

PACIFIC FORUM

# COMPARATIVE

C O N N E C T I O N S

A TRIANNUAL E-JOURNAL OF BILATERAL  
RELATIONS IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

## INDO-PACIFIC AS THE “EPICENTER”

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The Biden administration released its long-awaited *National Security Strategy (NSS)* this trimester, along with unclassified versions of its *National Defense Strategy and Missile Defense and Nuclear Posture Reviews*. There were no big surprises. The NSS identified the Indo-Pacific as “the epicenter of 21st century geopolitics” and reaffirmed China as the “pacing challenge,” even while branding Russia as “an immediate threat to the free and open international system” as a result of its invasion of Ukraine. Underscoring the priority attached to the region, President Biden attended the East Asia Summit in Phnom Penh and the G-20 Summit in Bali, with Vice President Kamala Harris representing the United States at the annual Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders’ Meeting in Bangkok.

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This article is extracted from *Comparative Connections: A Triannual E-Journal of Bilateral Relations in the Indo-Pacific*, Vol. 24, No. 3, January 2023. Preferred citation: Ralph A. Cossa and Brad Glosserman, “Indo-Pacific as the ‘Epicenter’,” *Comparative Connections*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp 1-18.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was not invited to any of the Asia summits but found other ways to attract attention, including some 70 ballistic missile launches for the year while announcing plans to rapidly produce and potentially use tactical nuclear weapons. Chinese President Xi Jinping, when not busy defending Pyongyang's bad behavior, was busy orchestrating the 20<sup>th</sup> National Peoples Congress, where he was elected "president for life." Meanwhile, the tech war between Washington and Beijing continued to heat up, much to the dismay of many US allies and partners.



Figure 1 North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un oversees a missile launch at an undisclosed location, in a photo released on Oct. 10, 2022. Photo: KCNA via Reuters

More broadly speaking, the economic outlook for the region appeared discouraging even as the administration failed to put much additional meat on the bones of its own Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF). Other regional trade agreements continued apace, sans Washington, which struggled to get its own House (pun intended) in order as we continue to ponder the significance of the US mid-term elections.

### **NSS: Strategic Competition Underway**

In his cover letter introducing the [2022 National Security Strategy](#), President Biden stated "(W)e are in the midst of a strategic competition to shape the future of the international order." He clearly identified the main competitors: China, which "harbors the intention and, increasingly, the capacity to reshape the international order in favor of one that tilts the global playing field to its benefit"; Russia, whose "brutal and unprovoked war on its neighbor Ukraine has shattered peace in Europe and impacted stability everywhere"; and autocrats, like Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin (among others), who are

"working overtime to undermine democracy and export a model of governance marked by repression at home and coercion abroad."

The NSS outlines two strategic challenges: first, "the post-Cold War era is definitively over and a competition is underway between the major powers to shape what comes next"; and second, "while this competition is underway, people all over the world are struggling to cope with the effects of shared challenges that cross borders—whether it is climate change, food insecurity, communicable diseases, terrorism, energy shortages, or inflation."

The NSS was supposed to have been issued this past spring, but the Russian invasion of Ukraine caused it to be pulled back for a rewrite. Nonetheless, the focus on China, previously outlined in the administration's March 2021 "[Interim National Security Strategic Guidance](#)," (which we covered in depth in the [May 2001 Regional Overview](#)) was retained. While Russia was deemed the immediate threat, by "recklessly flouting the basic laws of the international order," the PRC remained "the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to advance that objective."

The NSS tries to assure the rest of the world that "(W)e do not seek conflict or a new Cold War." It underscores the "critical difference between our vision, which aims to preserve the autonomy and rights of less powerful states, and that of our rivals, which does not."

It identifies the top three US global priorities as: Out-Competing China and Constraining Russia, Cooperating on Shared Challenges, and Shaping the Rules of the Road, while addressing six underlying Key Pillars, which we paraphrase as follows:

- the dividing line between foreign policy and domestic policy is gone: to succeed abroad, the US "must invest in our innovation and industrial strength, and build our resilience, at home";
- alliances and partnerships are "our most important strategic asset" and an "indispensable element" contributing to international peace and stability;
- the PRC is the "most consequential geopolitical challenge" and "there are

significant global dimensions to this challenge.” While Russia “is a source of disruption and instability globally,” it “lacks the across the spectrum capabilities of the PRC”;

- the world should not be seen “solely through the prism of strategic competition, [we] will continue to engage countries on their own terms”;
- globalization has delivered immense benefits “but an adjustment is now required to cope with dramatic global changes”;
- the community of nations that “shares our vision for the future of international order is broad and includes countries on every continent.”

### “Integrated Deterrence” is the “Centerpiece”

The NSS devotes an entire page (page 22) to explaining the concept of integrated deterrence, (first [introduced](#) by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin during a Change of Command Ceremony in Honolulu in April 2021 as the “cornerstone” of US defense strategy). The concept is also featured prominently in the unclassified version as the “centerpiece” of the [2022 National Defense Strategy](#) (which for the first time incorporates two previously stand-alone reports: the *Nuclear Posture Review* and *Missile Defense Review*).

We are living in a “decisive decade,” Secretary Austin notes in his cover letter, further noting that “(T)he 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS) details the Department’s path forward into that decisive decade—from helping to protect the American people, to promoting global security, to seizing new strategic opportunities, and to realizing and defending our democratic values.”

Not surprisingly, to those who had read the unclassified [Fact Sheet](#) when the classified version was submitted to the Congress in March (or to those who read our [earlier analysis](#)), the PRC was identified as “our most consequential strategic competitor for the coming decades.” The document is careful in (mostly) using “competitor” and “challenge” in describing the PRC, even as it brands Russia as an “acute threat” and others, like North Korea, Iran, and violent extremist organizations (VEOs) as “persistent threats.”

In a direct lift from the Fact Sheet, the NDS reaffirmed the following Defense priorities:

1. Defending the homeland, paced to the growing multi-domain threat posed by the PRC;
2. Deterring strategic attacks against the United States, Allies, and partners;
3. Deterring aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict when necessary, prioritizing the PRC challenge in the Indo-Pacific, then the Russia challenge in Europe;
4. Building a resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem.

It devotes a full chapter (Chapter IV) to integrated deterrence, which is defined as “using every tool at the Department’s disposal, in close collaboration with our counterparts across the US Government and with Allies and partners, to ensure that potential foes understand the folly of aggression.” It incorporates deterrence by denial, deterrence by resilience, and deterrence by direct and collective cost imposition. (For more on the concept, see Austin’s Dec. 4, 2021 [speech](#) at the Reagan National Defense Forum, which we summarized in our [January 2022 chapter](#).)

As noted earlier, the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) and Missile Defense Review (MDR) were incorporated into the NDS. The reports closely echoed the combined *2022 Nuclear Posture Review and Missile Defense Review* [Fact Sheet](#). The NPR repeats and emphasizes US declaratory policy when it comes to nuclear weapons: “As long as nuclear weapons exist, the fundamental role of US nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attack on the United States, our Allies, and partners. The United States would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners.”

