



Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

PRESS RELEASES

CSBA CEO Thomas G. Mahnken on a New Maritime Strategy for China

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Related Expert: Thomas G. Mahnken

Washington, DC, February 3, 2022 – The February 2022 issue of *Proceedings* (<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings>), the journal of the United States Naval Institute (<https://www.usni.org/about-us/mission-and-vision>), features an article by Dr. Thomas G. Mahnken, President and CEO of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), as part of its ongoing American Sea Power Project (<https://www.usni.org/taxonomy/term/1943>).

In "A Maritime Strategy to Deal with China,"

(<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2022/february/maritime-strategy-deal-china>)

(<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2022/february/maritime-strategy-deal-china>) Dr.

Mahnken assesses the current deficit of U.S. strategic thinking about the PRC and argues that a maritime strategy for China should seek to address those elements of Chinese behavior that are of greatest concern to the United States and its allies – particularly Beijing's expansionist behavior in the Asian littoral. He further argues that a maritime strategy for the 21st century should seek to turn geography to our advantage. In describing the ongoing relationship between innovative operational concepts and deterrence, Mahnken posits a new strategy of "maritime pressure" for America's joint force the Indo-Pacific region and argues for a U.S. and allied posture based upon two mutually supporting elements: an inside force arrayed forward in the western Pacific and a complementary outside force primarily consisting of air and naval surface forces to support them. Such an approach, he argues, would offset China's current geopolitical and military advantages and pose a nettlesome operational and strategic challenge to Beijing. The article draws upon previous CSBA research on joint operational concepts, including Tightening the Chain: Implementing a Strategy of Maritime Pressure in the Western Pacific (<https://csbaonline.org/research/publications/implementing-a-strategy-of-maritime-pressure-in-the-western-pacific>), as well as ongoing research on strategic competition.

Dr. Mahnken talked about the ideas in this article and the urgency of developing a plan for the U.S. Navy on the CavasShips podcast (<https://defaeroreport.com/2022/02/04/cavasships-podcast-feb-05-22-episode-34the-need-for-a-strategy/>) on February 6. Dr. Mahnken will also discuss his article in an upcoming episode of the Proceedings Podcast (<https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/the-proceedings-podcast>) hosted by Bill Hamblet, Editor-in-Chief of *Proceedings*, on Friday, February 11, 2022.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND BUDGETARY ASSESSMENTS

CSBA is an independent, nonpartisan policy research institute established to promote innovative thinking and debate about national security strategy and investment options. CSBA's assessments focus on key questions related to existing and emerging threats to U.S. national security, and its goal is to enable policymakers to make informed decisions on matters of strategy, security policy, and resource allocation.

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