

The New Strategic Framework of the United States for the Western Hemisphere

Abstract:

Three months before the North American presidential elections, the president of the National Security Council (NSC), Robert O'Brien, presented the new strategic framework for the Western Hemisphere in Florida. Interestingly, the region is the only one that has concerned NSC public diplomacy so much to publish an area development document of the 2017 National Security Strategy.

In principle, this special treatment of Latin America is surprising. Especially when the great novelty of 2017 was the express recognition of China and Russia as powers that challenge the power, influence and interest of the United States. However, when it is discovered what is new about the document with respect to the positions of previous administrations, everything ends up falling into place. In Latin America external everything is complicated because there are "adversary countries that exert an evil influence".

Keywords:

Western Hemisphere, Chinese Communist Party, predatory practices, debt trap, "Growth in the Americas", "Back to the Americas", Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

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El nuevo marco estratégico de los Estados Unidos para el hemisferio occidental

Resumen:

Tres meses antes de las elecciones presidenciales norteamericanas, el presidente del Consejo de Seguridad Nacional (NSC), Robert O'Brien, presentó en Florida el nuevo marco estratégico del hemisferio occidental. Curiosamente, la región es la única del mundo que ha preocupado tanto a la diplomacia pública del NSC como para publicar un documento de desarrollo de área que complete la Estrategia Nacional de Seguridad de 2017.

En principio, es sorprendente este tratamiento especial a Iberoamérica. Sobre todo, cuando la gran novedad de 2017 fue el reconocimiento expreso de China y Rusia como potencias que desafían el poder, la influencia y el interés de los Estados Unidos. Sin embargo, cuando se descubre lo que tiene de novedoso el documento respecto a las posiciones de anteriores administraciones todo termina encajando. En Iberoamérica actúan actores externos “que ejercen una influencia maligna”.

Palabras clave:

Hemisferio Occidental, Partido Comunista Chino, prácticas predatorias, trampa de la deuda, “América Crece”, “Regreso a las Américas”, Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID).

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The necessary turn towards the Western Hemisphere

The president of the National Security Council (NSC), Robert O'Brien, on the day before his trip to Colombia and Panama in August of this year, decided to stop for a few hours in Florida. The purpose of his trip was to present a summary of the new strategic framework for the Western Hemisphere¹ He decided to choose a special audience for his exhibition. He presented the general vision of the strategic document to an audience of Venezuelan and Colombian migrants in West Palm Beach. Obviously it is a second level document, yet it is surprising to see the place, the time, a Sunday before the start of a trip, and the chosen participants. I don't think it was wrong for anyone to think that there could have been a good reason for doing things this way.

A first and simple approximation could be the United States' own electoral calendar. Some analysts have tried to understand this.² The message from the NSC advisor will not rally the vote of the average citizen in Florida or the rest of the United States but it may be interesting for the Hispanic lobby, despite the little publicity it has been given.

The purpose of this type of document is to develop the National Security Strategy (NSS), in this case that of 2017. We could start by emphasising that the NSC has only made public the general vision of the strategic framework of the Western Hemisphere, leaving aside the rest of the regions of the world. In principle, this special treatment for Ibero-America is surprising. Especially when the great novelty of 2017 was the express recognition of China and Russia as powers that challenge the power, influence and interest of the United States, so seriously as to erode American security and prosperity.³ Precisely, perhaps the key to everything has to do with what is apparently perceived as far away, China.

¹ "Overview of Western Hemisphere Strategic Framework".

Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Western-Hemisphere-Strategic-Framework.pdf>

² Margaret Myers, director of the Asia and Latin America programme of the Inter-American Dialogue, says: "The timing of the framework's announcement, in South Florida in August, suggests that it—like much of Trump's policy toward the region—is intended to shore up support for his re-election in November." Available at: <https://www.thedialogue.org/analysis/does-the-u-s-have-a-good-strategic-plan-for-latin-america/>

³ National Security Strategy 2017.

Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>

Throughout the 21st century, China has expanded its space of interest in Ibero-America, increasing its presence in the financial and business sectors. It is not a different strategy from the one it has applied in other regions of the world from which it obtains raw materials. In 20 years, China has increased its exports from Latin America, concentrating purchases mainly in Brazil, Chile, Peru and Argentina.⁴ The concentration is also related to the products it acquires. In 2000, five primary products represented almost half of Ibero-America's exports to China. In 2013, these five products (iron ore and its concentrates, copper ore and its concentrates, oil, refined copper, soya) accounted for three quarters of sales to the Asian giant.⁵

China aims not only to keep open markets that will enable it to obtain primary resources, but also to ensure a complete supply chain for its critical industries through direct investment or loans.⁶ Its aim is to forge a relationship strong enough to weather the effects of possible changes in government.