It further notes that the administration “conducted a thorough review of a broad range of options for nuclear declaratory policy—including both No First Use and Sole Purpose policies—and concluded that those approaches would result in an unacceptable level of risk in light of the range of non-nuclear capabilities being developed and ‘fielded by competitors . . . even’ while retaining “the goal of moving toward a sole purpose declaration,” pledging to “work

with our Allies and partners to identify concrete steps that would allow us to do so.”

The *MDR* meanwhile “provides a framework for US missile defenses that is informed by: defense priorities and deterrence objectives as indicated in the *NDS*; the framework of integrated deterrence; and the multifaceted elements of US missile defenses.” It also “identifies how the United States is integrating missile defense with its Allies and partners to strengthen international cooperation against shared threats.” It further notes that the US will continue to rely on strategic deterrence “to address and deter large intercontinental-range, nuclear missile threats to the homeland” from China and Russia while continuing to “stay ahead of North Korean missile threats to the homeland through a comprehensive missile defeat approach, complemented by the credible threat of direct cost imposition through nuclear and nonnuclear means.”

In comparing this *MDR* to the [2019 MDR](#) produced by the Trump administration, the evolving threat includes one significant addition: small Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (sUAS) which are “complicating the traditional roles of air and missile defense.” The threats are also reordered. In 2019, North Korea had pride of place, followed by Iran and Russia, with China last. This year, China comes first, then Russia, North Korea, and Iran, followed by the sUAS threat. There is also a great deal more attention paid to hypersonic weapons, which “pose an increasing and complex threat due to their dual (nuclear/conventional) capable nature, challenging flight profile, and maneuverability.” Bonnie Glaser’s [chapter](#) on US-China relations provides more details on how all four documents treat China.

### Some Mild Surprises during Regional Summitry

As usual, the last four months of 2022 were chock full with regional summits. There was the usual ASEAN-centered pageantry. Cambodia (as this past year’s ASEAN Chair) hosted the East Asia Summit (EAS) on Nov. 13, while Thailand took its turn as host of the annual APEC Leaders’ Meeting on Nov. 18-19. Adding to the mix, in the middle of the other two summits, was the G20 Summit, hosted this year by Indonesian President Joko Widodo, on Nov. 15-16. Each was the first in-person event since the pandemic struck and the first since Russia invaded Ukraine.

One of the big questions this year was “Will Vladimir Putin show up?” at any of the meetings. He did not. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov attended in his stead, but even he skipped the APEC event. A related question was “How would Ukraine be addressed?” especially since several of the participants, most notably China and India, had been inclined to temper or withhold criticism of Putin’s invasion. Surprisingly, at least to us, Moscow did not get a free pass. As nicely summed up by *Nikkei* in its [coverage](#) of the three summits, “India wins, Russia loses, and face-to-face meetings help cool US-China tempers.”

**East Asia Summit.** First up was the EAS along with its series of ASEAN Plus One meetings. This was largely a non-event. The [Chairman’s Statement](#), issued by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, was one of the shortest on record. It contained no reference to Ukraine. Nor did it address regional concerns usually on the ASEAN agenda, such as the South China Sea, Myanmar, or North Korea, even though all these topics were discussed (according to the White House’s [readout](#) of the meeting). The most positive thing one can say about the Chairman’s Statement is that there was one. The last time Cambodia chaired, it was unable (for the first time in ASEAN’s history) to produce one. Attempts to produce a more expansive Joint Statement were [reportedly](#) thwarted by Russian objections to any reference to the “war” in Ukraine (which, at the time, Moscow still insisted on calling a “special military operation”).

**The Group of 20.** The G20 meeting was more direct (despite Lavrov’s presence). Spurred on by a video appearance by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the Bali meeting’s [Leaders Declaration](#) addressed the war in Ukraine head on, citing the [UN General Assembly Resolution](#) that “deplores in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and demands its complete and unconditional withdrawal from the territory of Ukraine.” It further stated that “it is essential to uphold international law and the multilateral system that safeguards peace and stability” and that “the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is inadmissible.” The Declaration noted that “(M)ost members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine and stressed it is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy,” even while acknowledging that there were “other views and

different assessments of the situation and sanctions.”



Figure 2 President Volodymyr Zelensky during his video speech to G20 leaders in Bali. Photo: Ukrainian President's Office

According to White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, incoming G20 Chair, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi “played an essential role in negotiating the summit’s declaration.” She further [stated](#) that “Prime Minister Modi made clear, “Today’s era must not be of war.”

There were a number of meetings on the sidelines of the summit, the headline encounter being that between Presidents Biden and Xi, their first face-to-face meeting since Biden took office nearly two years ago and the latter’s unprecedented “reelection” to a third term as China’s leader (following repeal of the Deng Xiaoping-initiated two-term limit aimed at preventing a new strongman from emerging). As documented in the US-China [chapter](#), the resulting optimism was soon tempered by a healthy dose of realism. The sitdown between Xi and Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio was notable as well, given it was the first encounter by the leaders of Japan and China in three years.

While geopolitics grabbed the headlines, the G20’s ostensible goal was “to foster deeper economic cooperation amid the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, spreading inflation and the risk of a global recession.” The final communiqué contained a series of economic measures and political commitments. It calls for efforts to promote macroeconomic and financial stability, food and energy security, sustainable energy transition, digital transformation, global health, and a variety of other concerns. This summit may have revived the G20’s role as the premier global multilateral economic steering committee, a status that has been eroding since its formation during the Global Financial Crisis.

**APEC Leaders’ Meeting.** Days later, Thailand hosted the annual APEC Leaders’ Meeting. Its [declaration](#) echoed almost exactly the language of the G20 statement on Ukraine, a telling indication of how well that formulation was received. It reiterated support for World Trade Organization reform and efforts to build a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific, a longstanding ambition that has faded in recent years. There was backing for macroeconomic stability, sustainable finance, and the digital transition, among other issues.

President Biden didn’t attend the APEC meeting, jetting off instead to the climate summit in Egypt. Vice President Kamala Harris took his place. First Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Belousov represented Russia. Harris [previewed](#) US goals as chair of APEC in 2023, with a “focus on sustainable economic growth,” while working with APEC economies “to make new sustainability and decarbonization commitments.” She further announced that San Francisco would host the next Leaders’ Meeting and associated events. Peru and South Korea will serve as APEC chairs for 2024 and 2025, respectively.

### A Bruising Outlook for Regional Economies

The year ahead will be a tough one, with the IMF [estimating](#) that “one-third of the world economy to be in recession” as the United States, China, and the European Union all slow simultaneously. In October, the IMF reduced projections for global growth in 2023 to 2.7%, a decrease of 0.9 percentage points over its April estimate. Only during the Global Financial Crisis (2007-09) and the most acute phase of the COVID pandemic were the numbers worse. Revised projections usually come out later in January and growth is expected to be reduced further still.

The causes of the downturn are well known. The war in Ukraine has disrupted trade in Europe and created shortages in food, fuel, and fertilizer around the world. The abrupt reversal of China’s zero-COVID policy has led to the spread of the disease throughout that country, fanning fears of another global wave of infections and creating new bottlenecks in international supply chains.

