

“Change is made of Choices,  
& Choices are made of Character”

Amanda Gorman  
National Youth Poet Laureate  
Youngest Presidential Inaugural Poet

Strategic Leadership:

Gather information from a wide network  
of experts and sources.

Reframe a problem from several angles  
to understand root causes.

Seek out diverse views to see multiple  
sides of an issue.

*Harvard Business Review, Spring 2023*

## CHINA–WEST DIALOGUE

### AN ALTERNATIVE FRAMING OF THE GLOBAL ORDER

GLOBAL SOLUTIONS SUMMIT, BERLIN

# An Alternative Framing of the Global Order

Colin Bradford

## 1. Facing Reality: Geopolitical Realism

There is no sense in wishful thinking that the world should be otherwise.

The United States and China each and together manifest clear behaviors of geopolitical realism characteristic of systems of balance of power which go back to Metternich and Bismarck. Their behaviors befit a classic great power dynamic of struggle for offsetting power and national advantage.

The redefining of Asia as the Indo-Pacific region, the strengthening of the Quad consisting of the United States, India, Japan and Australia, the heralding of the G7 as a value-driven alliance in the struggle of “democracy versus autocracy”, the Aukus agreement to deploy nuclear submarines to Australia, and the extension of NATO’s influence into Asia, all are clear manifestations of balance of power moves as part of strategic repositioning of the United States in its relations with China.

China has been rapidly increasing its military strength, and in particular naval capacity and nuclear arsenals, extending its regional influence through the Belt and Road Initiative, ramping up its relations in the Global South, insisting on its intentions to bring Taiwan under its control, meeting with Russia as a counterweight to Western dominance, and seemingly intent on “systemic change of the international order with China at its center”, as perceived by Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission President.

All this in a way is “normal”. But what is unusual now is the continuously increasing intensity of confrontational narratives between the United States and China and China and the United States. It is definitely a two-way street. What seems to be driving the confrontational narratives is less international strategic assessments than domestic political drivers in both countries. This moment of global polemics has its origins in domestic polarization and politics in which national strength externally mobilizes political unity internally.

No better example can be given than the fact that the only clear point of unanimity between Republicans and Democrats in Washington is “China”. Also, as President Xi Jinping has gained an unprecedented third term and seeks to consolidate his internal power within the one-party state, he too has used the power struggle with the United States to strengthen his hand internally. The media in both countries ramp up the rhetoric on both sides and

imbue it into public discourses. Thinking outside the box, is out of order. Making other choices is not under consideration, so it seems.

## 2. The Consequences of Confrontation

It is in a way natural that the two largest economies in the world should engage in competitive behavior between them. And to some more circumscribed extent, there would be nothing wrong with it.....except that there are consequences.

The consequences are that the confrontational narratives between the US and China have not only dominated geopolitics for the last five years but they have permeated, overwhelmed and undermined global relations generally and global governance for global problem-solving in particular.

The world now faces a simultaneity of global systemic challenges as never before in human history. Climate change, biodiversity, global health, social divides and war each represent existential threats to human survival and together an immense challenge to humanity, as never before. The confrontational narratives threaten to bifurcate the international community, forcing countries to choose sides, when in fact the current context requires that the international community becomes whole, unified and stronger to address the current panoply of risks.

What is at stake is nothing less than humanity's capacity to exercise agency over problems and responsibility in addressing global challenges. If humanity allows polarization to occur on a global scale, then humanity will fail to save the planet from catastrophe and societies from implosion.

However comfortable and historic great power tensions may feel as normal exercises of balance of power politics, this time is different. This time the geopolitical gamesmanship of off-setting dynamics potentially divides and destroys the international community which needs to pull together to face existential threats.

## 3. Causes

The underlying dynamic driving geopolitical conflict between China and the US is the dumbing down of public discourses to simplistic formulations and one-liner media-minded messaging which feeds ideological divides internally and externally. In bids for power internally, domestic political discourses seek to gain adherents based on emotion and excitement. The focus on governance in

American politics, at least, has all but disappeared as politics has turned into posturing in relation to social and cultural issues. The policy debate is overshadowed by political theater. And, such as they are, policy debates too become plagued by over-simplification and ideological differences.

The central problem is that by posing issues as binaries, choices between diametrically opposite viewpoints become a framing that facilitates bids for power but does not begin to further problem-solving. There are empty spaces in public discourses. Debates based on substance are overwhelmed by rhetorical flourishes, one-liners and oversimplification.

