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Prospects for China's Advance in Latin America During the Second Trump Administration

R. Evan Ellis¹

Abstract: This work examines the impact of the policies of the second Trump administration in the United States on the advance of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Latin America. It argues that the administration's pushback against China could deter some engagement with the PRC. Nonetheless, those policies and actions also will have indirect consequences that facilitate China's advance in the region, including (1) expanded exports to the PRC by some Latin American countries due to US tariffs, (2) decreased attractiveness of the United States as a partner, (3) ceding space to China in multilateral institutions, (4) disrupted cooperation on Latin America with US democratic allies outside the region, (5), increased incentives for security cooperation with the PRC, (6) extended life of anti-US regimes doing business with US extra-hemispheric rivals, and (7) risk of more anti-US regimes opening doors to the PRC.

Keywords: China, Latin America, Caribbean, soft power, extra-hemispheric actors.

Introduction

The pushback against the global advance of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been an important element of the "America First" strategy of the second administration of US President Donald Trump.²

During the first Trump administration (2017-2021) and the administration of Joseph Biden (2021-2025) that followed it, US resistance to China's advance sought to leverage the appeal of the United States as a reliable, democratic partner, by contrast to the authoritarianism and aggression of the PRC.³ Both administrations leveraged the contrast between the United States for individual rights and freedom of expression versus the PRC crackdown against democracy in Hong Kong, its internment of Uighur Moslems in Xinjiang, and its use of economic influence to suppress discourse about its undemocratic practices elsewhere in the world, among others.⁴

In a similar fashion, the US approach during both the first Trump administration and the Biden administration focused on the United States as a defender against aggression versus a China that threatened to use military force against Taiwan, transformed reefs and shoals in disputed waters into PRC military outposts, and then used the China Coast Guard and Maritime Militia to impose its territorial claims against those disputing those areas.⁵ During the first Trump administration and the following Biden administration, the United States sought to limit the more predatory aspects of China's advance by advocating for openness and the rule of law in contracting business dealings in the region, in contrast to China's frequent use of nontransparent state-to-state negotiations and the inclusion of personal benefits in its commercial dealings.

Although the second Trump administration continues to prioritize confronting China advance, its broader set of strategic initiatives, focused on domestic issues such as migration, drugs, and deficits, within the framework of an “America First” foreign policy—and the style with which it is pursuing those interests—indirectly facilitates the PRC’s advance in important ways.⁶ Such unintended, adverse effects are further facilitated by a PRC regime disposed to take advantage of those opportunities and a strategic environment that facilitates China’s advance.

This work examines the prospects for the PRC advance in Latin America and the Caribbean as a function of the domestic and foreign policies of the new Trump administration, the orientation of the PRC toward the United States and the region, and the broader strategic context shaping the region’s response.

The State of PRC Advance in the Region at the Outset of the Trump Administration

The advance of the PRC, its companies, and other agents in Latin America and the Caribbean has been broadly discussed in academic literature, including edited volumes by Xing and Vadell; Peters, Cook and Alter; Alden and Alvaro; Ellis; and Gallagher, among others.⁷ China’s advance in the region also has been widely reported on in the press. That advance has been principally economic in nature, but also includes political, security, and other dimensions.⁸

Since the acceptance of the PRC into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, its commerce with the region has expanded from \$15 billion to \$482 billion by 2022, greater than that of the United States in virtually every nation in South America.⁹ During the same period, PRC investment in the region expanded from approximately \$1 billion to more than \$193 billion.¹⁰ That accumulated investment also comes with an outsized level of influence, given the coordination between PRC companies and the state, and given the broad understanding of the PRC’s willingness to use economic coercion against countries and actors that speak out in ways that displease it—that maintaining a public position acceptable to the PRC on issues of core importance to it such as Taiwan and what it regards as its internal affairs, impacts the ability to access PRC markets, business partners, or secure other benefits of engagement with China.¹¹

During the post-COVID-19 period, PRC initiatives have shifted to concentrate on strategic sectors such as electricity generation and transmission, telecommunications and other digital industries, lithium and rare earth metals supply chains, and electric vehicles, although Chinese companies remain active across the region in traditional construction projects, port operations, and extractive sectors such as metals, petroleum, and agriculture as well.¹²