Both of those factors heighten inflationary pressures, adding yet more reasons for central banks to raise interest rates to purge their

economies of that danger. The IMF warns that inflation is “the most immediate threat to current and future prosperity.” With more than 75 central banks increasing interest rates, the IMF concluded that “It is likely that the world economy will face recession next year as a result of the rises in interest rates in response to higher inflation.”

The IMF projects growth in emerging Asia to recover slightly in 2023; after recording 4.4% in 2022, it should expand 4.9% this year. China’s growth is anticipated to rise from 3.2% in 2021 to 4.4% in 2023. That is a creditable performance—matching regional growth—but it is the first time in four decades that China is not an engine but a drag on performance. [According](#) to Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the IMF, “the impact on Chinese growth would be negative, the impact on the region will be negative, the impact on global growth will be negative.” Korea is expected to register 2% growth, a fall from 2.6% the year before. Meanwhile, Japan is forecast to have 1.6% growth this year, a slide of 0.1 percentage points from 2022. India will remain a bright spot, with 6.1% growth expected in 2023.

### Mixed Messages from US Politics

The world probably dodged a bullet in the US midterm elections. Projections of a “red wave”—an overwhelming victory by Republicans—were premature. Defying history—the party holding the White House typically loses big when the president is not on the ballot—and polling—which showed strong support and enthusiasm—Democrats increased their seats in the Senate, claiming a real majority in that chamber, and Republicans gained only a slim majority rather than the double-digit margin that many anticipated. The divisions in the GOP were then made plain in the first week of January when it took 15 ballots—the most in over 100 years—to elect a speaker of the House of Representatives as factions within the party battled for influence.

As we write, it isn’t clear what concessions were made to win over the dissenters, but reporting suggests that the Freedom Caucus, which has taken radical, if not extreme, positions on many issues—such as defaulting on US government debt to get it to restrain spending—will have considerable input into legislating. This bodes ill for the ability of the House to do its job, which could cripple Congress as a whole. Observers

expected a Republican-controlled House to focus on frustrating and humiliating the Biden administration but few anticipated that radicals would have such influence, potentially turning an obstructionist body into a destructive one.

For CC readers, the consequences of a GOP victory could be palpable. Expect an even harder position against China: The Republicans [announced](#) that they will establish a Select Committee on China to examine all aspects of US policy toward Beijing. Trade controls will continue to tighten and there is a good chance of some form of regulation of outward investment by US companies in China. As a corollary, support for Taiwan will likely increase, as explained in the [chapter](#) on China-Taiwan relations. In other words, there is good reason to believe that whatever hopes there may have been for a “reset” following the Biden-Xi summit in Bali will be frustrated.

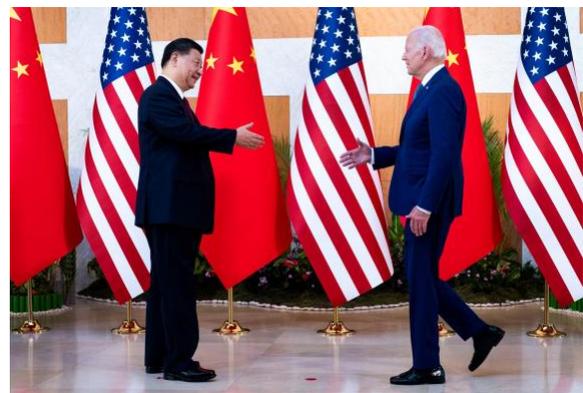


Figure 3 President Xi Jinping and President Joe Biden meet in person for the first time as national leaders in Bali, Indonesia in November 2022. Photo: Doug Mills/The New York Times

Some GOP members have demanded drastic reductions in US aid to Ukraine. It is not clear how those legislators think about US international commitments more generally, and alliances more specifically. Expect vocal demands for increased defense spending from partners and more threats if they fail to do so.

We’ve been critics of the Biden administration’s regional economic agenda, arguing that the various initiatives such as Build Back Better World or the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) are insufficient. During this reporting period, the first in-person ministerial meeting convened in Los Angeles in September, at which participants agreed to start formal negotiations,

which began when Australia hosted in December the first in-person round of IPEF negotiations aimed at setting economic rules and standards in the Indo-Pacific. The following week US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo hosted a virtual IPEF ministerial, at [which](#) all congratulated themselves on the progress made, pledged to do more, and “welcomed the Government of India’s confirmation that it will host a special IPEF negotiating round on Feb. 8–11 in India for the IPEF Pillars covering supply chains, clean economy, and fair economy.”

We’d like to see more support for the World Trade Organization, rather than continued obstructionism and the crippling of its appellate board. The new Congress is unlikely to have any appetite for the policy revisions we prefer; we expect more pressure for continued pressure against trade partners and calls to reshore production at home, even if it antagonizes allies and partners and contravenes international trade rules.

### Tech Tensions Strain Alliances

The confluence of two policies—the tougher line against China and that desire to create jobs at home—is heightening strains in alliances as Washington tightens strategic trade controls. In October, the US imposed new [regulations](#) that would restrict China’s access to advanced semiconductors, the equipment to make them, and related products and services. The regulations were done unilaterally by the Biden administration, despite months of talks with allied governments (in Japan and Europe) whose firms, along with the Americans, dominate global markets for chipmaking equipment. Those governments were reportedly happy to have Washington take the heat for the moves, sparing them China’s anger.

The US continues to press those allies. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo [explained](#), “We are ahead of [China]. We need to stay ahead of them. And we need to deny them this technology that they need to advance their military.” She added that “I think you will see Japan and Netherlands follow our lead.”

Those allied governments are slow to follow the US lead for two reasons. First, they [doubt](#) the moves will work. China may be slowed, but its efforts to develop indigenous technology will continue—and likely succeed. Second, they

remain more committed to the Chinese market than their US counterparts. Views are not monolithic of course, but semiconductor-making equipment has become Japan’s second-largest export sector, and nearly one-third of Japanese exports (¥970 billion yen, roughly equivalent to \$7.6 billion) goes to China. Meanwhile, US companies complain that the Biden administration’s restrictions could cost them as much as [\\$3 billion](#) in business.

Tensions will increase since more export restrictions are coming. The initial rules addressed chips for supercomputing; those for artificial intelligence, biotech and quantum computing are expected. US efforts to spur domestic production, such as through the Inflation Reduction Act’s “green” subsidies for sustainable energy, are also aggravating relations. South Korea and Japan have voiced concern and are [reportedly](#) coordinating with Europe to develop a response to the US action.

### Emperor Xi

As alluded to above, Xi Jinping has essentially claimed the title of “Emperor for Life” as he put the final nail in the coffin containing Deng Xiaoping thought. Deng was the primary architect of China’s rise, spouting homilies like “it doesn’t matter if the cat is black or white as long as it catches mice” and “to get rich is glorious.” The color of the cat still doesn’t matter, as long as it now fully subscribes to Xi Jinping Thought. Getting rich now means painting a huge target on your back. “Hide your strength and bide your time” has been abandoned by “wolf warrior” diplomats who remind neighbors that China is a big country and they are not. And state-owned enterprises have received a new lease on life as loyalty trumps efficiency when it comes to big business (or any business at all).

