE A COMMUNITY DISCUSSION ABOUT AID, FOREIGN POLICY, AND WHAT YOUR TAX DOLLARS ARE GOING TO SUPPORT IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