China uses bilateral relations, investment activity, corporate business, infrastructure contracts and management, payment mechanisms, financial management of investments as a network of mechanisms designed to constitute an integrated vertical structure with the countries it is interested in Ibero-America. The full success of its strategy would enable China to control all activities related to the production cycle in a wide range of sectors.

While China increased its influence in Ibero-America, especially in Venezuela, Ecuador, Chile, Peru, Brazil and Argentina, the United States has neglected its presence in the region enough to worry its National Security Council, forcing its president to

⁴ 27% of Chilean exports are to China, (USD 19.2 billion). Peru is proportionally close with 26% of its foreign sales (USD 11.7 billion) and Brazil is very close, with important exports of iron ore and soya, with China absorbing 22% of its total foreign sales (USD 48 billion). Available at:

<https://www.dineroenimagen.com/grupo-financiero-multiva/nueva-amenaza-para-el-crecimiento-economico-global/119005>

⁵ Available at: <https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/40743-relaciones-economicas-america-latina-caribe-china-oportunidades-desafios>

⁶ 90% of China's estimated investment between 2010 and 2014 was in the extractive sectors, while the rest of the world's countries devoted a quarter of their FDI to the same sector. Available at:

<https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/38196>

acknowledge that for too long the United States has neglected a region of extreme importance⁷.

The strategic framework for the Western Hemisphere

The SNC's strategic framework for the Western Hemisphere begins by highlighting the serious threat to regional security represented by Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua. The danger to stability and peace posed by repressive dictatorial regimes is compounded by their collaboration with guerrilla groups, terrorist gangs and transnational criminal organisations. The panorama, according to the document, is complicated by the fact that there are "adversarial countries that exert an evil influence". Of course, the document expressly quotes China but without saying so it could be extended to Russia and Iran.⁸

Some analysts have considered that the document does not bring any significant new developments.⁹ It is true that there are threats that are still present and that have been a source of constant concern to previous administrations to a greater or lesser extent. In the 1990s it was the war on drugs, during President Bush's terms it was the war on terrorism, and President Obama focused on fighting transnational crime. The central dangers identified by each of the presidents have always been related to the constant concern to consolidate democracy in Ibero-America, to boost economic prosperity, to favour institutional development and to reduce corruption.

⁷ Robert O'Brien during his brief visit to Florida pointed out that: "President Trump views the Western Hemisphere as an incredibly important area for the United States that has been neglected for too long," Available at:

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/americas/cuba/article244930712.html>

⁸ "Overview of Western Hemisphere Strategic Framework". "Repressive dictatorial regimes threaten regional security, a situation exacerbated by the encroachment of both transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) and adversarial countries exerting malign influence. Throughout the region, these external actors seek to align themselves with sympathetic regimes, exploit the region's abundant resources for their own gain, and target their investments and donations to expand their own political and economic influence, all while contributing to widespread corruption and the systemic deterioration of the rule of law."

Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Western-Hemisphere-Strategic-Framework.pdf>

⁹ "The document (or at least its declassified summary) says few truly new things. This shouldn't surprise us from an administration that has said little about policy toward Latin America beyond Cuba, Venezuela, and immigration." Available at: <https://adamisacson.com/whats-new-about-trumps-new-strategic-framework/>

Of course, all these elements are still present but with a new focus. Now they are not only concerned with their own dimension as a risk but also because they facilitate the entry of external actors into the Western Hemisphere. Tensions and their causes are not new in Ibero-America but, unlike in the past, social upheavals, political instability, macroeconomic imbalances, company bankruptcy and unemployment may encourage the entry of Chinese capital and companies; for some states even the Chinese model could be an option.

