



China Brief Writing Guidelines

Overview

China Brief provides substantive, timely, fact-based analysis about economic, political, and security issues in China, and the country's relations with neighboring regions and key, strategic states. Published every two weeks, *China Brief* is dedicated to striking a balance between current events reporting and long-term strategic analysis, and is intended for policymakers, journalists, scholars and members of the military, intelligence and business communities. *China Brief*, like all Jamestown publications, is especially committed to providing information that should be, but is not always, available through official or intelligence channels. To this end, *China Brief* articles are expected to report **new information grounded in primary, indigenous sources, and supplemented, when appropriate, with government reports, foreign media articles, academic papers, interviews and personal field experience**. Jamestown's unique ability to bring new facts and fresh perspectives has made *China Brief* a sought after resource for analysts and policymakers.

Writing Style

Articles for *China Brief* are intended to be succinct and easily accessible by specialists as well as generalists. We ask that articles submitted to *China Brief* limit opinion as much as possible and refrain from summarizing widely available information. Authors should avoid submitting articles that are commentaries or editorials; articles provide timely, fact-based analysis of primary source data. Heavy reliance on secondary sources is strongly discouraged.

Articles must use indigenous information and primary sources of information for their articles. Citations of Western media outlets (*Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *RFE/RL*, *EurasiaNet*, *The Telegraph*, etc.) as well as secondary sources, such as academic journals and news agencies like Reuters, are strongly discouraged.

While *China Brief* is an in-depth analytical journal, it is not intended to be academic in tone or perspective.

Structure

Articles should have a succinct and clear introduction summarizing the analytic takeaways of the piece. An indication of what we expect, both in substance and in style, is what we have already published. Please take a moment to look over previous *China Brief* articles before writing.

- **“News Peg”:** Begin each article with a one- to two-paragraph description of a recent event or development related to the larger topic/theme your article will discuss. Up-to-date news

pegs (something that occurred within approximately one or two weeks of submitting the article) are preferred.

- **Body:** Further details, background, and the bulk of the article’s analysis should go here. A good article will fit the news peg within a larger context, explain its relevance and importance, connect the news peg to a larger issue or trend, and (where appropriate) highlight domestic or inter-state security-related topics “to watch for.”
- **Summation/Conclusion:** Avoid ending your articles “abruptly.” Please include a summation or conclusion of what the article discussed, and ideally point to larger themes the article topic highlights. A good conclusion may (though does not necessarily need to) provide some predictions for future developments related to the main topic.

Our authors must report on the facts accurately. Although each submission is checked for accuracy, it is up to the author to ensure the veracity of his/her statements. Jamestown also assumes that articles submitted to *China Brief* have not been submitted or published elsewhere. In short, draft articles should be original and solely intended for publication in *China Brief*.

Editorial Process

While Jamestown reserves the right to make editorial changes to create a consistent style for the content of our publications, we aim to preserve the author’s original intent and tone. In the case of translated articles, significant editing is often necessary. We make every effort to consult with the author on editorial changes, but please be advised that due to time constraints we are occasionally unable to do so prior to publication.

Plagiarism

All articles must be the original work of the author. Jamestown will cancel the publication of the article in the event that it is found to be, in whole or in part, copied from other sources.

Publication and Payment Policy

Jamestown editing staff will make every effort to work with the author to make submissions suitable for publication. In the event that a submission, whether it was solicited or unsolicited, still does not meet the aforementioned criteria after consultations and revisions are made, Jamestown reserves the right to decline the publication of a draft article for *China Brief*.

Authors will receive a \$350 honorarium for full-length published articles, or \$100 for briefs.

Technical Requirements

- Full-length submissions should be 1,500-2,000 words in length. Briefs should be 800-1,000 words.
- Submit all articles with two proposed titles.
- Use indigenous/primary source citations when necessary. Reference to author's previous works need not be footnoted.
- China Brief is an American publication, so standard American—as opposed to British—spellings will be used. Please be consistent in your spelling of proper names, particularly those requiring transliteration into English.

