

Chinese Views on the Trump Administration's Asia Policy

Michael D. Swaine*

Authoritative and non-authoritative Chinese commentaries on the Trump administration's foreign policy have tended to avoid making hostile remarks in response to some notable U.S. provocations. This cautious stance most likely reflects at least three factors. First, the Chinese now recognize that presidential campaigns often produce aggressive rhetoric, but a new administration eventually moderates its stance in the face of practical constraints. Second, the upcoming 19th Party Congress in fall 2017 strongly indicates the need for Beijing to avoid taking any actions that could generate a foreign policy crisis. Third, the Chinese probably believe that Trump is ultimately someone who will take a pragmatic and transactional approach toward the Sino-American relationship. The current Chinese viewpoint, however, could darken considerably if Washington or Beijing adopt confrontational stances toward sensitive and potentially volatile foreign policy issues such as North Korea, Taiwan, or the South China Sea.

In *CLM* 50, we examined Chinese views on presidential candidates Hillary R. Clinton and Donald J. Trump. In this issue, we take a close look at Chinese views toward President Trump's policies toward Asia and China. The period covered begins with Trump's election on November 8, 2016, and ends with the presidential summit between President Trump and Chinese president Xi Jinping, held at Trump's Mar-A-Lago resort April 6–7.

As in previous *Monitor* articles, Chinese views in this essay are divided into authoritative and non-authoritative statements and actions. Five main foreign policy subjects are covered: 1) the state of overall current and future U.S.-China relations; 2) economic and trade policy, especially involving China; 3) the Taiwan issue; 4) the ongoing North Korea nuclear weapons crisis; and 5) maritime disputes in the South and East China Seas. The article ends with an assessment of the main features and trends of those views and their possible implications for the future.

Chinese Views and Statements

General Characterizations of Future and Current U.S.-China Relations under Trump

Overall, authoritative Chinese sources have been remarkably positive and upbeat in assessing the current and future tenor of the bilateral relationship, with a few partial exceptions.

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For example, following his election on November 8, senior Chinese officials gave no indication of any tension, worries, or suspicions regarding candidate Donald Trump's often-negative campaign views of China.

A congratulatory message from Xi Jinping stated:

Attaching great importance to China-U.S. relations, I look forward to working with you to, in the principle of non-conflict, non-confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation, expand bilateral cooperation in all fields at bilateral, regional and global levels, manage and control differences in a constructive way, push bilateral relations for greater progress at a new starting point and better benefit the two peoples and people of all countries.¹

Variations on this statement have been made by authoritative sources many times since then.²

In accentuating the positive, authoritative sources have at times stressed the unchanging, foundational elements of U.S.-China relations in the aftermath of Donald Trump's election. These include "huge common interests," mutual opportunities, popular expectations in both countries of continued development, and expectations in the international community for the two countries to "play a constructive role in maintaining world peace, development, and stability."³

Chinese optimism was arguably increased further when Secretary of State Rex Tillerson repeated, while in Beijing, the above phrasing Beijing uses to describe the goals of the relationship, involving the search for greater cooperation based on "no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation."⁴

And the apparent love-fest continued through the April 6–7 Mar-a-Lago summit. Following that event, Wang Yi stated:

This summit has become a stabilizing force for U.S.-China relations as well as a new opening for the bilateral relationship.⁵

In line with this approach, any problems in the relationship have been downplayed by authoritative sources. For example, in responding to general questions regarding Trump's critical or hostile tweets about China, Foreign Ministry spokespersons have usually avoided negative statements, stressing instead the need to continue working to deepen mutual understanding and produce mutually beneficial results.⁶

Many non-authoritative sources have echoed the above optimistic take on U.S.-China relations of authoritative sources, albeit at times with a more decidedly cautious note. Indeed, one scholar remarked, right after Trump's election:

Chinese observers are cautiously optimistic about Sino-U.S. relations

under an administration of president-elect Donald Trump. Most of Trump's comments regarding China are election rhetoric and have no feasibility at all.⁷

