

The 2025 Busan Trump-Xi Meeting and the Future of U.S.-China Relations

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Abstract

U.S. President Donald J. Trump introduced reciprocal tariffs on April 1, 2025, with China facing the highest tariffs and countries with active trade with China also facing increased tariffs. Since Liberation Day, senior U.S. and Chinese economic and trade officials have held five rounds of negotiations in third countries, and Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping have had four phone calls, discussing not only tariff issues but also meetings and mutual visits between the two leaders. The breadth and depth of the U.S.-China strategic competition have increased, highlighting the importance of building a personal relationship between the U.S. and Chinese presidents, which is crucial both as a communication channel in times of crisis and as the most important relationship for global stability. In November 2026, China will host the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Shenzhen, and in December 2026, the United States will host the G20 Summit, with both Beijing and Washington publicly expressing support for each other as hosts. These fora appear to have become an important factor in maintaining the relations between the two countries for the coming year. However, past experience shows that maintaining relations between the U.S. and China is fraught with various possibilities. Although the situation is relatively calm at present, tensions could escalate at any time, and it is not uncommon for both sides to use various means to maintain a certain level of hostility. This paper first focuses on Trump's return to power and how the leadership in Beijing and Washington has interacted amid this change. Secondly, it discusses the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and Trump's maneuvers to drive a wedge between China and Russia. Finally, it looks ahead to the U.S.-China relationship after the Trump-Xi meeting in Busan and offers a conclusion.

Keywords: Trump-Xi Busan Meeting, U.S.-China Relations, Taiwan Security, Trade War, Strategic Competition

I. Foreword

At the end of October 2025, nine months after assuming office, President Donald Trump held his first face-to-face meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at a U.S. military base in Busan, South Korea. As during the Biden administration, they took advantage of the informal APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting to meet. After Trump's re-election, attention was focused on when the U.S. and Chinese leaders would meet, as just over a month after his election, Trump invited Xi to Washington to attend his inauguration, but ultimately China sent a delegation led by Vice President Han Zheng instead. Trump introduced reciprocal tariffs on April 1, with China being the top-ranked country subject to the highest tariffs, and countries with active trade with China also facing increased tariffs. The Trump administration also included measures



Figure 1. President Donald Trump Participates in a Bilateral Meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping

Source: The White House, "President Donald Trump Participates in a Bilateral Meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping," October 30, 2025, *The White House*, <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/gallery/president-donald-trump-participates-in-a-bilateral-meeting-with-chinese-president-xi-jinping/>>.

to prevent Chinese goods from circumventing the tariffs in its decision-making process, making it difficult for major global economies to avoid their impact.

Since Liberation Day (April 2), senior U.S. and Chinese economic and trade officials have held five rounds of negotiations in third countries, and Trump and Xi have had four phone calls, discussing not only tariff issues but also meetings and mutual visits between the two leaders. The breadth and depth of the U.S.-China strategic competition have increased, highlighting the importance of building a personal relationship between the U.S. and Chinese presidents, which is crucial both as a communication channel in times of crisis and as the most important relationship for global stability. Xi has consistently stated that in the face of storms and challenges, as helmsmen, the two leaders should grasp the direction and manage the overall situation, ensuring that the ship of U.S.-China relations sails steadily forward.

In mid-September, before the beginning of the United Nations 80th General Assembly, President Trump publicly invited Xi to visit the United States. However, China ultimately sent Premier Li Qiang to New York to attend a United Nations event. During phone and face-to-face talks with Xi, Trump also promised to visit China early next year and invited Xi to visit the United States. In November 2026, China will host the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Shenzhen, and in December 2026, the United States will host the G20 Summit, with both Beijing and Washington publicly expressing support for each other as hosts. After the Busan Trump-Xi meeting, U.S. Secretary of War Peter Hegseth and Chinese Minister of National Defense Dong Jun held talks in Malaysia, agreeing to direct military-to-military dialogue and exchanges, and stating that U.S.-China relations were unprecedentedly good. However, Hegseth also called on Southeast Asian countries to unite and respond to China's actions in the South China Sea.¹ Before the Busan meeting, Trump surprised everyone by announcing the resumption of nuclear testing after a 30-year hiatus. Yet, in mid-February 2025, President Trump told the media in the Oval Office that he hoped to hold talks with Chinese President Xi and Russian President Vladimir Putin to slow down, stop, and reduce nuclear weapons. He stated, "We have no reason to

1. Phelim Kine, "Hegseth Seeks a Reboot of US-China Military Hotlines," November 1, 2025, *Politico*, <<https://www.politico.com/news/2025/11/01/hegseth-seeks-a-reboot-of-u-s-china-military-hotlines-00632761>>.