Binaries pose false choices based on fear of stark alternatives. Posing economic policy as a choice between free markets and state-run economies is to falsify the real choices. All economies are mixed economies. Even China calls itself a market economy. So posing tax policies as fueling “big government” rather than as revenues necessary to pay for infrastructure, investment in people, in basic research, science and technological development, to improve labor skills and environmental sustainability polemicizes a public debate rather than mobilizes understanding and consensus on essential public policies.

Similarly, the framing of US foreign policy as a struggle for “democracy versus autocracy” generates an ideological discourse when in fact in the 21<sup>st</sup> century all countries are facing increasing challenges in balancing representativeness and control, governing effectively and credibly, and delivering for their publics outcomes that are politically sustainable.

The Chinese government is not immune from these tensions. The pressure of generating outcomes for 1.4 billion people in ways that result in support for their government is a constant urgency and absolute necessity from a governance perspective. This intense pressure given the size of China does not legitimize authoritarian practice, but it does help outsiders understand the enormity of the challenge in governing a country four times bigger than the United States.

Making the binary choice between “democracy and autocracy” a centerpiece of American foreign policy has been received in the rest of the world with some skepticism because it seems to pit good versus evil, us versus them, the virtuous versus the villainous. It stylizes and stereotypes relations in a way that trivializes the real complexities of governance and creates divides and divisions in a moment when we need convergence and unity globally to manage the future. It creates blocks and alliances of contention rather than fluidity, flexibility and pragmatism to facilitate practical decision-making and problem-solving.

## 4. Alternative Global Political Dynamics for a Global Future

Even though geopolitical great power politics based on off-setting balance of power dynamics is a reality, is it nonetheless possible to formulate alternative political dynamics that can facilitate global relations to address global challenges and strengthen global governance for global problem-solving?

After three years of dialogue among a highly diverse group of thought leaders from different professions and experiences from a dozen countries, we have concluded not only intellectually but from our own experience in the China-West Dialogue that pluralism works.

\*\*\*Pluralism breaks the intensity of the tensions of a bipolar world and the polarizing effects of binary formulations.

\*\*\*The diversity of perspectives which creates pluralism as a force generates complexity which has the effect of professionalizing relationships rather than polemicizing them.

\*\*\*The results are that understanding reduces discord, trust diminishes disagreement, substance replaces posturing, mutuality overcomes singularity and dialogue delivers outcomes.

\*\*\*Diversity, pluralism and complexity overwhelm simplistic ideological approaches and drive strategic thinking and progress in problem-solving.

These are the elements of the new *global political dynamics* which are determining the new global order today. The dominant dynamics of the global order today are desires for independence, policy space, non-alignment and strategic autonomy in foreign policies and global relations.

The undeniable fact of life is that most countries of the world today want to avoid being forced to choose sides in a bifurcated global order. Their freedom and strategic positioning depend on strengthening pluralism in global relations, not joining blocs or alliance systems.

The world we are in today is a multivalent world. Not a multipolar world of balance of power fame. Not a unipolar world. Not a value-driven international order. The world today is characterized by a stunning simultaneity of systemic crises, a welter of channels of influence, communications and transactions, a plethora of interests and values, and instantaneous connectivity and news cycles.

This is not a world in which binaries can work. Binaries are linear trade-offs across a spectrum of a dichotomy which is a zero-sum framework. One move to the right or left along the spectrum comes at a cost for one side of the argument or the other. Add a second dimension to a binary and at least decision-making takes place in a two-dimensional space, not along a single line.

The world today is not only a world of three dimensional volumetric decision-making spaces but one in which multiple vectors intersect and interact in what can be described as a multivalent decision-making space. Complexity reigns. Pragmatism and professionalism prevail, by necessity.

Ideological formulations are not viable in complex decision-making spaces that characterize policy choices in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There is a complete disconnect between many public political discourses and the substantive dimensions of real-life public policy decisions which means that discourses interfere with good policy making. This disconnect between public discourses and substance are essential drivers of division.

The underlying fundamental determinant of pluralism in a multivalent world is differentiation which is a powerful force in societal and individual identity. The most energizing elements for creativity and innovation are distinction, uniqueness, excellence beyond existing norms, full realization of potential, a refusal to accept what is for what could be, ambition, transcending limitations, imagination, inspiration, and ambition. Differentiation is the determinant of cultural diversity and pluralism in the public square. Following formulaic stylistic models is not a compelling force in today's world.

