

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING TRUMP AND PUTIN'S VISIT TO BEIJING.

Trump's visit to Beijing was followed shortly by Putin's. Both enjoyed pomp and ceremony designed to dazzle the masses. However, the content and results of the two meetings could not be more different. Trump left with nothing, not even the 200 Boeing jet order which the Chinese have not confirmed nor any orders for Nvidia H200 chips. Describing his retinue of billionaires as excess baggage was apt. Their inclusion was intended to shift the gravity of the Summit from the Political to the Economic, but in the end, Trump did not succeed, he failed both politically and economically.

This is not a personal observation. Much of the media, even in the USA, admitted that it was Xi who strong armed Trump not the other way round. Trump entered the negotiations smarting from the dual defeat in the Ukraine and Iran. Compared to these disasters, his two successes in Syria and Venezuela were in the relegation zone. Trump entered the Summit with little leverage and left further weakened.

On the other hand, Putin and Xi signed off on 40 deals. The Russian media praised the outcome. *"President Vladimir Putin concluded his state visit to China yesterday (May 20), marking what appears to be one of the most productive, forward-looking, and strategically significant Russia-China summits in recent years."* It was not the number of deals which were so significant, but the quality of the deals. For the first time China ignored the consequences of US sanctions which before had blocked deals with Russia before. This was particularly true for their commercial aviation agreements. After the Ukraine war broke out and the US retaliated with additional economic and financial sanctions, China withdrew from their joint CRJ929 jetliner programme. This wide-bodied plane was being developed to compete with Boeing's 787 jetliner and Airbus's A350 plane. By abandoning this project to secure western components for its narrow-bodied CRJ929 jetliner going into service, China ended up increasing its reliance and dependency on Western suppliers rather than Russian.

It appears this has been reversed. Between the two countries they now have the base for indigenous aircraft production including engines. No doubt the success of the locally produced Russian MC-21-310 jetliner powered by Russian engines contributed to China's newfound confidence in their joint abilities. It is important to remember how many Chinese decisions are governed by commercial considerations. If they can deal with the West, they compromise. But this can be fraught as they found out through the delays to the roll out of their own CRJ929 narrow-bodied jetliners due to a deliberate shortage of jet engines from the west. It seems to have dawned on the Chinese that by keeping Russian advanced manufacturing at arm's length they have not protected but harmed Chinese industry.

Another telling point which occurred outside the Summit was the instruction by the Chinese government that refiners and importers of energy were to ignore the threat of US sanctions. The government would have the back of the energy companies, and if the US invoked penalties, China would retaliate. This change in policy, as well as the wake-up call from the war in Iran, cleared the ground for finalising the world's biggest gas pipeline, *The Power of Siberia*, which will cost over \$400 billion to construct.

In addition, accompanying the large professional Russian delegation was the head of Russia's central bank. Elvira Nabiullina. Her presence symbolised the ever closer financial, trade and auditing alignment between the two countries. [Trade is the message](#). Over the course of the year US-China trade fell 16.6% while Russo-Chinese trade rose by 19.7%. 99% of their combined trade was conducted in either Yuan or Roubles using their own non-western financial systems for 90% of the transactions.

The growing confidence of the Chinese government is born from growing commercial successes. This is true of the single most invested industry - AI. [China has effectively caught up in software including LLMs](#) despite lagging in hardware, and it has done so despite the US spending \$285.9 billion on AI in 2025 versus \$12.4 billion in China. But its not only in the field of investment where Chinese efficiencies shine, it is also in the cost of usage; *a complex task which costs \$15 with GPT-5 runs for about \$0.50 on DeepSeek*. As a result, the popularity of DeepSeek and the QWEN (Alibaba) is soaring, especially outside the US and Europe. The article concludes with the observation that while the US has won the early sprint, it will be the Chinese who will win the marathon, especially when [Chinese EUV lithography machines](#) move into serial production.

This ends the days when China held the quantitative advantage, while the West held the qualitative advantage. Very few technology bottlenecks remain and those that remain are [within a few years of being removed](#). The new assertive stance of President Xi is a strategic move. Up to now, the imperative guiding Chinese policy was to play for time, time to catch up, to close the technology gap, to build its military capacity. That does not mean the assertive Xi is reckless, he has retained his position calling for a peaceful resolution of both the Iranian and Ukrainian wars, rather than offering unconditional support to either Russia or Iran.