Table 1. Donald Trump and Xi Jinping's Four Phone Conversations

Date	News or President Donald J. Trump's Truth Social
January 18, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The call was a very good one for both China and the U.S.A. It is my expectation that we will solve many problems together, and starting immediately. We discussed balancing Trade, Fentanyl, TikTok, and many other subjects.” • “President Xi and I will do everything possible to make the World more peaceful and safe!” • “The Taiwan issue concerns China’s national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and he hopes the U.S. side will handle it with caution,” Xi said according to Chinese state television.
June 5, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should no longer be any questions respecting the complexity of Rare Earth products. • Our respective teams will be meeting shortly at a location to be determined. • President Xi graciously invited the First Lady and me to visit China, and I reciprocated. • The conversation was focused almost entirely on TRADE. • Nothing was discussed concerning Russia/Ukraine, or Iran.
September 19, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We made progress on many issues including Trade, Fentanyl, the need to bring the War between Russia and Ukraine to an end, and the approval of the TikTok Deal. • Would meet at the APEC Summit in South Korea. • Mutual visits of heads of state.
November 25, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We discussed many topics including Ukraine/Russia, Fentanyl, Soybeans and other Farm Products, etc. • We have done a good, and very important, deal for our Great Farmers. • This call was a follow up to our highly successful meeting in South Korea, three weeks ago. Since then, there has been significant progress on both sides in keeping our agreements current and accurate. • President Xi invited me to visit Beijing in April, which I accepted, and I reciprocated where he will be my guest for a State Visit in the U.S. later in the year. • We agreed that it is important that we communicate often, which I look forward to doing.

Source: Doina Chiacu, Michale Martina, & Yukun Zhang, “Trump, China’s Xi Hold Call on TikTok, Trade, Taiwan,” January 18, 2025, *Reuters*, <<https://www.reuters.com/world/trump-says-he-discussed-trade-fentanyl-tiktok-with-chinas-xi-2025-01-17/>>; Donald J. Trump, “I just concluded a very good phone call with President Xi,” June 5, 2025, *Truth Social*, <<https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/114631295762726849>>; The White House, “I just completed a very productive call with President Xi of China,” September 19, 2025, *X*, <<https://x.com/WhiteHouse/status/1969062244794134862>>; Donald J. Trump, “I Just Had a Very Good Telephone Call with President Xi, of China,” November 25, 2025, *Truth Social*, <<https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/115605897178712132>>.

produce new nuclear weapons. The nuclear weapons we possess are already enough to destroy the world 50 times, even 100 times.” Trump also mentioned that he would call on all countries to commit to cutting their defense budgets by half.²

Nevertheless, since taking office, Trump has succeeded in pressuring NATO members and many allies to commit to increasing defense spending, with NATO raising its share of GDP from the current 2% to 3.5%. White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt pointed out that if the U.S., Europe, and NATO allies can increase defense spending, allies and friends of the U.S. in the Asia-Pacific region should be able to do the same.³

Many observers were paying attention to the meeting between Trump and Xi, wondering whether it touched on the Taiwan issue. Trump stated that “Taiwan is Taiwan,” while Nvidia reportedly lobbied Trump to approve the export of advanced artificial intelligence chips to China. In an interview with *CBS*, Trump stated that this topic was not discussed. Regarding whether the U.S. would send troops to defend Taiwan in the event of Chinese military aggression, Trump replied that Beijing is aware of the serious consequences of military invasion.⁴ Trump’s national security team, which considers China as the U.S.’ biggest geo-economic competitor, successfully persuaded Trump not to allow the export of advanced chips to China.⁵ After returning to Washington, Trump met with Republican senators to discuss the

2 David Pierson, “China Says U.S. Should Lead Trump’s Proposed Arms Control Effort,” February 14, 2025, *The New York Times*, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/14/world/asia/china-trump-nuclear-military.html>>.