## 5. Implications of Pluralism as the Driver of the Multivalent Global Order

The conclusion of the China-West Dialogue after over thirty zoom sessions involving over sixty experienced thought leaders including colleagues from China in every session is that the "strategic autonomy" policy of Europe and the European Union vis a vis China is vital in pluralizing the bilateral US-China relationship into China-West relations ("West" in a non-geographic sense). Indeed, it has become our view that because of this pluralizing effect, Europe's strategic autonomy policy toward China is in the interest of the United States.

Strategic autonomy strengthens pluralism which reduces geopolitical tensions and professionalizes global relations alongside of on-going geopolitical interactions. It enables the world to move forward in addressing global

challenges and it demonstrates that pluralism is a positive-sum game approach rather than a zero-sum game. The “us versus them” buzz recedes and does not obliterate global relations in other domains.

While trilateral power relations between Europe-China-and the US are necessary, they are not a sufficient condition for a new global order that keeps the international community whole.

Diversity-pluralism-and complexity are already powerful forces in the Global South and have been for some time. Clearly, today Indian prime minister Narendra Modi and recently re-elected Brazilian president Lula da Silva are leaders in the Global South who are keen to assert independence and generate more global pluralism. Chilean scholars have assembled a volume of essays from thought leaders in Latin America arguing for “active non-alignment” as in the strategic interests of Latin America. (Fortin et al, 2021) The May- June 2023 issue of *Foreign Affairs* cover features “The Nonaligned World: The West, the Rest, and the New Global Disorder”. Charles Kupchan perceived the emergence of a “global turn” in 2012 based on “multiple versions of modernity”. (Kupchan, 2012)

\*\*\*China clearly benefits from a more pluralistic world that provides more maneuvering room and policy space for it to operate as a rising power. But it is also true that pluralism will constrain the ambitions of any nation seeking pre-eminence.

\*\*\*We are not transitioning from a US-led global order to a China-led global order. We are already in a pluralistic global order which is in the interest of the world as a whole to nourish.

\*\*\*Pluralism not only provides greater “autonomy” for all countries but pluralism constitutes a new “global political dynamic” that enables global governance to move forward even as geopolitics follow an older form of balance of power.

One of the “sites” in which global relations can flourish and in which global governance can be effectuated is the G20. The year-long processes of G20 working groups, task forces, ministerials and engagement groups leading up to the two-day annual G20 summits are valuable opportunities to address global challenges and generate greater ambition and achievement in dealing with them.

The G20 consists of the twenty largest economies in the world. The criterion for membership is influence, not regime type or value system. Compared to the G7, the G20 is a secular, eclectic, and agnostic with respect to values. Russia is a

member of the G20 and there is no appetite for removing Russia from it, despite the war on Ukraine. By having Russia in the G20, and not thrown out as Russia was from the G7 in 2014 as a result of the Crimean crisis, it forces Russia to the table and it forces Russia's adversaries to deal with Russia, like it or not. In the long run, this eclecticism will benefit all parties involved.

The G20 could become a platform for pluralized China-West relations to play out. The presence of great powers, major powers and middle powers from every region of the world provide a caldron in which the tensions with China in their "multivalent" form can be implicitly or explicitly addressed. Multivalence is a manifestation of complexity which forces pragmatism and professionalism over polemics. The finite number of 20 large economies makes the G20 more manageable than larger bodies would be.

The problem for the G20 in recent years is that the spillover effects of geopolitical tensions with Russia and China not only constrain the effectiveness of G20 deliberations in generating results but overwhelm global governance all together. The current situation as it has developed in recent months not only weakens global cooperation but obliterates it. *The world is moving inexorably toward a bifurcated world order.* Positions are hardening. Pundits are having a field day feeding on friction and fracture as inevitable features of a new global order.

## 6. Ways Forward

There needs to be a clear-eyed realistic understanding of the tensions between the US and China. The United States political establishment has moved beyond the notion that economic liberalization in China and China's integration into the world economy will produce political liberalization within China. China sees the example of Russia putting political reform first and economic reform later as a disaster that China will not replicate. For China control over destiny is vital. For the United States, liberal values of individual freedom and democracy are foundational. For both the US and China global leadership is important to national identity. The US wants to preserve its role in a US-led, rules-based international order whereas China feels its rise positions China to be a leader of the international order and a rule-maker in it.

These are deeply rooted historical thrusts which lend a certain inevitability to competition, confrontation and conflict.

