

# Exploitation of Strategic Conditions

# 2035

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The future strategic environment will be characterized by a persistent state of competition where global competitors seek to exploit the conditions of operational environments to gain advantage. Adversaries understand that the application of any or all elements of national power in competition just below the threshold of armed conflict is an effective strategy against the US.

TRADOC G2 identified a set of 24 conditions that actors could exploit during competition to gain an advantage over the US. Understanding these exploitable conditions, how the various actors may act on them, and the implications of exploitation will be critical for the US Army to plan, organize, train, and equip the future force for success.



## Persistent State of Competition



Diverse transnational actors (states, cities, and nonstate actors including VEOs, criminal groups, MNCs, empowered individuals, etc.) compete through all instruments of power (Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic, Financial, Intelligence, and Legal) and across all domains (Sea, Land, Air, Space, and Cyberspace).

Explanations or interpretations of events/ideas originating from a particular perspective and presented to a target audience in order to gain influence.



## Competing Narratives

## Erosion of the Liberal World Order



The shift of state and non-state actors from 20th century liberalism to a realist pursuit of self-interests ahead of collective interests, while ignoring or subverting existing international structures and norms.

Societies characterized by increasing divisiveness as a result of conflicting or competing identities.



## Factionalized and Polarized Societies

## Multi-Polar World



A global environment where power is distributed among three or more significant poles (states), each with the ability to generate wealth and/or military capability that can/may threaten other interests and attract other actors into their spheres of influence.

Consequences associated with increasingly urbanized populations, for example, pollution, poverty, resource scarcity, etc.



## Effects of Urbanization

## Fragile and Failing States



A fragile state is characterized by weak state capacity or weak state legitimacy leaving citizens vulnerable to a range of shocks. A failing state refers to a political body disintegrating toward the point where basic conditions and responsibilities of a sovereign government no longer function properly.

Concentration of regional/global power in Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA), for example, CMAs may generate a majority of the GDP of a state.



## Dominance of Cities

## New International Cooperation Models



The development of new regionalized and specific cooperative agreements, relationships, and institutions that replace or challenge existing agreements, relationships, and institutions.

Factors within a population that reduce the ability of an environment to support that population.



## Demographic Pressures

## Use of Proxies



Widespread use of surrogates by both state and nonstate actors to further their interests indirectly and with reduced direct risk.

Contest between actors to secure needed or desired resources.



## Resource Competition

## Diverse Technology Actors



Non-traditional technology leaders are emerging to compete with traditional technology leaders as new technologies emerge and are implemented globally.

Unequal distribution of income, wealth, and economic opportunity.



## Economic Inequalities

## Information Communication Technology Ubiquity



Near universal access to information and communication around the globe.

Economies focused on a limited scope of goods and services to gain an advantage within a market.



## Specialized Economies

## Technology Access Gaps



Technological advancements and access will vary globally and be primarily available to those with control over its distribution and use.

Economic systems that are linked to other economic systems.



## Interconnected Economies

## Technology-Reliant Societies



Societies are embracing and becoming increasingly reliant upon the digitalization of every aspect of their lives.

Inadequacy of current systems to meet the needs/challenges of the population.



## Infrastructure Capacity Challenges

## Crypto-Technology Use



The utilization of encryption technology that enables increased security for the transmission and storage of data.

Change in global or regional climate patterns resultant from the cumulative effects of global mean surface temperature increase.



## Climate Change

## Contested Spaces



The physical, cognitive, or heterotopic spheres of competition.

The emergence of new and/or evolved pathogens that impact the way people live.



## Disease Evolution

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# COMPETITION IN 2035: ANTICIPATING CHINESE EXPLOITATION OF OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

## China's Approach to Exploitation

China's whole-of-nation approach, which involves synchronization of actions across government, military, and industry, will facilitate exploitation of OEs and enable it to gain global influence through economic exploitation.

China will leverage the international system to advance its own interests while attempting to constrain others, including the US.

### PREFERRED CONDITIONS

### PREFERRED METHODS

#### Infrastructure Capacity Challenges

China targets undeveloped and fragile environments where their capital investments, technology, and human capital can produce financial gains and generate political influence.

#### Interconnected Economies

China looks for partners and opportunities to become a significant stakeholder in a wide variety of economies in order to capitalize on its investments as well as generate political influence.