3 The White House, “Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt Briefs Members of the Media, June 26, 2025,” June 26, 2025, *The White House*, <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/videos/press-secretary-karoline-leavitt-briefs-members-of-the-media-june-26-2025/>>.

4 Norah O’Donnell, et al., “Trump Press on Government Shutdown, Nuclear Weapons Testing, ICE Raid and More,” November 2, 2025, *CBS News*, <<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-60-minutes-interview-highlights/>>.

5 Lingling Wei, Amrith Ramkumar, & Robbie Whelan, “Trump Officials Torpedoed Nvidia’s Push to Export AI Chip to China,” November 3, 2025, *The Wall Street Journal*, <<https://www.wsj.com/world/china/trump-nvidia-china-chip-exports-51e00415>>.

previous government shutdown issue, mentioning his meeting with Xi in Busan and noting that the high-level Chinese officials present were sitting properly and upright, and that no one dared to speak freely while sitting beside Xi.

II. Trump Re-Elected, Washington and Beijing Begin Talks on Reciprocal Visits

After being re-elected, Trump began his second term on January 20, 2025, while both houses of Congress also came under Republican control, giving Trump a whole government. Two weeks after Trump was re-elected, Peru hosted the informal APEC Leaders' Meeting, and outgoing President Biden, following the established schedule, met with Chinese President Xi at this multilateral conference and arranged a meeting. This was the third consecutive year, following Xi's third term, that the two leaders had met at an APEC summit, with discussions lasting 90 minutes. Xi used the meeting with Biden to signal that China was prepared to cooperate with the new U.S. administration, stating that "China's goal of a stable, healthy, and sustainable China-U.S. relationship remains unchanged." Xi cautioned that a stable China-U.S. relationship is critical not only to both nations but also to the "future and destiny of humanity."⁶ At that time, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement saying that both China and the U.S. support each other in hosting the APEC and G20 summits in 2026. Consequently, just over a month before taking office, Trump sent an invitation to China, hoping Xi could attend Trump's inauguration.⁷

Before taking office, Trump also told his aides that he hoped to visit China within his first 100 days in office, aiming to deepen the personal relationship between the two leaders. Two days before his inauguration, Trump's call with Xi focused on issues such as bilateral trade, fentanyl, and TikTok. After the call, Trump agreed to delay the

6. Annie Linskey & James T. Areddy, "Xi Tells Biden China Is Ready to Work With Incoming Administration," November 16, 2024, *The Wall Street Journal*, <<https://www.wsj.com/world/xi-tells-biden-china-is-ready-to-work-with-incoming-administration-dd50f11c>>.

7. Demetri Sevastopulo, "Donald Trump has Invited China's President Xi Jinping to His Inauguration," December 12, 2024, *Financial Times*, <<https://www.ft.com/content/68036935-2dc9-411e-b57b-bfd318b98165>>.

TikTok acquisition timeline. Additionally, Trump stated that he hoped to work with Xi to address many issues immediately, striving to make the world more peaceful and secure in every matter. However, Trump always prioritized addressing the U.S.-China trade imbalance, threatening to raise tariffs on Chinese imports to 60%. Chinese state media emphasized that both sides agreed to establish a strategic communication channel and maintain regular communication on major issues.⁸ International media reported that the U.S. hoped to invite Xi to Trump's inauguration. White House Press Secretary Leavitt told *Fox News* that President Trump hoped to maintain communication not only with allies and partner countries but also to create an open

