

Forum: United States Senate

Issue: Protecting national security in response to resurgence Chinese threats

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Position: Deputy Chair of the US Senate

Earlier this year, spymasters as part of U.S intelligence outlined the five biggest threats to American national security. Whilst many outside threats such as Tiktok's influence through invasive espionage, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine following Russia's invasion last year, the most predominant threat was the Chinese Communist Party(CCP)'s influence on both national security and global leadership. This was described as a "consequential threat" outlined towards the Intelligence Committee as part of the Senate, where most notably, China was described as the most grave and capable rival.

Though China's desire to become a global power across East Asia is largely fuelled by the leader of the CCP, Xi Jinping, it is also worth mentioning that China's historic partnership and allyship with Russia poses a serious threat towards not just national security, but the influence and strength the United States boasts on the world stage. The most profound instance of where this occurs is the trade war between the US and China since January 2018 as each one sets to dominate the global trade market through a constant battle of imposing tariffs on the other country's goods in order to better fuel their own markets. As of 2020, \$360 billion worth of tariffs have been imposed on the Chinese economy by the United States while China has imposed \$110 billion in retaliation efforts. Though an attempt to reduce tariffs has been made, such as China bringing in over \$200 billion in imports in an attempt to increase exchange rates by increasing demand for imported goods and services which will lead to an appreciation in currency, thus increasing the negative balance of trade.

Now, following each country's attempt to overthrow the other one to establish its place as a global superpower, both military wise and on the market, this has only been further fueled by Taiwan's overall dominance on the semiconductor market, due to it's highly invested research and specialisation in the area.

Definition of Key Terms:

1. **Tariffs:** According to Investopedia, a tariff is a tax imposed on goods and services from one country to another to influence it, raise revenue and protect competitive advantage. Being a form of an indirect tax, a tariff is regressive in nature and can restrict the supply of goods and services despite being considered a measure of protectionism
2. **Appreciation:** The increase in value of a country's currency or otherwise a financial asset's value increasing over time, which is impacted negatively by exchange rates as they increase the demand for the currency compared to the value of another currency
3. **Balance Of Trade:** Difference between the value of a country's imports and exports, calculated by subtracting the value of imports from the value of exports
4. **Trade Deficit:** When a country imports more goods than it exports, according to the International Monetary Fund; a trade surplus is when a country exports more than it imports
5. **National Security:** A nation's safety against acts of terrorism, war crimes, espionage; according to The Heritage Foundation, it can be seen as the safekeeping and guarding of the nation as a means of protection
6. **Allyship:** Continuous support for a country, group or minority, specifically from those who are not members of the group, but still want to provide support
7. **Cap and Trade System:** A form of government regulation designed to target carbon emissions levels across a nation, especially through the emission of chemicals rich in carbon dioxide through industrial processes; according to Investopedia, this is seen as an effective measure to work alongside a carbon tax policy
8. **Decoupling:** When an asset in a market diverts from their otherwise predicted path or normal pattern, usually when a group of assets, known as an asset class, move in opposite directions

Background Information

<p>US-China Trade War</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commenced in July 2018, when then US President Donald Trump imposed tariffs on China to counteract unfair trade - Washington began imposing tariffs, starting with \$34 billion in July 2018, to which China responded with that same amount; 25% duty tax was placed on Chinese goods imported into the US which resulted in imposing bans from China on American made products such as cars and agricultural products - Truce was declared on December 1st, 2018 at the G20 summit by Xi Jinping for 90 days; soon after resulted in a further \$200 billion in tariffs imposed following dissolving and unsuccessful negotiations, an increase of 15% in tax on Chinese goods, followed by a \$60 billion increase from China - Tariffs have slowly been delayed since 2019, with some being decreased or removed entirely
<p>US-China Technology War</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the past few years, the war has increased immensely due to the 2 nations battling it out for control over the tech industry - AI systems, such as ChatGPT could pose a serious threat towards peaceful negotiations going forward, as the US attempts to rely less on Chinese made components such as semiconductors, whilst China tries to become more tech independent - The US had planned to coerce China to leave the high tech industries, in order to better exert power and control on the technology market - A number of sanctions and control policies have been implemented by the US to further expand its control and become more of a monopoly in the tech industry and market - Several years ago, the US began removing the offices of major Chinese corporations such as Huawei over concerns of reported espionage - In October of 2022, exports to China of advanced computer chips were halted, bringing an end to 25 years worth of trade and technology policies between the 2 nations - Currently, the war has only worsened, as stronger tech curbs have been introduced by the US as the Secretary of State looks to further slow progress made by Chinese chip manufacturing companies
<p>Weather Balloon Incident</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In February 2023, a white balloon was spotted flying over regions in North America; specifically America, Alaska & Canada - The balloon was shot down promptly after, which instigated a response from the Chinese government, claiming that it was merely a balloon that had veered off the course of its mission of collecting weather data - Closer examination of the balloon, however, revealed

