TRANSCRIPT
The Asia Chessboard Podcast

“Coronavirus Crisis: Talking the Pandemic’s Effects on Asian Geopolitics with Evan Medeiros”

RECORDING DATE
Monday, March 23, 2019

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Andrew Schwartz: Welcome to the Asia Chessboard, the podcast that examines geopolitical dynamics in Asia and takes an inside look at the making of grand strategy. I'm Andrew Schwartz at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Benjamin Rimland: With the coronavirus pandemic sweeping the globe and shaking assumptions about power and economic prosperity, Mike is joined by Dr. Evan Medeiros discuss what the viral crisis portends for the U.S.-China relationship, America's allies in the Indo-Pacific and the future role of Asia in global growth.

Michael Green: Welcome back to the age of chess board. This is Michael Green from CSIS and Georgetown University. We're joined today by Dr. Evan Medeiros, a professor and colleague at Georgetown, former director and senior director for Asia at the NSC during the Obama administration and a scholar and practitioner with a background in geopolitical thinking, China and U.S.-China relations.

Michael Green: We're going to talk today about the implications, geopolitically, of the current situation we find ourselves in with COVID-19, recognizing that the situation is fluid and there are some things we can illuminate about the underlying tensions or fissures in international relations in the Asia Pacific. But there are many things about this we don't know and so prediction is going to be a little more difficult, but we're at a point where we can certainly anticipate some of the possible implications of this virus for the geopolitics of Asia and also to talk about what it has illuminated about the existing tensions and relations in the region.

Michael Green: So Evan, welcome. Good to have you on board.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Thanks Mike. It's great to be here.

Michael Green: We're going to start as we always do by asking you a little bit about how you got into this business. How did you become a China scholar? How'd you get into the policy world and now at Georgetown?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Yeah, so Mike, for me it began going back to the 1980s when I was in high school. I was a very active policy debater. My interest in Asia first and foremost came from my interest in international security affairs, specifically arms control and nonproliferation because those were big aspects of many of the debates I participated in. And as sort of the 80s progressed, China became more and more interesting to those people interested in arms control and nonproliferation. And so when I went to college, I was much more interested in having a regional expertise and that it was the people that understood what was going on within countries that brought an enormous amount of analytical power to address questions related to international security.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So, sort of my thinking as I graduated from undergrad was I have this functional interest in international security affairs with the revelations about North Korea's nuclear weapon program, Iraq's nuclear missile program, sort of non-
proliferation became a super hot topic and China was very much at the center of it because China was a proliferator who was a big supplier of nuclear technology, missile technology to the Middle East, South Asia and other parts of the world.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So what I realized was I wanted to mix my functional interest with a regional interest. So started studying Chinese, started trying to develop a specialization in China, Chinese politics, economics, foreign policy, and sort of mix the two from that point onward.

Michael Green: So that's a really good piece of advice we give to all of our students in the master's in Asian studies at Georgetown, and good advice for people earlier in their career. You want one foot in a functional area where you're deep in the knowledge and you want one, if you have the ability in regional studies. It's a competitive marketplace and when you have both of those in your toolkit, you can pivot to other subjects around China or other parts of Asia. Or you can pivot to other countries as you look at proliferation. So good advice.