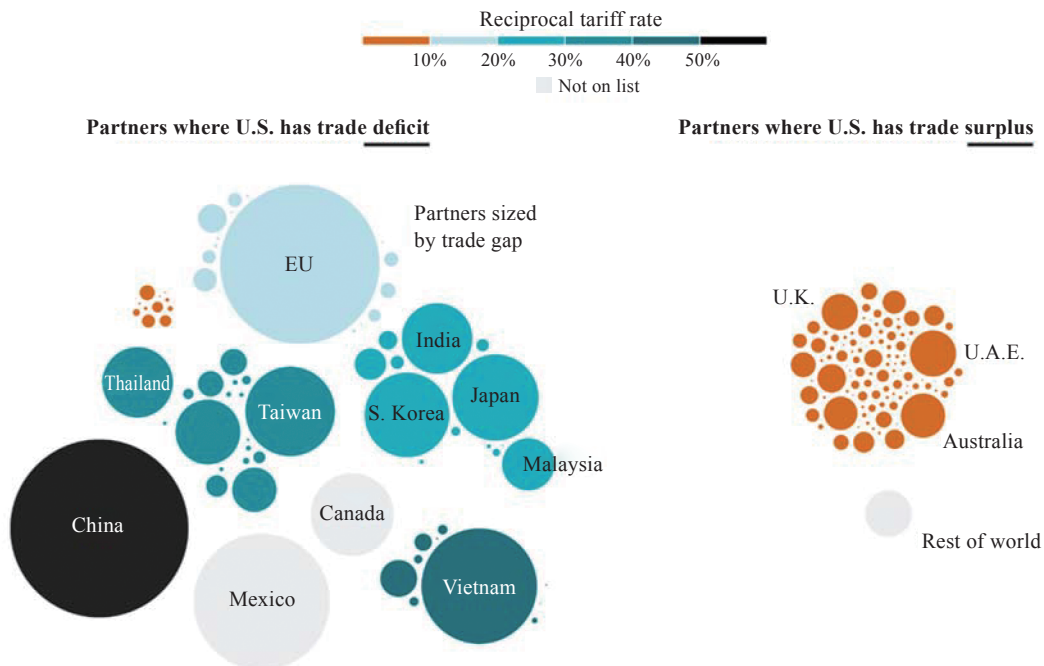


Figure 2. The US\$1.2 Trillion Deficit

Source: Kara Dapena, "The List of Trump's Reciprocal Tariffs by Country And Where They Stand," April 10, 2025, *The Wall Street Journal*, <<https://www.wsj.com/economy/trade/trump-reciprocal-tariffs-visualized-5d5a8093>>.

8 Chun Han Wong & James T. Areddy, "Trump, China's Xi Speak Ahead of Inauguration," January 17, 2025, *The Wall Street Journal*, <<https://www.wsj.com/world/china/chinas-xi-offers-olive-branch-to-trump-by-sending-top-deputy-to-inauguration-2876a8db>>.

dialogue with rival countries. She further noted that Trump did this during his first term despite facing much criticism, yet the world gained peace. Whether Xi attended Trump's inauguration was up to Xi.⁹

Diplomatically, it is rare for foreign heads of state to attend U.S. presidential inaugurations; usually, countries are represented by stationed ambassadors or high-ranking officials. On Trump's first day in the Oval Office after taking the oath, he signed executive orders requiring relevant departments to review foreign trade policies, publicly stating that from February 1, tariffs on Canada and Mexico would increase by 25% each, and Chinese imports would also face a 10% tariff increase. In his inaugural address on January 20, Trump said he would "immediately begin the overhaul of our trade system to protect American workers and families." "The American dream will soon be back and thriving like never before," he added. In response to Trump's tariff increase on Chinese imports, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce promptly announced that it would take corresponding countermeasures. After Trump launched his trade and tariff war, China was the only country that matched the United States blow for blow.

During his election campaign, Trump advocated raising tariffs on Chinese imports to balance the trade deficit between the two countries and even indicated that he would terminate China's Most-Favored-Nation status. After Trump sought reelection and won, Chinese Ambassador to the U.S., Xie Feng, actively sought contact with potential Trump cabinet members and his campaign team, but progress was less than expected. Beijing was concerned that high-level communication channels between the two countries would later be obstructed by hardliners in Washington. On the night Trump was elected, Xi congratulated him by phone. Additionally, two days before Trump's official inauguration, Trump and Xi also had a conversation. According to a press release from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Xi emphasized to Trump during the call that the Taiwan issue concerns China's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, urging the U.S. to handle it carefully. Xi also reportedly said that the nature of Sino-U.S. economic and trade relations is mutually beneficial, and that confrontation should not

9. Demetri Sevastopulo, "Donald Trump Has Invited China's President Xi Jinping to His Inauguration."

be our choice. The two also exchanged views on major international and regional issues of common concern, such as the Ukraine crisis and the Israel-Palestine conflict; the two leaders agreed to establish a strategic communication channel to maintain regular contact on major issues of mutual concern.¹⁰ In mid-March, Trump further indicated that Xi would visit the U.S. in the near future.

