

# Jamestown

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## China Brief

### **Submission Guide**

The Jamestown Foundation's mission is to help the United States and its partners understand our adversaries in their own words and in their own terms. We do this by providing objective analysis on global developments of strategic importance that is grounded in local sources, knowledge, and experiences from the regions we cover. Our analysis primarily covers Russia, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, in addition to terrorist groups and militant leaders.

A good China Brief article provides fact-based analysis about developments in the security, political, diplomatic, and economic domains of countries of concern. It should report new information grounded in local sources, local knowledge, and/or local experiences, and supplemented, when appropriate, with government reports, foreign media articles, academic papers, interviews, and personal field experience. Jamestown's unique ability to bring new evidence and fresh perspectives has made our publications sought-after resources for analysts and policymakers alike for over four decades. Jamestown does not publish policy recommendations or editorial commentaries. We are dedicated to facts and analysis, and making sure that people can understand the world as it is.

### **PRIORITY TOPICS**

The Jamestown Foundation welcomes article submissions on the following topics:

- Military & Security
- Foreign Policy
- Information Warfare
- Economics & Energy
- Politics & Society
- Technology

Jamestown will prioritize article submissions based on relevance to U.S. policy, timeliness, novelty of analysis and sources, and alignment with one of the above topic areas, according to the needs of the publication.

## PITCHING

Jamestown welcomes article pitches. A good pitch should be roughly 150 words long, detail the intended topic, provide a basic outline of the structure and substance of your piece, and list the main sources on which you will base your analysis. We also accept full drafts. For more information about the publication process, please refer to the Editorial Timeline section below.

## STRUCTURE

The core ingredients for a Jamestown article are a clear argument substantiated with primary sources and local data. Each fortnightly issue typically features five China Brief articles (c.2,000 words) and 2–3 China Brief Notes articles (c.1,000 words). All articles should be structured as follows:

- **Title:** Provide two potential titles. These should prioritize active phrases. Try to distill the entire article into fewer than ten words, or 50 characters.
- **Executive Summary:** Write three bullet points of around 35 words each, highlighting the main points of the article. These should appear in order of importance (not necessarily in the order they appear in the text). Ask yourself: if you were a policymaker and did not have time to read the whole article, what would you need to know?
- **Introduction**
  - **News Peg:** Begin each article with a description of a recent event or development related to the larger topic/theme your article will discuss, accompanied with a Chinese-language source. This should have occurred within two weeks of a submission.
  - **The “So What”:** Add one or two sentences following the news peg on the significance and relevance of the topic to our readers. This is the core argument of the article and helps readers understand why the developments covered in the article matter.
- **Body:** Provide the bulk of your analysis, background, and further details.
- **Conclusion:** Provide a summation of the article’s content and point to wider themes the article topic highlights. Explain the implications of the article’s analysis. If possible, offer predictions for future developments or suggestions for further research.

## SOURCING

China Brief articles must be based on Chinese-language sourcing. Sources should accompany direct quotations, statistics, and information previously reported elsewhere. Please use the best source available. For example, link to an official document itself rather than to a news article about it. Sometimes, Western or other media outside the region provide unique sourcing that cannot be found elsewhere. Give credit where it is due rather than citing a derivative report.

**Formatting sources.** Please use in-text, parenthetical citations at the end of sentences. These should be in the form “([Source Name], [Month fully spelled out] [Day], [Year]).” E.g. “([Xinhua](#), June 4, 2025).” If the source is from the current year, omit the year in the citation.

**Archiving sources.** Many web pages in the regions covered by Jamestown publications are liable to disappear or to have their URLs changed. Where possible, **authors should archive web sources prior to submission** so that a captured version of the source can still be accessed in the event that the original is taken down.

**A note on plagiarism.** All articles must be the original work of the author. Any passages found to be recycled or pasted from another source—even if written by the author—will result in the termination of the author’s relationship with Jamestown. Direct quotations must be placed inside quotation marks and clearly sourced, though paraphrases are often preferable to lengthy quotes. Quoted text should mostly be limited to spoken remarks or, potentially, to an argument made by a specific and notable writer.

**A note on artificial intelligence (AI).** Large language models are invaluable research assistants. They are tools that are constantly improving. Learn how to make the best use of them. At the same time, Jamestown will not accept articles that are artificially generated, either wholly or in part. We expect contributors to adhere to rigorous standards to ensure that any information acquired via such tools is checked and verified. **When in doubt, tell us.** Clarity up front about how you use AI will save time and prevent misunderstanding.