	that this was not the case
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US-China Trade War

Following the inauguration of then President Donald Trump in January 2017, a year later threats were issued against China for what was considered unfair in terms of handling trade practices, through accusations of stolen property and changes to policies that supposedly commend local companies through the use of subsidies. This was further motivated by the US wanting China to increase their purchase of American produced goods in order to counteract their rising trade deficit of over \$400 billion as of May 2019. These threats continued on for several months until July 2018, when a tariff of \$34 billion was issued with a 25% tax on goods imported from China, which was retaliated against by the Chinese government with a \$34 billion tariff on American goods imported into the country.

But this is far from when the real tensions commenced. As far back as 1985, the trade deficit that the US has with China has exponentially increased, even more so following the 1997 financial crisis in Asia and the arrival of China in the World Trade organisation in 2001, where following a brief drop in value during the 2008 economic crash, numbers quickly increased once again.

Growing Trade Deficits

In 2017, China was responsible for just under 50% of the trade deficits, a number which had dropped to nearly 30% by 2022, whilst imports from the US had increased by \$900 billion, bringing down the total percentage of imported goods from China into the US market by 5%. This is largely due to increased imports from other countries such as Vietnam and Mexico into the US, who could take advantage of strategies such as location and agreements regarding free trade. Not just that, China has also served as a location of increasing exports into Vietnam such as telecommunications equipment and components used to construct computers, plus a 30% increase in exports to Mexico, resulting in an indirect increase in exports towards the United States, as both Vietnam and Mexico serve as parts of an assembly line towards increasing Chinese goods imported into the States. As a result, China's role in global production increased from 26% to 31% by 2021, whilst the trade deficit between the US and China exceeded \$1.18 billion the next year. In an attempt to combat this, the US increased exports to \$1.9 trillion in 2022, largely consisting of energy products as

well as chemicals to Europe as it battled the economic effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

