

Quad Alliance

Xi's China takes on the Quad

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Quad Alliance Timeline

- 2004: Triggered by the tsunami; focused on disaster response; intended to increase capacity to meet shared challenges including regional security
- 2017: Japan's Shinzo Abe invited diplomats to a working-level meeting at the ASEAN summit to discuss significantly deepening their cooperation; failed to produce a unified communique; agreed to meet annually.
- 2019: Foreign ministers met; agreed in principal to “advance a free and open Indo-Pacific”.
- March 2020: Quad-Plus talks held with S. Korea, NZ, and Vietnam to discuss cooperation on trade, technology, and supply chains

Quad Alliance Timeline

- June 2020; India-China border clash prompted India to begin to strongly support the Quad
- October 2020: Foreign ministers met; agreed to institutionalize the Quad; build out a true security framework; counter China
- March 2021: Virtual Quad Summit with Quad leaders; released first joint statement “Spirit of the Quad”
- May: Biden approached S Korea on joining the Quad
- August: Japan and Taiwan hold first bilateral security talks

Chinese Response

- Indifferent at first; more robust after October 2020
- Use a combination of “carrots and sticks” to drive alliance members apart
- October 2020; slammed the Quad for building an Indo-Pacific NATO
 - Imposed import restrictions on Australia; threatened other nations as well
 - Courted Japan; agreed to implement new maritime and aerial crisis communication mechanism; proposed Jinping visit; called off due to demonstrations against HR abuses and to Chinese incursions in the East China Sea
 - Tried to de-escalate border tensions with India; offered economic and COVID-19 vaccine aid

Biden Administration

- Focused on allied, regional, and multilateral engagement (vs. “America First”)
- Resolved Trump-era trade and military-basing disputes with US allies such as Japan and S Korea, stabilizing relations
- Pivoted to Asia
- Frustrated with France’s concept of “strategic autonomy” and remaining neutral in US / China disputes



Spirit of the Quad from Virtual Summit

March 2021

- Strive for a region that is “free, open, inclusive, healthy, anchored by democratic values, and unconstrained by coercion”
- Facilitate collaboration, including in maritime security, to meet challenges to the rules-based maritime order in East and South China Seas
- Launched a joint vaccine-distribution initiative in the Indo-Pacific
- Set up working groups on vaccines, climate change, and critical and emerging technologies to secure technology supply chains
- Reaffirmed commitment to complete denuclearization of N Korea

Chinese Response

Full Scale Political Attack

- Attacked the Quad as “starting a new Cold War”
- Isolate and marginalize the Quad by outflanking it internationally
- Increase maritime security cooperation with ASEAN
- Strengthen pan-Asian economic cooperation through RCEP and CPTPP

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

- Free trade agreement among the Asia-Pacific nations of Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam
- Ratified: 2020; effective: 2022
- Benefits retail sector

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)

- Free trade agreement covers virtually all sectors and aspects of trade between member countries to reduce trade barriers and facilitate trade
- Signatories: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam
- Successor to TPP that was introduced by Obama and nixed by Trump