The central idea of the strategic framework of the Western Hemisphere is precisely to revitalise the commitment of the United States with Ibero-America to close the door to the predatory landing of economic mechanisms of control by China, especially in the countries that accumulate more imbalances and that with the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 would be even worse off to face them. Of course, this purpose is combined with an aggregate of threats that multiply the risks of intrusion.¹⁰

The document, based on the current problems known to all, including the effects of the pandemic, includes a desired end state that is in line with the common interests of the region but especially highlights aspects that are precisely important to energize US policy in the area. The strategic framework rightly chooses the areas of common interest, highlighting the importance of shared democratic values, consolidation of the rule of law, strengthening of an effective system of governance, transparency, sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, mobilisation of domestic resources, and energy, infrastructure and security integration. Of course, these are important dimensions where all countries can benefit, but they are also solid bases for collaboration that allow the United States to open the door to the projection of its instruments of soft, hard and intelligent power.

The document sets out five lines of improvement. Some are easier to export than others. Three of them are on everyone's lips and therefore do not generate resistance in their approach, although concrete proposals for improvement in each of these directions will probably be controversial. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), a UN body, would have no problem in endorsing these aims. We

¹⁰ "Our continued strong and positive engagement reduces the space for thugs, gangs, drug cartels, transnational criminal organizations and adversarial countries to engage in predatory activity in the region."

can really say that they are its own because it repeatedly insists on these points in its documents.

1. Reaffirming the regional commitment to democracy and the rule of law
2. Advancing economic growth and the expansion of free markets.
3. Developing and strengthening interregional organisations.

The other two could be more complicated from the beginning. The Enhanced US National Security Line defines preventing illegal migration through effective border control and surveillance and addressing the drivers of migration as its first priority action. The US approach identifies the migration phenomenon as a national security problem. In itself, this approach is already controversial. On the other hand, it creates an obligation for the countries of origin, which forces them to implement direct intervention to contain migratory flows to the United States.

The second controversial line of improvement is to counteract China's economic aggression and malignant political influence. This purpose has a cost for Latin American governments and their economies that they can only accept if they truly assimilate the danger to their sovereignty and development posed by some Chinese economic and trade practices of a predatory nature.

US diplomacy and its think tanks will have to make a remarkable effort to clearly identify which Chinese behaviours are truly a threat to the development, macroeconomic balance, growth, and innovation of each of the countries. In addition, the United States and its companies will have to offer sufficiently attractive business and investment alternatives to modulate a progressive shift in the economic interests of some sectors in certain countries, especially telecommunications, network development, energy and infrastructure.

The US strategy will be effective if it does not seek to impose an anti-China orientation on Latin American governments for exclusively geopolitical reasons. Regional leaders have to come to the conviction that China has a strategy involving penetration and control in Ibero-America that imposes a perverse degree of dependence on the national interests of the region's own countries in the long term. Dependence on a small number of raw material exports to China and control by Chinese companies and loans of entire sectors of production will eventually limit the ability of countries to address their

industrial development and the innovation needed to increase the added value of their production. In fact, China is a competitor with Ibero-America, from which it extracts raw materials and then sells manufactured products, hindering the possibility of transforming the economic structure of the continent.

The United States cannot promote an inter-American turnaround without offering options that allow Ibero-America to take advantage of the technological, logistical, business and financial strengths of the United States, through public-private partnerships and through organisations such as the United States International Development Finance Corporation (USDFC).¹¹

The strength of the story in the strategic framework for the Western Hemisphere

The United States is aware that the Chinese Communist Party intends to export a dream but knows that in Ibero-America the only way to challenge the “American dream” is through the convergence of nationalism, anti-capitalism, totalitarian state interventionism, political violence and populism. Chavism was a mixture of all of the above, led by the strong leadership of Hugo Chávez and financed by high oil prices. The resounding failure of the Bolivarian regime in Venezuela and of Cuban communism is the strongest immaterial support that the United States has achieved since the beginning of the 21st century.

No Ibero-American country wants to repeat the Venezuelan or Cuban experience. The miserable living conditions of Venezuelans, Cubans and Nicaraguans are humanitarian dramas continually present in the perception of the continent. The millions of Venezuelans who have left their country to settle in other neighbouring countries are reminded of this every day. The harsh tragedy allows us to project a consistent favourable story to the US policy of turning to Ibero-America, as long as it is intelligently practical.

¹¹ DFC was formed in 2019 through the passage of the BUILD Act to strengthen and modernize US development lending. DFC integrates the former Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and the Development Credit Authority, which depended on USAID. DFC is the US development bank that partners with the private sector to finance projects in the energy, health, infrastructure, and technology sectors. DFC also provides financing to SMEs and women entrepreneurs in emerging markets.

