

“How has China emerged since the Cold War era and how has it grown into a significant world power”

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Cold war era (1947-1991)



Between 1947-1991

The Cold War was a period of geopolitical tension between the Soviet Union and the United States

Proxy wars

The principle of the conflict was for global influence by the two superpowers



October 1986

Iceland

Ronald Reagan, Mikhail Gorbachev
ended the cold war



China Territorial claims

China's geography and borders have meant that an attack from foreign forces is extremely unlikely.

In the North, it has the Gobi desert and Siberia

South it has the Himalayas and jungles.

West has more empty nothing

East is the Sea

Territorial claims

This has allowed the country, both pre and post cold war era to be fairly self-assured that it will not be attacked.

This has been one of the reasons that China has been keen to keep control of Tibet, fearing that, if let go, it could be left vulnerable.

Its geography has allowed the nation to focus on economic development and military power to become a global power.

It also explains why China is notoriously aggressive over its territory and what it thinks it should own.

Hong Kong and Macau

The handing back of Hong Kong to China in 1997 and Macau in 1999.

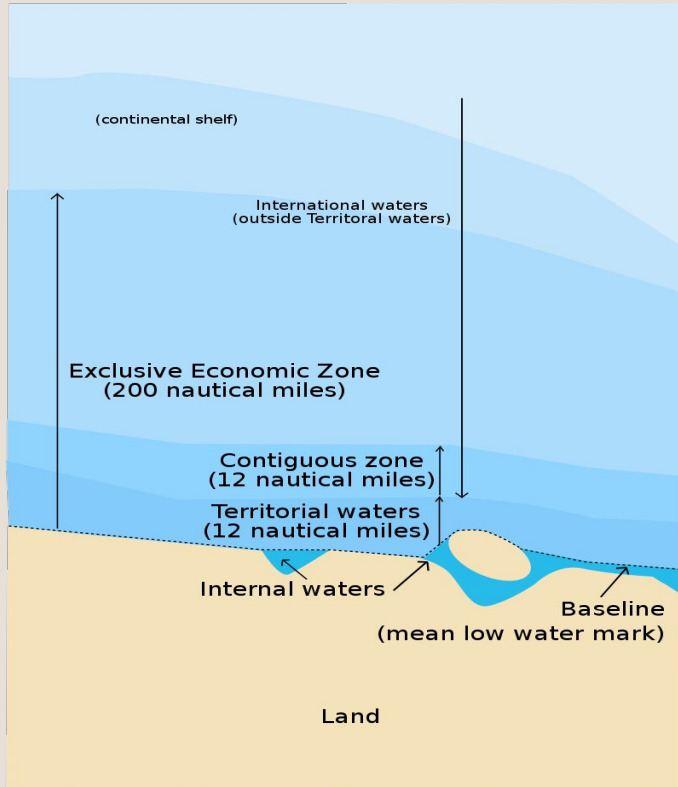
Hong Kong accounted for $\frac{1}{3}$ of China's total foreign currency and this allowed China to gain a foothold on the world stage more easily.

Hong Kong was as a major import hub and made use of its skilled labour force.

Similarly, Macau's less enforced laws allowed the Chinese government to effectively smuggle goods into the country.

It, too, also became a centre of trade for mainland China. These allowed the country to modernise massively after the Cold war era and become an emerging global power.

South China Sea and the Spratly Island



South China Sea and the Spratly Islands

China, particularly since the Cold war, has also started to stake its claim on the South China Sea.

It is a major trade route and would give China a lot of power if they were to control it.

This would obviously benefit the country massively and so, to back up their claim to the area, they have started to build artificial islands in the sea which act as air bases and potentially as weapon bases as well

South China Sea and the Spratly Islands

The Chinese military is aggressive towards other countries' militaries flying in their claimed airspace or entering their claimed waters.

This has led to a few flare-ups in the past- particularly with the USA and the Philippines.



Sphere of Influence

Since China's open door policy began, it has had an ever increasing sphere of influence across the globe, this growth accelerated by the collapse of the USSR. This influence of China seen particularly in that of South-East Asia and Africa.

Since 1979, China has been growing its control and influence across that of South-East Asia, in terms of military expansion but also more subtly through the dependence a few of these countries have on that of China.

Following the financial crisis in that of 2008, this heavily impacted South-East Asian countries, including that of China. As countries recovered from this, it happened at very different rates, with China recovering much earlier than that of the majority of South-East Asian countries. This disparity in the rates of recovery presented China was an opportunity. Due the the fact that many of these South-East Asian countries rely heavily on that of exports, China's early recovery to the crisis saw many of these countries shift their export destinations to China, seen particularly in that of Malaysia and Thailand. This dependence of these countries on China for recovery and growth has seen China's influence grow over the area, with relationships improved in the area with many tariffs being abolished between China and South-East Asian countries, aiding the the spread of China's influence and control over the region.

Sphere of influence

China has further spread its influence in Southeast Asia through a variety of different forms of diplomacy in the region. China has been using elite-elite diplomacy throughout the region, targeting at building relationships between China and high-level political and military officials. In the Philippines, Malaysia this is particularly notable. In the Philippines, China has been enthusiastically embraced by President Rodrigo Duterte's, giving China significant influence of the country.

In Africa, China has become central player in Africa's urbanization push, with most of the countries infrastructure and development being driven by Chinese companies. China's early partnerships with Africa in developing their infrastructure, has left China in a very strong position today, with China being Africa's largest trading partner and over 10,000 Chinese firms operating throughout Africa, this also giving Beijing an advanced position over the stockpile of natural resources which Africa is. Much of China's development push for Africa has been that of transport with multiple railway network projects being established, such as the \$12billion coastal railway in Nigeria. Such a push for development of transport networks in Africa by China is an attempt to accelerate the growth of the African economy, with China's already established monopoly over Africa, such growth would only present China with further opportunities to strengthen their economy and global influence, if Africa becomes more of an economic powerhouse.