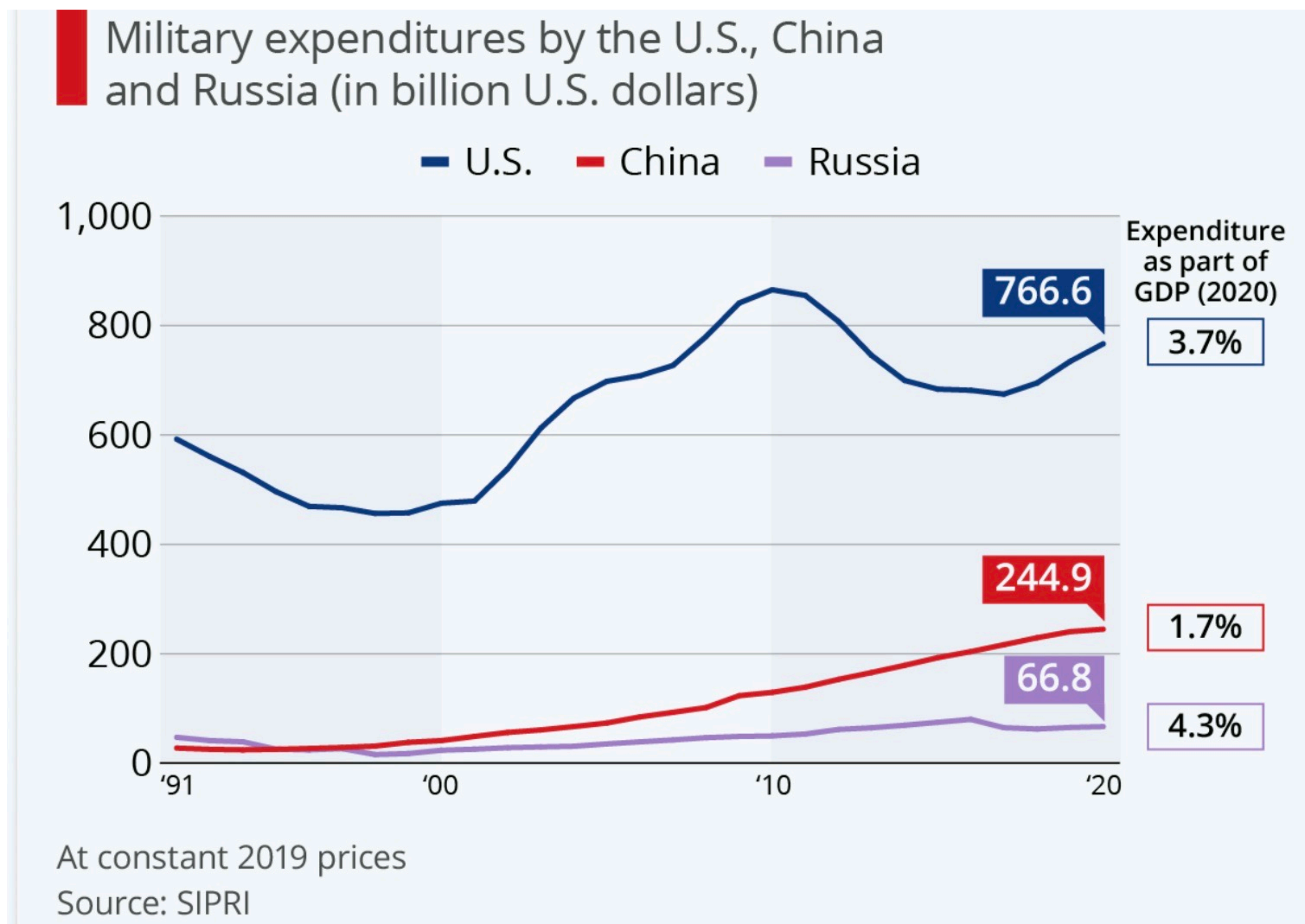
RECP vs. CPTPP

- RCEP consolidates Asian production bases and markets for maximum efficiency
- CPTPP focuses on combining production bases from many countries in the Americas, Europe and Asia.