It is therefore appropriate for the United States to seek an alliance of Ibero-American countries to isolate these regimes and support their transition to democracy without direct and overt intervention by the United States. Venezuela's special links with China, Russia, Cuba and Iran, which have so far barely sustained Nicolas Maduro, are proof to the rest of the continent of how dangerous excessive reliance on the attractive promises and offers of foreign actors can be.

The Chinese model and its progressive penetration are involved in an interesting proposal for countries with low levels of development. While IMF or World Bank loans impose conditions on States' economic policies to bring their accounts into order, China lends money without imposing anything other than the payment of obligations, allowing Governments to receive funds without addressing unpopular adjustment measures or tackling pending reforms.

The problem with no-obligation loans is the inefficient use of resources, which in the long term compromises the sovereignty of the recipient states by ending up with a debt that is impossible to repay. The case of Venezuela is again the clearest, it has a debt with China of more than 67 billion dollars and with Russia of around 6 billion. Venezuela cannot pay the service of its debt and can only compensate its creditors with oil or by giving up the exploitation of its wells.

In Ecuador, with President Rafael Correa, something similar began to happen. The country received 6 billion dollars in Chinese loans to finance infrastructure in the country. Loan repayment is being made with the delivery of 90% of Ecuador's oil production to China by 2024.¹² These are the so-called "loans-for-oil".¹³

The credits linked to the payment with raw materials that China has granted in Ibero-America are usually linked to the obligation to contract Chinese companies to exploit the deposits and Chinese contractors to support or build new infrastructures. The application of this practice places an additional burden on the creditor country, as it is forced to engage with Chinese companies and is unable to hire local companies. The mechanism imposed involves somehow paying twice, once for the credit and once for

¹² <https://www.iniseq.es/blog/seguridad/compromiso-chino-en-america-latina-y-competencia-estrategica-con-los-eeuu/>

¹³ Of the 74,419.3 million dollars in loans granted between 2008 and 2011, 50 billion dollars went to interest-bearing oil loans.

Available at: <http://congreso.investiga.fca.unam.mx/docs/xvii/docs/l17.pdf>

the hiring of Chinese companies. The system prevents the investment from having the expected multiplier effect. On the other hand, many of the projects of Chinese companies have failed or have been built but with serious defects.¹⁴

Brazil, Ecuador, Argentina and Bolivia, without reaching the levels of Venezuela, have huge debts with China.¹⁵ The Chinese loans are not private, from banks or private investors, they are loans granted by the Chinese Communist Party, using financial entities that directly control the Party-State. Therefore, they are completely different from loans that any other creditor can make. Behind these loans there are not only financial interests but also, and above all, strategic and geo-economic interests, which allow China to gain influence.

On many occasions, Chinese capital flows are directed to joint ventures, allowing the Asian giant to control the exploitation of energy and mining resources. The success of China's strategy of economic penetration and dominance of the added value of production is evident and forms part of the basis on which its global influence is rising, in this case in Ibero-America.

Mechanisms for development of the strategic framework for Western Hemisphere

In December 2019, the US government launched the project "Growth in the Americas", in Spanish "América Crece", which proposes to expand bilateral cooperation in Ibero-America, reducing regulatory, legal, acquisition and investment market barriers. "Growth in the Americas" seeks to promote the projection of US companies in the Latin

¹⁴ For example, the Ecuadorian dam of Coca Codo Sinclair, built by the Chinese company Sinohydro. The project cost 2.245 billion dollars. Ecuadorian engineers have warned of the danger of cracks appearing in the dam, and cracks in the hydroelectric plant's distributors are a threat important enough to generate the danger of a partial or total collapse of the dam. The contractor Sinohydro is currently under investigation by the Attorney General's Office for corruption.

Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-47144338>

A Chinese company's project to build a hydroelectric dam in Santa Cruz, Argentina, began without an environmental impact assessment and led to the Supreme Court eventually stopping construction. Construction of the Sinopec oil refinery in Moín, Costa Rica, was halted due to problems with the country's legislation. The Rositas hydroelectric project in Bolivia also had to be halted because it did not take into account the need to establish agreements with the indigenous population. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-50574118>

¹⁵ After Venezuela, the Ibero-American countries most indebted to China are Brazil, with a debt of 28.9 billion dollars; Ecuador, with 18.4 billion dollars; Argentina, with 16.9 billion dollars; and Bolivia, with 2.5 billion dollars. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-50574118>

American markets, offering a government platform capable of facilitating access to contracts, investments, mergers and collaborations with States and companies in the region with more guarantees and security. The US government intends to turn its private sector into an engine of growth, development and employment in Latin America, concentrating its activity in sectors of special interest to the United States.