Sources

Make sure Sources are formatted according to the following style:

- ([Xinhua](#) [with hyperlink] April 3 [if it is from the current year, otherwise include a comma and the year June 3, 2013]). News agencies Xinhua or BBC or purely online sources (White House Website) will not be *italicized*. Newspapers (*People's Daily*), will be.
- Multiple sources should be separated by semicolons. Thus: “China’s widget production rose 30 percent in the third quarter compared to the same period last year ([Xinhua](#), April 3; [People's Daily](#), November 10, 2013).”
- Footnotes: In the body of the article, place [#] at the end of the sentence, where # is the correct number. Put a section labeled **Notes** at the end of your article. Number 1., 2., etc and put your comments, books sources (with page numbers) there.
- Information from interviews and personal conversations must be cited, although the source may be kept anonymous if there is a good reason. The preferred format is: (Author’s interview, SOURCE’S NAME, CITY, DATE) or, if the name is withheld, simply (Author’s interview, CITY, DATE).
- Dates should be given in the month-date-year format widely used in the United States, with the current year omitted. The names of months should always be spelled out. Thus: “November 1, 2013”; for a date in the current year, simply “November 1.”
- Please observe the following formatting requirements: Microsoft Word Document; no paragraph indentations; do not skip lines between paragraphs. For web layout reasons, this will make it easier for us to publish your articles. You can use Microsoft Word’s “line spacing options” menu to create spaces between paragraphs that will transfer more gracefully to the web.
- Do not italicize proper names. For example: Zeng Qinghong or Zhongnanhai.
- When possible, please provide English translations/explanations of foreign language names and terms. For example: *danwei* (work unit), Zhongnanhai (compound of China’s top leaders).
- For Chinese terms, we prefer characters, unless, like *danwei* or *minzu*, the word will be frequently used.
- Anything in quotes must have a source.

- For sources go back as far as possible to the original (Instead of citing an article in the Diplomat that is repeating everything in a report by the Chinese ministry of foreign affairs – go to the Chinese foreign affairs website, and find the actual link and quote from there.)
- If you are talking about a weapon system or new organizational shift, always go back to the doctrine.

Other Elements:

- Make sure all text is justified
- Include **Bold** section headings
- Please include a short bio (2–3 sentences) describing your current affiliation and where you have been published before if applicable. Author biographies are linked in China Brief articles and examples can be found that way.
- Include 2–3 sentences about yourself: current and past positions, recent publications and relevant experience.

Abbreviations

EU, UN, CIS, OSCE, CIA, FBI, NATO (no periods);

U.S. (with periods)

Always spell out what the abbreviation stands for first before providing the abbreviation.

ex: The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) summit lasted three days.

that/which – (*which* is preceded by a comma; *that* is not)

ex: The political faction that usurped power last year consolidated its authority.

or: General Cao’s political faction, which usurped power last year, consolidated its authority amid waning public support.

Note on usage: “That” is used with a “restrictive” clause, in other words, a part of a sentence that you cannot remove without changing the meaning of the sentence. “Which” is used with a “non-restrictive” clause—a part of a sentence that can be removed without altering the overall meaning of the sentence.

ex: The Russian company that put in the highest bid won the tender. [This sentence means that of all the companies competing in the tender, the winner was the one that put in the highest offer. The clause cannot be removed because the phrasing of this sentence implies there were other Russian companies bidding for the contract that did not win (because their bid was not the highest).]

ex2: The Russian company, *which put in the highest bid*, won the tender. [The sentence, as it is phrased, implies that of all the international companies competing in the tender, the Russian company won (and it happened to have put in the highest bid).]

There is

Avoid starting off a sentence with “There is...”

ex: There is no evidence of an overt Moldovan-Belarusian military alliance.

instead try: No evidence exists for an overt Moldovan-Belarusian military alliance.

Spacing

Keep only one space between sentences. Text should be single-space, with an extra line between block (right- and left-justified) paragraphs.

More on Parenthetical Source Citations

Please use in-text, parenthetical citations in the form ([Source Name], [Month fully spelled out] [Day]). If the source is from a non-current year, include the year inside the parenthetical citation. The sentence end punctuation should always go after the parenthetical citation.