The (currently unanswered) question is “How will this affect Chinese foreign policy and Chinese behavior going forward?” Thus far, signs are not promising. China has become increasingly assertive and aggressive, especially toward Taiwan, raising concerns about Xi’s intentions and timelines. If this activity was aimed at making Taiwan more intimidated and compliant and keeping the rest of the international community at bay, it has failed miserably. Expressions of support for Taiwan’s democracy have flourished and volumes are

being written about the need for, and how to, improve Taiwan's defenses. (The Pacific Forum's contribution to this debate can be found [here](#).) The more pressure Xi puts on Taiwan, the more Washington feels compelled to respond, not just rhetorically but through increased arms sales and training as well. The more the US speaks out and/or provides assistance to Taiwan, the more Beijing seems to feel compelled to turn up the pressure. This game of chicken is a recipe for disaster. Making it worse will be the seemingly inevitable trip to Taiwan by House Speaker McCarthy which the administration would be unable to prevent but which Beijing will nonetheless interpret as another example of its support for Taiwan independence.

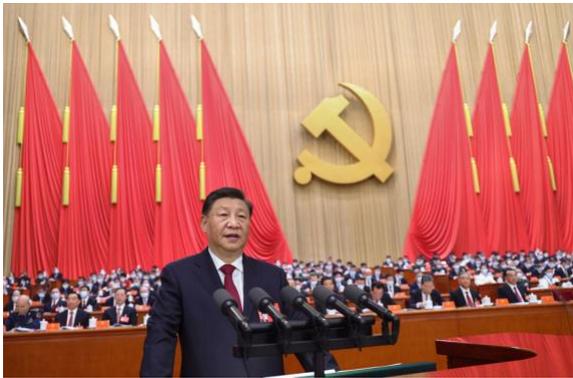


Figure 4 Xi Jinping delivers a speech at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Oct. 16. Photo: Ju Peng/Xinhua

**Enter North Korea.** Meanwhile, Pyongyang seems intent on capitalizing on increased China-US tensions by proceeding with, and boasting about, its nuclear and missile development programs while resting assured that Beijing (and Moscow) will prevent the UN Security Council from responding to its continued violations of numerous existing (supposedly internationally-binding) Resolutions. North Korea conducted some 70 ballistic missile tests in the past year, including tests of intercontinental and submarine-launched missiles. It began the New Year with another launch, as Kim Jong Un [vowed](#) an “exponential increase” in his country's nuclear arsenal while promising to “overwhelmingly beef up” its military muscle by developing a new ICBM capable of delivering a “quick nuclear counterstrike” and the launch of the country's first reconnaissance satellite.

Even more disconcerting was Kim Jong Un's reported [announcement](#), at the seventh session of the 14th Supreme People's Assembly on Sept.

9, of what amounts to a “first use” doctrine for its expanding tactical nuclear arsenal. At the meeting, North Korea [passed](#) new legislation that further enshrined its nuclear power status and announced five conditions in which the country would launch a preemptive nuclear strike (spoiler alert: just about any time it wanted to). The North also reiterated that it would never give up its nuclear weapons despite sanctions pressures, [stating unequivocally](#), “There will never be any declaration of ‘giving up our nukes’ or ‘denuclearization,’ nor any kind of negotiations or bargaining to meet the other side's conditions.” In short, the North's nuclear weapons status was “irreversible.”

It seems to us more than coincidental that Kim's change in policy to espouse the first use of nuclear weapons when it is “unavoidable” due to “tactical” reasons” appears to echo Vladimir Putin's not-so-veiled threats to use nuclear weapons on the Ukrainian battlefield under unspecified conditions well short of the survival of the Russian state. Meanwhile Beijing, which has been vociferously complaining about how Australia's planned acquisition of nuclear-powered (but conventionally armed) submarines are somehow a gross violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, remains silent as its erstwhile allies blatantly threaten to use nuclear weapons against its neighbors.

Plainly, there will be much to write about in the next issue of *Comparative Connections* as these trends continue and tensions promise to intensify.

# REGIONAL CHRONOLOGY

## SEPTEMBER—DECEMBER 2022

**Sept. 1, 2022:** Chinese e-commerce platform Pinduoduo [quietly launches](#) US site, aiming to crack a market dominated by Amazon and where China's Shein is also making inroads.

**Sept. 1, 2022:** South Korea and the US [wrap up](#) Ulchi Freedom Shield exercise.

**Sept. 2, 2022:** US State Department [approves](#) potential \$1.1 billion sale of military equipment to Taiwan, including 60 anti-ship missiles and 100 air-to-air missiles.

**Sept. 2, 2022:** Office of the US Trade Representative [confirms](#) that domestic industry representatives requested continuation of Section 301 tariffs on China and the tariffs accordingly did not expire on their four-year anniversary.

**Sept. 2, 2022:** Former Sri Lankan president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who [fled and left the country in crisis](#) back in July, returns from Bangkok in an apparent end to his self-imposed exile.

**Sept. 3, 2022:** Biden administration [says](#) it will keep tariffs on hundreds of billions of dollars in Chinese imports while it continues statutory review of duties imposed by former President Donald Trump.

**Sept. 4, 2022:** Philippine ambassador to the US Jose Manuel Romualdez [states](#) that the Philippines may allow the US military access in the event of a Taiwan conflict, “for our own security.”

**Sept. 6, 2022:** Russia [purchases](#) millions of rockets and artillery shells from North Korea to re-energize its offensive in Ukraine, as Western sanctions cut Moscow's supply of weapons.

**Sept. 7, 2022:** State Department [approves](#) the potential sale of F-16 aircraft sustainment and related equipment to Pakistan in a deal valued at up to \$450 million.

**Sept. 7, 2022:** Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), North Korea's rubber-stamp Parliament, [opens](#) its 7th session: the second this year. On Sept. 8

SPA passes a new [law](#), replacing a shorter 2013 statute, reaffirming the DPRK's status as a nuclear weapons state.

**Sept. 8, 2022:** Japan and India [agree](#) to bolster bilateral cooperation on maritime security, including expanding joint drills and setting up a high-level defense dialogue.

**Sept. 8-9, 2022:** Third ministerial (and first in-person meeting) of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) is held in Los Angeles. The 14 members declare which pillars that they will [negotiate](#) in and agree upon the main issue areas for each pillar.

**Sept. 9, 2022:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un publicly [expresses](#) determination not to give up the country's nuclear weapons, accusing the United States of seeking the collapse of his regime, not just denuclearization.

**Sept. 9, 2022:** North Korea [celebrates](#) 74<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. At the 14<sup>th</sup> Supreme People's Assembly, North Korea announces five conditions for a nuclear preemptive strike, states that it will not share nuclear weapons and technology with other countries, and reaffirms that the country will resist all sanctions and pressures to give up its nuclear weapons.

**Sept. 11, 2022:** Member nations of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework [agree](#) to start official negotiations to boost regional economic cooperation.