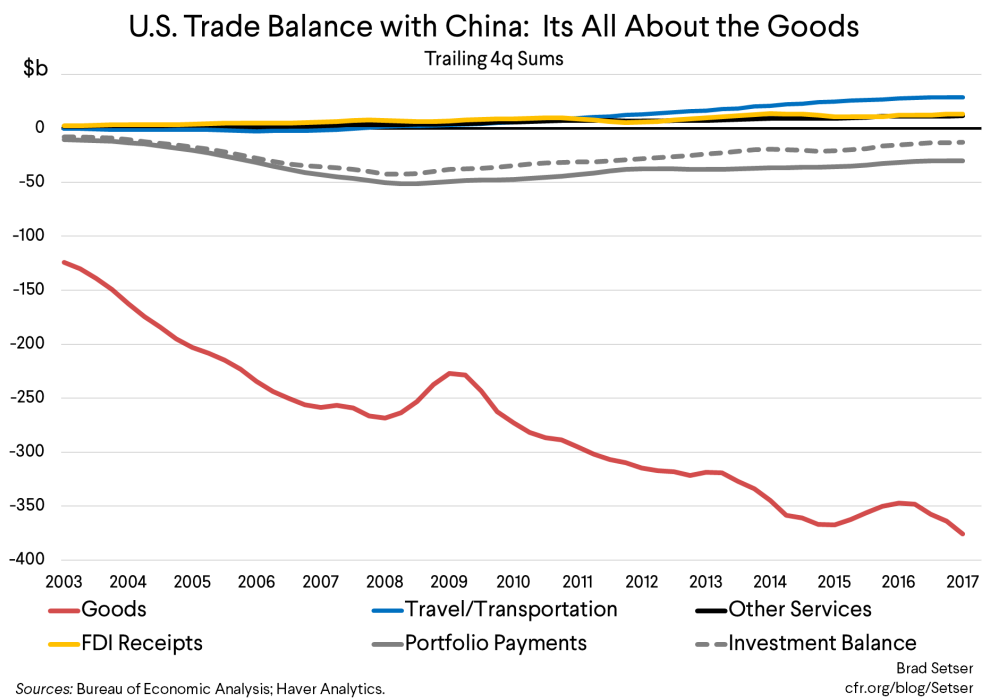


Fig 1.1: A timeline of the US' trade deficit with China

This resulted in a spike in exports, which was not enough to counteract the rising numbers of imports, bringing the total to \$3 trillion following a 17.7% rise to bring import deficits close to \$4 trillion. Along with this, the value of the US dollar steadily rose as well, thus increasing the demand for foreign goods.

The US then proceeded with a strategy known as decoupling - one which lowered American imports into China by over 20%, thus resulting in stunted growth in manufacturing products in the US. China, however, saw a decrease in imports; nearly 30% in 2000 to just under 20% by 2017. The US did attempt to further increase manufacturing, however - most notably through the Inflation Reduction Act set forth by the Biden Administration in 2022, which had a lesser impact due to protectionist measures imposed. This resulted in a result of almost \$1 trillion in trade deficits following a 12.2% rise last year - which also increased due to a rise in spending of machinery and vehicle parts.

Despite this rise, many firms still work closely with China as the deficit between the 2 countries grew to over \$380 billion, a rise of 8.3% - trade between the 2 countries is still strong, and as estimated by the International Monetary Fund(IMF), the result of

cooperation between US trade and advancements in technology from China could be substantial for the global economy.