The relationship between Beijing and Washington during Trump's first term was characterized more by friction than cooperation, even tending towards competition, hostility, and confrontation, and the Biden administration largely continued this trend over the following four years. China ultimately sent Vice President Han Zheng to Trump's inauguration, while media reports suggested that the White House had hoped for the presence of Cai Qi, Director of the General Office of the Communist Party and a member of the Politburo Standing Committee, at the inauguration. It is also worth noting that Washington hoped to bring about an early end to the war between Russia and Ukraine through Xi's assistance.¹¹

III. The Russia-Ukraine War Continues, Trump Maneuvers to Sow Discord Between Russia and China

Two days before taking office, Trump had consecutive phone calls with Russian President Putin and Chinese President Xi. After his re-election, Trump also publicly stated that Putin sought to meet with him and that he was ready for the meeting. The Kremlin confirmed that Putin was willing to meet with Trump to discuss the Ukraine war, but the meeting should be arranged after Trump took office.

10. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, "President Xi Jinping Speaks with U.S. President-Elect Donald J. Trump on the Phone," January 17, 2025, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PRC*, <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjlb/zzjg_663340/bmdyys_664814/xwlb_664816/202501/t20250117_11538172.html>.

11. Lingling Wei & Alex Leary, "Trump's Inauguration Won't Have Xi Jinping Among the Guest," December 12, 2024, *The Wall Street Journal*, <<https://www.wsj.com/politics/trumps-inauguration-wont-have-xi-jinping-among-the-guests-7c5471a9>>.

On his first day in office, Trump mentioned in his inaugural speech that he would be a peacemaker and a fair leader. On the same day, Xi also held a video call with Putin, during which Putin and Xi signaled their intention for China and Russia to work closely together, enhancing their opposition and dissatisfaction towards the existing international order led by the United States. In 2024, trade between China and Russia reached \$245 billion, but in 2021, Russia's trade with Europe was \$270 billion. If U.S.-Russia relations improve, Russia would have a greater opportunity to diversify economic risks, which would be more advantageous for its economy, whereas the strategic and economic gains China has obtained from Russia since the Russia-Ukraine war would be diluted.¹² After taking office, Trump continued to



Figure 3. Vladimir Putin Meets Xi Jinping

Source: Kremlin.ru, "Vladimir Putin Meeting Xi Jinping," May 16, 2024, *Wikipedia*, <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2024_visit_by_Vladimir_Putin_to_China#/media/File:Vladimir_Putin_meeting_Xi_Jinping_\(2024\)_2.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2024_visit_by_Vladimir_Putin_to_China#/media/File:Vladimir_Putin_meeting_Xi_Jinping_(2024)_2.jpg)>.

12. Joe Leahy & Max Sedddon, "What Donald Trump's Closer Ties to Russia Mean for China," February 27, 2025, *Financial Times*, <<https://www.ft.com/content/29e007bb-436b-4078-8303-48cc486aeb3e>>.

emphasize the importance of improving relations with Putin, which many believe could strategically disadvantage China. If this occurs, Beijing would lose its once-in-a-century opportunity to challenge the United States. Western observers believe that this is why Xi, during his visit to Moscow to meet with Putin in May, emphasized that China and Russia are true friends.

Upon taking office, the Trump administration immediately proposed a UN Security Council resolution for the swift end of the Russia-Ukraine war. Russia and China voted in favor, but France and the UK abstained. The resolution did not mention Russia's invasion, nor did it emphasize Ukraine's territorial integrity. The U.S. side noted that this approach was to lay the foundation for future peace. Trump has always given the impression of favoring transactional politics. Some have argued that if the U.S. and China can reach deals on trade, export controls, and the Taiwan issue, then the U.S. and Russia could similarly reach deals.¹³ Chinese international affairs experts worry that Washington might manipulate to drive a wedge between China and Russia; if Trump succeeds, Russia's reliance on the Chinese economy would greatly decrease, and China might find it difficult to obtain cheaper oil and investment opportunities from Russia.