**Sept. 12, 2022:** Head of a UN team of investigators on Myanmar [states](#) that Facebook has handed over millions of items that could support allegations of war crimes and genocide.

**Sept. 12, 2022:** Indonesia and Norway [sign](#) bilateral climate and forest partnership to support Jakarta's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, even as it reduced deforestation to a 20-year low.

**Sept. 13, 2022:** UN General Assembly convenes in New York.

**Sept. 13, 2022:** Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, who seized power in a 2014 coup, [is](#)

[suspended](#) while the court deliberates on the case filed by the opposition.

**Sept. 14, 2022:** US Senate committee [approves](#) legislation that would significantly enhance US military support for Taiwan, including provisions for billions of dollars in additional security assistance, amid increased pressure from China toward the democratically governed island.

**Sept. 15, 2022:** President Biden signs [executive order](#) directing the Committee on Foreign Investments in the United States (CIFUS) to concentrate on specific types of transactions that would give a foreign power access to key technologies that are critical to US economic growth.

**Sept. 15, 2022:** Four Russian naval ships and three Chinese vessels launch their 2<sup>nd</sup> joint Pacific patrol.

**Sept. 16, 2022:** SCO [holds](#) its 22<sup>nd</sup> summit in Uzbekistan, the first in-person gathering since the pandemic. Uzbekistan [signs](#) deals worth \$16 billion with China and \$4.6 billion with Russia during respective leaders' visits.

**Sept. 16, 2022:** Seoul Central District Court [dismisses](#) its case for Japan to disclose its state assets in South Korea to pay compensation to comfort women because of its refusal to comply.

**Sept. 17, 2022:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi [tells](#) Russian President Vladimir Putin that now is not the time for war, publicly assailing the Kremlin chief over the conflict in Ukraine.

**Sept. 18, 2022:** *Arleigh Burke*-class guided-missile destroyer *USS Higgins* (DDG 76), in cooperation with Royal Canadian Navy Halifax-class frigate *HMCS Vancouver* (FFH 331), [conducts](#) exercises in the South China Sea.

**Sept. 18, 2022:** US President Joseph, when asked "Would US forces defend the island (of Taiwan)?" responds "Yes, if in fact there was an unprecedented attack."

**Sept. 18, 2022:** Two Chinese military drones, the CH-4 and the WZ-7, are reported to have [flown near Taiwan](#) for the first time.

**Sept. 19, 2022:** US President Joe Biden [says](#) US forces would defend Taiwan in the event of a

Chinese invasion, his most explicit statement on the issue, drawing an angry response from China that said it sent the wrong signal to those seeking an independent Taiwan.

**Sept. 20, 2022:** Japan [abandons](#) controversial training program for Myanmar cadets, with a Defense Ministry spokesperson saying that the decision was a response to the military junta's shocking execution of four political prisoners in July.

**Sept. 21, 2022:** Taiwanese government [says](#) that it will never allow China to "meddle" in its future after a Chinese government spokesperson said Beijing was willing to make the utmost effort to strive for a peaceful "reunification" with the island.

**Sept. 22, 2022:** BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Relations meeting [takes place](#).

**Sept. 23, 2022:** Top diplomats from the US, Japan, and South Korea [meet](#) in New York to coordinate joint response to North Korea's nuclear and missile threats.

**Sept. 23, 2022:** Nuclear-powered USS *Ronald Reagan* aircraft carrier [arrives](#) in South Korea to conduct its first combined drills with the South Korean Navy.

**Sept. 23, 2022:** Senior diplomats from the United States and China [meet](#) with tensions high after an explicit pledge by Biden to defend Taiwan.

**Sept. 23, 2022:** Quad Foreign Ministers Meeting on the sidelines of the 77<sup>th</sup> UNGA. Quad countries [promised](#) "to deepen Quad multilateral cooperation in support of advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific, which is inclusive and resilient" and agreed their "vision is for a region where the rules-based international order is upheld, and where the principles of freedom, rule of law, democratic values, peaceful settlement of disputes, sovereignty, and territorial integrity are respected."

**Sept. 25, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) a short-range ballistic missile toward the East Sea, the North's fifth missile firing since the Yoon administration took office.

**Sept. 26, 2022:** Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio [kicks](#) off three days of meetings with nearly 40 global leaders in Tokyo to attend state funeral for Abe Shinzo, using the opportunity to renew the ex-leader's push for a "free and open Indo-Pacific."

**Sept. 26, 2022:** US *Ronald Reagan* Carrier Strike Group [conducts](#) series of exercises with ROK Navy.

**Sept. 27, 2022:** State funeral for Abe Shinzo takes place.

**Sept. 28, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) two short-range ballistic missiles off its east coast, a day before US Vice President Kamala Harris is set to arrive in Seoul.

**Sept. 29, 2022:** Court in military-ruled Myanmar [jails](#) deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her former economic adviser, Australian Sean Turnell, for three years for violating a secrets law.

**Sept. 29, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea, its third provocation in less than a week. The US quickly [condemns](#) the launches but urges North Korea to engage in dialogue.

**Sept. 30, 2022:** In Taipei, the US government convenes a preliminary meeting of "Chips 4," a new working group of the US, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan intended to strengthen semiconductor supply chain resiliency and cooperation.

**Sept. 30, 2022:** China [withdraws](#) draft resolution against the AUKUS alliance at the general conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna after apprehending that the measure would not receive majority support.

**Oct. 1, 2022:** *Arleigh Burke*-class guided-missile destroyer *USS Higgins* (DDG 76) and fleet replenishment-oiler *USNS Rappahannock* (T-AO 204), in cooperation with the Royal Canadian Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces, [conducts](#) exercises in the South China Sea.

**Oct. 1, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea, a day after South Korea, the US, and Japan staged an anti-submarine warfare exercise. This marks

North Korea's fourth missile launch within a week.

**Oct. 2, 2022:** South Korean activists [clash](#) with police while launching balloons carrying anti-Pyongyang propaganda materials across the North Korean border, ignoring their government's plea to stop since the North has threatened to respond with "deadly" retaliation.

**Oct. 4, 2022:** Taiwan [vows](#) to safeguard interests amid US-led Chip4 talks, as a senior Taiwanese official says full decoupling from China, Taiwan's largest trading partner, is "not realistic."

**Oct. 4, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) intermediate-range ballistic missile over Japan, its first launch of an IRBM in eight months and the fifth missile test in just over a week. In response, a South Korean F-15K fighter [fires](#) two JADAM precision bombs at a firing range on a Yellow Sea island and air drills with the US in a combined strike package.

**Oct. 5, 2022:** US aircraft carrier *USS Ronald Reagan* [redeploys](#) near the Korean Peninsula in a show of might aimed at deterring further North Korean activity after Pyongyang fired a ballistic missile over Japan.

**Oct. 6, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea, its sixth missile test in under two weeks.

**Oct. 6, 2022:** US Treasury Department [announces](#) sanctions on three individuals for procurement of Russian-made arms from Belarus for the military regime in Myanmar.