Simplest Example:

General Chang provided \$50 million of military aid to Pakistan (Xinhua, March 10).

Citation after quotation:

Medvedev told reporters, “Russia will never give in to Armenia’s demands” (Kommersant, June 23).

Source from a non-current year:

A decade ago, bilateral trade between Mongolia and Uzbekistan equaled \$400 million (Ferghana.ru, January 13, 2002).

One source from multiple dates:

The prime minister pushed through her agenda consisting of cracking down on corruption, securing Middle Eastern gas shipments, combating drug trafficking and fighting unemployment (Kyiv Times, February 27, March 1, 3–4).

Last year’s figures were nearly three times larger than the export numbers released by the Finance Ministry on August 1 (Azerbaijani Ministry of Finance, August 1, 2011; August 1).

Multiple sources, same date:

Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov vowed to crack down on the problem of systemic hazing in the military, but his pronouncement has had little effect on falling number of recruits (Interfax, Kommersant, July 5).

Multiple sources, multiple dates (separate with a semicolon):

The Belarusian president enjoys the public support of 43 percent of the population, yet these numbers have been declining since March (Charter97.org, August 4; Nasha Niva, March 30).

Titles

Capitalize only if followed by specific name

Russian President Vladimir Putin issued a strong declaration against...

The **Russian president** issued a strong declaration against...

Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, issued a strong declaration against...

The **embassy** lodged an official protest.

The **Estonian Embassy in London** lodged an official protest.

The **ministry of interior** revamped its guidelines for the use of force.

The **Russian Ministry of Interior** revamped its guidelines...

(exception: US government agencies are always capitalized – State Department, Department of Defense, etc...)

Comma Series: A, B and C (not A, B, and C)

Currency/Money

\$500,000

NOT: USD 500,000

NOT: \$ 500,000

NOT: 500,000 USD

NOT: 500,000 US dollars

\$3.5 billion

NOT: 3.5 billion dollars (US)

Only use currency symbols for US dollars, and (optional) for the euro “€”

If providing money amounts in a non-US currency, also provide the converted amount in dollars in parentheses:

Ex: The new main battle tank is projected to cost 27 million rubles (\$881,500) per unit.

Hyphens/En-Dashes/Em-Dashes

Though easily confused, the hyphen (-), en-dash (–) and em-dash (—) each has a separate punctuation role.

Hyphen (key usually located to the left of the Backspace key)

Use a hyphen to:

- form compound modifiers
ex: The deposed president traversed the **15-kilometer** distance by ferry.
But: The deposed president traveled 15 kilometers by ferry to escape.
ex: The **al-Qaeda-affiliated** cell planned...
But: The cell, an al-Qaeda affiliate, planned...
ex: The police officers came under **grenade-launcher** fire.
But: The police officers came under fire from a grenade launcher.
ex: Russia retains a **long-term** lease on the base.
But: Russia's lease on the base was long term.

Do not hyphenate an adverb (usually ends in “-ly”—truthfully, quickly, timely) with an adjective.

ex: The quickly degrading infrastructure...

Use a hyphen with most comparative (-er) and superlative (-est) forms that are a part of a compound, but not when the words more, most, less, and least are used.

ex: The highest-level meeting of Russian and Turkish authorities...
ex: The Baltic States, NATO's least secure region of responsibility,...

Note on use: Compound modifiers that need a hyphen come before the noun. Try placing “and” between the adjectives. If there is no loss of meaning, then you are very likely to be dealing with several adjectives, as opposed to a compound adjective that requires a hyphen.

ex: “Moscow based institute” → “Moscow **and** based institute” → “Moscow institute” makes sense, but “based institute” does not; this is a compound modifier that requires a hyphen (“Moscow-based institute”)
ex: “mobile light infantry” → “mobile **and** light infantry” → “mobile infantry” and “light infantry” both make sense, and the meaning that the infantry is both mobile and light is preserved. This was just a series of adjectives, which do not require hyphenation.