In July 2020, NSC President Robert O'Brien launched another initiative known as "Back to the Americas", which offers financial incentives to US companies that return to the US or settle in Ibero-America from Asia, especially if they come from China. Mauricio Claver-Carone, Executive Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs at the SNC, was responsible for reporting on the content of the "Return to the Americas" programme. The first evaluation of the effects of these stimulus measures to relocate, mainly from China, American companies estimates that investments in Ibero-America would be between 30 and 50 billion dollars, especially in the infrastructure, energy and transport sectors.¹⁶ The terms "nearshoring" and "reshoring" reflect the meaning of this new relocation. The idea is to redesign the process outsourcing of companies' activities through subcontracting with others in nearby countries (nearshoring) or in the country itself (reshoring). President Trump's 2016 campaign slogan "Make America Great Again" may be expanding the horizon beyond US borders to somehow reach the entire continent. Capturing a share of the 5 million jobs, which American companies generate in Asia, would have a positive social and economic effect in an adverse international context.¹⁷

Precisely, it is interesting to know that Mauricio Claver-Carone was then the American candidate for the position of president of the Inter-American Development Bank, the most important development bank in Ibero-America. The position has always been held by an Ibero-American, and Claver-Carone's candidacy generated a lot of controversy because it is one of the most influential positions in the region and because of the profile of the candidate, a conservative American of Cuban-Spanish origin, known for his firm opposition to Chavism and Castroism.

¹⁶ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-latam-usa-idb-exclusive-idUSKCN24U39E>

¹⁷ <https://www.infobae.com/america/eeuu/2020/07/30/cuanto-trabajo-podria-crearse-en-america-latina-si-avanza-el-plan-de-estados-unidos-para-mudar-fabricas-desde-asia/>

Claver-Carone's ability is not in question from a technical point of view, he was one of the Executive Directors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), representing the United States. It is in question from the political point of view. Even by some American Democrats.¹⁸ The truth is that on 12 September, despite criticism, Mauricio Claver-Carone was elected president of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for a five-year term.¹⁹ The SNA advisor for Latin America was supported by 30 countries, accounting for 66.8% of the support.²⁰

The "Return to the Americas" programme is part of a larger relocation movement. We are witnessing a phenomenon of "de-globalisation" that could have a revolutionary impact on economies, jobs and consumers. The fourth industrial revolution and the new opportunities offered by robotisation and artificial intelligence favour a commitment to change and relocation to less hostile and closer regions. The price of labour with the new developments is no longer a relevant factor when choosing where to install a factory.

The Bank of America Global Research announces that the phenomenon of business relocation is unstoppable and will cause tectonic changes in the world economy. The surveys conducted by the bank surprised analysts due to the strength of the expected movements in the global supply and value chains. 83% of US companies surveyed have relocation plans. Many want to start coming home and China is where most want to leave.²¹ The change will be slow, it has just started, but in 5 or 10 years most companies will have completed it.²²

¹⁸ Joe Biden's campaign declared itself against Claver-Carone. Patrick Leahy, a Democratic senator from Vermont and vice chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, which approves funding for the bank as part of discretionary spending, said the choice of Claver-Carone "does not bode well for US support for the bank in the years ahead". Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/es/2020/08/26/espanol/america-latina/mauricio-claver-carone-bid-trump.html>

¹⁹ The Inter-American Development Bank, founded in 1959, is one of the main sources of long-term financing for the economic, social and institutional development of Ibero-America. The IDB also conducts cutting-edge research projects and provides policy advice, technical assistance and training to public and private clients throughout the region.