In diplomatic terms, the PRC has established “strategic partnership” relationships with twelve countries in the region, often involving a bilateral coordination mechanism that meets at least annually at the ministerial-level to advance projects and coordinate on

topics of importance. In 2023, as the PRC moved beyond the zero COVID-19 policies that had restricted the travels of its diplomats and corporate officials to the region, it began to resume diplomatic engagement with the region, as well as taking projects forward at a more rapid pace.¹³ In 2024, Xi Jinping returned to Latin America for the first time since before the COVID-19 pandemic, in a series of engagement that included attendance at APEC Peru 2024, the annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, in Lima, Peru, and the meeting of G-20 leaders in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.¹⁴

In Central America and the Caribbean, that contain six of the twelve states in the world that continue to diplomatically recognize Taiwan rather than the PRC, the Xi Jinping regime's advances in convincing states to switch recognition to the PRC has been an important line of effort with significant consequences beyond diplomacy. With the end to the informal "diplomatic truce" between the PRC and Taiwan in 2016, the PRC persuaded Panama to flip in June 2017, followed by the Dominican Republic and El Salvador in 2018, Nicaragua in December 2021, and Honduras in March 2023.¹⁵ In each case, the flip was associated with the signing of multiple nontransparent memoranda of understanding (MOU) and an associated advance of PRC engagement in infrastructure projects, penetration of local markets, activities with local governments, and the development of networks of relationships with businesspeople, academics, journalists, and others, as the negotiation of free trade agreements, which has further opened local markets to PRC companies.¹⁶

Beyond bilateral engagement, the PRC and its companies also interact at the subnational level. Such activities include currying of relationships with state and/or provincial level leaders in the region, often as a compliment to national-level engagement where the latter are difficult, as was the case with Argentina under Javier Milei, as well as in Brazil under Jair Bolsonaro.¹⁷ PRC courtship also has reached local-level leaders, including relationships that the PRC maintains with more than 180 "sister cities" in Latin America.¹⁸ Since such engagements receive less national-level press attention, and since the rules governing accepting Chinese funding often are less well defined at the local level, such engagement gives the PRC important opportunities to develop webs of influence through invitations of such leaders to the PRC on trips paid for by the Chinese state.

In multilateral affairs, the PRC is present in key institutions of the Interamerican system, including as an observer at the Organization of American States (OAS) and a member of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), where they have sought to leverage membership to position Chinese companies to win work paid for through "co-financing funds" that combine International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans with funds from PRC-based policy banks.¹⁹ The PRC also maintains multilateral relationships with the region through United Nations organizations such as the Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL). It further has multilateral ties with the region through the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates), which links it not only to Brazil, but also to Bolivia and Cuba, which formally joined as partner countries in January 2025.²⁰ The preferred

PRC organization for engagement in the region, however, has been the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), with which the PRC established a forum in 2015.²¹ The China-CELAC Forum holds periodic summits at the head-of-state level, which serve as an environment in which the PRC sets out its offering for cooperating with the region in coming years. The most recent China-CELAC leaders' summit occurred in May 2025, with the PRC using the occasion to present major initiatives involving political, developmental, and security cooperation, as well as expanded people-to-people ties.²² Beyond leader summits, the China-CELAC forum has also served as the bases for a range of subforums on issues including space cooperation, defense, disaster relief, and even think tanks.²³

In the security domain, PRC-based companies have sold and/or donated a modest amount of equipment to the region's security forces, trained military and police from the region in PRC security education institutions, sent delegations and warships on occasional visits to the region, and participated in courses and military exercises in the region, among other activities.²⁴

The PRC also has engaged with the region in the space sector, including building ground control facilities, operating a deep space radar and multiple telescope facilities, and conducting exchanges of data, in ways that potentially give them access to Western Hemisphere space that could be exploited against the United States in time of war.²⁵

Overall, PRC engagement in the region not only has helped the PRC to advance its economic interest in the region and capture the associated value added, but also has arguably impacted the dynamics of countries in the region and their interest in cooperating with US and Western institutions, extended the life of anti-US populist regimes, facilitated digital and people-to-people networks that could be used for intelligence purposes, and given the PRC physical presence, relationships, influence, and technical knowledge that it could exploit against the US in the hemisphere in time of war.²⁶