There is another vital reason for Xi's newfound assertive stance which has to do with BRICS, the Global South and the Gulf region. BRICS is fragile, with India aligning itself with Israel for example. By playing to Chinese strength and US weakness the Chinese government wants to put the heft into multipolarity. The days of China being the quiet operator manoeuvring behind the scenes seems to be over.

In contrast, the Summit in Beijing highlighted US weakness. Post-summit this weakness is increasingly apparent as the negotiations to end the Iran war drag on. Washington's optimistic stance on the possibilities of resolving the outstanding issues is not mirrored by a more cautious Iran although both agree to an extension to the truce. Iran's missiles give it escalatory dominance because they have the capacity to destroy the entirety of the Gulf infrastructure from subterranean fibre cables to energy and desalination plants. And Teheran has made it clear that should war commence it won't hold back this time.

This was Trump's Saturday evening post on *Truth Social* boasting about peace being in reach. Note his emollient words towards Netanyahu, in contrast to their previous call which ended in acrimony.

I am in the Oval Office at the White House where we just had a very good call with President Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, of The United Arab Emirates, Emir Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim bin Jaber Al Thani, and Minister Ali al-Thawadi, of Qatar, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir Ahmed Shah, of Pakistan, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, of Türkiye, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, of Egypt, King Abdullah II, of Jordan, and King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, of Bahrain, concerning the Islamic Republic of Iran, and all things related to a Memorandum of Understanding pertaining to PEACE. An Agreement has been largely negotiated, subject to finalization between the United States of America, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the various other Countries, as listed. Separately, I had a call with Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu, of Israel, which, likewise, went very well. Final aspects and details of the Deal are

Contrast this to what Trump wrote on March 6. Then he said he would not negotiate with Iran and called for Iran's unconditional surrender. Since the 6th of March, Trump has issued eleven threats to blow Iran from the face of the earth, but without following through. This open-mouthed thinking has invoked the law of diminishing credibility. He is beginning to be taken less seriously which is very dangerous for the reputation for any global leader. It has accelerated the drift to China.

Truth Social: There will be no deal with Iran except UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER! After that, and the selection of a GREAT & ACCEPTABLE Leader(s), we, and many of our wonderful and very brave allies and partners, will work tirelessly to bring Iran back from the brink of destruction, making it economically bigger, better, and stronger than ever before. IRAN WILL HAVE A GREAT FUTURE. "MAKE IRAN GREAT AGAIN (MIGA!)." Thank you for your attention to this matter!
President DONALD J. TRUMP

Mar 06, 2026, 6:50 AM

[There are reports](#) that Trump was expecting some agreement on the war to be announced over the weekend. He even missed his son's wedding and had prepared the Whitehouse press corps for a grand face-saving proclamation. It did not come. In frustration the US lashed out with a minor attack on Bandar Abbas, an Iranian port, killing four sailors. Not enough to provoke a renewal of the war but enough to express displeasure at the delayed peace announcement. What happens next depends on Iran's response.

But all is not lost for the USA. Its grip on the global energy market has tightened. The rise in the oil price, mainly traded in dollars, has increased the demand for dollars strengthening it. While Washington realises the war in Ukraine is lost, they do not consider the economic war outside Ukraine to be lost. Ukraine has been specifically targeting Russian energy facilities seeking to disrupt oil and gas production as well as ports. They have had notable successes. On the high seas interdiction of Russian vessels remains probable.

What is clear is that the *Axis of Change* - China, Russia and Iran - is beginning to reshape geopolitics. Last year, for the first time, Xi retaliated economically against US boycotts and embargoes. This year he has gone further by disrespecting US sanctions. The original cancelled Summit in Beijing was timed to follow the swift crushing of Iran. This was meant to strengthen a unipolar world led by Washington. Instead, the setbacks in the Gulf robbed Trump of this opportunity. The opposite has taken place; it has strengthened multi-polarity. And China is at the helm.

Brian Green 26th May 2026