Michael Green: Your first job in government was at the Treasury Department. How'd you transition from, you were at the RAND corporation, how'd you transition into policy with your academic background?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Well, it was a gradual process for me. So when I finished up my PhD, I got this really great teaching job at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies and they had a great center for nonproliferation studies that was doing some very innovative capacity building work with the Chinese Foreign Ministry and with the Chinese PLA. And so when I finished up there, I got this job at RAND. And so RAND was sort of, obviously it wasn't a government job, but because it was a federally funded research and development center and much of the work at RAND was all government contracts, so funded by the Defense Department, the intelligence community, other parts of the US government. So all the research we were doing at RAND was on China and Asia was government related and policy-related. So having that PhD training turned out to be essential because it's the only way that you can sort of rigorously tackle hard policy problems.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So RAND very much whet my appetite for policy work and bringing good analytical skills and knowledge to bear on answering tough policy questions. And so in the mid two thousands I got this fantastic fellowship called the international affairs fellowship, sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations. It's a great opportunity. It funds you for a year if you're outside of government to go into government. If you're in government, it funds you to come out of government and do a little bit of intellectual capital building. But I decided that at that point, because the nature of my work was so related to political military affairs in Asia and China specifically, I wanted to sort of push myself, so I decided to see what the Treasury Department would be like. And specifically I chose that because at that particular time in the late Bush administration, Henry Paulson, who had just become treasury secretary had started up this very new
innovative approach talking with the Chinese about global economic issues, something called the strategic economic dialogue, which was one of the predecessors to what became the strategic and economic dialogue in the Obama administration.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So I thought, let me go to Treasury, and it's something that anybody that studies Asia long enough comes to realize is that economics, really political economy drives so much of the strategic decisions in the region. And I needed to better understand the Chinese economy, the U.S.-China economic relationship, if I was really going to be able to have a strategic perspective. Paulson said at the time when he set up the SED, the strategic economic dialogue, it was really at the forefront of what was going on in the U.S.-China relationship. Treasury had enormous amount of backing from the White House. Paulson had a great relationship with lots of senior Chinese leaders, and as a result, there was an enormous amount of really interesting private discussion going on between Americans and Chinese, but from the Treasury Department. And the other great part of Treasury is that the career people at Treasury are incredibly well trained super professionals and I learned an enormous amount from them about global economics, global economic institutions, and of course the U.S.-China economic relationship.

Michael Green: So when you were at RAND, you were the principal author or one of the core authors for the report, Pacific Currents, which looked at across the region, how countries were adjusting their strategy in response to China’s rise. Another great piece of advice for people in their career, if you’re a China expert, get outside the box. If you’re a Japan or Korea expert, get outside the box, look at your country of primary expertise from the outside and then you went on to NSC and joined Georgetown where you’re teaching a course and running programs under the Cling fellowship you have there as well as being a professor of practice in the endowed chair you have.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: That’s right, but don’t forget I had a quick brief detour to the private sector. I worked for Eurasia Group for a few years just to sort of see what the world of strategic advisory in political risk would be like. Something that listeners should keep in mind is that when you go to the private sector, it sort of, it forces those of us that are interested in public policy issues, especially international public policy to sort of bend and mold our thinking a little bit because we have to figure out how to translate our knowledge of politics and geopolitics into something that’s relevant for the business world.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Probably the two issues that I spent most of my time as senior director at the NSC working on were North Korea and the U.S. trying to competition over the South China Sea. Right. Very, very serious, long term policy challenges. And you get into the business world and most people basically when you talk about South China Sea or North Korea with them, especially global markets investors, so hedge funds, asset managers, et cetera, they weren’t really interested in
either of those topics because their view was unless they're going to lead to war, it doesn't really impact me.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So, sort of thinking about how a politics and geopolitics does and doesn't affect the business world is something that's important and it's sort of like a skill. Right? And the question is, are you interested in developing that skill? And I was glad that I sort of took that particular detour because for a few years it was actually quite useful. And I think it helps me a lot in teaching at Georgetown, not just because we have students that are interested in a career in the private sector, but also because it allows me to bring that political economy into the kinds of strategy questions that you and I and others at Asian studies at Georgetown are constantly wrestling with.

Michael Green: Let's focus on what we can say right now about the impact of the coronavirus. Let me begin by asking you about your take of the war of words between Beijing and Washington. Obviously president Trump is raising hackles in China by calling this the Wuhan or China virus. Of course the Chinese were calling it the Wuhan virus at first too, and then you have particularly offensive and egregious statements out of the official press spokesman for the Minister of Foreign Affairs saying that the U.S. army started this virus and so forth. Is this indicative of a much, much deeper strategic problem or is it just nastiness about the people who are grabbing the megaphone at present? How much can we say about the geopolitical meaning of all this really quite nasty war of words?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Yeah, so I mean the world of words is absolutely despicable and I don't think it's worth getting into the whole blame game of like who started it. But I do think as a former American official, the President of the United States should not be calling this the China virus. I think that that's just race baiting. There's a lot of anecdotal reports on social media about Chinese Americans, these are American citizens of Chinese descent being harassed and we as the United States can and should do better.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Now it's absolutely true that a Deputy Foreign Ministry spokesman in China had some horrible things to say, suggesting that the US military brought this disease to Wuhan. But I think my concern about the broader geopolitics of this is that if the U.S. and China can't cooperate on a pandemic, can they cooperate on anything? And in many ways the COVID-19 pandemic is sort of a test for how bad the U.S.-China relationship is or as Ryan Haas at Brookings said, we had to put a mirror up to the face of the relationship and what we're seeing is pretty ugly.