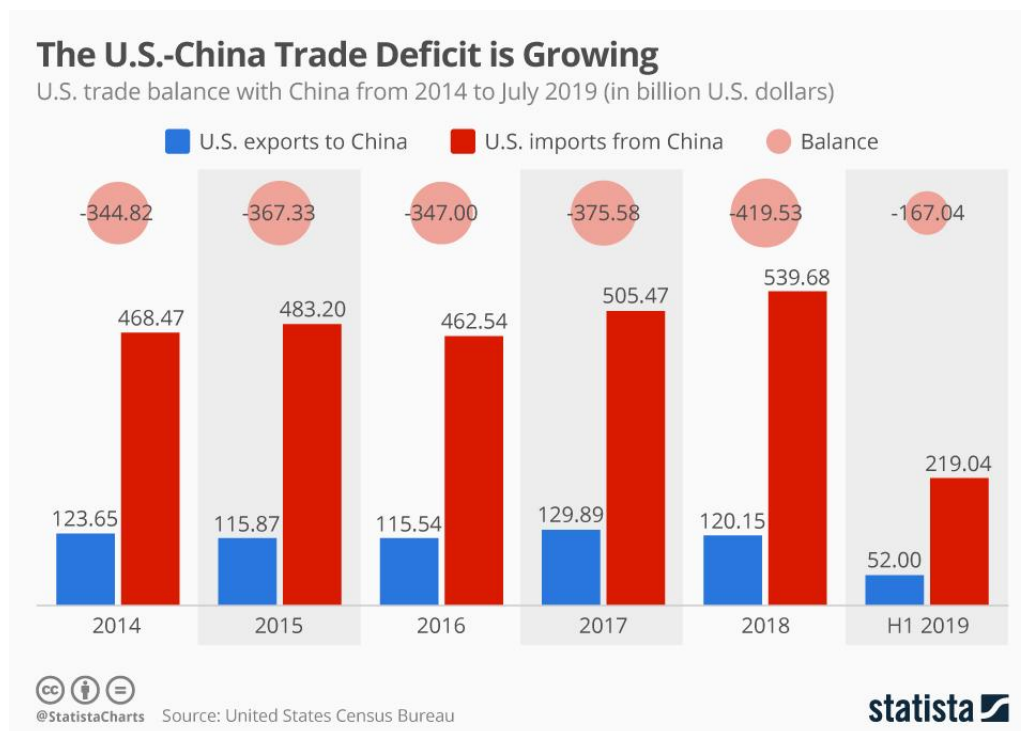


Fig 1.2: A graph showing the trade balance and deficit comparisons

The Cap & Trade System

Historically, however, things have not been very different

During the 1980s, Trump was already seeking to eliminate the trade deficits on the US economy in order to promote local firms and producers by starting the process of advocating for tariffs, a move that was seen by economic analysts as something that would cause problems for the economy further down the line, which was revealed through a poll conducted by Reuters and the press associated with the move.

This was further pushed by the introduction of the “cap and trade” system established by Warren Buffet in 1987, with the aim of reducing the preexisting trade deficit through exporters receiving certificates equal to the monetary value of the exports. This system is entirely controlled by market forces determining what gets purchased and what firms get licensed, while several assets would be transferred ownership to the US Government through the promise and convincing of a good reputation. This was true as a trade deficit was to be expected in 1987 which was proposed to be countered by companies rejecting the IOUs offered, therefore forcing trade back into balance to better set a limit on spending - which is where the certificates would come

in handy, especially with large companies who would help achieve a trade billions in millions, if not billions of dollars, something that is particularly helpful in a liquidity dominated economy.

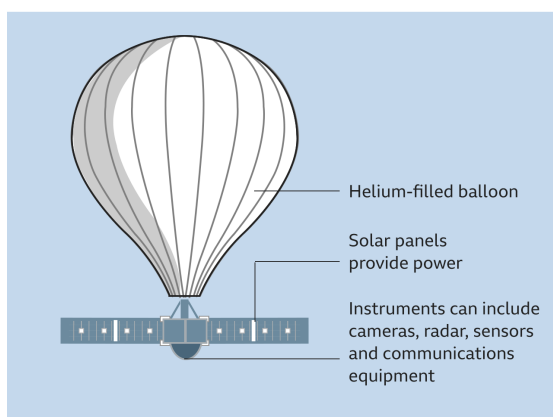
Not only this, the system would help the American economy by enabling producers to export for up to 10% more while also being able to issue the relevant certificates in monetary value, with the certificates being able to control the volumes of the US dollar.

Weather Balloon Incident

In early February 2023, a white balloon was spotted flying around airspace in Northern America, towards Alaska and Canada. This balloon was being steadily tracked by the Department of Defence, before looming near the West before being shot down 2 days later off the coast of South Carolina. China retaliated saying it was merely a weather balloon that had drifted off course, and the decision to shoot it down was a massive overreaction by the US.

According to personnel, however, the balloon was a high tech weapon used to gather surveillance and spy on military bases - which is in line with the findings of the balloon having possessed high tech equipment along with collection pods to transmit communications to China, along with solar panels to gather data on confidential US intelligence. Along with this, Canada was also tracking the balloon's flight path in alliance with the US to prevent further incidents

High altitude surveillance balloons



How high do they fly?



Source: Reuters

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Fig 1.3: A breakdown of the type of surveillance balloon used by China to commit espionage over the United States

Delayed Secretary Of State Visit

The main consequence of this, however was the postponing of US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken's upcoming visit to China to kick off a weekend of highly diplomatic negotiations and talks between the 2 countries- from a range of topics regarding Taiwan, disputes over the South China Sea, North Korea and Russia's ongoing invasion of

Ukraine. This also put talks in November between Joe Biden and Xi Jinping in jeopardy, as open communication line talks amid high tensions between the US and China meant that these lines would likely be delayed, at least for the near future.

Furthermore, talks in November outlined the policies set forth by Biden to address transnational barriers such as climate change and macroeconomic stability on a global scale - along with an agreement to keep leaders in close communication to further agree efforts and constructive measures whilst also recognising the importance of maintaining relations between the United States and China

Hainan Island Incident

In April 2001, a US Spy plane collided with a Chinese aircraft in the smallest and southernmost province of China, Hainan. This area is close to the South China Sea, a region controlled by the PRC plus other nations - this region is highly controversial due to the dispute of power between flights flying over the sea. According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the PRC controls a certain region of the sea, which was reportedly breached by this aircraft flying over it.

