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## **German university suspended Chinese researcher's funding**

Amidst growing mistrust between Western countries and China, the Friedrich Alexander University a German university has decided to [suspend](#) its cooperation scheme with Chinese students. The China Scholarship Council ([CSC](#)) funds Chinese postdoctoral students studying in foreign countries. It is administered by China's Ministry of Education and requires all students to regularly report to the Chinese embassy as part of its contract. The German university has backed its move by claiming a threat to data security, especially to its industrial research. It said "The political landscape has changed significantly in recent times...this claim is taking place at a time when a German security agency has informed its Government that the country's greatest threat is from China in terms of "economic and scientific [espionage](#)".

China has responded by saying that the university is using the 'CSC' contract as an excuse for the restrictions. As the contract requires Chinese students to report on the student's activities it could risk leaking German research to China. In recent years several universities across Europe and the U.S. have taken similar actions against China due to increasing threats of espionage. This phenomenon is believed to reduce openness to China.

## **China boycotts Japan after releasing radioactive water in the Pacific Ocean**

Last week China announced to boycott of all Japanese seafood as a response to Japan's controversial initiative to discharge water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant. However, experts from the [UN's International Atomic Energy Agency](#) say that the plan to discharge the treated water is well within international standards thus minimising the threat to the environment if any.

However, China has argued that this is an "extremely selfish and irresponsible act" and said Japan was "passing an open wound onto the future generations of humanity". Another challenge is to the livelihood of coastal communities and fishermen as there would be a rise in fear among consumers of contamination by radioactive waste. To curtail the public fear

Japan has committed to encouraging domestic activities and enhancing the seafood industry which China is the biggest buyer in the region. Japanese officials have also invited a [joint expert group](#) of Japan and China to study the possible challenges by the discharge of water into the Pacific Ocean.

### **China claims U.S. using the Philippines to increase tension in the region**

Recently, the Philippines have published its new six-year long '[National Security Policy 2023-2028](#)' (NSP) creating concerns for China. The NSP is meant to counter any external threats to the Philippines and strengthen its relations with the US. China claims that such a document only allows the US to enter Asia and interfere in China's internal affairs. The NSP includes issues such as cross-straits and Taiwan as a matter of concern thus indicating an inclination towards the US military interest.

The current Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., said "Any military conflict in the Taiwan Strait would inevitably affect the Philippines given the geographic proximity of Taiwan to the Philippine archipelago and the presence of over 150,000 Filipinos in Taiwan." The Philippines already has agreements with the US and Australia and according to reports is planning for a similar agreement with one of China's neighbouring countries.

Chinese analysts have argued that such policies create [friction](#) in the South China region and allow the US to use the Philippines as a bridge for its own military interest. However, some have said that the Philippines only intends to [secure itself](#) and is under no obligation to support the US military actions against China if any in future. For the US it is important to hold onto its influence in the South China Sea to maintain its credibility which stems from protecting Taiwan at all costs.

### **China expects to use the Jeddah peace talks for its benefit in the global south**

The recent peace talks meeting at [Jeddah](#) hosted by Saudi Arabia aims to end the war in Ukraine which is in its second year. Kyiv presented its 10-point peace formula requiring full withdrawal of Russia from its occupied territory. Which of course would be difficult if not impossible as that would be a mark of shame and failure of Putin's credibility. The peace talk was held in participation of 30-40 countries several of them from the global south which has been facing food supply shortage due to the war. In this situation China aims to utilize the diplomatic opportunity to garner support from and influence over the global south. Which in turns would also make it a rival to India as it aims to do the same.

China's strategy is to maintain positive relations with Russia at the same time have greater influence over international relations of European nations which for some time it has been losing its control. In March, China was able to break a deal between [Iran and Saudi Arabia](#) the latter of which is an ally of the US at the same time has strong relations with China and Russia. Thus, providing a stronghold for China in the Middle East for further influence and becoming a challenge to the US.

Beijing has attempted to [prevent](#) the event from turning into an anti-Russia summit led by the US and is acting as a possible [mediator](#) between Russia and Ukraine. This would allow it to

be seen as a successful and powerful state in global relations and a possible catalyst between [Global South](#) and others. Ukraine has not been able to garner much support from the global south as most of them have been pro-Russia for decades now and thus will not risk weakening their relations with Russia for the sake of Ukraine. Thus, it is a big opportunity for China to mediate between the involved parties.