The question is: can these two super powers with global ambitions create space for communication, dialogue, and professional interaction that contributes to global governance with others rather than continuing on a path of separation,



distant sparring, maneuver and ambition that dominates and divides the global community?

The fact is that the moment we are in right now could have been decidedly different. At the Indonesian G20 Summit in November, presidents Joseph Biden and Xi Jinping met in person. The outcome was positive. The read outs by the White House and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China were promising. Xi and Biden agreed that US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken would visit China and meet with President Xi Jinping. The visit was planned for late January.

On January 28 a Chinese “spy balloon” entered US airspace. The Blinken visit was suspended. The anticipated resuscitation of the six official China-US working groups suspended or “extinguished” after the visit of US House Speaker Pelosi to Taiwan in August, stopped. Tensions have risen ever since, exacerbated in US eyes by the Xi Jinping-Vladimir Putin meeting in Moscow at the end of March and in China eyes by the meeting between House Speaker Kevin McCarthy with the president of Taiwan, Tsai Ing-wen in California in early April.

Despite pledges to avoid another Cold War, the truth is the world of today is very different from the world that might have been if it was not for the balloon. A Chinese observer told the New York Times that “In China’s view, though Biden showed a good attitude in Bali, he is not strongly willing to improve Sino-US relations”. (April 21, Dean Wu Xinbo, Fudan University)

There needs to be another a shift in the dynamics. Some soul-searching needs to go on in Washington and Berlin. What are the fundamental strategic interests at stake for both China and the United States? What are the ways that together the US and China could overcome the current turn of events which were arbitrary and capricious.

The fact is that balloons are not a new security threat. They are a relatively common occurrence. One government report indicated that there have been 163 balloons or “balloon-like entities” reported over the United States since March of 2021. (ODNI, January 2023). There is nothing new about espionage between competitive parties. But, the balloon on January 28 became a political football. Political theater prevailed.

The fact is that there is no reason why a Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States should have gone to Taiwan. The Speaker of the House has no Constitutional authority to be involved directly in US – China relations as an independent actor. (Masters, CFR, 2017)

The fact is that there is no reason for fanning the flames of the Taiwan issue by public gesture and display by high profile US contacts with Taiwan’s leadership,

nor hyper-ventilating about a new world of three nuclear powers instead of two, when what is actually happening on both sides of a great power conflict is building of capacities to mutual deterrence.

The US has made it clear that it will strengthen the defense systems of Taiwan to not only resist a potential invasion by China but deter it. The entire history of nuclear weapons build-ups is to create equivalent defensive capacities to prevent first-use by opponents. China has been absolutely clear about the fact that it opposes the use of nuclear weapons by Russia in the war on Ukraine and that China's national defense policy is for deterrence.

The entrance of the Chinese balloon into US airspace on January 28 was a turning point. The Blinken visit to China that could have been, was understandably postponed. Official relations between the US and China have been frigid ever since. There are no signs of thaw. This is a moment in which serious-minded people need to step forward and change the dynamics.

*There is no reason to let a single intrusive balloon change the course of history.*

*The central challenge is to protect the singularity of the international community as a unitary concept in service to the world as whole. A bifurcated global order is not the future the world wants.*

The fact is that China has endorsed the salience of the principles the United Nations Charter, has declared nuclear weapons as unacceptable means of warfare, has declared that the safety and security of nuclear plants are sacrosanct and off limits in war, and has, with France, "called on parties to protect women and children, victims of conflict, and to increase humanitarian aid to conflict zones, and to provide unimpeded access for humanitarian aid in accordance with international commitments".

\*\*\*These points display a differentiation of China's international position on basic principles of international relations from that of Russia. It seems obvious that these distinctions should be recognized, and that the world should work with China to enhance the firmness of its commitments to them as a basis for international cooperation and as structural foundations for holding the international community together as a bulwark against a bifurcated global order.

To keep the international community whole, there need to be shifts in the political dynamics. The mantra of "competition when it should be, cooperate wherever we can, and contest where we must" laid about by Secretary of State Blinken on May 26, 2022 no longer holds up. The partitioning of collaborative

efforts collapses and is overwhelmed by confrontation, contestation and competition.

\*\*\*There needs to be a *pause* in the confrontational narratives, a push to promote *dialogue*, and a *reimagining* of the geopolitical landscape that isolates collaboration from competition and competition from conflict. \*\*\*

The foundational shift that may matter most is to see how US actions look from a China perspective and make sure outsiders are seeing China as it is and not seeing it through a singular simplistic lens. It is not hard to understand now how the Pelosi visit to Taiwan was explosive from a Chinese perspective. And, it was not necessary, from US policy perspective.