In 1958, Vietnam, one of the seven countries in control over the South China sea, recognized China's claims over ownership of the Paracel Islands; however, it abstained on the issue. However, since 1975, the country has abstained on the issue, along with the US.

US - China Technology War

In 2018, then president Donald Trump commenced a dispute between the US and China regarding control over vital services in technology, such as 5G data and semiconductors, along with artificial intelligence(AI), something, that given the US' major position on the technology stage globally is a major threat to the position that the US holds, which China has challenged and fought back against. This has only resulted in the US imposing multiple sanctions, mainly through the form of restrictions and policies as previously mentioned, on China and their economy in an attempt to severely slow progress down.

This started off with Washington establishing a blockade towards US constructed semiconductors, with Beijing retaliating by removing American constructed tech from their supply chains, in an attempt to "de - Americanise".

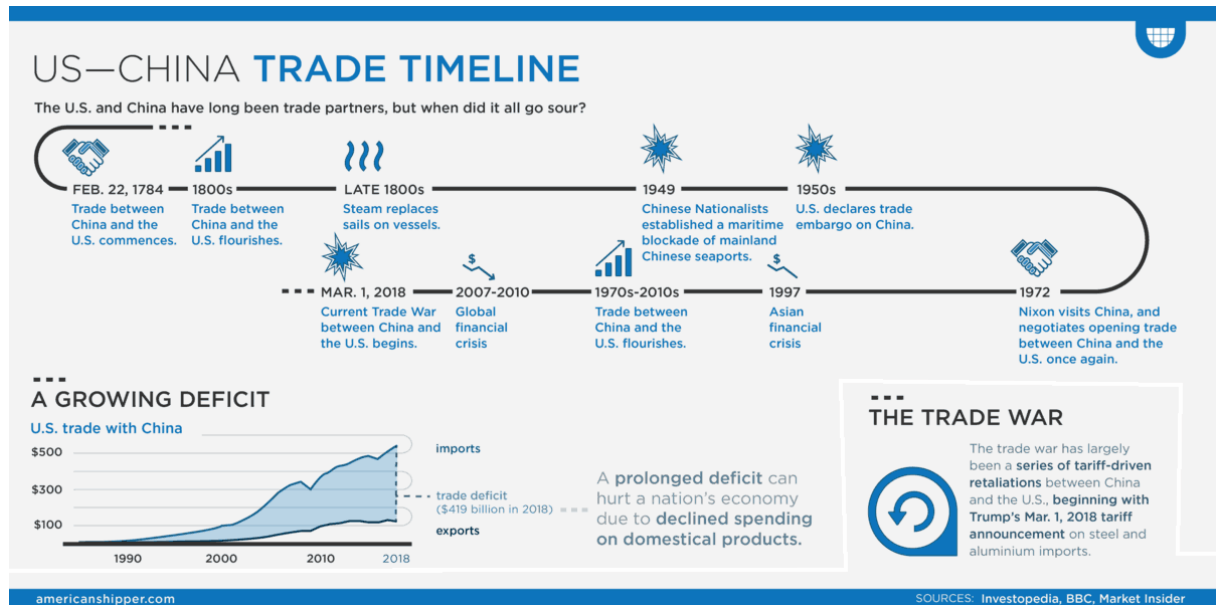


Fig 1.4: A map showing the growing impacts of trade between the US and China

Made In China 2025

In 2015, the Chinese government launched a campaign branded as “Made in China 2025” which seeks to further dominate the manufacturing market over the course of 10 years.

The real problem stemmed from after Trump’s inauguration as President, after which trade advisor Peter Navarro and Senator Marco Rubio commented on the move, which “flaunted rules of international trade” through state issued subsidies granted towards tech companies in order to help them grow. This was followed up by a series of sanctions as well as fines put on ZTE, a Chinese telecommunications company dealing US branded technology to Iran, plus reports from the US Trade Representative that Huawei’s emerging control over 5G data was becoming an enlarging problem for the US.

For instance, Washington argues that the overarching policy relies on property theft and cyber spying to force unwanted technology transfers which could pose a security risk while breaching international trade laws.

