

## Foreword

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In the forty years since the United States established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, the dynamic between the two countries has moved through periods of collaboration, competition, and occasionally confrontation. Today, the U.S.-China relationship encompasses all pressing issues of national security—whether technological innovation, military capability, or global trade. Accordingly, our thirty-fifth annual summer workshop meeting in Aspen, Colorado, rightly focused on this crucial challenge.

Facing a new era of U.S.-China relations, the Aspen Strategy Group (ASG) brought together a collection of seventy legislators, policy makers, scholars, journalists, and private sector leaders to discuss the right balance and approach for U.S. policy toward China. As one of the foremost organizations in the United States focused on national security and foreign policy, the Aspen Strategy Group takes seriously the need for nonpartisan discussions to address the challenges facing the United States today. Few are as pressing as the current state of our relationship with China.

The rise of China as a great power on the world stage is a reality long foretold. As Jim Steinberg explains in his Ernest May Memorial Lecture in this volume, the admission of China into the World Trade Organization was a move meant to forestall the expansion of authoritarian ideology in China, one that was thus far unsuccessful. Since the Clinton administration, the economic growth of China and its slow but steady ascension as a global power have shifted geopolitics. Over the last few decades, China has challenged U.S. interests in many ways. Between China's Belt and Road Initiative and Huawei's expansion of 5G network capabilities around the world, the opportunity for the United States to maintain its preeminent role in the fields of global infrastructure development, technology, and the economy is being challenged.

The U.S. and China are competing for military power and positioning in the Indo-Pacific, on trade, for technological power, and in an ongoing debate about democracy versus authoritarianism. At the same time, the countries need to work with each other on climate change, stabilizing the global economy, and other issues. Can we learn simultaneously to compete and cooperate?

Our goal over the summer was to begin a process of addressing these complicated questions and to help define a new policy with respect to the U.S. relationship with China. We began our conversations in Aspen with the central query: How do we get a clear-sighted view of China that doesn't underestimate or overestimate it and allows us to develop a strategy without potentially disastrous historical aftereffects? This compilation captures our resulting conversations and policy recommendations. We hope your assumptions will be challenged and your understandings broadened through your reading of these papers, as ours were.