**A new Cold War**

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The US and allies’ exit from Afghanistan and the Middle East followed by marshalling of new alliances in the Asia-Pacific region like Quad (USA, Australia, Japan, India) professed to become a mini NATO before the latest military alliance named AUKUS (Australia, UK and USA).

Some leading Chinese experts opine that China will determinedly and unswervingly stick to its chosen path to success. It will continue to expand its cordial international relations with a view to creating a harmonious global community with a shared future, and resolutely opposing and working hard to avoid a cold war.

While in the United States, China’s rise is a source of nervousness; however, in China the country’s growing status is a source of self-assurance and delight. Many Chinese analysts highlight the political dysfunction, socioeconomic inequality, ethnic and racial divisions, and economic stagnation that plague the United States and other Western democracies. They also point out that many developing countries and former socialist countries that emulated Western models after the Cold War are not in good shape, and they note how Afghanistan and Iraq, the two places where the United States has intervened most forcefully, continue to suffer from poverty, instability, and political violence. For all these reasons, many Chinese, especially the younger generation, feel fully justified in meeting U.S. pressure with confidence and even a sense of bold triumphalism.

[US President Biden will soon talk to PM Imran Khan: Wendy Sherman](https://nation.com.pk/09-Oct-2021/us-president-biden-will-soon-talk-to-pm-imran-khan-wendy-sherman)

While President Joe Biden may take solace in Obama’s slogan “cooperate with China where we can and compete where we must”, yet most experts opine that to avoid open conflict, leaders in Washington and Beijing need to accept two fundamental realities. The first is that the CCP enjoys immense popularity among the Chinese people; its grip on power is unshakable. External pressures on China to change its political system are likely to be futile and might even backfire by promoting unity and inflaming anti-Western sentiment. The second reality is that the United States will remain the most powerful actor in shaping the global order. The country’s problems are obvious: racial tensions, political polarisation, socioeconomic inequality, and weakened alliances. Its strength, however, lies in its diversity, its culture of innovation, and the resilience of its civil society; and those attributes remain unchanged.

It needs no emphasis that if the United States and China fail to manage their rivalry, the world will face splitting up and commotion. Therefore, to prevent a contest from becoming a calamity, Taiwan and the US-Chinese economic competition will need to be meticulously managed by both the big powers. American veteran independent senator and former presidential candidate Bernie Sanders opines that the unprecedented global challenges that the United States faces today i.e. climate change, pandemics, nuclear proliferation, massive economic inequality, terrorism, corruption, authoritarianism—are all shared global challenges. They cannot be solved by any one country acting alone. They require increased international cooperation including with China. Americans must resist the temptation to try to forge national unity through hostility and fear. Developing a mutually beneficial relationship with China will not be easy. But we can do better than a new Cold War. It is hoped that the saner voice from a very senior and sincere American will be heeded by the hawks in the American establishment to avoid a new Cold War that may as a consequence result in a direct military conflict with China or in a number of military clashes among allies of both the great powers in the Asia Pacific region. The European countries, with the wisdom of hindsight of two world wars and endless American wars thereafter, already seem more determined to stay focused on the North Atlantic region and on mainland Europe by contesting Russian influence and selective cooperation with China as highlighted in my piece “Impact of NATO’s Strategy 2030”.

[Zahir Shah appointed as deputy chairman NAB: sources](https://nation.com.pk/09-Oct-2021/zahir-shah-appointed-as-deputy-chairman-nab-sources)

Pakistan has been under a lot of pressure by the USA and allies after joining the Chinese BRI and its flagship project China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The American-Indian bear hug as strategic allies in the Asia-Pacific region to contest China and most duplicitous coercion of Pakistan through FATF on behalf of India has actually proved counterproductive and forced Pakistan to further slide toward the Chinese camp. While USA may realise the folly of pushing Pakistan away too late as has been the case in the past; yet Pakistan must also comprehend that these tectonic shifts and realignments are taking place as a result of the fresh global strategic contest giving birth to a new Cold War primarily between USA and China with the old American rival Russia standing with China now. Besides, in order to maintain balance in our foreign, economic, defence and other domestic policies, it is an inescapable imperative to develop a clear understanding of the new Cold War shaping up at a fast pace primarily with obvious pitfalls for the allies of both the global powers. Pakistan therefore needs to tread carefully on the newly chosen strategic path and avoid becoming a cat’s paw once again. Instead, it must result in better military deterrence and sure footed economic prosperity for the country as suggested in”Pak-US Relations: How to Bridge the Widening Gap”.