

FMSO's Military DIME (M-DIME) Research Project

Tracking Russian and Chinese military influence in states around the world

Instruments of Chinese Military Influence in Argentina

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OVERVIEW OF FMSO'S M-DIME RESEARCH PROJECT

The Military DIME (M-DIME) Research Project is a dynamic effort from researchers at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO). Its goal is to provide Army leaders with a clear, comparative understanding of how China and Russia employ instruments of national power to obtain military influence around the world. The M-DIME framework is derived from the "DIME" concept, which classes instruments of national power into four types: Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic. Based on this concept, the M-DIME framework gives more narrow attention to the instruments that China and Russia employ to gain military influence in third-party countries.

The M-DIME framework's purpose is to track and analyze the military influence of "Benefactor" countries (i.e. China and Russia) in select "Recipient" countries in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and South and South-east Asia. Benefactor countries are assumed to engage in activities that result in them having increased military influence in Recipient countries to gain leverage over global rivals, competitors, and adversaries; for China and Russia, this means the United States. Within this framework, "military influence" is defined as the ability of a Benefactor country to shape or alter the attitudes, behaviors, and capabilities of actors within—and entities associated with—the armed forces of Recipient countries.

The M-DIME framework identifies 12 distinct instruments of national power employed by Benefactor countries to gain military influence in Recipient countries, three for each of the DIME categories. They are as follows:

DIPLOMATIC INSTRUMENTS

- D1 Defense-Related Diplomacy
- D2 International Military Education and Training
- D3 Soft Power Activities

INFORMATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

- I1 Cultural and Media Outreach, Collaboration and Alignment
- I2 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Support
- I3 Cooperation in Military Intelligence and Communications

MILITARY INSTRUMENTS

- M1 Formal Bilateral Military Engagements
- M2 Shared Informal/Multilateral Military Engagements
- M3 Defense/Security Pacts and Agreements

ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS

- E1 Arms Transfers
- E2 Technology-Sharing and Joint Production Agreements
- E3 Trade and Cooperation in Strategic Commodities/Sectors

M-DIME analysis is based on qualitative assessments of Benefactor influence in Recipient countries along each of the 12 M-DIME instruments of influence. These assessments are made for the Benefactor's **Current Influence** (assessed as Very High, High, Medium, Low, Very Low, or Unobserved) and **Projected Influence** (assessed as Increasing, Steady, Decreasing, or Unknown). Current assessments are made based on activities from 2012 to the present, while future assessments are three-year forecasts.


The bulk of activities considered in the M-DIME Research Project involve members of the armed forces or defense sector personnel in both Benefactor and Recipient countries. Such activities include formal and informal military-to-military diplomacy, security cooperation engagements, and arms transfers. However, the M-DIME Research Project also tracks and analyzes Chinese and Russian activities that employ non-military instruments of influence but ultimately bear on the decision-making and capabilities of the Recipient country's armed forces. Such activities include Chinese and Russian collaboration with Benefactor states in media, communications technology, and strategic sectors.

The M-DIME Research Project's findings are derived from open-source research. Each M-DIME product is produced with the collaboration of analysts from across FMSO, frequently with the assistance of non-Department of Defense subject matter experts coming from academia, think tanks, and the private sector. Given its basis in open-source research, the M-DIME Research Project has an inherent limitation. It cannot track Chinese and Russian military influence activities that are deliberately kept secret. Consequently, assessments of Chinese and Russian influence based on instruments for which secrecy is important or where information would typically be classified by the Benefactor or Recipient countries—for instance, military-technology sharing or intelligence collaboration—are acknowledged to be made with low confidence. In certain cases, assessments are not made where open-source data is considered inconclusive.


In sum, the M-DIME Research Project is a tool for U.S. Army and U.S. Government personnel to better understand the instruments of national power employed by China and Russia to gain global military influence and the impact these activities have on U.S. national security interests. Over time, FMSO will expand the body of research and assessments based on this framework, increasing its comparative value across Benefactor and Recipient countries.


KEY ASSESSMENTS














China’s current M-DIME influence in Argentina is assessed as Low. By far the most important instrument for China’s current military influence in Argentina is:

 **Trade and Cooperation in Strategic Commodities/Sectors (E3).** Investments and cooperation in strategic sectors by private and state-owned companies are China’s primary instruments for gaining military influence in Argentina. Chinese efforts focus on trade and cooperation in hydroelectric and nuclear energy, as well as the extraction of lithium, uranium, natural gas, and oil. For example, the Cauchari Solar Plant in Jujuy owned by PowerChina is the largest in Latin America. Furthermore, various multimillion-dollar agreements exist to construct lithium extraction projects in northwest Argentina. Comprehensive cooperation in strategic sectors between China and Argentina is significant, as the South American country is a key trading partner for the United States.

China’s projected M-DIME influence in Argentina is assessed as Steady. Some of the most important instruments for China’s projected military influence in Argentina are:

 **Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Support (I2).** China and Argentina have multiple collaboration agreements in ICT between civilian entities. Notably, the Chinese private company Huawei has signed agreements and provided professional training to top universities in Argentina. Moreover, high-level Chinese government officials have publicly expressed their intent to continue bilateral collaboration. Chinese influence via the instrument is expected to remain steady over the next three years.