Regional Security Measures - 2021

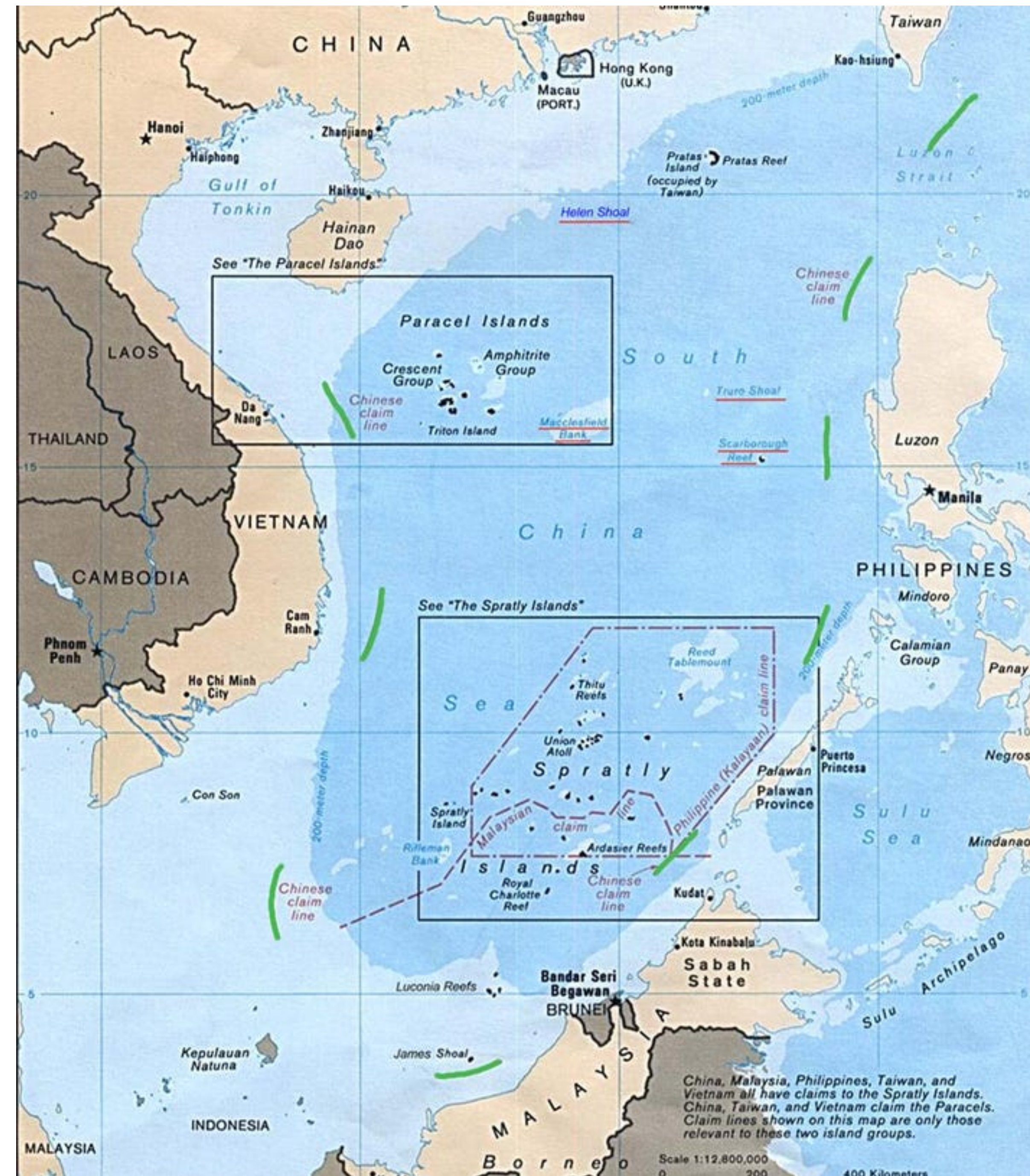
- AUKUS pact - Australia to develop nuclear powered attack submarines
- Japan announces doubling defense spending to bolster and maritime defenses as it becomes more concerned about threats posed by China and N Korea
- US Pacific Deterrence Initiative - land based precision strike capabilities in allied countries
- Five Eyes intelligence partnership - sharing info on Chinese behaviors
- China continues to increase defense spending

China Steps Up Military Spending



Maps

East and South China Seas



Quad Leaders' Summit Focus Areas

Sept 2021

1. COVID and Global Health
2. Infrastructure
3. Climate
4. People-to-People Exchange and Education
5. Critical and Emerging Technologies
6. Cybersecurity
7. Space

Quad Leaders' Meeting

March 2022

- Reaffirmed commitments
- Discussed Ukraine
 - Cannot allow it to happen in Indo-Pacific (implying defending Taiwan)
 - Agreed on a new humanitarian and disaster relief mechanism
- Agreed to meet F2F in Tokyo in coming months

Implications for China

- Quad could serve as a foundation of a broader global anti-Chinese coalition, leading to a broader allied economic, customs and standards union
- Increase engagement with ASEAN (perturbed by AUKUS pact)
- Court disaffected EU partners
- Leverage economic clout
- Join CPTPP
- Double down on strategic and military cooperation with Russia
- Increase defense spending

Discussion Questions

1. A big part of the Chinese strategy to draw US's allies away is leveraging the power of the Chinese economy. How successful will this play out for President Xi Jinping's plan to break up the Quad?
2. The Quad alliance was originally tried out in the mid-2000s but soon after died out. What factors have been the most influential in its revival in recent years?
3. Is it important for the US to maintain a powerful presence across East Asia? If so, to what extent will the Quad be able to fulfill this goal?
4. As a result of the AUKUS agreement, a French-Australia deal was canceled, resulting in Paris being outraged. What is the likelihood that China will exploit this alliance rupture, and how concerning is that possibility?
5. The presence of the Quad will likely be exploited by President Xi Jinping to prove that he must consolidate more power resulting in worsening US-China relations. Does the possibility of this turn of events invalidate the Quad?