



Menu

Friday April 15, 2022



[Home](#)

[Platinum](#)

[Newsfront](#)

[Politics](#)

[Opinion](#)

[Podcast](#)

[The Wire](#)

[Books](#)

[Cartoon](#)

[Best Lists](#)

[Specials](#)

[Sci & Tech](#)



[Subscribe](#)

[Home](#) | [Evan Ellis](#)

Tags: [latin america](#) | [belt and road initiative](#) | [prc](#)

The Risks of Chinese Engagement in the Americas



(Rolffimages | Dreamstime)



By Evan Ellis

Friday, 15 April 2022 10:32 AM

[Current](#) | [Bio](#) | [Archive](#)



[Comment](#) | [Print](#) | [A A](#)

In the past two decades, People's Republic of China-based companies have invested \$160 billion in Latin America. 21 of our neighbors there have pledged themselves to China's "Belt-

and-road Initiative.”

The PRC is attempting to “rewire” the region to its own economic benefit, securing access to commodities and markets, capturing the value added for itself, focusing on “connectivity.”

In the port sector, PRC-based companies are involved in 40 major projects.

China has built multiple wind, solar and hydroelectric facilities, albeit with problems. Ecuador’s Coca Coda Sinclair dam, for example, had over 7,600 cracks, plus caused massive erosion, rupturing one of the nation’s major oil export pipelines.

In Chile, PRC-based companies control an unprecedented 57% of electricity distribution.

Growing PRC presence in digital architectures is an intelligence concern, given China’s history of intellectual property theft and cyberespionage. In December 2021, Microsoft exposed hacking

by PRC-based NICKEL, whose targets included companies in 16 Latin American countries.

In telecommunications, Huawei has grown its Latin American presence for two decades, and is now poised to dominate its 5G networks.

PRC-based companies play a growing role in the region's eCommerce, including Alibaba, and the Fintech company NuBank.

The Chinese rideshare company DiDi Chuxing, has half of the market in Latin America, capturing data on passenger movement, and finances.

Chinese surveillance and control systems such as ECU-911 and BOL-110 capture similar sensitive data, as do the 10 PRC-built "smart cities," presently in the region.

PRC-based Hikvision has taken over Syscom, Mexico's largest security systems company.

The airport scanners from China's Nutech capture data on the devices that pass through them.

In Chile, PRC-based Aisino almost won the right to manage the country's Civil Registry.

In Argentina, a PLA-operated deep-space radar may capture communications from passing satellites.

The PRC further promotes its interests through Latin American institutions. IADB President Mauricio Claver-Carone has called out PRC for use of its bank membership to win contracts for Chinese firms.

In security engagement, the PRC is a significant provider of military goods to the region, including fighters, transport aircraft and radars for Venezuela, helicopters and armored vehicles for Bolivia, and military trucks for Ecuador.

Argentina may acquire the FC-1 fighter, the most advanced PRC aircraft yet sold to the region.

Officials within the PLA naturally plan for how they would use Latin America in a future war, leveraging the knowledge and relationships they build today to do so. To this end, the PLA has made 20 military deployments to the region, and PLA leaders have visited 200 times since 2000.

In People-to-people diplomacy, China's 44 Confucius Institutes attract those with the interest to learn Chinese. bringing the

best to study in the PRC on Hanban scholarships, after which some secure China-facing positions in their own governments. The 2022-2024 China-CELAC plan promises 5,000 such scholarships for Latin American students.

The PRC also engages the region's academics, journalists, politicians and officials through luxurious paid trips to China.

In pursuing its interests in the region, China acts as an "incubator of authoritarian populism," providing loans, investments, and commodity purchases, that give liquidity to anti-democratic actors as they consolidate power.

China also provides the mechanisms to help its authoritarian friends stay in power. In Venezuela, China's CEIEC helped the Maduro regime to spy on the opposition. In Cuba, Huawei technologies helped cut off protesters from the outside world during the July 2021 uprising.

With respect to Taiwan, eight of the last 14 countries that recognize the ROC are in the Western Hemisphere. Each "flip" facilitates the expansion of China's activities in that country, through the signing of non-transparent MOUs.

The PRC strategically benefits from Russia's provocative actions in the region, most recently, its threat to deploy military forces, whether or not China and Russia coordinate on these matters.

What can U.S. legislators and policymakers do? The following five steps should guide our engagement:

1. Help our partners engage the PRC with transparency, on a level playing field, through strong institutions.
2. Exclude Chinese vendors from sensitive digital domains, yet provide viable alternatives to the PRC.
3. Support better government databases on the performance of the PRC and its companies.
4. Re-think rules that constrain the agility of agencies like DFC to provide alternatives.
5. Fully leverage the June 2022 Summit of the Americas to advance a bold and resource-backed approach to partnership with the region.