This caution was understandably more evident prior to Trump's inauguration, given the many critical or hostile tweets about China he made during the presidential campaign. At the time of his inauguration, one non-authoritative source expressed the hope that Trump would dispel the "doubts and worries" he had created by showing "a sense of responsibility that matches his power. . . . Trump and his advisors should avoid the mistake of going too far."⁸

Some observers were more even-handed in what they expected from the relationship. One stated:

Both countries must master the direction of China-U.S. relations. The two countries should not attempt to "coerce" the opposite party, but should pursue win-win and multiple win cooperation.⁹

In contrast, non-authoritative sources have also been direct and confrontational when commenting on Trump's criticisms of China. As always, the more hardline *Global Times* expressed a particularly strong view:

We must confront Trump's provocations head-on, and make sure he won't take advantage of China at the beginning of his tenure. We must struggle with Trump's provocations with reason and strength, and make sure that he will not gain any real benefit during the beginning of his tenure.¹⁰

Yet many scholars, including military ones, became especially optimistic following Tillerson's repeat of China's phrasing during his Beijing visit, noted above. One stated:

Despite President Trump's tweets about China . . . the [U.S.] acceptance of the "no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation" principle has laid a solid foundation for China-U.S. cooperation.¹¹

And such optimism became particularly notable following the April summit. For example, at that time Zhong Sheng observed:

The meetings between the heads of state of China and the U.S. have not only completed the smooth transition in China-U.S. relations, but also realized a good start in China-U.S. relations in the new period and made clear the direction for China-U.S. relations in the future.¹²

Finally, of note is the fact that non-authoritative sources have also expressed the opportunity for China provided by Trump's apparent reduction in engagement with the world, and his apparent protectionist sentiments. One stated:

It is time for China to transfer its role from an economic locomotive to an architect of the transformative world order. Now, the world has come to a crossroads. Which country can provide as much certainty to this confusing world as the U.S. did? . . . Allowing China to modify the world order could be an option. China should offer certainty to the world by engaging in the process of principle-making.¹³

Economic and Trade Policies and Statements, Especially toward China

In general, authoritative sources have responded to the statements and policies of Trump and his administration regarding economic and trade issues with China (including, in particular, threats to impose massive tariffs on Chinese imports) by stressing the mutually beneficial nature of bilateral relations in these areas, as well as China's overall contribution to global economic development.

These comments usually also involve an expression of a willingness to "work with the U.S. side to further deepen and expand economic and trade cooperation and bring more benefits to the two countries and the rest of the world."¹⁴

Chinese authoritative sources point out that "should a trade war break out between China and the U.S., it would be the foreign-invested companies in China, particularly U.S. firms that would bear the brunt of it. We don't want to see a trade war. A trade war won't make our trade fairer. It will only hurt both sides."¹⁵

Moreover, authoritative sources also often state that the World Trade Organization (WTO) provides an existing framework for addressing any economic problems between the two countries.¹⁶

However, on a more ominous note, one authoritative source stated: "Although China wishes the best from U.S.-China economic relations, it will be prepared for the worst scenario."¹⁷

Moreover, in response to critical remarks by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross that China is hypocritical in talking about free trade while being highly protectionist, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson stated: "In today's world, it is clear to all who is sincere in promoting trade and investment liberalization and who is practicing protectionism."¹⁸

Non-authoritative Chinese sources in many ways echo the authoritative sources, expressing a general optimism about the mutual benefits of the current economic order and the ability of the U.S. and China to solve their economic differences through normal channels and direct meetings, while cautioning against the self-defeating nature of any U.S. high-pressure tactics.¹⁹

However, as is often the case with many other issues, some non-authoritative sources also expressed a more sharp-edged, directly critical view of Trump's economic ideas than those found in authoritative sources. For example, the reliably hardline *Global Times* editorial page thundered that China will not shrink from a trade war, adding:

If the Trump administration imposes punitive tariffs on Chinese goods, China will not hesitate to take revenge. The U.S. trade deficit with China is due to strong complementarities in bilateral economies. The arrogant Trump team has underestimated China's ability to retaliate.²⁰

Taiwan

In general, authoritative Chinese sources have responded cautiously but sternly to actions and statements made by Trump or his team regarding Taiwan.