The strategic relationship between China and Russia has indeed become closer, attempting to alter the international power balance and impacting global security. Before Russia attacked Ukraine, the U.S. continuously conveyed intelligence to China about Putin planning a military invasion, but all were rejected by China. Before invading Ukraine, Putin visited Beijing, and China publicly claimed that China-Russia relations had "no limits." China-Russia trade continued to rise, from \$147 billion in 2021 to \$245 billion in 2024. China continued to purchase more crude oil from Russia, and in May 2025, Xi visited Russia to attend a parade for the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. This was their over 40th meeting and Xi's 11th visit to Russia. Before meeting with Putin, Xi publicly labelled U.S. hegemony as a fascist force, and during

13. Felicia Schwartz, "US Drives Ukraine War Measure Through UN with Russian Backing," February 25, 2025, *Financial Times*, <<https://www.ft.com/content/96a8f8c6-2ef9-45f6-a0abc64ac572a063>>.

the meeting, he emphasized the need to solidify China-Russia cooperation, exclude external interference, with both countries jointly opposing unilateralism and bullying. In September 2025, Putin travelled to Beijing to attend the Victory in War parade hosted by Xi. The leaders of China and Russia believed that the more uncertainty and chaos Trump created internationally, the more favorable the situation became for them.¹⁴

IV. China-U.S. Relations After the Busan Trump-Xi Meeting

On the morning of October 30, 2025, Trump and Xi held a meeting in Busan, South Korea, with both sides leading important senior officials. The talks lasted for



Figure 4. The Trump-Xi Summit in Busan

Source: The White House, “President Donald Trump Participates in a Bilateral Meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping.”

14. Alexander Gabuev, “Xi and Putin Are the Greatest Beneficiaries of Trump’s Chaos,” May 7, 2025, *Financial Times*, <<https://www.ft.com/content/c5a1bc4e-462e-4e76-b0cb-5210c2e74efa>>.

90 minutes. This was the first time in six years that the two have met as national leaders. Before the talks, senior economic and trade officials from both sides held the fifth round of talks in Malaysia and reached a consensus on economic and trade and tariff negotiations, also called a framework agreement, but neither side issued a joint statement or held a joint press conference. The U.S. side was represented by Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and the Chinese side by Vice Minister of Commerce Li Chenggang, each providing media briefings on the talks.¹⁵ However, Li was not able to become a Chinese delegation member for the Busan meeting. Before the Malaysia talks, Bessent once mentioned that a low-level Chinese official had come to Washington uninvited in September and demanded talks, behaving erratically during the meeting and threatening the U.S., arrogantly claiming that the U.S. would “face a fire from hell.” Bessent did not explicitly name Li, but people made clear associations. At that time, there were doubts about whether the Trump and Xi meeting could proceed smoothly during the APEC summit in South Korea. It was not until U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Chinese Politburo member and Foreign Minister Wang Yi communicated by phone that the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially announced the day before the talks that Xi Jinping would meet with Trump in Busan.

During the Trump-Xi meeting in Busan, Trump arrived at the venue first. When Xi arrived, Trump immediately stated that the meeting would certainly be very successful. He continuously praised Xi as a respected and great leader in person and referred to them as long-time friends, but Trump also complained that Xi adopted a rather tough stance during the negotiations. After the meeting, a hiatus in the U.S.-China trade war was announced, one that is expected to last for a year.¹⁶ Trump also concluded his week-long Asian tour and immediately returned to Washington, not

15. Hannah Miao & Chun Han Wong, “U.S., China Sound Confident Note After Trade Talks,” October 26, 2025, *The Wall Street Journal*, <<https://www.wsj.com/world/china/bessent-sounds-confident-note-after-trade-talks-with-china-f09d310d>>.

16. Lily Kuo & David Pierson, “The Art of Letting Trump Claim a Win, While Walking Away Stronger,” October 30, 2025, *The New York Times*, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/30/world/asia/china-trump-xi-trade.html>>; Jonathan Cheng & Jason Douglas, “The Trade War Couldn’t Change China’s Economy,” October 31, 2025, *The Wall Street Journal*, <<https://www.wsj.com/world/china/the-trade-war-couldnt-change-chinas-economy-25c464d8>>.