Michael Green: Yeah, and the contrast to when I was in the White House to a SARS and avian influence, it's really striking. When avian influenza struck, Hu Jintao was a new leader, the Chinese were embarrassed. They did not share information. They were disorganized. But the second time we hit a pandemic crisis together, which was avian influenza and that was projected be this bad, but never got that far, but it nevertheless was a serious enough crisis, certainly among the experts that
in avian influenza the Chinese and American governments, but also Singapore, Japan went out of their way to try to share information in a really unprecedented way.

Michael Green: A number of commentators have said, what this tells us is over the 10, 15 years since then, ethno-nationalistic populist politics have taken over. Do you think that what we’re seeing now in U.S.-China relations is a result of leadership style of, of Xi Jinping’s particular form of nationalism and Donald Trump’s form of nationalism? Or do you think it runs much deeper in the national security communities, elites in both countries?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: I think it’s a combination of both, Mike. I think that the leadership styles, the sort of populist orientations of Xi and Trump have affected the tone of how the US and China are talking with one another. It’s affected how the governance styles of how Xi has dealt with this at home. He creates a political environment where people don’t want to share bad information at the early stages of the pandemic, creates an environment in the United States where Trump for weeks on weeks after, even after getting intel briefings, telling him how bad it was going to be, sort of downplayed it. But that’s the proximate factors. There are deeper factors there of intensifying security competition, economic competition, technology competition and sort of emerging war of ideas about governance internationally. So I think it’s really a combination of the two.

Michael Green: And you can see that the way this goes, the trajectory in China is not clear. I was quite struck that on March 21st or so, over the weekend, Cui Tiankai in an interview with a US media criticized not by name, but criticized clearly that the MFA press spokesman and said he doesn’t speak for Xi Jinping basically. And it’s not helpful.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So Mike, I saw the interview—

Michael Green: What do you make of that?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: I saw that interview on Axios and Cui Tiankai, who I know well and worked very productively with was very, very careful. He did not summarily reject what Zhao Lijian said. He was very careful but he was also trying to contrast his view and his view was, I speak for China about the U.S.-China relationship, right? Because he’s the Chinese ambassador to the United States. But Cui Tiankai himself was still very careful and I’m very critical of the Chinese government because if they really wanted to distance themselves from Zhao Lijian, they would either fire him or they would give him a new ambassador job like in some small country, clearly indicating a demotion and they haven’t done that and that’s what concerns me is they haven’t distanced themselves from this kind of talk.

Michael Green: Should we be worried that Zhongnanhai, that Beijing may draw strategic conclusions from this that are dangerous for us? I’m thinking back on analysis of how Beijing assessed the Gulf War in ’90, ’91 in fact, it was a RAND project I was
involved in and the conclusion was that China and Chinese elites and think tanks like CICIR just way over estimated American power after the Gulf War because of precision strike musicians, our ability to form a coalition and really bought into the unipolarity argument. But then after the 2008 financial crisis, the Chinese may have gone too far in the other direction underestimating American resilience and overestimating their own ability to coerce smaller states and, and make hay of the financial crisis. It sure seems like in the current situation, the analysis to the extent that we understand it in Beijing is very self confident about what this means geopolitically. What do you think?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Well, I think that the Chinese, I mean knowing how the Chinese make these kinds of assessments, I don't think that they've probably come to a definitive one yet because they're not out of the woods yet. We don't know how the pandemic's going to play out in Asia, in the United States, in Europe and really globally. So I think it's too early for them to come to some kind of definitive conclusion. As a matter of foreign policy. I think they've shifted from a defensive tactic to a much more offensive one. In other words, the fact that they have this very aggressive international propaganda campaign to basically say, we tackled this very, very quickly. That's a result of the type of efficient government we have. Even talking about the Chinese foreign ministry spokesman now talks about the unprecedented transparency that they're showing. And of course Xi Jinping has been getting on the phone with leaders of major European governments, Asian governments, Iran, et cetera, and offering aide.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So the Chinese clearly are trying to do a 180 on the narrative after their major missteps in January and February. But I think that they themselves know that they're not out of the woods yet. I mean, the reality is is that there's no way that China can resume the levels of growth that had before, 6% in 2020 or whatever it is, unless the rest of the world starts growing, right? There's no way that China's going to lead the world out of a global recession because China depends for its growth on so much of the economic activity in the United States and in Europe.