**Oct. 6, 2022:** South Korea, Japan, and the US [conduct](#) a joint naval exercise in the East Sea focusing on countering nuclear and missile threats from North Korea.

**Oct. 7, 2022:** US Commerce Department imposes sweeping export controls against China's semiconductor industry, affecting both US chip design firms and Taiwan suppliers using American technology like TSMC.

**Oct. 7, 2022:** South Korean Defense Minister Lee Jong-sup [meets](#) the commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command in Seoul to discuss North Korea's provocations and the Seoul-Washington alliance.

**Oct. 9, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea, its seventh missile provocation in two weeks.

**Oct. 10, 2022:** Malaysian PM Ismail Sabri Yaakob [announces](#) dissolution of Parliament, paving the way for the country's 15th general election despite protests by most political parties over holding polls during the monsoon flood season.

**Oct. 10, 2022:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un [supervises](#) an exercise of tactical nuclear operation units to check and assess the “war deterrent and nuclear counterattack capability” in response to recent joint US-South Korea military exercises. Kim states that North Korea has “no content for dialogue with the enemies and felt no necessity to do so.”

**Oct. 11, 2022:** Japan [lifts](#) border restrictions after almost 2 years and 7 months.

**Oct. 12, 2022:** Indonesian President Jokowi [orders](#) a stress test for the economy amid global uncertainty. His comments follow IMF cuts to its global growth forecast for 2023 amid pressures from the war in Ukraine, high energy and food prices, inflation, and sharply higher interest rates.

**Oct. 12, 2022:** White House releases its *National Security Strategy*.

**Oct. 13, 2022:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un [supervises](#) the testfiring of long-range strategic cruise missiles involving units operating “tactical nukes” to send a “clear warning to the enemies” and a demonstration of the country’s deterrence capabilities.

**Oct. 13, 2022:** Philippines [seeks](#) to revive its upstream oil industry with redevelopment of an oil field that last produced in the early 1990s, as it hopes to wean itself off fuel imports, according to energy officials.

**Oct. 14, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) a short-range ballistic missile into the sea and hundreds of artillery rounds near the border with the South.

**Oct. 14, 2022:** South Korea [announces](#) new unilateral sanctions against North Korea, the first in five years, designating 15 individuals and 16 organizations for their involvement with the nuclear and missile programs.

**Oct. 14, 2022:** Around 10 North Korean military aircraft [fly](#) close to the border with South Korea, prompting the South Korean Air Force to scramble F-35A stealth fighters and other assets.

**Oct. 16, 2022:** Xi Jinping [opens](#) the Chinese Communist Party's twice-a-decade National Congress by pledging to never renounce using force to take control of Taiwan while championing a clampdown on Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement. Congress continues until Oct. 22.

**Oct. 17, 2022:** Maritime forces from the US, Canada, and Japan [conduct](#) exercises in the South China Sea in support of Royal Australian Navy forces.

**Oct. 17, 2022:** Singapore and Vietnam [ink](#) new agreements to deepen collaboration in trading renewable energy and working on carbon credit projects.

**Oct. 17, 2022:** Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio [sends](#) a ritual offering to Yasukuni Shrine, but does not visit the shrine.

**Oct. 18, 2022:** Japan [announces](#) additional sanctions on North Korea and freezes the assets of five organizations for their involvement with the nuclear and missile programs.

**Oct. 19, 2022:** Indian National Congress [elects](#) its first president outside the Gandhi family in over 20 years, party veteran Mallikarjun Kharge.

**Oct. 19, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) around 100 artillery rounds into the Yellow Sea and another 150 rounds into the East Sea, into the eastern and western buffer zones north of the Northern Limit Line.

**Oct. 21, 2022:** Sri Lanka's Parliament [passes](#) a constitutional amendment aimed at trimming presidential powers, beefing up anti-corruption safeguards, and helping to find a way out of the country's worst financial crisis since independence.

**Oct. 21, 2022:** Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., announces that Manila will drop a \$215 million helicopter deal with Russia and instead purchase military helicopters from the United States.

**Oct. 22, 2022:** Chinese President Xi [seals](#) his bid for a third term while his deputy and several other top officials got the boot as the country's top leadership meeting wrapped up.

**Oct. 24, 2022:** Department of Justice [charges](#) individuals for alleged participation on malign schemes in the US on behalf of the Chinese government, including conspiracy to forcibly repatriate Chinese nationals, obstruction of judge, and acting as illegal agents of a foreign country.

**Oct. 25, 2022:** Goto Shigeyuki, a former health minister, [is chosen](#) to replace Yamagiwa Daishiro as Japan's economic revitalization minister, who resigned due to controversy surrounding his ties with the Unification Church.

**Oct. 26, 2022:** Cambodia, current chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, [says](#) the bloc is gravely concerned about escalating violence in Myanmar.

**Oct. 26–30, 2022:** India's navy [hosts](#) the 29th edition of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) at Visakhapatnam.

**Oct. 27, 2022:** Secretary of Defense Austin [releases](#) 2022 National Defense Strategy, which codifies China as the US military's pacing challenge and seeks to prevent the PRC's dominance of key regions. He also releases the Nuclear Posture Review and the Missile Defense Review.

**Oct. 28, 2022:** Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council head [states](#) that China should stop sabre-rattling against Taiwan and maintain peace and stability, as Beijing ramped up political and military pressure on the island.

**Oct. 28, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) two short-range ballistic missiles toward the East Sea.

**Oct. 30–Nov. 5, 2022:** South Korea and the United States [conduct](#) the five-day *Vigilant Storm* exercise involving stealth jets and more than 240 aircraft.

**Oct. 31, 2022:** Chinese President Xi [tells](#) visiting leader of Vietnam's ruling Communist Party that both countries and parties should “never let anyone interfere” with their progress, state broadcaster CCTV reports.

**Oct. 31, 2022:** South Korea and Poland [sign](#) agreement to jointly push for a plan to build a nuclear power plant in the European nation, raising hopes for Seoul's first nuclear power plant export in more than a decade.

**Nov. 1, 2022:** Chinese Premier Li Keqiang [chairs](#) the 21<sup>st</sup> SCO Prime Ministerial meeting.

**Nov. 2, 2022:** North Korea [launches](#) a barrage of missiles and artillery shells, with one short-range ballistic missile flying across its de facto maritime border with South Korea.

**Nov. 2, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) multiple ballistic missiles, including one that triggered an alert for residents in parts of central and northern Japan to seek shelter.

**Nov. 2, 2022:** Rights group Amnesty International [claims](#) that aviation fuel supply chains connect foreign companies to the Myanmar junta's airstrikes on civilians.

**Nov. 3, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) intercontinental ballistic missile and two short-range missiles toward the East Sea.

**Nov. 4, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) three short-range ballistic missiles toward the East Sea.

**Nov. 4, 2022:** Foreign ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain, and the US [include Taiwan](#) in their G7 meeting statement, saying they “reaffirm the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and call for the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues.”

**Nov. 5, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) four short-range ballistic missiles toward the Yellow Sea on the last day of the *Vigilant Storm* drill of South Korea and the United States.