- write out numbers larger than 20

ex: twenty-eight, sixty-seven, one hundred and thirty-five

Note on use: Under most circumstances, you should write all numbers larger than ten as numerals. Only write out larger numbers with words when at the start of a sentence, or to prevent confusion.

- write words with hyphenated prefixes or words with in-word hyphenation
ex: un-American, x-ray, pre-Soviet

En-dash (Ctrl + -) = – note: the “-” is on the number keypad

Use an en-dash to:

- express a number or date range
ex: Annual oil exports are predicted to rise between **5 million–7 million** barrels, reflecting an increase of **10–12 percent** over last year.
But: Do not write 5–7 million unless the range is actually from 5 (five) to 7,000,000 (in which case it would be clearer to spell it out rather than use an en-dash).
ex: The Mongolian military expects to spend \$3 billion on equipment upgrades in **2012–2015**.
ex: The minister’s visit, scheduled for **August 30–September 1**, was pushed back from its originally planned date of **August 23–27**.
- Combine open compounds
ex: **Georgia–South Ossetia** peace process

Em-dash (CTR+ALT+-) = — note: the “-” is on the number keypad
Not – or --

The em-dash is a very versatile—if overused—punctuation mark, and it is mainly utilized to signify an “aside.” Jds

ex: The convoy of vehicles—**which included Kostov’s land cruiser**—was hit by RPG fire from militants atop nearby buildings.

NOT: The convoy of vehicles – **which included Kostov’s land cruiser** – was hit by RPG fire from militants atop nearby buildings.

NOT: The convoy of vehicles-**which included Kostov’s land cruiser**-was hit by RPG fire from militants atop nearby buildings.

Percent

Always use numerals but spell out “percent”; never use “%” in your text.

ex: Turkmenistan's GDP rose by 5 percent in 2012. This year, analysts forecast a growth of 6.5 percent.

ex: More than 38.5 percent of households in Baku receive their news from the Internet.

Dates:

Dates are rendered in the form: May 3, 2004 (rather than 3 May 2004). In addition, do not use ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th,...) in dates (ex: November 5th), only use cardinal numbers (November 5). It is a minor point, but changing the date format throughout an article can be time consuming. Inside the in-text parenthetical citations, always fully spell out the month followed by the day (Interfax, August 15). Include the year inside parenthetical citation only if the source is from a non-current year. [See subsection "More on Parenthetical Source Citations"]

Between April 3–12,...

From April 3 to April 12,...

Western

The Western idea of democracy...

NOT: The western idea of democracy

Quotes

In American English Periods go inside quotes. Bob's burgers are "great."

Use double quotation marks (" ") for direct quotations.

Use single quotation marks (' ') only for quotations within quotations.

ex: General Hamad said that the rebellion should be "eviscerated" (Times, January 10).

ex: General Hamad's chief of staff was quoted as saying that the "president of the republic issued an order to 'eviscerate the rebels'" (Times, January 10).

Please use "smart" quotes (" ") not "straight" (" ") quotes in your text.

Led/Lead

Lead = (verb, present tense): guide, go in front, head

= (adjective): highest in rank or authority

= (noun): a dense, gray metal [Pb]

Led = (verb): past tense of "to lead"

Toward/Towards, Upward/Upwards

US convention is to use "toward" and "upward." The extra "s" is used in Britain.

ex: US policy **toward** Lithuania...

Numbers

One through ten as words

11 and upward, as well as decimals (0.8, 4.9, etc.), as numerals

Note: Even while following this rule, avoid mixing word and digit numbers in a single sentence to avoid confusion.

ex: He sent the border guards in groups of 12, 7, 13 and 24.

Terror – use Terrorist instead, unless in a direct quotation

Terrorist attacks

Islamists

Try to avoid the term “Islamist”; use “militants,” “extremists,” “Islamic extremist,” etc.

Contractions

Never use contractions (it's, can't, didn't, won't, he'll), unless in a direct (originally English-language) quotation; always spell out fully (it is, cannot, did not, will not, he will)