**A final note.** Beyond adhering to the rules set out in this guide, please reread article drafts before submitting. Even better, read them out loud to yourself. This guarantees that your editors will be able to return work back to you more quickly.

## **EDITORIAL TIMELINE:**

A typical editorial timeline for publishing an article in China Brief is as follows:

1. The author provides an initial proposal following the pitching guidelines outlined above. Please send this via email to [cbeditor@jamestown.org](mailto:cbeditor@jamestown.org). If you need to contact the editor directly, please email Arran Hope at [hope@jamestown.org](mailto:hope@jamestown.org).
2. The editorial team replies to the author approving a selected pitch.
3. The author prepares a first draft and sends it to the editor.
4. The editorial team replies with edits and/or appropriate feedback.
5. The author confirms edits and/or appropriate feedback, and, if needed, sends a second (and likely final) draft to the editor.
6. The editor either confirms the article is ready for publication at the next available opening OR the article is returned to the author for a third draft and repeat of steps 4 and 5.

## **PAYMENT**

Jamestown pays all its contributors an honorarium per published article. To inquire about honorariums and payment methods, please contact the editor at [cbeditor@jamestown.org](mailto:cbeditor@jamestown.org).

## STYLE GUIDE

Every piece of analysis published by Jamestown follows our established style guide. This ensures consistency and clarity across our publications. Adherence to the guide below will pave a quicker path to publication.

This guide is not exhaustive; the editor is happy to assist with any issues concerning style that arise during the writing process.

**Spelling:** American English; check with Merriam Webster (based on Standard American English).

- **Acronyms and abbreviations:** Always spell these out the first time they appear, both in the executive summary and in the main body of the text, respectively.
  - **Exceptions:** terms known by their abbreviations (SWIFT, HIMARS, etc.)
- “*United States*” and “*European Union*” are nouns; “*U.S.*” (including the dots!) and “*EU*” are adjectives.
- **Chinese Names:** Always include the Chinese characters for personal names, using the orthography that the individual in question would use. If the person is from the PRC, use 简体字 and *pinyin* romanization. If instead the person is from Taiwan, use 繁体字 and Wade-Giles or other relevant romanization systems. For instance, write Wang Huning (王沪宁) but Lai Ching-te (賴清德). The only exception to this rule is Xi Jinping, for whom characters can be avoided due to the frequency with which his name is mentioned.
- Write out the title of/identify each person the first time they are mentioned. Titles should only be capitalized if followed by a specific name. E.g. “President Putin” but “The Russian president.”

### Terms to Avoid:

- Conjunctive adverbs at the start of sentences. E.g., “Additionally, ...” If using them, insert them into the body of the sentence rather than at the start.
- Indeed, in fact, there is, utilize, strategic, impact/impactful, significant, pivotal, de facto, de jure.

### Punctuation:

- **Oxford commas!!!**
- **Ellipsis:** (...) should have a space on either side.
- **Quotes:** Use smart quotes ‘’/“”, not straight quotes '"/". In headers, only use single quotes.
- **Hyphen:** Use to form compound modifiers. E.g., “the 15-kilometer distance” or “the al-Qaeda-affiliated cell.” N.B. Do not hyphenate an adverb with an adjective.
- **En-Dash:** Use to express a number or date range, to combine open compounds, and when referring to relations between two countries. E.g. On August 30–31, International North–South Transport Corridor, Armenia–Azerbaijan peace process.
- **Em-Dash:** Mainly used to signify an aside or oppositional phrase. There should not be a space between a word and an em-dash. Do not overuse.

**That/Which:** Which follows a comma; that does not.

**Toward, not towards:** Drop the “s” at the end. Ditto for all words ending “–ward.”

**Among, not amongst:** drop the “st” at the end. Ditto for all similar words.

**Contractions:** Only use in a direct (originally English-language) quotation.

**Questions:** Avoid rhetorical questions. Avoid beginning a sentence with question words.

**Western:** Capitalized, as in “the Western idea of democracy.”

**Allies vs. Partners:** An alliance refers to a treaty commitment for mutual defense, whereas a partnership refers to any mutual agreements on a bilateral relationship that fall short of a full alliance.

**Metonyms:** Metonyms may be used, but they should not be personified.

### **Quotation:**

- **Punctuation:** All should go inside the quotation marks.
- **Quoting sources in Chinese:** All quoted material should be followed by the original 中文 in parentheses. E.g., “foreign-related legal struggle” (涉外法律斗争).
- **Block quotes (>40 words/2–3 lines):** Only include on rare occasions. Indent by 0.5 margins on both sides. Do not use quotation marks. Use a colon before the start of the quote.