Michael Green: I think the other interesting dimension to this is where is China getting diplomatic advantage? It's getting diplomatic advantage from this in countries where it already was making progress on Belt and Road and on its propaganda. Countries that are for one reason or another dissatisfied with their immediate neighborhoods. So countries like Greece or Spain that are disillusioned with Germany and the EU, countries in Sub Saharan Africa. I don't see evidence yet and I don't expect to that China is going to make enormous diplomatic headway with Japan or Korea or India. In some ways, just reading the press in those countries-

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Or France or Germany. But we'll to see.

Michael Green: Exactly.
Dr. Evan Medeiros: I mean the concern I have is the Chinese continue to run this play, sort of claim that they've been very aggressive, very effective at containment mitigation, offer a lot of assistance to other countries and if in that context America missteps and really handles this badly, then China will benefit not from its aggressive a propaganda campaign, but the delta between the American mismanagement of this. That's what concerns me is if Donald Trump and the U.S. really look like they're handling this poorly, then that itself, China can gain from that. Would you agree?

Michael Green: I would agree with that and it worries me, frankly, because while professionals like Dr. Fauci, some key state leaders like my Maryland governor Larry Hogan have demonstrated incredible professionalism, foresight, and dignity. When the president gets to the podium it does not reassure the rest of the world. The only thing I would add is we are not in a bipolar world. We're in a multipolar world, certainly in Asia, and to the extent countries like Korea or Singapore, Taiwan or others, Japan are able to control this, that will reduce the damage to our system of government because it will demonstrate as Taiwan has demonstrated as Korea has the democracies can and do function well in these crises.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: To me that's the key point. I mean, you probably read an article in foreign affairs this week that Kurt Campbell and Rush Doshi wrote about how China might emerge from the pandemic as sort of this incipient global leader. And I think that argument is premature. To me, the most likely geopolitical implication of this is sort of accelerating the rise of Asia, because economies like South Korea, Taiwan, to some extent Japan, Singapore, those economies that have been through major pandemics before, right? SARS, MERS, H1N1, and our democracies, as you mentioned, they've actually done exceptionally well at flattening the curve. Right? Taiwan and South Korea being the most prominent ones.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So, I think it's important to bring this point forward because this is not, I don't see the geopolitical implication as the U.S. versus China, but rather as Asian economies who had a lot of experience, who had very effective containment, mitigation, bureaucracies, even democracies like South Korea and Taiwan, they're the ones that have handled this well, right? So this is not a China versus U.S. sort of dynamic.

Michael Green: That's critical. And the other thing to keep in mind is that a society's resilience and response is a little bit like your immune system's response to a virus. Korea had already gone through MERS, so their system was ready to act. I think that the failures, and there are big failures, by the U.S. are, as your old boss president Obama would say, teachable moments and the resilience in the American political system and economy means that we will be much better prepared the next time this comes around. We just were not ready for this in the way that societies like Korea that had already experienced MERS and SARS were.
Dr. Evan Medeiros: Right. On that point, Mike, I mean, I hope the United States after going through this goes to South Korea and learns about their early and large scale testing, right? They’re very sophisticated process for contact tracing. The way that they structured their CDC. I mean, I’ve talked with several friends from the Taiwan government in recent weeks and they said, look, we knew there was an unexplained pneumonia in China in mid-December and we went to America and told them about it, we went to the CDC. So an economy like Taiwan where they have a very sophisticated early warning network, it's essential that we learn from their experience because clearly we’re not up to the standard we thought we were.