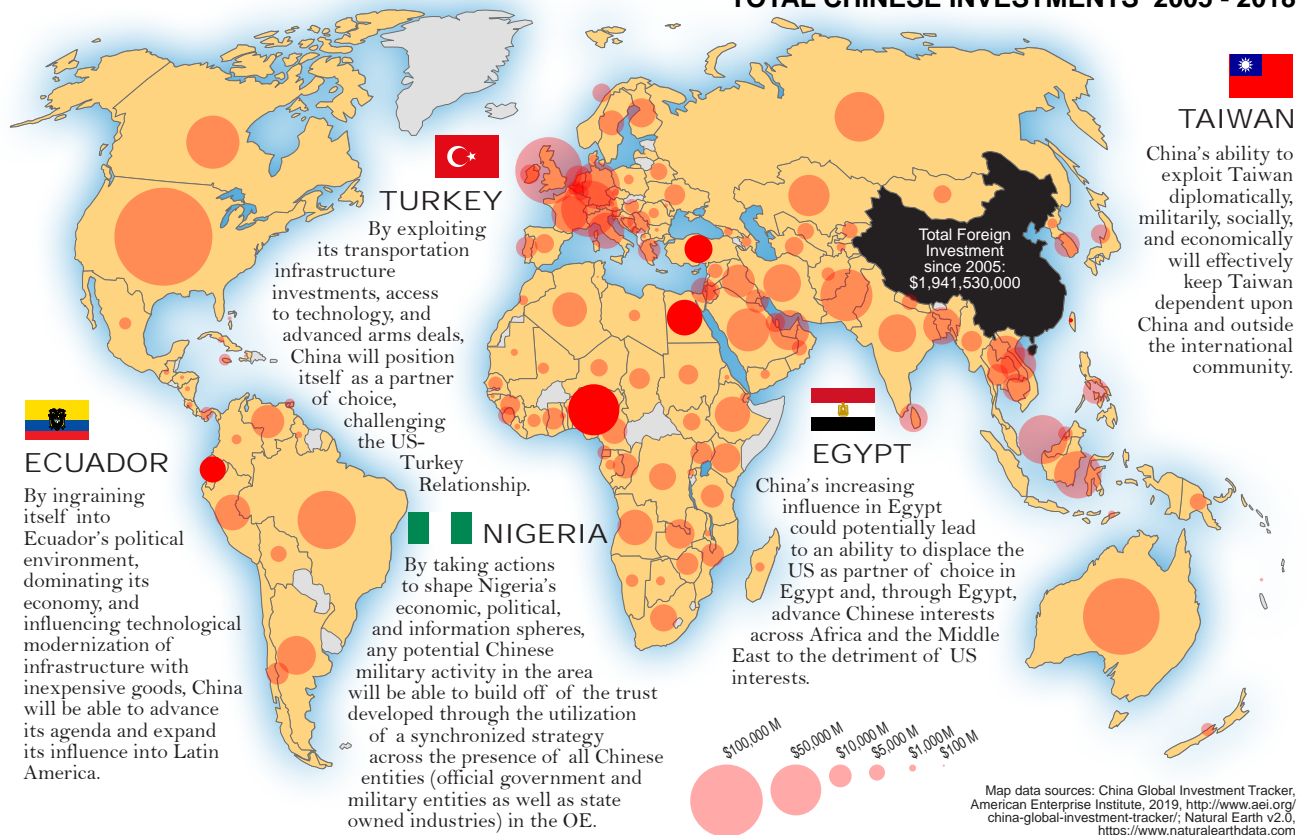
#### Specialized Economies

China looks for opportunities to partner with specialized markets and leverage their vulnerabilities for gain.

#### Technology Access Gaps

China targets areas where their capital investments in technology provide partners with key resources and competitive advantages by filling technology gaps.

## TOTAL CHINESE INVESTMENTS 2005 - 2018



## IMPLICATIONS FOR THE US ARMY

Traditional US Army threat paradigms may not be sufficient for competition.

The US Army could be drawn into unanticipated escalation as a result of China's activities during the competition phase.

US Army military partnerships will likely be undermined by China in 2035.

US Army operations and engagements will be increasingly impacted by the pervasiveness of Chinese goods, technology, infrastructure, and systems.