If the West looks at China only through the lens of strategic competition and contestation for global leadership, then the West will miss the impact of internal processes in China on China's global ambitions and the degree to which complexity drives "heterogeneous" outcomes in China not simplistic results. (Massot, 2022) If the West could see China in a deeper way, that would reduce fear-driven aspects of its responses which would enable more engagement and interaction in place of friction.

From the experience of the China-West Dialogue, there is no doubt that dialogue facilitates understanding, that complexity enables professionalism over polemics, and that diversity in perspectives feed pluralistic dynamics which generate composite outcomes more in the interest of the international community as a whole. Xi and Biden need to reinstate the six official working groups that were extinguished or suspended after the Pelosi visit to Taiwan. High level official exchanges need to be reinstated. Dialogues need to be encouraged among societal leaders as well as between officials. Tit-for-tat official responses to daily events need to be put on "pause".

Competition will continue, but interaction, exchange and communications need to be not only restored but strengthened as vital to the future of the world community as a whole. While not being naïve regarding strategic ambition, the recognition of the degree to which pluralism is the driver of global political dynamics today will help to modify, contain and blunt the *pretense of hegemony* that is at the core of the strategic fictions today. The annual Global Solutions Summits in Berlin constitute one of the platforms where dialogue has begun and where geopolitical tensions can be offset by professional exchanges among thought leaders from around the world and across substantive domains.

## 7. Moves to Strengthen Global Governance in a Pluralistic Global Order

So, what concretely does the rise of pluralism as a driver of the global order mean for US-China relations and for global governance?

What global political dynamics could complement, strengthen and support global governance based on “secular” global relations rather than on value-driven affiliations?

Can a new global order evolve based foundationally on pluralism in which achievements in professionalized global relations create pathways of mutual progress?

Several features jump out as having potential to leverage change: G7 behaviors in the G20; shifting coalitions of consensus replacing bloc politics, greater commitment to the G20 as one platform for professionalism to prevail, and identifying specific areas of convergence for the US and China to work together.

\*\*\*The G7 is fine as an alliance of like-minded countries with shared values which coordinate among themselves on issues of priority concern to them and buttress unity in the West on the Russian war on Ukraine. But, the G7 is no longer a legitimate forum for addressing global issues, except in aligning and marshalling G7 country support to address them. The G7 is not a global forum, even though its few economies are 30 per cent of global GDP, equal to the share of world GDP generated by the BRICS.

*The G7 cannot act on behalf of the world as a whole. The G7 cannot any longer engage in the pretense of preeminence in the face of global pluralism. The G20 is a clear manifestation of a “site” where diversity leads to pluralism.*

As a result, it is imperative that the US, Canada, Japan, France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom decide to not always act as a group and actually shift their behaviors within the G20 to reflect the eclectic, diverse and secular basis of the G20 group of countries, which is based on weight in world GDP and diversity, not values or like-mindedness of regimes.

\*\*\*Embracing the notion of “*shifting coalitions of consensus*” as the modality for mobilizing convergence in action, with different clusters of G20 countries leading on different issues due to the complexity and variance of interests across issues, is *central to making global governance effective in a multivalent world*. There is no reason why a single dominant coalition, like the G7 or the BRICS, need to, should or can drive decision-making in the G20. In fact, the outcomes would be more robust and process more sound if fluidity and flexibility in positioning varied from

issue to issue rather than being based on ideological formulations and false dichotomies.

Alan Alexandroff pointed out in 2008, “effective multilateralism...(depends) on the construction of a group of states that expressed a collective determination of leadership legitimacy.” (p.404). A commitment to *legitimizing* leadership and global governance by a diverse group of countries could drive behavioral change in the G20, avoiding blocs, alliances and fixed groupings, by encouraging alignments based on varied interests due to the complexity of the issues.

\*\*\* The G20 is a platform in which new global governance behaviors can come into play and drive different results. This is because the G20 is not just about two-day annual summits but is a year-long set of processes which bring officials from G20 capitals together in task forces, working groups and ministerials to thrash out feasible pathways forward for coordinated action. These year-long G20 processes are professional exchanges. Details matter. No politicians are trying to enhance their political base in press conferences after G20 official meetings.