²⁰ Sixteen countries, Argentina, Peru, Chile, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica and the European Union countries participating in the IDB as non-borrowers abstained from voting: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and France. <https://www.lavanguardia.com/internacional/20200910/483391010270/mauricio-claver-carone-bid-presidente.html>

²¹ The most important movements are being made by the consumer durables, retail, technology hardware and semiconductor sectors. The first two are changing mainly because of the confidence in obtaining

The two chambers of the United States Congress have held sessions to inform and discuss China's presence in Ibero-America. The US-China²³ Economic and Security Review Commission, in its 2019 annual report, assessed China's growing influence as a comprehensive threat to the United States.²⁴ It would be more correct to say the growing integral threat of the Chinese Communist Party.²⁵

The commission's 2019 report, after analysing the internal and external challenges faced by China, its global ambitions, its position in Taiwan and Hong Kong and China's competition with the United States, lists 38 recommendations to Congress, of which ten are important. The document would deserve another analysis paper, but it could be

better profitability with automation and robotisation. The last two sectors are moving because of the tension between the United States and China, which causes uncertainty because of possible sanctions or political restrictions. Available at:

https://www.bofaml.com/content/dam/boamlimages/documents/articles/ID20_0147/Tectonic_Shifts_in_Global_Supply_Chains.pdf

²² "We're calling this a "tectonic" shift because we expect things to move slowly but persistently over the next five or 10 years. It won't happen overnight, but some of the forces seem unstoppable. National security and protectionist concerns aren't going away. Automation's not going away. Labor costs in China aren't going to suddenly drop."

Available at: <https://www.bofaml.com/en-us/content/tectonic-shifts-in-global-supply-chains.html>

²³ The US-China Economic and Security Review Commission is a government commission to assist Congress. It was created by mandate of the congress in October 2000. Its mission is to monitor and investigate how China may be affecting the national security and trade of the United States.

²⁴ "In 2019, Beijing stepped up its efforts to promote itself as a global political and economic leader, offering the clearest evidence yet of its ambition to reshape the international order so it benefits Chinese interests and makes the world safe for the CCP. General Secretary of the CCP Xi Jinping continued to tout the CCP's model and "Chinese wisdom" as solutions for the world's problems and vowed to build a "community of common human destiny," a CCP formulation for a China-led global governance regime. In the security realm, Beijing exhorted the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to prepare itself for challenges in the years ahead while it continues its transformation into a "world-class" military able to conduct combat operations within and beyond the Indo-Pacific region. Meanwhile, as trade tensions between China and the United States deepened, General Secretary Xi declared that the CCP was now engaged in a "New Long March" and must prepare for a protracted, multidecade confrontation with Washington and its allies"

Available at: <https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/2019%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

²⁵ The US-China Economic and Security Review Commission in its 2019 report to Congress decided to adopt a significant change from Chinese leader Xi Jinping. They have since started referring to him as the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and have stopped treating him as a chairman. The change in treatment reflects a political conviction, China is not the adversary, the adversary is Chinese communism.

anticipated that after reading it one knows whether the congress is well informed and advised.²⁶

Conclusion

Many statements and actions reveal that the United States regards the Chinese Party-State as a factor that threatens its links with the rest of the countries of the Americas. The United States, of course, says that it is not willing to lose its influence and forget its interests in the Western Hemisphere. Many have identified the United States' turn towards the Americas as an updating of the Monroe doctrine. This interpretation is too simplistic and does not respond to the United States' status as a global power. After many years, the United States has come to believe that economic openness and trade freedoms do not promote prior progress in developing strong supports for the promotion of human rights and democracy in China.

Those who think that the new strategy responds to an anti-Chinese reaction also make an error of judgement by oversimplifying the challenge. The American administration discovered long ago that China can be a partner, an ally and a competitor simultaneously but, at this time, it is aware that the Chinese Communist Party is an adversary. If there was any glimmer of political openness in China, it has been completely extinguished.

The direction indicated by the strategic framework is related to the disengagement of the United States from the Chinese Party-State and the defence of the Western Hemisphere from the predatory practices of the Chinese Communist Party and its evil influence.

*Andrés González Martín**
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IEEE Analyst

²⁶ One fact to support this assessment is that of the ten most important recommendations to the congress, the fourth refers to the need to hold monitoring sessions dedicated to evaluating the capabilities of the American pharmaceutical industry, its dependence on Chinese production of drugs and active components and the ability of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure the safety of drug imports from China. In order to attend to this evaluation and to have sufficient resources to support the actions of the congress and to respond to the detected vulnerabilities, it proposes the approval of three legal provisions. The report was delivered in November, a month and a half before China made the first COVID-19 infections public.