Impact of Current US Policies on China's Advance

In its first weeks, the incoming Trump administration has shown its intention to use diplomatic pressure and threats of sanctions and even military action to pressure countries engaging with the PRC in ways that challenge US strategic interests to desist from doing so. Examples include Trump's threat to retake control of the Panama Canal, due to unacceptable influence by the PRC over its operation; the presence of Chinese companies maintaining manufacturing and distribution operations in Mexico with the intention to secure tariff-free access into the US market under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA); and Mexico not doing enough to stop Mexican drug cartels from exporting fentanyl, made from Chinese precursor chemicals, into the US, were similarly some of the grounds used by Trump in threatening tariffs against Mexico.²⁷ The president also has imposed tariffs directly against Chinese products, prompting the PRC to raise their own tariffs on US products. Such actions have driven the countries

targeted by such pressures to take actions in the short term that may modestly reduce the Chinese presence. President José Raúl Mulino of Panama, for example, symbolically announced Panama's withdrawal from the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and initiated an audit of the operations of the Chinese firm Hutchison (Panama Ports Company) in the Ports of Cristobal and Balboa, that could ultimately lead to findings of corruption in the 2021 renewal of their contract, sufficient to invalidate the contract and hold a new bid for the contract. Similarly, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum has spoken of increasing the number of Mexican companies and workers, vis-à-vis Chinese ones, in the manufacturing sector.

On the other hand, in an effort to decrease disincentives for US-based companies to invest in the region, in February 2025, the Trump administration issued an executive order terminating their liability under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) for their activities in the region.

Beyond such PRC-related policies and actions, the administration also promulgated a series of executive orders and took other actions in the framework of its "America First" policies that will have indirect impact on PRC presence in the region. These include an attempt to acquire the territory of Greenland, confiscate the West Bank, impose tariffs and other pressures on Canada, Japan, South Korea and the European Union, the elimination of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the expanded expulsion of immigrants and an attempt to end birthright citizenship, significant cuts in US government programs, and other actions that led to challenges in US courts regarding their legality or constitutionality.²⁸

The PRC-specific actions of the Trump administration, and other actions that telegraph the administration's willingness to act aggressively against partners that defy it, may have a dissuasive effect in the short term on decisions of other US partners concerning engagements with China.

Such dissuasive effects have already been seen in multiple areas. They include Panama's withdrawal from the BRI and steps to invalidate the contract by the Hong Kong-based firm Hutchison to operate in Panama, as well as the reluctance of governments throughout the region to host military officers from the People's Liberation Army in their military schools.²⁹ In the future, governments who are currently closely aligned with the United States, including Argentina, Paraguay, Costa Rica, and Ecuador, are likely to continue to accommodate US concerns, particularly in the security domain, and possibly in other sensitive areas like space cooperation and the technology sector.

Despite such positive effects, there is a risk that the Trump administration's actions also may have consequences that directly or indirectly increase engagement in the region by both the PRC, as well as by other actors that threaten the United States.³⁰

The following sections discuss such adverse consequences in more detail.

Expanded exports to the PRC. In certain sectors, such as agriculture, as occurred during the first Trump administration, the US imposition of tariffs on the PRC will lead it to retaliate by buying fewer products from the United States and turning more to Latin America as alternative sources of supply. It is likely that as China buys less US soy, corn grains, and beef, it will expand the purchase of these products from countries such as Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay.³¹ In a more indirect fashion, as China cuts purchases from the United States of rare earth elements such as niobium, where PRC-based companies have had a significant presence since 2016, as well as other strategic minerals, it will turn to alternative sources such as Brazil.³²

At the same time, as Latin American countries face increased impediments to the US market for exports such as steel, in the case of Mexico and Brazil, they will likely redouble their efforts to diversify their exports by increasing their focus on China as a market and commercial partner, even if the PRC does not purchase the same types or quantities of materials lost to the US market.

Decreased attractiveness of the United States as a partner. The “America First” policies of the Trump administration will likely decrease the attractiveness of the United States as a partner vis-à-vis China in a myriad of ways, impeding the United States’ ability to secure cooperation of the region, as well as in its effort to persuade partners there not to enter into certain types of cooperation with the PRC.