Made in China 2025: Target Sectors



Graphic© Asia Briefing Ltd.

Fig 1.5: The target sectors of the proposed Made in China 2025 campaign

Industries Revamping

Alongside the tech industry, China is planning to seriously ramp up production of various other industries, such as biomedicine, maritime engineering, aerospace engineering and electrical equipment. These are most likely part of China's plan to become more technologically advanced as well as independent in the future if the current sanctions and fines imposed by the United States continue

Current Situation

US - China Taiwan Tensions

Since the early days of China's communist government, which first started when China went communist in 1949 during the aftermath of the Chinese Civil War between China and Taiwan, following Mao Zedong's election as Chairman of the People's Republic of China, tensions regarding Taiwan's sovereignty have been intense and further complicating matters of peace talks between the two nations that each attempt to further establish themselves as a global superpower by the use of sanctions and fines against the other.

Korean War & Taiwan Strait Crisis

Following the defeat of the KMT nationalists during the Civil War, Taiwan became an ally of the United States the year after, during the Korean war as US troops fight against the

Soviet led North Korean side, managing to push over North Korean troops back over the 38th Parallel over to China, but was eventually pushed back across by 200,000 troops from China.

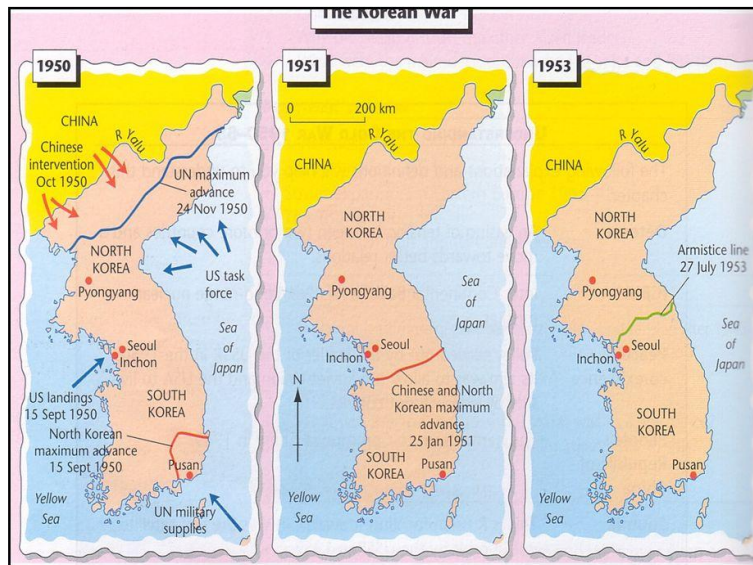


Fig 1.6: A map showcasing the advances and retreats of the Korean War, 1950-53

Following the armistice signed in 1953, the first Taiwan Strait Crisis commenced, which resulted in missile and artillery launches and attacks from Beijing on several Taiwan controlled islands outside of China. The Nationalists of the ROC deployed troops on these islands which prompted retaliation from China. Although the crisis eventually dissolved, China and the US almost went to war.

A few years later, in 1958 the crisis picked up again as tensions increased, especially following various steps taken by the US to further commemorate its ongoing support for Taiwan - this was largely through the signing of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in 1954 whilst also considered being involved in talks with the ROC leader at the time, military dictator Chiang Kai Shek. This resulted in increased bombings by the PRC, which originally included smaller islands, but later went on to include larger islands such as the Mazu and Dachen islands.

Whilst attempting to resolve conflict through limiting ways to reopen the Chinese Civil War, the United States promised ongoing support for the ROC. In 1955, Congress, along with President Dwight D. Eisenhower passed the "Formosa Resolution", a comprehensive document which granted the US to defend Taiwan and its islands in the event of an attack by the PRC.

This did impact relations between the PRC and the US, as a conference in the same year resulted in the Foreign Minister of the PRC, Zhou Enlai, wishing to establish talks between China and the United States - perhaps a result of increased tensions between China and the Soviet Union or the ongoing threat of war with the US. In any case, talks between the PRC and the United States resumed in Geneva in September 1955.