**Nov. 6, 2022:** Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Forces [hold](#) international naval fleet review, with South Korea's navy participating amid efforts by the two countries to thaw their icy relations.

**Nov. 7, 2022:** North Korean state media [reports](#) that it has never had arms dealings with Russia and has no plans to do so, after the US said North Korea appears to be supplying Russia with artillery shells for its war in Ukraine.

**Nov. 8, 2022:** After meeting his Russian counterpart for the fifth time this year, India's foreign minister [says](#) that India will continue buying Russian oil because it benefits the country, adding that the two countries were expanding trade ties.

**Nov. 8, 2022:** President Biden [extends](#) for an additional year the national emergency declared in 2020 related to the threat from securities investments that finance certain Chinese companies.

**Nov. 8, 2022:** North Korea [launches](#) one short-range ballistic missile toward the East Sea. The missile is assumed to be one of North Korea's new SRBMs.

**Nov. 8, 2022:** US midterm election take place, with Republicans capturing a majority in the House of Representatives but Democrats retaining control of the Senate.

**Nov. 11, 2022:** Southeast Asian heads of government [issue](#) a "warning" to Myanmar to make measurable progress on a peace plan or risk being barred from ASEAN meetings, as social and political chaos escalates in the country.

**Nov. 12, 2022:** US [upgrades](#) ties with ASEAN, elevating their relationship to a "comprehensive strategic partnership," vowing to deliver more aid as President Biden steps up efforts to counter China's growing influence in the regional bloc.

**Nov. 12-13, 2022:** President Biden participates in the East Asia Summit in Cambodia and the adjacent US-ASEAN Summit. Presidents Xi Jinping of China and Vladimir Putin of Russia do not [attend](#) the EAS

**Nov. 13, 2022:** Japanese PM Kishida [criticizes](#) Beijing for stepping up actions that infringe on Japan's sovereignty in the East China Sea at an annual summit of ASEAN and its partners.

**Nov. 14, 2022:** President Biden and President Xi [hold](#) a three-hour meeting on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Bali, Indonesia, their first in-person meeting as presidents. President Biden [warns](#) President Xi that the US would enhance its security position in Asia if Beijing cannot rein in North Korea's weapons programs. During a three-hour meeting the two leaders also had strong words about Taiwan.

**Nov. 14, 2022:** President Yoon Suk Yeol of South Korea [meets](#) Indonesian President Joko Widodo, discussing potential areas of cooperation between the two economies in high-tech and clean energy sectors.

**Nov. 15, 2022:** FM Wang Yi [meets](#) Russian FM Lavrov on the sidelines of the G20 meeting in Indonesia. Wang [tells](#) Lavrov that China endorses Russia's no nuclear pledge on Ukraine and acknowledges that Russia reiterated its position that a nuclear war was "impossible and inadmissible."

**Nov. 15-16, 2022:** G20 Summit takes place Nov. 15-16.

**Nov. 16, 2022:** President Xi [criticizes](#) Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in person over alleged leaks of their closed-door meeting at the G20 summit, a rare public display of annoyance by the Chinese leader.

**Nov. 16, 2022:** ROK President Yoon and Japanese Prime Minister Kishida [agree](#) to seek a quick settlement of the issue of compensation for Korean victims of wartime forced labor, a key point of contention between the two neighbors, during their summit in Cambodia.

**Nov. 16-17, 2022:** Thailand [hosts](#) the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting and brokers a consensus statement that calls Russia out for the war in Ukraine.

**Nov. 17, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) one short-range ballistic missile into the East Sea.

**Nov. 17, 2022:** South Korea and the United States [co-host](#) the Symposium on Countering DPRK Cyber-Exploitation of Cryptocurrency Exchanges. Officials from more than a dozen countries discuss ways to counter cryptocurrency theft and other illegal cyber activities of North Korea.

**Nov. 17, 2022:** Myanmar junta [releases](#) 5,800 prisoners, 400 of whom are estimated to be political detainees including Australian economist Sean Turnell and US citizen Kyaw Htay Oo.

**Nov. 17, 2022:** Japan and China [hold](#) their first summit in about three years as Japanese companies struggle to find a balance between maintaining a presence in the world's No. 2

economy and responding to US calls to diversify. The meeting between PM Kishida and President Xi comes ahead of the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders meeting.

**Nov. 18, 2022:** Myanmar's ruling military [says](#) that it did not engage in bargaining with other countries before releasing four foreign prisoners among nearly 6,000 in an amnesty this week.

**Nov. 20, 2022:** Japanese PM Kishida [sacks](#) internal affairs minister Terada Minoru over a funds-related scandal amid falling support ratings for his Cabinet. Terada is the third Cabinet minister to go in under one month.

**Nov. 21, 2022:** Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim [seeks](#) backing from the graft-tainted incumbent coalition and his longtime rival to form a government, in a bid to gain an edge over opponent Muhyiddin Yassin, after a tumultuous election delivered a hung Parliament.

**Nov. 22, 2022:** US VP Kamala Harris [wraps](#) up a three-day visit to the Philippines by flying to an island that faces the disputed South China Sea, making her the highest-ranking US official to visit Palawan, which has been at the front-line of the maritime feud between China and several Southeast Asian countries.

**Nov. 23, 2022:** Malaysia's King Abdullah [calls](#) special meeting of hereditary sultans to discuss who should be prime minister as an unprecedented post-election crisis enters its fourth day.

**Nov. 24, 2022:** 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) [convenes](#) in Siem Reap, Cambodia, where regional defense chiefs adopt a joint declaration to promote peace and security in the region.

**Nov. 25, 2022:** South Korean President Yoon [warns](#) that the government might step in to break up a nationwide strike by truckers, describing it as an illegal and unacceptable move to take the national supply chain "hostage" during an economic crisis.

**Nov. 26, 2022:** Malaysia's new prime minister, Anwar Ibrahim, [says](#) he will continue to maintain stable ties with China as he seeks to emphasize economic engagement, while avoiding confrontation on contentious issues.

**Nov. 26, 2022:** Taiwan's opposition Nationalist (Kuomintang or KMT) Party scores a major victory over President Tsai Ing-wen's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in island-wide local elections.

**Nov. 27, 2022:** Congressional and other sources [claim](#) that weapons deliveries to Taiwan amount to \$18.7 billion, up from more than \$14 billion a year earlier.

**Nov. 28-Dec. 11, 2022:** India-Australia bilateral training exercise "AUSTRA HIND 22" between contingents of the Indian Army and the Australian Army [takes place](#) at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges (Rajasthan).

**Nov. 28-Dec. 12, 2022:** India-Malaysia joint military annual training exercise "Harimau Shakti -2022" is [conducted](#) at Pulai, Kluang, Malaysia.

**Nov. 30, 2022:** Delhi [responds](#) to criticism from Beijing regarding India-US military exercises, with India's External affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi saying China "needs to reflect and think about its own breach of these agreements of 1993 and 1996."

**Nov. 30, 2022:** India [assumes](#) the G20 presidency.

**Nov. 30, 2022:** Jiang Zemin, China's paramount leader during the 1997 Hong Kong handover and 2001 entry into the World Trade Organization, [dies](#) at age 96.