Michael Green: Well, I also wonder when there’s a reckoning for all this, whether the failing in the end for us is not going to have been the CDC or the professionals, but political leadership. Let me ask you about another dimension to this, which is decoupling. You know, we’ve seen pretty pronounced decoupling in certain areas of U.S. relations with China, particularly obviously 5G. I suspect we’re going to see more decoupling because even before this crisis there was some criticism of American dependence on China for medical equipment, for pharmaceutical precursors. Where do you see this impacting this overall debate about decoupling? There’s an argument also that globalization will bounce right back when this is over. What’s your take?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Yeah. So my take is that I think the global economy, assuming this doesn't go on for many months, so if we’re talking about 30 to 60 days, I think the resilience of the global economy, the ability to bounce back is going to be substantial. But in terms of the U.S.-China dynamic, I’ve never been a huge fan of the term decoupling. I think a better term to use is diversifying, right? Because so many companies all over the world recognize the Chinese market is so big, both as a market for consumption as well as a market for production that it’s hard for them not to be in the China market.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So when people talk about decoupling, I think what they really mean is diversifying. In other words, companies globally recognizing that they simply have become too reliant on suppliers in China or to reliant on consumption in China or both. And so I think we’re seeing that in the tech space as results of the U.S.-China trade war. Tech companies have recognized that there were real risks, regulatory risks, legal risk, political risk from producing so many of their electronic products. Both consumer and industrial electronics in China. So I think you’re already seeing a diversification in that space and I think pharmaceuticals is going to be the next one.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: And I don’t think you’re going to have American pharmaceutical companies just shut down their entire infrastructure in China and move it elsewhere. I think you’re just going to start to see a lot of redundant infrastructure. So I think to me, resilience will become the key word in corporate strategy. And when it comes to China, resilience is going to mean diversifying and diversifying out of China. So countries aren’t so reliant on a production there.
Michael Green: You worked for a few years for the Eurasia group giving corporate multinational clients political risk advice. It seems like this will be as bad as 2008 and the financial crisis. How would you assess the geopolitical and economic risk over the next months and years?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So I think the political risk is very, very substantial and it really depends on the severity and the duration of the crisis in the major Western economies in particular. Because if we’re able to contain this and manage it and in somewhere between 30 to 90 days, get it under control and U.S. economy is able to bounce back, and so that’s sort of bringing supply and demand back online. Then I think the geopolitical risk, the headwinds will be modest and manageable. But if that’s not the case, I worry about a moment at which the United States is, you know, other countries in the world who are already questioning some of the foreign policy and domestic governance choices we make are going to continue to discount the United States even more.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: And in an election year, the political risks become even higher. Because the question is, is if the pandemic goes on long enough, will it materially constrain the U.S. from conducting a free, fair and open election. And if the U.S. is not careful and doesn’t begin planning for conducting an election under these circumstances, then they could have serious long term reputational effects for the United States.

Michael Green: So Evan, when there are crises like this in Asia, sometimes the U.S. has rallied and created important new relationships. The Korean War and led to our entire alliance system in Asia, for example, the North Korean nuclear crisis led to the six party talks and more cooperation, but sometimes like the ‘97, ‘98 financial crisis, the U.S. did the right thing in a way by demanding more resilient financial systems in countries like Korea and Indonesia and Thailand, but in the process we alienated a lot of countries. What’s the parallel for where we are today? What are the lessons, for example, from ‘97, ‘98?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: So Mike, that’s a great point and I think that it's important as the United States thinks about its response and its interaction with Asian countries and China in particular to think about the Asian financial crisis because it's a useful analogy. I mean it was really a diplomatic and financial failing on the part of the United States because it left many Asian economies, especially Southeast Asian economies feeling as if Washington just ignored them and the U.S. let the IMF take the lead and operate in a very, very heavy handed way in stark contrast to how activist the U.S. was in Mexico financial crisis earlier in the 1990s so I think it's making sure the U.S. response does not leave the impression that America is MIA and coincidentally giving China the opportunity to step forward.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: And in particular, in the case of the ‘97, ‘98 financial crisis, all the Chinese did was take a very self-serving action, which is not devalue the renminbi, but yet they generated an enormous amount of regional goodwill from doing that. And I
think we want to avoid that kind of situation where we lead the impression of ignoring other countries and give China an opportunity to take advantage of it.

Michael Green: Not a time for unilateralism, in other words, lead through multilateral efforts.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Absolutely. Work through existing multilateral efforts. Look at creating new multilateral efforts. Mike, you'll remember that one of the initiatives that came out of the Asian financial crisis was Japan's proposal of an Asian version of the IMF, which actually didn't go anywhere, but nonetheless, it was the region looking for a regional solution. One of the other things to come into the Asian financial crisis was the Chiang Mai initiative, which was basically a series of currency swap agreements in the region that the Chinese used to generate a lot of political goodwill, even though practically it didn't really have that much significance because even if you have a swap line and the Chinese are offering you lots of renminbi, it doesn't really help a balance of payments crisis. So to your point, think about the U.S. working through existing multilaterals and or creating ad hoc new ones and given how under institutionalized the pandemic response space is, I think there's a lot that the United States can and should do.