The crisis did break out in 1958 again, however, as immense bombing of several Taiwanese islands conducted by Mao's Communist Party resumed and increased tensions between the PRC and the US, which resulted in Eisenhower commanding a military escort and resupplyment of arms to Taiwanese troops, also considering the use of nuclear weapons against the People's Republic of China.



Fig 1.7: United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Republic of China leader Chiang Kai Shek engaging in discussions regarding the “Formosa Resolution”

The Microchip War

In December 2021, following a severe shortage of semiconductor parts in the technology sector, Taiwan began to release fewer and fewer of these chips, which halted the production of various goods in heavy demand on the market, such as cars and mobile phones. Yet these tensions were far from new - as explored earlier in this report, the ongoing tariffs and export restrictions between the US and China were closely linked to the semiconductor restrictions which are still ongoing.

The semiconductor bans have been quickly ramping up since July 2022, however, with the United States first pressuring both Dutch and Japanese companies to halt their sale of

semiconductor linked products to China - in particular, lithography equipment that could be used to produce advanced semiconductor chips as wide as five millimetres. This further continued as restrictions on chips as wide as fourteen millimetres were now in effect by the end of July. August followed with more chip bans and restrictions, which included memory chips from Chinese manufacturers themselves, along with electronics design automation(EDA) software.

This continued further on until October 7th, when it was announced that more export regulations had been imposed on China, specifically targeting artificial intelligence(AI) and semiconductor industries. According to US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, there was intense competition between China and the United States in the post Cold War era, with technology being the heart of the competition.

Taiwan's Microchip Monopoly

Given Taiwan's role in the microchip battle between the United States and Taiwan, there are several reasons as to why Taiwan has formed a monopoly when it comes to the production of semiconductor chips.

A few major reasons for this are largely linked to the high levels of research as well as investments that have gone towards the development of the semiconductor industry, both in order to stay ahead of the competition and to keep up with manufacturing technology to both faster and more efficiently produce their semiconductor chips. Because of the large amount of money and time that has been spent and gone into developing the research and development sector, the factories have a good understanding of their main competitors and how to best outsell their products whilst also being able to make a profit as a result. This means that they are likely able to gain their supplies from local suppliers, which brings down the cost significantly, or buy large quantities of resources and raw materials in bulk, thus increasing the likelihood of discounts being given. In the long run, this is crucial towards not only selling for a cheaper price, but also being able to correctly estimate the amount of semiconductor chips needed to be sold on the market, to better avoid a surplus of chips which the government would be forced to buy.

Along with this, the highly experienced labour force involved in semiconductor production would be a massive boost, as they would likely be highly efficient at their specific tasks, even more so if specialisation was utilised, as workers would be made to concentrate on one

specific task instead of everything, thus making assembly lines more efficient.