In response to Trump's acceptance of a telephone call from Taiwan president Tsai Ing-wen on December 2, 2016, authoritative Chinese sources merely lodged "solemn representations with the party concerned in the U.S." and stated that "President Trump's team is fully aware of China's solemn attitude on the issue."²¹

The Chinese government made no direct criticism of President-elect Trump or his policies following the call, although Wang Yi employed a well-used Chinese saying to caution Trump without naming him, stating that "those who undermine the One China principle and damage China's core interests will be lifting a rock only to drop it on their own feet, whether the Tsai Ing-wen authority or any other individuals or forces in the world."²² The day after the phone call, Wang Yi more directly criticized Taiwan for playing a "little trick" that would supposedly not change the "one China" policy of the U.S. government.²³

Unsurprisingly, authoritative sources have been more pointed (albeit not shrill or confrontational) in criticizing Trump for his suggestion that he is prepared to negotiate the "one China" policy in exchange for deals with Beijing on trade and other issues. For example, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang said that Beijing was "seriously concerned about his words," adding that if the "one China" policy (termed the "foundation" of the relationship) "is compromised, the sound and steady development of the bilateral relationship will be out of the question."²⁴

The tensions over Trump's stance toward the "one China" policy were apparently resolved when Xi spoke with the new president via telephone on February 10th, and again when Wang Yi met with Tillerson on the sidelines of the G20 meeting in Bonn on February 17.

After the latter meeting, the Foreign Ministry stated:

The U.S. side has made it clear that it will continue to adhere to the one-China policy. The two heads of state agreed that China and the U.S. could absolutely become great cooperation partners and should push bilateral relations for greater development from a new starting point... Based on the consensus reached by the two heads of state, China is ready to work with the U.S. side to strengthen communication, enhance mutual trust, handle differences, and deepen cooperation."²⁵

Unsurprisingly, non-authoritative sources presented a sharper, more emotional view toward Trump's phone conversation with Tsai and his initial willingness to question and possibly use the "one China" policy to gain diplomatic leverage.

The ever-reliable *Global Times* produced a string of harsh editorials. A typical one stated:

The one China principle is not for selling. Trump thinks that everything can be valued and, as long as his leverage is strong enough, he can sell or buy . . . China needs to let him know that China and other world powers cannot be easily taken advantage of. China needs to begin a round of resolute struggle with him . . . China needs to be fully armed and prepared to take a Sino-U.S. rollercoaster relationship together with Trump."²⁶

But the harshest words were reserved for Tsai and Taiwan.

Beijing should start from severely punishing Taiwan independence forces, exploring the possibility of disciplining those forces through non-peaceful means and make the use of military force an actual option to realize reunification.²⁷

Other non-authoritative sources were more measured in their criticism, citing the limits on Trump's provocative words and deeds created by the overall need for productive Sino-U.S. relations and cautioning Trump against attempts to "play games with China" on the Taiwan issue.²⁸

North Korea

Authoritative Chinese sources have generally avoided responding negatively to Trump's repeated criticism that Beijing is not applying enough pressure on the North Korea, and his claim that he will get China to use its supposedly decisive leverage to compel Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons.

Sources instead stress the global community's supposed recognition of China's contributions to a "proper settlement of the Korean nuclear issue" and its efforts to preserve peace and stability on the Peninsula.²⁹

Many sources also emphasize the long-held Chinese view, summed up in January by a Foreign Ministry spokesperson, that "the crux of this issue does not lie in China, but in the U.S.-North Korea conflicts." The spokesperson went on to add, "We hope that the new U.S. administration could be more constructive in handling this issue."³⁰

Finally, authoritative sources have clearly expressed China's opposition to any attempt by the Trump administration to apply unilateral "secondary sanctions" against Chinese entities, as well as strong opposition to Trump's confirmation of the Obama-era decision to deploy the THAAD missile defense system in South Korea.³¹

Non-authoritative sources again reflect the combination of relatively harsh and measured views of Trump's North Korea policies seen in other areas, attacking the new administration for blaming Beijing for Pyongyang's reluctance to give up its nuclear weapons, and for supporting the THAAD deployment decision.