As noted previously, expanded US tariffs, and economic uncertainty associated with an escalating tariff war with multiple partners, will likely decrease the attractiveness of the United States as a market and investment destination, as well as its perceived reliability and goodwill.³³ The high-profile discourse of Elon Musk and the DOGE committee regarding significant corruption and billions of dollars of fraud and waste in the US government is likely to further undermine confidence about doing business with the US government and legal system, although not undermining it completely.³⁴

Complimenting these effects, the shutdown of USAID—while some of its programs will be resumed under the State Department—not only has caused significant harm to those impacted by program cutoffs, but also sends a powerful message that the United States is not interested in helping the region beyond initiatives that directly serve its own self-interest.³⁵ That message, even if only partially true, removes what has always been a point of differentiation between the United States and the PRC—that the United States is often seen as having the motive of profit or other self-interest behind every project or donation it offers the region.³⁶

More indirectly, the shutdown of government activities, and associated legal fights and political controversies, undercut perceptions that the United States is a reliable partner. Cuts in internal US loan programs, the risk of government shutdowns generated

by the Democratic Party political response, and the abrupt change in US policies in general from the Biden administration to the Trump administration, arguably undercuts confidence in the region that the United States and its commitments can be relied on, if a choice is made to go with a commercial, technological, and/or political commitment to the United States versus one to the PRC.³⁷

Finally, problems that could accrue to the US economy as a function of the disruption of supply chains involving Canada and Mexico, or US exports more broadly, due to US tariffs, could undercut demand in Latin America from US-based companies, or their ability to invest in the region, although such economic dynamics are difficult to anticipate.

Ceding of space to China in multilateral institutions. The US withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Paris Climate Accords, and associated negotiation and summit processes, and the possible withdrawal of US government presence and funding from a range of other international organizations effectively cedes those international institutional battlegrounds to the PRC, as the latter seeks to use its own presence in those institutions to impact the agenda and discourse of those institutions and the standards, regulations, and reports which such institutions promulgate.³⁸ It gives the PRC a free hand, in the absence of the United States, to interact in those institutions with Latin American and Caribbean partners, among others, that are interested in the issues represented by the organizations, leveraging the negative feelings by those partners over the withdrawal of the United States and associated funding.

In addition, the US withdrawal from select multilateral organizations also contributes to PRC efforts to lead a “South-centric” dialogue of nations, as manifested by the PRC Global Development Initiative, promoting the idea that the United States and other developing nations do not share or value concerns of the less developed world.³⁹

Even where the United States continues to participate in multilateral institutions, its weakened clout may create important strategic opportunities. The March 2025 election of Suriname Foreign Minister Albert Ramdin as new Secretary General of the OAS, with the backing of the PRC, will likely open avenues for PRC influence at the expense of the United States.⁴⁰ While Secretary Ramdin’s credentials as a career diplomat and his long prior experience with the OAS as one of its senior functionaries are beyond reproach, his longstanding work with the PRC and representation of a country with deep PRC economic and ethnic ties is likely to give him a leadership orientation much less helpful to the United States than his predecessor, Luis Almagro, who was closely aligned with Washington’s agenda in the region.

Disrupted US cooperation in Latin America with the European Union, Canada, and democratic Asia. Although traditional US democratic allies continue to work with the United States during the Trump administration, US tariffs against and harsh rhetoric toward the European Union, Canada, and democratic partners in Asia such as Japan and South Korea, may undercut to some degree cooperation on more peripheral issues

such as cooperation on alternatives to Chinese infrastructure and other investments in Latin America, particularly where those solutions do not involve a US-based company receiving the work.

Other potential democratic partners, although not as directly affected by US tariffs and rhetoric, may have diminished political space and goodwill to cooperate with the United States due to Trump administration actions. India, for example, has an important company, Arcelor-Mittal, with a large steel operation in Mexico that has been affected by US tariffs on the steel manufactured in Mexico, largely for the US market.⁴¹ India may thus be reluctant to cooperate in other ways, through financial or commercial cooperation which may benefit a US company vying against a Chinese one for a project in the region.

