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THE US AND CHINA TECHNOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL COMPETITION AND HOW AFFECT TO ARGENTINA AND LATIN AMERICA.

We base the following reflection on two related ideas. The first one is to point out that the competition and rivalry between the two great powers of our time come from those areas they consider relevant in terms of "securing their future." The second implies that in order to achieve this objective, they must ensure and obtain a maneuvering space that as a result of the growing fracture of what we call the liberal international order. While the academic discussion presents that rivalry in terms of power reconfiguration with a specific systemic dynamic; the policymakers discuss the consequences in terms of opportunities and threats that such an existing alteration entails the status quo established by the U.S. in 1945.

This dynamic affects foreign policy perspectives of middle and lesser powers and creates severe complications in the specific case of Argentina's process to be a stable partner in the international system and begins to affect our autonomy to achieve our own security and prosperity objectives. Likewise, the situation in the country is far from unique. All Latin America are affected by the same dynamic of rivalry.

The present situation is paradoxical for Argentina. Commercially and financially, the country needs both the U.S. and China. In the bilateral relationship, we do not have security issues that directly affect us, and in no case, Argentina as such represents a security concern for any of the countries involved.

However, the rigidity that the relationship between the U.S. and China begins to show in the field of commercial and security affect the country in economic and political terms. There is a kind of triangular relationship forming it that shapes as a result of China's increasing penetration into the region and U.S. fears which are causing security concerns that in the long run going to affect Argentina because it is in a vulnerable international position.

The triangular logic between a rising power and one that wants to maintain its position of prominence forces a vulnerable country like Argentina to actively think about its positioning in the face of explicit or indirect pressures that may happen. The room to be neutral became much smaller than the previous situation. The policy that began at the end of 2015, known as Intelligent engagement with the world, now should be recalibrated based on the need to create autonomy in an interdependent world. Autonomy involves much more than just increasing its maneuver in a complex world. This concept involves ensuring that the pursuit of the national interest by building power and well-being in a world of multiple grids of connection, which involves extensive levels of interpenetration, where dissimilar actors can generate blockades that are difficult to anticipate.

Policies of coercion, attraction, and blockade are realities that empowered countries and are used to achieve certain ends, as can be seen in Latin American political reality. Venezuela is a tragic reminder of how quickly the most vulnerable countries in the

international system can be exposed and suffer the designs of the great powers and their competition.

Technologically we are in a stage of the competition for access. In the second half of the 21st century, we will live under the mistakes and successes we made in this first half. Access not only involves natural resources. Access means freeing the "invisible" power existing in the transformation of matter, the creation of life and the leap to one possible, expected and exponential future, which was challenging to achieve as a consequence of not having the right tools until now. In terms of Technology, we are converging to our next evolutionary leap as Harari points out in his book *Homo Deus*.

However, one of the troubles that new technologies generate on the distribution of power of countries that there is a growing willingness from powers and part of the business community to limit such access. Firstly, to actors who can make harmful use of them, and secondly by states who want to steal developments that may have implications in the field of military or citizen security, which generates ongoing tensions between technology developers, users, governments and companies. In political terms, strategic considerations are beginning to displace economic considerations, and such displacement acts as a brake on the technological potentials offered today.

If technology ensures access to different spaces and promotes a particular type of globalization, it can also allow policies to build capabilities to prevent and eventually denied unwanted, unauthorized access from a potential competitor. The North American liberal globalization project enabled for the American preferential access, eventually that "access granted" was eroded as time goes by, as a result of the rise national counterprojects which use globalization means to national ends. They did not share the liberal spirit, but they bear the same ambition to maximize so much that they could offer the world, as well as reap the benefits of their new competitive skills and efficiency as demonstrated by Fareed Zakaria in his book *"The Post-American World."*

We can appreciate that tensions characterize this period as a consequence of the passage from an order focused on a universal or global consensus among the various state participants which allowed to advance a certain sense of shared rules to which subjected to all who feels part of the so-called international community. The liberal order, on which the Obama administration tried to add China as a "responsible shareholder," was slowly finding several limits, which came from American mistakes, the successes of competing powers, and increasing dispersion of power among various and the loss of legitimacy of the action.

The erosion of American power, together with the consolidation of the rising with other and different political parameters than Western ones, is resulting in a more limited order, focusing on the particular needs of each of the potential order builders or alternative leaders of the international system. While there is a discussion about "the international disorder," the current situation is significantly closer to the definition that Randall Schwelien provides when talking about an increasingly entropic international system, and therefore neither order nor disorderly has preponderance, we rather live in a perpetual state of "volatility."