Michael Green: Sounds like where we are right now, this corona crisis has clearly revealed some underlying tensions, geopolitical and ideological between the U.S. and China. It has reinforced China's propaganda push to some success with countries that already were looking to China more for belt and road and other things, but not with the OECD leading countries like Japan or Britain or France, that we are making some bad decisions in terms of pointing fingers and not cooperating well, but we certainly haven't reached the kind of tragically flawed decision making after the Great Depression with protectionism and devaluation of currencies. Hopefully we'll avoid that.

Michael Green: Where we failed perhaps also is just not looking for ways to cooperate with China in particular at a moment when we do sink or swim together on this one. If you were in the White House now with a generic president who is not the current president, what would your advice be? What are a couple things the U.S. could do now to reboot cooperation with China without kind of tolerating their very nasty rhetoric about the U.S. or the propaganda campaign? Are there things we could do right now to put U.S.-China relationship on a better trajectory than where we are right now?

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Sure. So a few ideas come to mind. First and foremost, the United States really needs to get out in front of containing and mitigating the virus. Because when I think about America's geopolitical position and how Asian policymakers think based on my NSC experience, first and foremost, they look at the intrinsic strengths of the United States. And if we're not able to manage this well at home, we just lose the confidence of policymakers throughout the region. So first and foremost is American strength begins at home.
Dr. Evan Medeiros: And number two, I would launch a U.S.-Asia pandemic response initiative. Don't make this intrinsically U.S.-China. Right? And given the fact that as we talked about South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan have done a pretty good job to date of flattening the curve, and there are other Asian economies like the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, that are really struggling. Let's sort of lean into America's strategy of being a leader of the Indo-Pacific to learn from the Asian countries that have done well and help those that aren't doing that well.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: And so take this out of the U.S.-China context, but in terms of China, I think there are a couple easy things we could do early on. Number one, stop calling this the China virus or the Wuhan virus, right? I just think it's race baiting and it turns a geopolitical competition into something that's a lot uglier. Number two, I think we could look at lifting some of the tariffs on medical goods that the U.S. might need to import from China. Just do it overnight. My understanding is the USTR is sort of issued an order where they're going to open a 30 day review and comment period. This is the kind of thing that we just need to do immediately.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Number two, have Xi Jinping and Donald Trump get on the phone agree that this is a global crisis, that they're going to work together on this crisis, designate senior representatives, high level envoy, sort of have them designate point people on both sides there that are going to cooperate. I'm sure that there is a lot of goods that the Chinese are now manufacturing. Whether it's masks or ventilators or respirators, see what kind of cooperation the US and China can generate in that particular space, and then begin talking with China and other Asian economies as well about sort of rules of the road for early detection of this, rules of the road for scaling up testing.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: I think it'd be great for the U.S. to begin cooperating with major pharmaceutical companies throughout Asia too. Everybody's trying to find a vaccine, to scale up testing capabilities. I mean, there's so many ways in which the U.S. could leverage the very extensive scientific cooperation between the U.S. and China, but also among Americans and Asian scientists. And I'd like to see that kind of all Asia initiative with the US-China cooperation being a big part of it.

Michael Green: Every crisis, the cliche goes, is an opportunity and the most effective multilateral institutions in Asia were created in the midst of crisis because governments needed some platforms to work together, whether it's the six party talks, which we started in the Bush administration because of the North Korea crisis, the Chiang Mai initiative, and some of the multilateral financial agreements in Asia. So maybe to use another well-worn cliche, regional governments will turn lemons into lemonade.

Michael Green: Dr. Medeiros, thank you, Evan. Great having you as a colleague at Georgetown, the students are very lucky to have access to your scholarship and experience and wisdom and we are delighted to have you on board today. We will continue doing the Asia Chessboard throughout, we'll try to make sense of this coronavirus and the geopolitical impact very rarely in the middle of this kind of
crisis do you know exactly what is coming next, but you can begin to eliminate
the fault lines, the trends and the areas to watch. And Evan, you've really helped
us do that today, so thanks again.

Dr. Evan Medeiros: Great to be here. Mike.

Andrew Schwartz: Thanks for listening. For more on strategy and the age of programs work. Visit
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