The *Global Times* criticizes Trump's "twisted view" about China being to blame for North Korea and cautions him against trying to "boss China around as he did with Japan and South Korea."³²

Zhong Sheng characterizes the U.S. push for THAAD as "the most serious military provocation that has taken place in recent years in Northeast Asia."³³

Other sources highlight the dangers of Trump's policy of increasing pressure on North Korea, and Pyongyang's likely reaction. One Chinese analyst expresses a typical view:

Great pressure on Pyongyang will seriously worsen North Korea's sense of insecurity and force it to move farther down the road of possessing nuclear weapons. New North Korean nuclear tests and missile experiments will actually provide new excuses for the U.S., South Korea, and Japan to enhance their military might, which will only further worsen the Northeast Asian security situation.³⁴

However, this critical and pessimistic view is combined with some strong criticism of Pyongyang's behavior (reflecting the shift in much Chinese sentiment against the provocative Hermit Kingdom), as well as efforts to caution it to take seriously apparent U.S. threats to use force, and to return to the path of denuclearization. For example, a *Global Times* editorial states:

The U.S. will defend against North Korea nuclear missiles, but it will not "fear" them or casually make concessions to North Korea. It would be most beneficial for North Korea to proactively give up nuclear weapons.³⁵

One Asia researcher correctly assessed that Trump "will depart from the Obama administration's traditional line of thought of 'strategic patience' on the Korean Peninsula," and therefore concludes that "the peninsula is now at a juncture of a changing situation," causing much global instability.³⁶

Maritime Disputes

Prior to Trump taking office, and afterward, authoritative Chinese sources have reiterated their recent position that the South China Sea situation "has been stabilized and is improving," along with Beijing's expressed hope that "the relevant country [read the U.S.] can respect the efforts made by China and ASEAN countries and sustain the positive momentum in the South China Sea."³⁷

In responding to criticism of China's behavior in the South China Sea leveled by Trump and Trump officials such as Tillerson, authoritative sources again avoid escalatory

remarks. They often repeat the above statements, stressing a hope that “parties outside the region will respect the aspiration and interests shared by countries in the region.”³⁸

In line with this restrained approach, authoritative sources have also at times highlighted the positive statements of Tillerson and others toward the bilateral relationship while reiterating the common hope that the two countries “will respect each other’s core interests and major concerns, approach and manage the disagreements in a constructive way to prevent them from disrupting the overall bilateral relations.”³⁹

And in response to the irresponsible view, promulgated most notably by Trump advisor Steven Bannon, that Beijing and Washington will go to war over the South China Sea in the future, authoritative sources repeat the common refrain that “China will firmly safeguard its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea [but is also] committed to maintaining peace and stability of the relevant areas alongside regional countries.”⁴⁰

Perhaps the most confrontational authoritative Chinese remarks on this issue (also made during the Obama era) occur in response to the charge that China is militarizing the South China Sea:

China’s construction activities on its own islands and reefs are entirely within its own sovereignty and have nothing to do with militarization. Certain countries [again, read U.S. and Japan] either send vessels and aircraft to the South China Sea to flex muscles or sow discord. This is exactly the largest contributor to militarization in the South China Sea. We urge the U.S. and Japan to view the South China Sea issue in an objective and rational light and do more things that are conducive to peace and stability in the South China Sea rather than the opposite.⁴¹

Regarding the East China Sea dispute with Japan over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, authoritative sources have generally provided stock responses to press queries and actions taken by Trump officials. These include criticisms of both the U.S. and Japan for making “false statements on the sovereignty of Diaoyu Dao,” creating instability and (in the case of Japan) attempting “to try to gain U.S. support for its illegal territorial claims in the name of the so-called mutual defense treaty.”⁴²

Non-authoritative sources again often echo the above authoritative views, but are also more direct in criticizing the remarks and actions of Trump and other senior U.S. officials.