**Dec. 1, 2022:** Korean government [asks](#) the US to include car-sharing EVs such as Uber and Lyft in the EV tax incentives under the Inflation Reduction Act.

**Dec. 1, 2022:** President Biden and French counterpart Emmanuel Macron [reiterate](#) the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and expressed concerns over the challenges posed by China.

**Dec. 1, 2022:** India [takes over](#) as president of the G20 for next year's summit that is scheduled to be held in New Delhi. India's FM Jaishankar says the presidency is a "crucial responsibility that is being assumed by India at a very challenging time in world politics."

**Dec. 2, 2022:** Canada [will increase](#) its role in the Indo-Pacific and challenge China when it

disrupts the international order, Foreign Minister Melanie Joly says, stating that "international norms have kept us safe since the Second World War and therefore need to be respected."

**Dec. 2, 2022:** South Korea [imposes](#) sanctions targeting eight persons and seven agencies seen as complicit in the DPRK's WMD programs.

**Dec. 5, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) 130 artillery shells into inter-Korean maritime buffer zones.

**Dec. 6, 2022:** Indonesian Parliament votes to [revise](#) the country's Criminal Code to criminalize adultery, sex outside marriage, and insults to the president or other state authorities.

**Dec. 6, 2022:** China [moves](#) one step closer to reopening by relaxing COVID-19 control measures and allowing some who test positive to isolate at home.

**Dec. 6, 2022:** US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) announces two arms sales approvals for Taiwan, with a total value of \$428 billion, which includes spare parts for the *F-16 Fighting Falcon*, Indigenous Defense Fighter, and C-130 military transport aircraft.

**Dec. 6, 2022:** "Tool-in" ceremony [celebrating](#) installation of the first equipment at TSMC's factory in Arizona marks the start of a new era of semiconductor manufacturing in the US and for Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, with Biden flying in for the ceremony.

**Dec. 7, 2022:** China and Saudi Arabia [sign](#) 34 energy and investment deals as President Xi vows to strengthen the comprehensive strategic partnership with Riyadh during his first visit to the Middle East since 2016.

**Dec. 7, 2022:** US [downgrades](#) diplomatic relations with Myanmar, with the incumbent US ambassador returning home later this month and Washington deciding not to send a successor.

**Dec. 8, 2022:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) [storms](#) to power in Gujarat with a historic mandate, winning a record-breaking 156 of 182 seats, a seventh consecutive victory for the party in the native state of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

**Dec. 12, 2022:** South Korea's foreign minister [tells](#) his Chinese counterpart that the country

expects China to actively support South Korea's efforts for dialogue with North Korea.

**Dec. 12, 2022:** Indonesia [summons](#) a United Nations official after the organization expressed concerns over threats to civil liberties posed by the newly-ratified revisions to its criminal code.

**Dec. 13, 2022:** India's defense minister [says](#) that Indian troops prevented Chinese soldiers from entering Indian territory during a border scuffle that led to injuries on both sides in the first such clash since 2020 between the Asian giants.

**Dec. 13, 2022:** Top nuclear envoys of South Korea, the US, and Japan [hold](#) trilateral meeting in Jakarta amid speculation that North Korea may carry out another nuclear test.

**Dec. 14, 2022:** US Forces Korea [launch](#) a new space forces unit as the allies ramp up efforts to better counter North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile threats.

**Dec. 14, 2022:** Leaders from ASEAN and the EU [resolve](#) to cooperate more on everything from clean energy to security, as they gathered in Brussels for the first-ever summit between the blocs.

**Dec. 15, 2022:** Australia [signs](#) new security deal with Vanuatu. It comes amid intensified competition with China in the Pacific, after Beijing's own security deal with the Solomon Islands.

**Dec. 16, 2022:** Japan issues the [National Security Strategy](#) (NSS), the [National Defense Strategy](#) (NDS), and the [Defense Buildup program](#). South Korea [issues](#) strong protest against Japan's territorial claim over disputed islands made in a national security strategy released on Friday while cautiously responding to Tokyo's plans for an unprecedented military buildup.

**Dec. 16, 2022:** UN General Assembly [passes](#) a resolution calling for international efforts to improve human rights conditions in North Korea, making this the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive year the General Assembly has adopted such a resolution.

**Dec. 16, 2022:** Malaysian political parties supporting PM Anwar Ibrahim [sign](#) a cooperation pact promising to ensure stability, ahead of a confidence vote on the premier next week.

**Dec. 18, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) two ballistic missiles toward the sea off the Korean Peninsula's east coast, days after the country tested a high-thrust solid-fuel engine that experts said would allow quicker and more mobile launch of ballistic missiles.

**Dec. 19, 2022:** North Korea [conducts](#) an “important final-stage” test that evaluates the capabilities of putting a military reconnaissance satellite into orbit.

**Dec. 19, 2022:** Local government in China's Xinjiang region [scrubs](#) detailed data on monthly exports from its customs website after the US slapped a ban on shipments over forced labor concerns.

**Dec. 20, 2022:** South Korea, the United States, and 13 other member nations [participate](#) in US-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework ministerial meeting.

**Dec. 20, 2022:** Operator of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange [opens](#) its first US office in New York to attract foreign companies interested in listing in the Asian financial hub, even as US-China tensions weigh on the bourse's profits.

**Dec. 21, 2022:** North Korea reportedly [conducts](#) first static ground test of a large solid-propellant rocket motor, the first indication that the regime is developing a propulsion system usable in intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) or ICBM-range submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

**Dec. 21, 2022:** Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong [arrives](#) in China to mark the 50th anniversary of bilateral ties, potentially offering an opportunity to mend relations that have soured over trade and security tensions.

**Dec. 22, 2022:** World Trade Organization [rejects](#) US efforts to attach “Made in China” label to products manufactured in Hong Kong.

**Dec. 23, 2022:** Japan [announces](#) a defense spending hike of more than 26% for the following year—its biggest increase since World War II—in response to concerns over a potential invasion of Taiwan. The amount includes \$1.6 billion to purchase US-made Tomahawk cruise missiles.

**Dec. 23, 2022:** North Korea [fires](#) two short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea, following the combined South Korea-United States air drills the day before.

**Dec. 26, 2022:** Five North Korea drones [cross](#) the inter-Korean border, with one flying over northern Seoul. South Korea fails to shoot down the five drones but sends its own drones to the border, with some crossing the border to carry out surveillance and other operations.

**Dec. 27, 2022:** [President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan announces](#) that conscription for all young men born after 2005 will be extended from 4 to 12 months beginning in 2024.

**Dec. 28, 2022:** US [authorizes](#) the sale to Taiwan of *Volcano* (vehicle-launched) antitank mine-laying systems, valued at \$180 million.

**Dec. 29, 2022:** President Biden [signs](#) into law the \$1.65 trillion Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act covering funding for the US government for fiscal year 2023 that includes [provisions](#) to authorize \$2 billion in loans to Taiwan to buy weapons from the US.

*Chronology prepared by Pacific Forum research intern Farah Ibrahim*