The sense of "clash of civilizations," strategic competence and pre-eminence of rival identities highlight the difficulties in securing the future that all powers have at this time designed international initiatives, such as the so-called "One Belt One Road Initiative" and the reactions it generates from Western powers. Misunderstanding and mistrust in Asia are on the rise because states have risen their concern between each other, and technology is playing a part in this new environment. We are not only hacking systems or computers. We are trying to hack minds.

We can reduce the Strategic competition to one sentence: Securing the future. This idea involves defining positions on at least three undefine races at the moment, intertwined and that generate fear among great powers, lesser powers and part of the society. Today we find great powers in a race to secure geopolitical (including outer space), geo-economic and cyberspace access. All these fields involve different and divergent dynamics in which tensions are increasing. 1) militarily the dynamics that exist in Southeast Asia are established by some unstable balance between Chinese revisionism and the American status quo, which translates into military power projection strategies such as the so-called Air-Sea Battle (ASB) or which adds up to the discussion on the Off-Shore control and the Chinese counterpart known as Anti-Access and Area Denial (A2/AD). The incorporation of military material symmetrically allows us to conclude that both decode their reality in terms of zero-sum games. 2) geoeconomically competition is also open, as there are obvious interdependencies and dependencies with different actors and where the possibilities and areas of cooperation are also shortened, increasing the view of Zero-sum game.

The U.S. and China accuse each other of exploiting the vulnerabilities of the weaker states with which they associate. This growing economic penetration also raises intra-regional tensions over the presence of economic actors that generate some resistance in local communities, as the Economist magazine pointed out in its article "The New Colonialists." This situation affects two main Chinese arguments of interaction with the international system because they questioned seriously. On the one hand, the perception of peaceful rise is no longer considered as such. Questions also appear about the "harmonious world" of cooperative coordination of interest in various places. However, limitation to those critics also appears because China, especially in the field of technology, for a significant number of countries remains as the leading partner in its development aspirations.

3) For both, today, cyberspace is a source of instability where there is already a clear perception of the zero-sum game too. Mutual accusations of espionage, industrial theft, patent fights and major future markets positioning, China and the U.S. perceive that there is no room for cooperation, fears rise and models of control and use of cyberspace differ actively for both. Add to that the "platform economy" with subtle but intrusive social control systems that also attend the rise of the capitalist surveillance economy, as author Shoshana Zuboff points out. The fact that it is not yet clear which of the two actors will benefit most from the contest, even though the forecasts place China in a better position so that in a relatively short period, maybe in 2030 to dominate broad spectrums of the international sphere.

Securing the future involves understanding how the competitive rivalry produced by these three material races will be solved, and that will define the structural position of both actors because in addition to being interrelated they create the strategic advantages military and economic command. If during 2007 it was noted that we had entered the race for "what was left" about state competitions for the Arctic or Antarctica in the words of Michael Klare; we are now in a race of greater complexity which we could identify as a career for "what follows."

"what follows/what is the next disruption" is to think in terms of the next evolutionary step, as - if the parallel applies - a new "race to the moon," or a revolution in strategic perspective or strategy 2.0, as a result of the fourth industrial revolution. The technologies involved are 1) robotics, 2) space, 3) communications, 4) Artificial Intelligence, and 5) digital biology. Like other races, we are facing a short-stroke, long-range race, where the first sprint is essential. That is where the Trump administration's main complain about China's behavior with patents and use it to clash with Chinese under the current trade war. Their argument is while the U.S. considers that they do Research & Development its Chinese counterpart performs Research + Development + Thievery according to Graham Allison in its already classic book *Destined for War*.

Two examples of this. In artificial intelligence, Assumptions rise about that in the next ten years it will add value for US\$17 billion, concentrated in some countries that are leading these changes. The cost of development IT infrastructure will be in the order of US\$55 billion for countries such as Australia to complex projects of around US\$180 billion. The speed of change is unbelievable. In 1980, China's GDP was US\$300 million, by 2015 US\$11 billion. International trade was less than \$40 billion. Whereas it now accounts for \$4 billion. China's arrival to the Moon is a good example of such a situation. The preparation of a space station also represents it. Huawei's increased patenting of technologies critical to the near future highlights China's potential and American resistance to change.