One analyst termed Tillerson’s remarks during his confirmation hearing about preventing China’s access to South China Sea islands as “ridiculous,” while admiring his urging Trump to accept the one China policy.⁴³

Some sources expressed concern that hawkish figures in the Trump administration might push more aggressive military actions in maritime areas and thereby exacerbate bilateral confrontations.⁴⁴

However, some analysts speculated that maritime disputes will not become a priority for the Trump administration, given its focus on economic issues, Taiwan, and problems in the Middle East, although some also expressed a concern that Trump might attempt to use the issue “as a bargaining chip in negotiations with China on issues such as the RMB exchange rate and trade protectionism.”⁴⁵

Conclusion

The above summary of Chinese views toward the major relevant foreign policy features and statements of Trump and the Trump administration clearly show that, in the main, both authoritative and non-authoritative sources have tended to avoid making hostile or confrontational remarks in response to some notable U.S. provocations. Instead, many sources have merely repeated Beijing’s standard, long-standing policy stance toward the issue in question, cautioned the U.S. against taking actions that could damage what is touted as the generally sound bilateral relationship, or highlighted the self-defeating nature of various possible negative U.S. actions

This relatively cautious stance, in the face of many at times highly critical statements by Trump or Trump officials, most likely reflects at least three basic factors: First, the Chinese now recognize that presidential election campaigns often produce bombastic utterances primarily for domestic political effect, and that new administrations often start out taking a tough stance toward China, only to moderate that stance in the face of practical constraints. Hence, they conclude that it is best to remain optimistic and adopt a “wait-and-see” attitude toward Trump and his administration.

Second, at this particular time, China’s domestic situation strongly indicates the need for Beijing to avoid taking any actions that could generate a foreign policy crisis. In particular, the Chinese leadership is focused primarily on preparations for the fall 2017 19th Party Congress, and hence requires a relatively placid external environment.

Third, the Chinese probably believe that Trump is ultimately someone who will take a pragmatic and transactional approach toward the relationship, adopting an initial tough rhetorical stance while eventually agreeing to compromise on sensitive and important issues in order to “strike deals.” Many Chinese probably suspect that Trump is not a fervent China-basher, but rather someone who uses the China issue primarily to further his political interests. He is also likely seen as someone who admires strong and decisive leadership and so will probably get along well with Xi Jinping.

Such Chinese views toward Trump were apparently borne out by the results of the April presidential summit, which both types of Chinese sources generally regarded as an extremely positive indicator of future relations.

These cautiously positive views notwithstanding, some non-authoritative sources, in particular the *Global Times* editorial page, castigate Trump and Trump officials for expressing “ridiculous” views and urge Beijing to push back strongly against any persistent criticisms or actions that threaten Chinese interests. However, while expressing a willingness to endure some damage to the relationship in order to protect those interests, few if any non-authoritative sources believe that the Trump presidency will destroy or derail what many Chinese view as a generally positive, stable, and mutually beneficial relationship.

This of course could change if, for example, Washington or Beijing adopts rigid, confrontational stances toward one or more of the three most sensitive and potentially volatile foreign policy issues examined above: Taiwan, North Korea, and maritime disputes. Of these issues, the slow-motion North Korea nuclear crisis arguably poses the greatest danger at present of altering Chinese views of the relationship in decidedly negative directions.

But this will largely depend on Trump. Some U.S. officials have said that China’s willingness or unwillingness to put unprecedented levels of pressure on Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons will serve as an indicator of the future tenor of the relationship. Whether this is a bluff designed to elicit Chinese compliance or a serious threat is not known. But if the latter, and Trump pulls down the entire relationship because China does not meet his expectations (as is likely), the current positive Chinese viewpoint toward Trump could darken considerably.

Notes

¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China (hereinafter shortened to PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs), “Xi Jinping Sends Congratulatory Message to Donald Trump on His Election as U.S. President,” November 11, 2016, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1414630.shtml.

² For example, see PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Wang Yi: Push China-U.S. Relations for Greater Progress at a New Starting Point,” November 14, 2016, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1415806.shtml; PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lu Kang’s Regular Press Conference,” February 9, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1437227.shtml.

³ Consulate General of the People’s Republic of China in Chicago, “Post-Election China-U.S. Relationship: Remarks by Consul General Hong Lei at International House of University of Chicago,” November 30, 2016, <http://www.chinaconsulatechicago.org/eng/lghd/t1420808.htm>.

