



AMERICAN FOREIGN
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Related Categories: International Economics and Trade; Public Diplomacy and Information Operations; Resource Security; China; Japan; Russia; Ukraine

U.S. MUST MAKE CLEAR IT WILL DEFEND TAIWAN: ABE

Japan's former Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, is calling on the U.S. to declare that it will defend Taiwan from China. Abe identified three similarities between the situation in Ukraine and Taiwan: a large military power gap between Taiwan and China; that neither Ukraine nor Taiwan has formal military allies; and the fact that the UN Security Council cannot resolve either conflict because both China and Russia are permanent members. "The American policy of ambiguity toward Taiwan is now fostering instability in the Indo-Pacific region, by encouraging China to underestimate American resolve, while making the government in Taipei unnecessarily anxious," he said. "Given the change in circumstances since the policy of strategic ambiguity was adopted, the U.S. should issue a statement that is not open to misinterpretation. The time has come for the U.S. to make clear that it will defend Taiwan against any attempted Chinese invasion. There must no longer be any room for doubt in our resolve." (*Los Angeles Times*, April 12, 2022)

EYEING CHINA, JAPAN AND PHILIPPINES HOLD SECURITY TALKS

In response to China's assertive military actions, the defense and foreign ministers of Japan and the Philippines are holding the two countries' first ever "two plus two" security talks in Tokyo. Japan's Defense Minister, Nobuo Kishi, and his Philippine counterpart, Delfin Lorenzana, shared their concerns about Russia's invasion of Ukraine and agreed that any such attempts to change the status quo in Asia by force are unacceptable, Japan's Defense Ministry said in a statement. Kishi and Lorenzana agreed to expand security cooperation between the two countries, hold joint military drills, and increase the transfer of defense equipment and technology, including the provision of air radar systems to the Philippine military. (ABC, April 7, 2022)

TWITTER USERS EXPOSING CHINA'S PRO-RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA

In recent weeks, scores of screen-grabbed posts from China's top social media platforms have been translated and shared on Twitter under the hashtag "The Great Translation Movement." The posts offer Western audiences a glimpse into the extent of pro-Russian and nationalistic content on China's heavily censored platforms. They are shared by an account created in early March by a decentralized, anonymous team that crowdsources the collection and translation of popular posts on Ukraine and other topics. "We want the outside world to at least know what is going on inside. Our goal is to raise awareness about the state of public opinion in China, whether it is purely the result of spontaneous interactions (or) the result of government censorship. We want to counter the effort of the Chinese state-affiliated media by showing the West some content they do not want to show," said the account's administrator. (CNN, April 13, 2022)

DIVERSIFYING SUPPLY CHAINS AWAY FROM CHINA "GOOD FOR EVERYONE"

It is "probably good for everyone" that countries are diversifying their supply chains to reduce their dependence on China, said World Bank President David Malpass, speaking in Warsaw, Poland. "They're having setbacks, major setbacks in various areas, and the forecasts for growth have been brought down," Malpass said; adding that China needs to be part of a value system shared by other countries in the global trading system. Malpass said he did not believe the world faced a new "Bretton Woods moment," a reference to the 1944 conference that revamped the international financial architecture and created the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund after World War II. "My view is we're not at that point now at all. There's not a sense of the world being lost. There's this sense actually of unity of a great deal of the world in one endeavor, which is to end the war in Ukraine." (Reuters, April 12, 2022)

CHINA'S NEW MEGA-COAL MINE CAN PRODUCE 15 MILLION TONS ANNUALLY

Officials in China's biggest coal mining hub – Ordos, Inner Mongolia – have approved the massive 170 sq. km Baijiahaizi mine, which can produce 15 million tons annually for the next 97 years. The Ordos natural resources bureau gave a license to Lianhai Coal Industry Co. to operate the mine, which contains an estimated 2.03 billion metric tons of coal. In 2019, the National Development and Reform Commission approved the project, which started operation before obtaining local permits. To insulate the country from soaring global energy prices, top officials have told leaders in mining regions to expand coal production capacity by 300 million tons. China produced 197 million tons of coal in the first two months of this year, and is on pace to reach 1.18 billion tons, more than any other country. (Bloomberg, April 7, 2022)