Increased incentives for security cooperation with the PRC. It is possible that some US partners in the region will be intimidated by the Trump administration's actions against regimes that have defied it, including the administration's swift reprisal against the regime of Gustavo Petro in Colombia, when the latter reneged on an agreement to accept a US military flight repatriating deportees to the country.⁴² Nonetheless, it is likely that others, particularly larger, left-leaning states in the region, could move toward expanded security cooperation with the PRC, including becoming more receptive to military sales and gifts, and training from and exercises with the PRC. They might pursue such relationships both as a signal to domestic constituencies of their independence, as well as a hedge in the face of US threats of unilateral US military action in their countries, after observing the Trump administration's threats to take control of the Panama Canal and the Gaza Strip or conduct military strikes against terrorist organizations in Mexico.⁴³

Extended life of anti-US regimes and others doing business with US extra-hemispheric rivals. Although the Trump administration has indicated its disapproval of the de facto government of Nicholas Maduro in Venezuela, as well as the authoritarian regimes in Nicaragua and Cuba, in its first weeks in office, it has prioritized talks with the Maduro regime to secure the latter's acceptance of Venezuelans deported from the US, as well as the return of US hostages, above putting pressure on the regime to limit its resources and the damage it can do in the region. Indeed, although the Trump administration has not acknowledged a quid pro quo, its renewal for six months of General License (GL) 41, allowing the oil company Chevron to continue to extract and sell Venezuelan oil, coincided with the Maduro regime's release of six detained Americans to Special Presidential Representative Richard Grennell.⁴⁴ The continuation of GL41 arguably contributes to the regime's financial solvency and the willingness of others, such as Russia, China, and Iran, to engage with it.

On the other hand, there is not yet reason to believe that the Trump administration will negotiate with other anti-US authoritarian regimes, such as Cuba and Nicaragua, in the way it seems to have done to a limited degree with Venezuela. Indeed, Cuba and Nicaragua may be treated differently to the degree that they have fewer levers of interest for the Trump administration to negotiate over, such as large numbers of migrants in the

United States or significant oil exports. Indeed, policy toward the latter two regimes, by contrast to Venezuela, could be relegated to the more traditionally hawkish Secretary of State Marco Rubio and National Security Advisor Mike Waltz.

Increased risk of emergent anti-US regimes opening doors to China. By taking actions offensive to some in the region, including threats of tariffs and other actions perceived as US “bullying,” as well as cutting aid programs and deporting migrants, the current Trump administration could inadvertently weaken incentives for cooperating with the United States based on value alignment.

As a compliment, by engaging in behavior perceived by some as beyond the traditional scope, and possibly legal limits, of executive authority, and by directing the nonenforcement of the FCPA, the Trump administration weakens the case of those who, using the example of and pressures from the United States, fight to preserve institutional checks and balances, and fight corruption in their own countries.⁴⁵

In some cases, the Trump administration’s actions that are unpopular in host countries may help open the door for the capture of power by populist politicians who have campaigned against close alignment with the United States, or who consolidate power in their countries by pushing the limits of institutional constraints. In Honduras, for example, where the leftist populist regime of Xiomara Castro and her Libre party is already consolidating power and opening doors to political and other strategic engagement with the PRC, it is not clear whether Trump administration policies will diminish the appeal of the more pro-US opposition in that nation’s November 2025 elections.

In the case of Honduras and others like them, the consolidation of power by anti-US populists using extreme interpretations of executive authority to override the constraints of legislatures and judiciaries, could open the door for those regimes to join Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba, and others in welcoming more problematic types of PRC engagement that more directly threatens US equities.

Beyond the risk of consolidation of power by anti-US populists in Honduras, negative reactions in the region to US policies also could impact other elections in the region, tilting the balance in less dramatic, yet still important ways, in favor of leaders more skeptical of the United States or more welcoming of cooperation with the PRC. In addition to Honduras, seven other national elections will take place in late 2025 and early 2026. These include Chile in November 2025, Costa Rica in February 2026, Peru in April 2026, and Colombia in May 2026. Together, these electoral events will shape opportunities for China, as well as receptivity to US efforts to partner and push back on Chinese influence in the region.