⁴ See PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Wang Yi Holds Talks with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson,” March 18, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1447388.shtml.

⁵ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Wang Yi discusses Xi Jinping’s state visit to Finland and his visit to the U.S. to hold heads of state meeting between China and the U.S.” (王毅谈习近平主席访问芬兰并赴美国举行中美元首会晤), April 9, 2017,

<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/zyxw/t1452310.shtml>.

⁶ See PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lu Kang’s Regular Press Conference,” December 9, 2016,

http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1422924.shtml. Also

see PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Transcript of Premier Li Keqiang’s Meeting with the Press at the Fifth Session of the 12th National People’s Congress,” March 16, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1446292.shtml.

⁷ See Yang Sheng, “‘Cautious optimism’ for Sino-U.S. relations after Trump victory,” *Global Times*, November 10, 2016, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1016886.shtml>. Jin Canrong, who is quoted in the article, is the associate dean of the School of International Studies at the Renmin University of China.

⁸ “Editorial: Doubts, fears linger as Trump takes office” (社评：寄语今天就任美国总统的唐纳德·特朗普), *Global Times*, January 20, 2017, <http://opinion.huanqiu.com/editorial/2017-01/9986170.html>.

⁹ Hua Yisheng, “Anticipating a new starting point for China-U.S. relations” (期待中美关系站上新起点), *People’s Daily*, January 21, 2017,

http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrbhwb/html/2017-01/21/content_1745455.htm. Hua Yisheng is a columnist for the overseas edition of the *People’s Daily*.

¹⁰ “Editorial: Trump should forget about slicing meat off the ‘fat lamb of China’” (社评：特朗普休想从“中国肥羊”身上割肉), *Global Times*, December 5, 2016,

<http://opinion.huanqiu.com/editorial/2016-12/9772279.html>.

¹¹ Fan Gaoyue, “Xi-Trump Summit Will Lead to Comprehensive Cooperation,” *China US Focus*, April 5, 2017, <http://www.chinausfocus.com/foreign-policy/xi-trump-summit-will-lead-to-comprehensive-cooperation>. Fan Gaoyue is a retired senior colonel and former chief specialist at the PLA Academy of Military Science.

¹² Zhong Sheng, “Contribute positive energy to world peace and development” (为世界和平发展贡献正能量), *People’s Daily*, April 10, 2017,

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[03.htm](http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrb/html/2017-04/10/nw.D110000renmrb_20170410_2-03.htm). For similar views, see Sheng Dingli, “A Thousand Reasons Building Ties” *China US Focus*, April 10, 2017, <http://www.chinausfocus.com/foreign-policy/a-thousand-reasons-building-ties>. Dr. Shen Dingli is a professor and vice dean at the Institute of International Studies, Fudan University.

¹³ Ding Gang, “China Can Assuage Neighbors in Trump era,” *Global Times*, November 16, 2016, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1018353.shtml>. Also see

Wang Yiwei 王义桅, “Why did the Munich Security Conference pay attention to China’s voice?” (慕安会何以关注中国声音), *People’s Daily*, February 21, 2017,

http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrbhwb/html/2017-02/21/content_1751703.htm.

¹⁴ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang’s Regular Press Conference,” March 1, 2017,

http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1442469.shtml.

¹⁵ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Transcript of Premier Li Keqiang’s Meeting with the Press at the Fifth Session of the 12th National People’s Congress.”

¹⁶ See PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lu Kang’s Regular Press Conference,” December 9, 2016.

¹⁷ NBC News, “China Speaks about President Donald Trump, South China Sea, Trade (Full Interview),” January 24, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7J6wFa-vYc>.

¹⁸ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference,” January 19, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1431978.shtml.