Table 2. Part of Fact Sheet: President Donald Trump Strikes a Deal on Economic and Trade Relations with China

<p>CHINESE ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China will suspend the global implementation of the expansive new export controls on rare earths and related measures that it announced on October 9, 2025. • China will issue general licenses valid for exports of rare earths, gallium, germanium, antimony, and graphite for the benefit of U.S. end users and their suppliers around the world. The general license means the de facto removal of controls China imposed since 2023. • China will take significant measures to end the flow of fentanyl to the United States. Specifically, China will stop the shipment of certain designated chemicals to North America and strictly control exports of certain other chemicals to all destinations in the world. • China will suspend all of the retaliatory tariffs that it has announced since March 4, 2025. This includes tariffs on a vast swath of U.S. agricultural products: chicken, wheat, corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans, pork, beef, aquatic products, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products. • China will suspend or remove all of the retaliatory non-tariff countermeasures taken against the United States since March 4, 2025, including China's listing of certain American companies on its end user and unreliable entity lists. • China will purchase at least 12 million metric tons (MMT) of U.S. soybeans during the last two months of 2025 and also purchase at least 25 MMT of U.S. soybeans in each of 2026, 2027, and 2028. Additionally, China will resume purchases of U.S. sorghum and hardwood and softwood logs. • China will take appropriate measures to ensure the resumption of trade from Nexperia's facilities in China, allowing production of critical legacy chips to flow to the rest of the world. • China will remove measures it took in retaliation for the U.S.'s announcement of a Section 301 investigation on China's Targeting the Maritime, Logistics, and Shipbuilding Sectors for Dominance, and remove sanctions imposed on various shipping entities. • China will further extend the expiration of its market-based tariff exclusion process for imports from the United States and exclusions will remain valid until December 31, 2026. • China will terminate its various investigations targeting U.S. companies in the semiconductor supply chain, including its antitrust, anti-monopoly, and anti-dumping investigations.
<p>AMERICAN ACTIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United States will lower the tariffs on Chinese imports imposed to curb fentanyl flows by removing 10 percentage points of the cumulative rate, effective November 10, 2025, and will maintain its suspension of heightened reciprocal tariffs on Chinese imports until November 10, 2026. (The current 10% reciprocal tariff will remain in effect during this suspension period.) • The United States will further extend the expiration of certain Section 301 tariff exclusions, currently due to expire on November 29, 2025, until November 10, 2026. • The United States will suspend for one year, starting on November 10, 2025, the implementation of the interim final rule titled <i>Expansion of End-User Controls to Cover Affiliates of Certain Listed Entities</i>. • The United States will suspend for one year, starting on November 10, 2025, implementation of the responsive actions taken pursuant to the Section 301 investigation on China's Targeting the Maritime, Logistics, and Shipbuilding Sectors for Dominance. In the meantime, the United States will negotiate with China pursuant to Section 301 while continuing its historic cooperation with the Republic of Korea and Japan on revitalizing American shipbuilding.

Source: The White House, "Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Strikes Deal on Economic and Trade Relations with China," November 1, 2025, *The White House*, <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/11/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-strikes-deal-on-economic-and-trade-relations-with-china/>>.

attending the informal APEC Leaders' Summit. He appointed Treasury Secretary Bessent to represent him at the Gyeongju APEC meeting. After Bessent's stay at APEC, there were concerns about China's commitment to the agreement. On the return flight on Air Force One, Trump told reporters he believed the United States and China would be able to sign a trade agreement very soon, and Bessent also indicated that both sides were expected to sign the trade deal within a week.

After Trump returned to the White House, the U.S. also officially announced the list of economic and trade deals reached between Trump and China, emphasizing that it was a historic agreement, a massive victory that safeguards U.S. economic strength and national security while putting American workers, farmers, and families first.¹⁷

The Chinese Ministry of Commerce issued a press release after the Trump-Xi talks, stating that it would suspend rare earth export control measures and the levy of port fees on American vessels for one year, and noted that the U.S. will also suspend the implementation of export controls under the 50% penetration rule and the levy of port fees on related Chinese vessels for one year.

On November 5, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce further stated that China would adjust a number of non-tariff measures targeted at the U.S.; Li Chenggang also met with a U.S. agricultural trade delegation in Beijing. The public welcomed the temporary truce in the China-U.S. trade war, but also questioned whether the Trump administration's attempt to change China's economic development goals through the trade war could be achieved. Although Bessent openly criticized China for using rare earth export controls as a bargaining chip as a serious mistake, high-level U.S.-China interactions claimed frank dialogue. However, mutual blocking, the setting of traps, and confrontation have become the norm.

17. The White House, "Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Strikes Deal on Economic and Trade Relations with China," November 1, 2025, *The White House*, <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/11/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-strikes-deal-on-economic-and-trade-relations-with-china/>>.