Military changes in the 1980's onwards

Following the Gulf War, the Chinese leadership realised that to fight modern conflicts, the key was advanced electronic weapons along with a large naval and aerial power.

From these key shifts in warfare the following actions took place:

- A ground force reduction to focus on air and naval forces
- A move away from the idea that greater numbers = greater fighting power and the recognition of machine capabilities
- A decreased reliance on the civilian population

Spending and acquisitions

1996 official military budget was \$8.7 billion (however independent estimates put it anywhere from \$8-\$100 billion)

Regardless, since 1988 its had a official 200% increase, aided by its economic dominance.

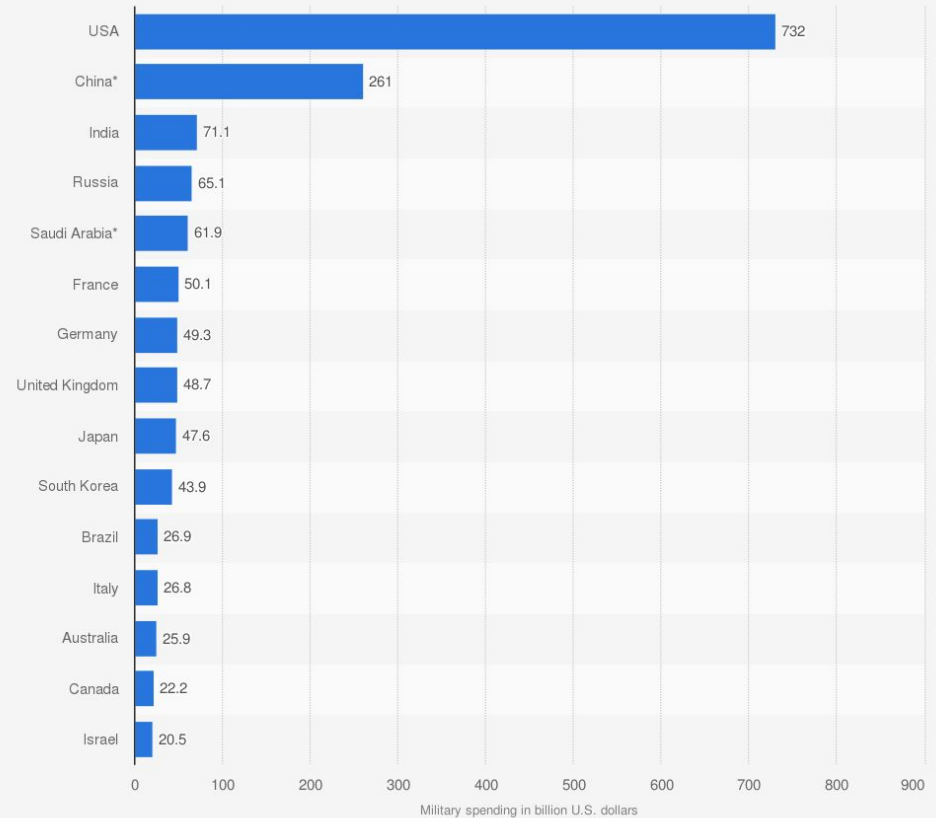
Spending and acquisition

By numbers, it has the largest military (in terms of aircraft). However it is in the process of modernizing its fleet to suit the previously stated changes in the region.

This includes the introduction of new fighter aircraft and naval ships. Although the Indian Navy is not able to counter the most modern warships of the US Navy.

Along with their equipment, they have been introducing elite forces similar to the US Marine Corps (e.g. the Indian Air Force etc)

The 15 countries with the highest military spending worldwide in 2019 (in billion U.S. dollars)



Source:
SIPRI
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Additional Information:
Worldwide; 2019

Nuclear weapons

On 16 October 1964, China exploded its first nuclear device. However they were always clear that they had a no first-use policy. China's nuclear tests in the late 1980s and 1990s were geared toward further modernizing its nuclear forces from its previously outdated weapons.

China formally acceded to the NPT (Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) in March 1992, as a nuclear weapon state. In its statement of accession, the Chinese government called on all nuclear weapon states to issue unconditional no-first-use pledges.

China has continued to modernize its nuclear weapons in order to maintain them as a strong deterrence.

FDIs

In 1976, Deng encouraged international trade and allowed foreign capital investment. The result has been China's phenomenal entry into world markets and a booming economy. The specific aim of these policies was to obtain large foreign exchange earnings, which would allow China to both modernize and become more independent. China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at an average rate of 9.3 percent between 1979-1993. The world experienced a growth rate of 2.6 percent for the same period. China's GDP has also quadrupled over a period of only fifteen years. It has also improved its status as a trading nation, in ten years, rising from 37th to 11th position. China has also accumulated a large foreign currency reserve and is second in the world to Japan. China has also taken advantage of foreign investment and is also rated second in the world, after the US.

FDIs

China began seeing the Soviet Union as somewhat less of a threat in the 1980s. Causing greater unease for the Chinese was the new Reagan administration, and above all its Taiwan policy, amid the building of a strong "new Cold War" structure to counter the Soviet Union. China began around 1982, to unilaterally revise its policy of rapprochement with the US, aspiring to what it termed "an independent and autonomous foreign policy," and sought to put a certain distance between itself and the US.

The Tiananmen Square Incident of June 4, 1989, seriously impaired China in its pursuit of a peaceful international environment, as China found itself isolated internationally for about a year thereafter. Another factor setting China apart was its insistence that rule by the Communist Party would be maintained, by force if necessary, following the dramatic end to the Cold War in the latter half of 1989.