Dr. Ellis is Latin America Research Professor with the U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute. The views expressed herein are strictly his own. His work focuses on security and defense issues, including transnational organized crime, populism and the region's relationships with China and other non-Western Hemisphere actors. Dr. Ellis has published over 270 works, including four books and has presented his work in 27 countries. He has testified on multiple occasions regarding Latin America and the Caribbean before the U.S. Congress and his work regularly appears in the

media in both the U.S. and the region. Through his work, Dr. Ellis calls attention to the strategic importance of Latin America and the Caribbean for the United States through bonds of geography, commerce and family and how the prosperity and security of the U.S. are tied to that of its partners in the region. Read Evan Ellis' Reports — [More Here.](#)

Posts by Evan Ellis

- [The Northern Triangle Needs Some TLC](#)
- [Thanks to COVID, China Poised to Expand Business Ownership in Latin America](#)
- [View More Posts by Evan Ellis](#)

Newsmax Blogs:

- [Michael Dorstewitz: When Did Personal Responsibility Become a Dirty Phrase?](#)
- [Bill Robinson: CPAC Leaders: Genuine Stalwarts for Freedom](#)
- [View More Newsmax Blogs](#)

© 2022 Newsmax. All rights reserved.

Special Links:

- [Outrage Over Survival Food](#)

- [Don't Settle. Do Business with Real Patriots Only!](#)
- [Learn the Truth About NASA's Warning to Us](#)
- [#1 Keto Weight Loss Pill Helps Burn Stomach Fat Quickly.](#)
- [Invisible Hearing Aids are Crushing the Market](#)
- [Smith & Wesson Releases New CSX](#)

[Click Here](#) to comment on this article

► **RECOMMENDED**

**You'll Be Like Walking
on a Cloud in These
Shoes!**

**Unvaccinated Djokovic
Could Skip French
Open, Wimbledon**

**One Exotic Loophole
Will Melt Body Fat Like
Crazy! (Watch)**

**Virginia: Do This Instead of Buying
Expensive Solar Panels (It's
Genius)**

**The Slippers for Standing All Day
Without Discomfort - Now 50%
Off!**

GOP Senators Object to Funding Government Without COVID Mandate Vote

Early Signs of Prostate Cancer That May Surprise You

The Weakness of NY Gov. Kathy Hochul

Virginia Say Bye to Your Home Insurance Bill if You Live in These Zip Codes

Low Testosterone Levels? Eat This And See The Results

Thune, Scalise: Biden Administration Should Not Mask Toddlers

Gainesville: Say Bye to Your Home Insurance Bill if You Live in These Zip Codes

Seniors, Do This Before You Renew Amazon Prime (It's Genius)

Place a Bottle in Your Parked Car's Tire if Traveling Alone, Here's Why

You'll Be Like Walking on a Cloud in These Shoes - Now 70% Off!

**Waukesha Massacre
Suspect Pleads Not
Guilty to 77 Counts, 6
for Homicide, 71
Others**

**Virginia: Say Bye To
Expensive Solar
Panels If You Own A
Home in Gainesville**

**Virginia in a Frenzy :
Cannabis Gummy
Discovery Leaves
Doctors Speechless**

**What She Did to Lose Weight Stuns
Doctors: Do This Daily Before Bed**

**Maryland Gov. Hogan: GOP Has
'Circular Firing Squad' on Anti-
Trump Members**

**One Simple Method To
Keep Your Blood
Sugar Below 100**

**Virginia Drivers Are
Ditching Their Auto
Insurance and Doing
This Instead**

**Doctors Stunned: 1
Cup Melts Body Fat
Like Crazy! (Drink
Before Bed)**

**How to Reduce Your Electric Bill by
Up to 90%**

**Do This Every Evening & Fungus
Will Be Gone in No Time**

**Democrat Senators
Urge Biden to Act
Quickly on Supreme
Court Nominee**

**Women's Arch
Support Flat Sandals -
Now 70% Off!**

**Husband of Shot
Cinematographer
Names Alec Baldwin in
Wrongful Death Suit**

**The Sandals for Standing All Day
Without Discomfort - Now 70%
Off!**

**Plaque Psoriasis Common Signs -
Most Wish They Hadn't Ignored
Them**

**Why Is This New
Cannabis Discovery So
Popular With Seniors
In Virginia?**

**Fighting Diabetes? Do
This Before Bedtime.
Keeps Blood Sugar
Below 100!**

**Lesley Stahl Slammed
for Unearthed Trump
Interview After
Durham Report**

US Futures Fall on Fears of Potential Russian Attack on Ukraine

Virginia Launches New Policy for Cars Used Less Than 50 Miles/day

[Load More](#)

Join the Newsmax Community

Read and Post Comments

Please review [Community Guidelines](#) before posting a comment.

[Home](#) | [Platinum](#) | [Newsfront](#) | [Politics](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Podcast](#) | [The Wire](#) | [Books](#) | [Cartoon](#) | [Best Lists](#) | [Specials](#) | [Sci & Tech](#) 

NEWSMAX.COM
America's News Page
© 2022 Newsmax Media, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Newsmax, Moneynews, Newsmax Health, and Independent. American. are registered trademarks of Newsmax Media, Inc. Newsmax TV, and Newsmax World are trademarks of Newsmax Media, Inc.

[Contact](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Shop](#) | [RSS](#) | [Archives](#) | [Links](#) | [Careers](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#) | 