China’s Disposition and Ability to Exploit Reaction to ‘America First’ Policies

In recent years, the government of Xi Jinping has demonstrated increasing confidence in asserting PRC interests around the world, not only in the Indopacific, but also Latin

America and the Caribbean, including assertive statements and actions by Xi himself, as well as a new generation of outspoken Chinese “wolf warrior” diplomats in countries such as Venezuela and Grenada. In Latin America, as elsewhere, Xi’s government also has displayed willingness to pursue initiatives of increasingly political and strategic character. These include its promotion of its “global development initiative” seeking to promote solidarity between itself and nations of the “developing world” as an alternative to traditional ties with the United States and European Union.⁴⁶ They also include PRC promotion of its “Global Security Initiative,” focused on collaboration in the military and security sector, including collaboration in areas such as technology and data management, and collaboration built around multilateral institutions at which the United States is not present, such as the BRICS and CELAC.⁴⁷ In addition, through China’s “Global Civilization Initiative,” the PRC seeks to promote a relativistic, unenforceable concept of democracy and human rights which indirectly privileges powerful states such as itself and other illiberal regimes seeking to escape the enforcement of international norms.⁴⁸

At the outset of the first Trump administration, the Xi government was arguably uncertain as to whether it could cooperate transactionally with Trump or whether it should brace for conflict. With the second Trump administration, however, Xi’s government has reportedly been following the president’s picks for senior leadership positions, and actively planning how to take advantage of negative reactions to these and other opportunities created by his policies and style internationally.⁴⁹

Consistent with this combination of assertiveness, willingness to assert political positions, and confidence in dealing with Trump in his second incarnation, the PRC is positioning itself to take advantage of frustrations with the United States over tariffs and other US policies by cynically positioning itself as the state that more reliably promotes free trade and does not seek to impose itself on its partners.⁵⁰

It is possible that PRC economic weakness, exacerbated by a trade war and expanded military competition with the United States, will limit resources available for it to pursue major commercial initiatives and significantly underwrite partners.⁵¹ Nonetheless, to date, PRC economic difficulties such as the weakness of its property sector, the financial trouble of banks associated with that sector’s collapse, and the significant debt overhang of local and provincial governments, has not to date significantly limited the ability of the PRC to pursue commercially viable projects on a limited scale in strategic sectors, such as those in clean energy and digital technologies.⁵²

Permissive Environment for PRC Advance

The impacts of Trump administration policies and the initiatives by the PRC to capitalize on them will occur in a strategic environment which facilitates the PRC advance. This includes significant economic difficulties in the region, and deepening corruption and violence across the region as a function of organized crime and government weakness.⁵³

This environment of difficulty and uncertainty increases the imperative for countries in the region to secure investment and export markets, as well as reliable partners.

In the context of insecurity and questions about the performance of regional democracies, the perception of China as a state-led model which has succeeded, despite its imperfections, in bringing 800 million people out of poverty, and providing relatively high levels of security and government efficiency, in contrast to perceived chaos and polarization in the long admired US democratic system, will shape the choices made by the region in powerful, if difficult to predict, ways.⁵⁴

Conclusion

The geopolitical environment is a complex, highly interdependent system shaped by the choices of interacting with humans, making its dynamics highly unpredictable. This paper has identified dynamics of concern to the United States and the region, arising plausibly as unintended consequences of the Trump administration's "America First" policies, through intuitive causal relationships.

It is also important to recognize that, amidst significant changes in the policies of both the PRC and the United States toward each other and toward the rest of the world, the behavior of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean will be defined by their own perceived interests as they navigate in a complex terrain. Those interests likely will be determined in part by the economic and other opportunities they perceive that varying levels of alignment or independence will have. Those choices also will be defined by the perceptions of each country of the probability of actually securing those benefits, and the risks of excessive dependence on either the United States or China, including the risks of adverse action taken by the partner who feels threatened or unfairly treated by those choices. The path the region navigates also will be shaped by the filter of the politicians, their ideologies, and the long-term value alignments they wish for their countries.

There is no certainty that the risks highlighted in this work will occur. Nonetheless, the potential for such consequences should alert the Trump administration's team to be alert for them, and think about how to respond to, or mitigate, such effects if they occur. Doing so is arguably part of putting "America First."

R. Evan Ellis, PhD, is a research professor of Latin American studies at the US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, with a focus on the region's relationships with China and other non-Western Hemisphere actors, as well as transnational organized crime and populism in the region. Dr. Ellis has published over 550 works, including five books, most recently *China Engages Latin America: Distorting Development and Democracy?* Dr. Ellis previously served as on the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff with responsibility for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as International Narcotics and Law Enforcement. He has testified about his work to the US Congress on various occasions

and has discussed his work on a broad range of radio and television programs. Dr. Ellis also has been awarded the *Order of Military Merit José María Córdova* by the Colombian government for his scholarship on security issues in the region.

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