V. Conclusion

China's pursuit of a strong national status, combined with its attempt to challenge the existing international order, vigorous military modernization, and rapidly expanding strategic nuclear weapons, poses a significant threat to international security. This has drawn the attention of the international community and security scholars.¹⁸ Before the meeting between Trump and Xi in Busan, the mention of the U.S. restarting nuclear testing had already laid the groundwork for the United States' strategic outlook for the next decade, as Washington inevitably faces unprecedented competition and challenges from two powerful nuclear states, China and Russia. Although China's nuclear capabilities still lag behind the United States and Russia, Beijing has always considered arms control and dialogue as constraints on its capabilities, and therefore China's willingness to participate has always been limited, deeply affecting the future development of U.S.-China relations.¹⁹ Dialogue and exchanges between the defense ministers of China and the U.S. have always been intermittent. Under the condition of a one-year trade truce between the U.S. and China, if the two defense ministers engage in interactions that gradually build mutual trust and establish mechanisms, there is a possibility for Sino-U.S. relations to move towards easing and stability, which in turn could also make peace and stability in the East China Sea, Taiwan Strait, and South China Sea possible.

18. Robert L. Gallucci, Vipin Narang, & Pranay Vaddi, "In Denial? Debating U.S. Nuclear Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 104, No. 5, September/October 2025, *Foreign Affairs*, <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/responses/denial-gallucci-narang-vaddi>>; Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar, Ernest J. Moniz, & Meghan L. O'Sullivan, "The Proliferation Problem Is Back: Washington Must Adapt Its Playbook for a New Era of Nuclear Risk," September 25, 2025, *Foreign Affairs*, <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/proliferation-problem-back>>; David C. Logan & Phillip C. Saunders, "Discerning the Drivers of China's Nuclear Force Development: Models, Indicator and Data," *China Strategic Perspectives*, No. 18, *NDU Press*, <<https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/3471053/discerning-the-drivers-of-chinas-nuclear-force-development-models-indicators-an/>>; Jacob Stokes, *Atomic Strait: How China's Nuclear Building Shape Security Dynamics with Taiwan and the United States* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2023), pp. 8-9.

19. Laurel Baker, "Interview: Rose Gottemoeller on the Precarious of Arms Control," July 29, 2024, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, <<https://thebulletin.org/2024/07/interview-rose-gottemoeller-on-the-precious-future-of-arms-control/>>.



Figure 5. Secretary of State Marco Rubio meets with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi

Source: U.S. Department of State, “Rubio with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, July 2025,” July 11, 2025, *Wikipedia*, <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marco_Rubio#/media/File:Secretary_Rubio_Meets_with_Chinese_Foreign_Minister_\(54646400777\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marco_Rubio#/media/File:Secretary_Rubio_Meets_with_Chinese_Foreign_Minister_(54646400777).jpg)>.

After Trump was re-elected, he immediately initiated the process of nominating cabinet members, many of whom hold a tough, hawkish stances towards China. Secretary of State Marco Rubio was the first to receive congressional approval, passing with 99 votes to 0, without objection. For a long time, his policy positions have been considered mainstream, and he has maintained amicable relations with the Democratic Party. However, Rubio was placed on China’s sanctions list twice during his tenure as a senator. Rubio currently also serves as the White House National Security Advisor. Trump has repeatedly indicated that he has no plans to seek re-election, but has strong confidence in the Republican succession led by Rubio and Vice President J.D. Vance. Rubio has long been on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, taking a tough stance on both Iran and China. He is skeptical and opposed to the U.S. continuing military aid to Ukraine while the Russia-Ukraine conflict persists, although he initially firmly supported Ukraine. Rubio’s first overseas visit upon taking office was to the Caribbean and Central and South America, discussing

canal operations with the Panamanian government and gaining positions and trust favorable to Trump. Before his visit to Central and South America, Rubio pointed out that China could potentially paralyze the Panama Canal before any conflict breaks out, and he firmly believes China is already planning this, viewing it as a direct threat to U.S. security.

By 2026, reciprocal visits between Trump and Xi are possible, with mutual support for hosting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and G20 summits. Rubio did not play a significant role in the U.S.-China trade war but will play an important role in the future development of U.S.-China, U.S.-Taiwan, and U.S.-Russia relations.