Securing the future means choosing the best strategic options. The U.S. and China have their options open, yet more and more limitations are appearing on the American side. Both countries have their versions of "being great again" however, they reflect different positions and considerations about their role in the international system. Both know that order is constructed but also know that orders expire. China, however, smartly raises its relationship with the world differently. Chinese narrative goes through that of the future, especially presenting a "brilliant" future for all. The American narrative put things in terms of security and risk, which creates limits in cooperation and sense of urgency and problems which some countries do not want to deal with. They offer security, but not future. This raise is especially counterproductive to South Americans, who are mindful of the U.S. role in the region, their levels of interference and divisive behavior throughout the 20th century, especially in the latter half of the region. China is unknown and "distant" geographically, but close because migration that increasingly interacts with local communities, showing a friendly profile and communications opportunities.

If we consider that the American Grand Strategy has gone from off-shore balancing logic to another known as accommodation strategy (which may contain appeasement options) to the present strategy which is considered a strategy of smaller international involvement, each one of them has detractors and those who support them. The U.S. National Security Strategy considers that the main objective of the 21st century is that of competition with Russia and China. Particularly to maintain a degree of technological supremacy, on sensitive issues such as detection, direct energy weapons, autonomous weapons, quantum detection, nuclear defenses and the modernization of nuclear arsenals, in the face of growing capabilities by Russia and China. An example of this is the creation of the various space forces and the decision to eventually install offensive weapons in it.

President Trump's logic has allowed previous administrations to close policies regarding the aggressive positioning of the U.S., considering them as distractions from "real" competition. Bush and Obama began wars of various kinds and intensity, leading to nearly twenty years of open intervention, continuing only with the operations inherited from the administrations that preceded it and which currently highlights the maintenance of the war in Afghanistan. The path of selective engagement seems to be the only one left for the U.S. to sustain its position in the international system, and this high-strategy discussion is one that Democrats also begin to take on for an eventual electoral contest. The liberal supremacy strategy, as Stephen Walt calls them, has proven costly, reckless, and ineffective.

Measures taken to Decoupling the value chains previously created in the technological field is one of the steps in the construction of a more rigid and less fluid world. That is why American universities, technology companies, and all those at the core of American national security are rethinking their relationship with China. While this situation makes it easier for China to seek partnerships with other countries, the U.S. simultaneously lets the potential partners know that a close relationship with the Asian giant is detrimental to a sustained relationship with Washington. Put them to choose it is not clear for everyone which side any country is going to take.

The option to use military power in a crisis appears unlikely, according to Rand's US-China Military Scorecard. That report notes that there is parity in six of nine areas of conventional military capability (attacks on bases areas, attack on surface units, achieve superiority prevent an opponent from launching space-based weapons) and that in the next 15 years China will be able to prevent American military superiority. The U.S. retains an advantage in cyber warfare and also in nuclear stability issues. U.S. military spending is \$605 billion, although it has no more significant upside-in margin without moving negatively on the overall U.S. budget, while China's is \$150 billion with enough room to continue Growing. The U.S. is concerned not only about relative changes in power but also about the intentions they involve. Moreover, intentions are always complicated to read in political terms.

Both China and the U.S. are trying to recreate a world of dependencies in a system characterized by interdependence. That is why in a sense trade war allows them to carry out a degree of decoupling, and to the extent that they advance in that decoupling, they

will mark many limitations for the secondary actors of international politics. The previous stage in international interdependent order construction have in mind the idea of accepting the premise of connection to various grids in convergent areas; as time pass, the divergences between the leading countries will accentuate the structural limitation of actors of less relative power. The third world country will have less autonomy in the second half of the twenty-first century.

Where this situation leaves us, in 2011, a foreign policy decision linked us to China's military space complex — changing the traditional policy of keeping Argentina relatively neutral from power competition in the 21st century. Likewise, China has a growing weight not only in Argentina but also in Latin America, which demonstrates the existence of a regional space with a double or triple overlapping periphery. Smart insertion involved two crucial issues, (1) getting along with all those in the national interest of the country. Reflecting values but realizing that in a multipolar world, the universality of them is limited. Therefore, the prudence mandate establish the ground for action. China means infrastructure, mining, grains, energy; it is the second largest trading partner representing 10.7 billion in imports and nearly 5 billion in exports. China is 8% with the U.S. we import 7 billion while exporting about 4 billion.

The dynamics of rising new powers and change in the structure of international politics condition affects the maneuver capabilities of the countries. They should have to identify the convergence agendas in the region and link them and try to understand the adverse consequences that some issues will have in their bilateral relationship. Decision taken to deal with divergent interest will be a central element in building intelligent autonomy. Argentina needs of both countries, and our future is related to find a way to deal with the great power competition that is already ongoing.

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