¹⁹ “How will the Trump presidency affect U.S.-China relations? Nine experts offer their analyses” (‘特朗普总统’ 如何影响中美关系? 9 大专家解读在此!), *Global Times*, November 9, 2017, http://opinion.huanqiu.com/opinion_world/2016-11/9656268.html; Zhang Wenyang 张文扬, “Chinese Academy of Social Science researcher Fan Mingtai: U.S. economic policy adjustments enter a new period” (社科院研究员樊明太: 美国经济政策调整进入特朗普时代), November 12, 2016, <http://www.eeo.com.cn/2016/1112/293968.shtml>; Feng Xingyuan 冯兴元, “How to understand globalization, deglobalization and China’s new trade” (如何看全球化、去全球化与中国新外贸), *Economic Observer*, March 17, 2017, <http://www.eeo.com.cn/2017/0317/300510.shtml>.

²⁰ “Editorial: the Trump team should not threaten China with trade war” (社评: 特朗普团队休拿贸易战威胁中国), *Global Times*, January 19, 2017, <http://opinion.huanqiu.com/editorial/2017-01/9971225.html>.

²¹ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang’s Remarks on U.S. President-elect Trump’s Phone Call with Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen,” December 3, 2016,

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²² PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Wang Yi: Those who undermine the One China principle will be lifting a rock only to drop it on their own feet,” December 12, 2016, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1424082.shtml.

²³ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Wang Yi Answers Question from Journalist over Donald Trump’s Call with Tsai Ing-wen.”

²⁴ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang’s Regular Press Conference,” December 12, 2016,

http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1423512.shtml; PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference,” January 16, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1430903.shtml.

²⁵ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Minister Wang Yi Meets with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson,” February 17, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1440207.shtml.

²⁶ “Editorial: Trump, please listen clearly: the ‘one China’ principle is not for sale” (社评: 特朗普请听清: “一个中国” 不能买卖), *Global Times*, December 12, 2017, <http://opinion.huanqiu.com/editorial/2016-12/9797239.html>.

²⁷ “Editorial: Holding no illusions, we are prepared for arm-wrestling with Trump” (社评: 不抱各种幻想, 准备与特朗普掰手腕), *Global Times*, December 13, 2016, <http://opinion.huanqiu.com/editorial/2016-12/9801404.html>.

²⁸ For example, see Cheng Hongliang 程宏亮, “New U.S. government should handle Taiwan issue cautiously” (美国新政府应该谨慎处理台湾问题), *Guangming Daily*, January 20, 2017, http://epaper.gmw.cn/gmrb/html/2017-01/20/nw.D110000gmrb_20170120_1-12.htm. Cheng Hongliang is a research fellow at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations’ Institute of American Studies.

²⁹ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lu Kang’s Regular Press Conference,” December 9, 2016.

³⁰ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang’s Regular Press Conference,” January 3, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1428102.shtml. Also see PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang’s Regular Press Conference,” February 13, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1438035.shtml; PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference,” April 6, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1451770.shtml.

³¹ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference,” March 17, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1446684.shtml; PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference,” March 22, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2511_665403/t1447805.shtml.

³² “Editorial: Does Trump want to use the North Korean nuclear issue to threaten China?” (社评: 特朗普又想拿朝核问题要挟中国吗), *Global Times*, January 3, 2017, <http://opinion.huanqiu.com/editorial/2017-01/9899005.html>.

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³⁴ Zhang Wenzong 张文宗, “Major things to watch for during Tillerson’s trip to East Asia” (蒂勒森东亚行的几大看点), *Global Times*, March 10, 2017, <http://opinion.huanqiu.com/1152/2017-03/10284471.html>. Zhang Wenzong is the head of the Political Studies Department under the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations’ Institute of American Studies.

³⁵ “Editorial: There may not be much time left to peacefully resolve the North Korea nuclear issue” (社评: 和平解决朝核的时间或许所剩无多), *Global Times*, March 21, 2017, <http://opinion.huanqiu.com/editorial/2017-03/10344693.html>.

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who is quoted in the article, is a researcher of the Institute of Asia-Pacific and Global Strategy of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

³⁷ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Geng Shuang’s Regular Press Conference,” December 15, 2016, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1424544.shtml; PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference,” January 24, 2017, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/t1433525.shtml.

³⁸ PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lu Kang’s Regular Press Conference,” January 11, 2017,

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⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Zhang Wenzong, “Major things to watch for during Tillerson’s trip to East Asia”.

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