Top semiconductor foundries by revenue

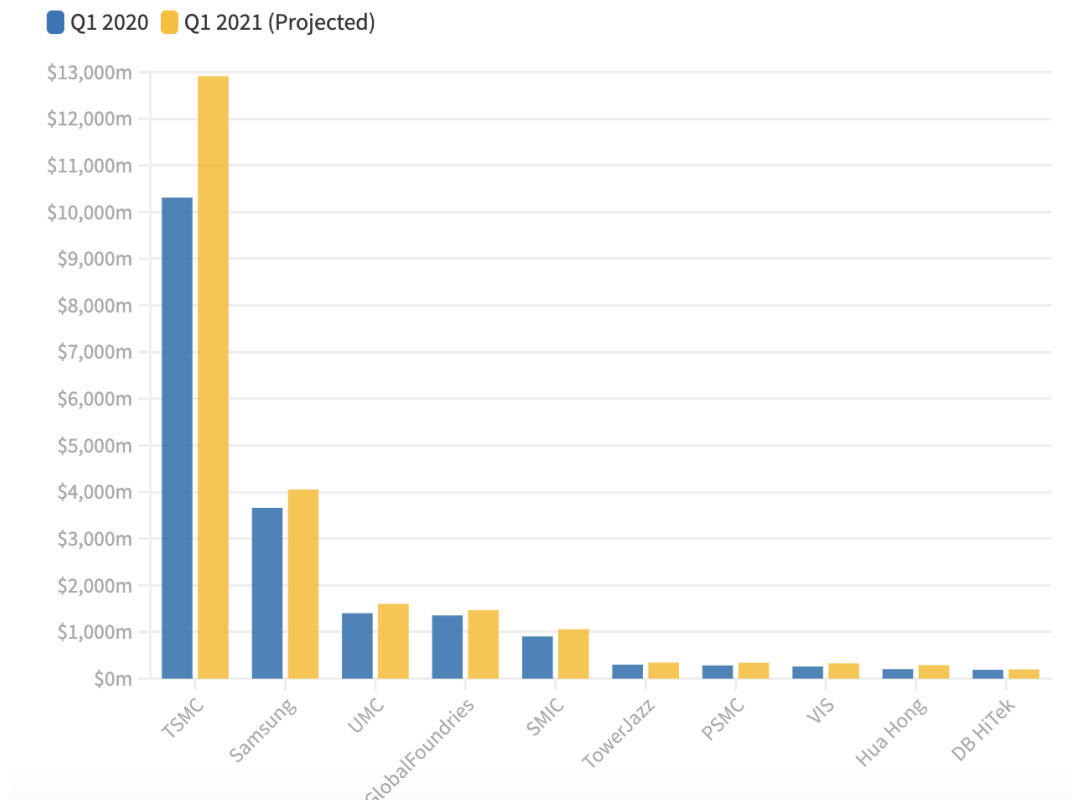


Fig 1.8: A graph showing the market for semiconductor’s reliance on Taiwan

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

<p>United States</p>	<p>The representative of the Western world and at the forefront of western ideals and beliefs, alongside being the closest ally of the United Kingdom, France and Canada, while maintaining tense relations with Russia and China, having been involved in several conflicts with them both, including North Korea through conflict over nuclear warfare and missile testing. With Russia, the main conflicts stem from the movement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation(NATO)’s movement further Eastward, an apparent reason for Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. With China, the conflicts stem from disputes over national sovereignty with Taiwan following three crises over the Taiwan Strait, however, more recently, a technology war between microchip and semiconductor production.</p>
<p>China</p>	<p>Works closely with Russia and North Korea to spread communist ideals, directly going against the West’s ideas of capitalism while also seeking to maintain control over the islands of Taiwan plus the Taiwan Strait, a conflict currently ongoing with the United States since the conclusion of the</p>

	Chinese Civil War, between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China.
Russia(formerly USSR)	Currently the main aggressor in the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, one that has gathered harsh criticism from the Western World, went against the US in the aftermath of WW2, breaking the "Grand Alliance" with the UK and the US. Works closely with China and is a big ally of North Korea, one of their only trading partners, while they are also directly against the values and ideals of NATO, while also claiming the West's ideals as brainwashing.
India	A generally neutral power in the ongoing conflicts with China, however, have direct trading links with China through imports of Chinese goods into India, which also include several major items such as electronics and steel products. Though not strongly involved in the microchip industry yet, plans exist for production by the end of 2024. Coincidentally, trade with China has fallen severely, resulting in a trade deficit occurring.

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- Conditions for a world without nuclear warfare, 24th September 2009(Resolution 1887)
- Proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, 22 December 2017(Resolution 2397)
- China's representation on the United Nations, 25 October 1971(Resolution 2758)

Possible Solutions

Proposed solutions:	<p>Due to the highly complicated nature of and depth of these cases, senators might wish to consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talks held in between individual parties, with both sides acknowledging the actions of the Trump Administration in 2017 & 2018 that has led to these events - Holding frequent meetings with the Head of
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	<p>Government to discuss the matter(in this case, Joe Biden) as well as the Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken; due to his recent visits to China, this might be a suitable option</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hotline set up(similar to the one during the Cold War) + any current ones be refurbished - Revised version of SALT(Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) to prevent the use of nuclear warfare - because this was designed in the 1970s, a polished code of conduct might be efficient due to advances in technology and space programs - Treaty signed between the parties to impose an outright ban on any espionage(from both sides) with consequences such as tariffs if caught
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Useful Links

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There is no need to use MLA format, please link the websites you have used with hyperlinks as bullet points.

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