The world is not paying attention, nor does it need to, to these working meetings of officials trying to define common ground, understand the limits of the feasible, and extend the horizon of the possible. These G20 year-long processes potentially provide the platforms in which working relationships are established, understandings are reached, and trust is developed.

\*\*\*It is a propitious moment to think of a few additional *areas of convergence* beyond climate change in which the West and China, and more specifically, the US and China might identify and work together to advance. A few quick examples come to mind.

Managing global debt. There is a looming challenge of debt distress in low- and middle-income countries which outstrips current international financial architecture arrangements to deal with it. There is clearly a great need for new financing to complement debt restructuring as it evolves. But there are huge fiscal and parliamentary constraints on budgets of advanced country contributors to international finance and development institutions. There are questions about whether the newly established Global Sovereign Debt Round Table (GSDRT) of the G20 is an advisory or a decision-making body.

China has made some moves to alleviate debt distress in several countries and is a supporter of the IMF role in the GSDRT. China has also allocated 10 billion of its 40 billion SDR allocation to low income countries. The US and the West needs to recognize these contributions and come up themselves with a set of steps and sources of funding to strengthen the global responses so

far to the emerging debt management challenges. Agreements between the US and China have the potential to ratchet up the global response to match the scale of the global financial risks at play.

Social inclusion. Social divides generate domestic political polarization that drive nationalism and geopolitical tensions. The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit to be chaired by the US in San Francisco in November of 2023 will focus on the “underserved and underrepresented communities” to “advance a practical economic policy agenda to benefit workers, business and families in all our economies”. This focus will provide an opportunity for the US to showcase the innovation of recent legislation, the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment Act, in prioritizing public investment in human, social and network capital to advance social inclusion. To highlight a success story in reaching the under-served, it would be a good signal to invite the G20 Chair for 2024, Brazilian president Lula da Silva, to the APEC summit. This would be a good outreach to the Global South and to scramble the divide between the G7 and the BRICS.

SDGS: The United States would do well to acknowledge the degree to which the rest of the world regard the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have meaning in the Global South and support from major global players like China. The SDG “space” is one in which the US and Europe could play more prominent roles in as a manifestation of having “heard” the concerns of the rest of the world. The G20 endorsed the SDGs as an expressed commitment to developing countries “to address global challenges”. The United States in particular could express solidarity with the developing world by upgrading its support for the SDGs.

Biodiversity. China co-chaired COP 15 on biodiversity and led a pledge of \$288 million dollars for the Kunming Fund for projects which are estimated to cumulative require \$1 trillion per year to reach sustainability targets. The United States could make significant contributions to this effort as a signal of collaboration with China on a common global risk. Brazil is a major focus of biodiversity conservation, providing an opportunity to foster BRICS-G7 collaboration to displace bloc competition.

Ocean health. France and China will co-chair the next major UN Conference on the Oceans in Nice in 2025. This joint leadership should open the door for the West to participate robustly in accelerating efforts to deal with the multiple dimensions of risk to the world’s oceans.

Conclusion: These are illustrative examples to highlight potential for convergence and collaboration among the great powers which capture the forces of pluralism at work in the global order as a whole and use them to drive

ambition and results which mobilize incentives for all to act nationally because of the synergistic effects of potential international complementarities. The threat is that a bifurcated global order would undermine global governance thereby creating additional systemic risks for humanity. Capturing the potential for collaboration and simultaneous action in global governance drawing on existing forces for pluralism already evident to ameliorate bifurcation and enable professionalism to drive global efforts to address global challenges are promising ways forward by preserving the singular international community for humanity as a whole.

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“Readout of President Joe Biden’s Meeting with President Xi Jinping of the People’s Republic of China”, Washington: The White House, November 14, 2022.

President Biden “reiterated that this competition should not veer into conflict and underscored that the United States and China must manage the competition responsibly and maintain open lines of communication President Biden underscored that the United States and China must work together to address transnational challenges....because that is what the international community expects. The two leaders agreed to empower key senior officials to maintain communication and deepen constructive efforts.”

“President Xi Jinping Meets with US President Joe Biden in Bali”, Beijing: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 14, 2022

“President Xi pointed out the current state of China-U.S. relations is not in the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples, and is not what the international community expects.

China-U.S. relations should not be a zero-sum game where one side out-competes or thrives at the expense of the other. The successes of China and the United States are opportunities, not challenges, for each other. The world is big enough for the two countries to develop themselves and prosper together. The two sides should form a correct perception of each other’s domestic and foreign policies and strategic intentions.”