**Document Titles:** Italicize laws, regulations, etc. E.g., “*China Coast Guard Law* (海警法)”

**Sources:** Use in-text (inside the period!), parenthetical citations in the form: ([Source Name], [Month fully spelled out] [Day], [Year]). Hyperlink the name. If the source is from the current year, do not include the year.

E.g., “([People’s Daily](#), January 18)” or “([Nezavisimaya Gazeta](#), June 13, 2024).”

- **Source Names:** Provide the original name of a source if it is commonly known (such as “RIA Novosti” instead of “ria.ru”; “TASS” instead of “tass.ru”; “PLA Daily” instead of “Jiefangjun Bao/Liberation Army Daily,” etc.). Write out government organizations when cited, i.e., “Russian Foreign Ministry” instead of “Mid.ru.” Spell out the full title for organizations with acronyms in the first instance. E.g., “([Ministry of National Defense \[MND\]](#), June 4)”;
- **Source Names:** Use the original source rather than the name of the website posting the article. In other words, if the article has “来源: \_\_” at the top or bottom, cite whatever appears in the “\_\_” as the source. E.g., cite [this](#) article as ([Xinhua](#), March 7), not “([NPC & CPPCC](#), March 7)” or “([News.cn](#), March 7).”
- **Multiple Sources in One Citation:** Cite chronologically, separated by a semicolon. E.g., ([Xinhua](#), March 7; [President of Russia](#), March 8).
- Sources from the same date: ([Interfax](#); [Kommersant](#), July 5).
- For the same source, but multiple dates, embed the URLs in the respective dates: (Window on Eurasia, [September 1](#), [November 10](#)).
  - For the same month, (The Barents Observer, [July 10](#), [12](#));
  - For the same year that is not current year, (Interfax, [July 10](#), [August 12](#), 2024);
  - For the same day (Xinhua, August 1 [[1](#)], [[2](#)]).

- **Citing Social Media:** Use the form “[Website title, forward slash, username (with @ when necessary)],” E.g., ([Telegram/@dimitriy\\_savvin](#), October 31), ([Facebook/GeorgianDream-Official](#), April 3).
- **Interviews:** Use the format (Author’s interview, [date conducted]).
- **Books, Reports, and Peer-Reviewed Articles:** Use the format: ([Author surname], [date published]), then add a footnote to a full citation in Chicago style.
- **Archiving:** Where possible, web sources should be archived. Suggested archiving sites: [archive.ph](#), [web.archive.org](#), [archive.is](#), [webcitation.org](#), [perma.cc](#), [webrecorder.net](#), [loom.com](#).

**Numbers:** Spell out the numbers one through ten; write 11 and upward, as well as decimals, as numerals. Use commas in large numbers, e.g., “6,489.” Avoid mixing word and digit numbers in a single sentence to avoid confusion. “He sent the border guards in groups of 12, 7, 13, and 24.” Round to three significant figures in most cases. Avoid starting sentences with numbers, but if it is unavoidable, always write out the number.

- **Quantities:** Use digits, but where necessary spell out “millions,” “billions,” etc.
- **Units:** Spell out units, e.g., “tons,” “miles,” “kilometers.” Add the conversion to imperial units in parentheses directly after. E.g., “200 kilometers (124 miles).”
- **Dates:** Use the format [month] [day], [year]. E.g., “March 18, 2024.”
- **Ranges:** “between April 3–12” (use en-dash). For years, include all digits in the end-date, e.g., “2021–2023.”
- **Percent:** Always use numerals but spell out “percent.” You may use the symbol “%” in tables and graphics.
- **Currency:** Only use the currency symbol for U.S. dollars. For others, spell out the currency and provide the U.S. dollar equivalent in parentheses. E.g., “renminbi (RMB) 1 trillion (\$138 billion).” N.B. For Chinese currency, do not use “Yuan” or “CNY.”

**Sentences:** Ensure they are active and clear. Break into separate sentences if too long.

**Paragraphs:** Ensure each has a topic sentence.

**Headers:** Should be active and paraphrase the author’s analysis, not just describe the topic. Capitalize anything five letters or longer, or any important words. All should be bold.

**Notes:** Use endnotes to provide more context and information. Endnote numbers should appear, bracketed, in bold, after the end of a sentence, and separated by a space. E.g., “... in Beijing. [1]”