 **Formal Bilateral Military Engagements (M1).** Since 2018, China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Strategic Support Force has operated a space station in Patagonia. Although the base is not employed for military purposes and there is no reason to expect this to change, the basing agreement is for 50 years and as such provides China with a steady level of influence through this tool.

| DIPLOMATIC / INFORMATION | | | MILITARY / ECONOMIC | | | | | |
|---|-----------|---|---|-----------|--|--|--|--|
|  | D1 | Defense-Related Diplomacy |  | M1 | Formal Bilateral Military Engagements | | | |
|  | D2 | International Military Education and Training |  | M2 | Shared Informal/Multilateral Military Engagements | | | |
|  | D3 | Soft Power Activities |  | M3 | Defense/Security Pacts and Agreements | | | |
|  | I1 | Cultural/Media Outreach, Collaboration, Alignment | | E1 | Arms Transfers | | | |
|  | I2 | Information/Communications Technology Support |  | E2 | Technology-Sharing, Joint Production Agreements | | | |
| | I3 | Cooperation in Military Intelligence/Communications |  | E3 | Trade/Cooperation in Strategic Commodities/Sectors | | | |
| CURRENT DEGREE OF INFLUENCE | | | PROJECTED FUTURE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE | | | | | |
| Very High | High | Medium | Low | Very Low | None/Unobserved | Increasing  | Steady  | Decreasing  |

INTRODUCTION TO CHINA-ARGENTINA MILITARY RELATIONS

Argentina has historically maintained a good relationship with China, with longstanding economic and diplomatic ties. Official diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1972¹ and their first bilateral trade agreement signed in 1977. In 1980, General Videla, as the de facto leader of the country, became the first Argentine leader to visit China.² Argentina became one of China’s main trading partners in Latin America following its rapid emergence as a major economic power. Chinese investments in Argentina multiplied across different sectors, such as mining, oil, natural gas, hydropower, nuclear energy, and telecommunications.³ China considers Argentina a “comprehensive strategic partner,” signifying a country vital to Beijing’s strategic interests. This distinction has been underscored by various high-level diplomatic visits. Argentine presidents visited Beijing in 1988, 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2004, while Chinese presidents visited Argentina in 1990, 2001, and 2004.⁴

Currently, military relations between Argentina and China are modest, and both countries prioritize military cooperation with other nations. Argentina

is one of Latin America’s largest economies and a key trading partner for the United States. The two countries share deep economic ties and have common interests in areas such as democracy, counterterrorism, energy, and technology infrastructure.⁵ Furthermore, Argentina has been a major non-NATO ally since 1998. Following President Mauricio Macri’s 2015 election, his center-right administration increasingly sought military engagements with the United States. For instance, Macri signed an agreement with the United States on cybersecurity collaboration, and joint military exercises between the two countries’ armed forces took place in 2017 and 2018.⁶ However, President Alberto Fernández’s center-left administration, which came to power in 2019, scaled back bilateral and multilateral military cooperation with the United States. Military relations between Argentina and China in the next three years will depend on the foreign policy direction of newly elected President Javier Milei. Despite being a political outsider, Milei has aligned himself with traditional center-right parties and has previously expressed intentions to politically distance Argentina from China.⁷

ARGENTINA AT A GLANCE

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Capital | Buenos Aires ⁸ |
| Population | 46,621,847 (2023 est.) ⁹ |
| GDP per Capita | \$21,500 (2021 est.) ¹⁰ |
| Head of Government | President Javier Gerardo Milei ¹¹ |
| Head of State | President Javier Gerardo Milei ¹² |
| Minister of Defense | Luis Petri |
| Chief of General Staff | General Juan Martín Paleo ¹³ |
| Military Expenditure (total) | \$2577.58 million (2022) ¹⁴ |
| Military Expenditure (% of GDP) | 0.4% of GDP (2022) ¹⁵ |
| Armed Service Branches | Army, Navy, Air Force, National Gendarmerie, Coast Guard ¹⁶ |
| Active Armed Forces Personnel | 80,000 (2023) ¹⁷ |

D - Diplomatic Instruments

China's use of diplomatic instruments to exert military influence in Argentina is particularly pronounced in security cooperation visits but less visible in other areas. Notably, there have been semi-frequent high-level meetings involving heads of state, defense ministers, and military chiefs of staff. Official reports also confirm shared military participation in standard soft power activities, especially military attaché activities. In addition, Argentina's military and national police have participated in a few short-term training programs in China. Interestingly, China also uses military exchanges in Argentina as a means of influencing the country.



D1: Defense-Related Diplomacy

Current Influence: Medium

Projected Influence: Steady

- ***There have been three meetings between the heads of state of China and Argentina.***
 - » In China, President Xi Jinping met with Argentine President Macri in May 2018¹⁸ and his predecessor, President Cristina Fernández, in February 2015.¹⁹ The talks focused on boosting political and economic ties. The heads of state signed statements for Beijing to undertake infrastructure projects in Argentina, including hydroelectric energy, nuclear energy, and railways.
 - » In July 2014, Xi made a state visit to Argentina. Following the meeting, China and Argentina upgraded their bilateral ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership.²⁰
- ***Chinese and Argentine military and defense officials have semi-frequent meetings.***
 - » In June 2023, Admiral Yuan Huazhi of the PLA Navy visited Argentina and met with the Chief of the General Staff of the Argentine Navy, Julio Horacio Guardia.²¹
 - » In April 2023, Chinese delegations from state-owned defense companies Norinco²² and China National Aero-Technology Import & Export Corporation²³ visited Argentina and met with Defense Minister Jorge Taiana and Chief of the General Staff of the Air Force Xavier Isaac. The Chinese companies offered to sell JF-17 Thunder fighter planes to Argentina.
 - » In October 2021, Taiana held a video call with the Chinese Defense Minister, General Wei Fenghe,²⁴ who visited Argentina in September 2019 to meet with the previous Argentine Defense Minister, Oscar Aguad.²⁵
 - » In September 2019, PLA Army Lieutenant General Ma Yiming met with the Chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Argentina.²⁶
 - » In June 2018²⁷ and November 2016,²⁸ the Argentine Security Minister met with the Chinese Vice Minister of Public Security in Buenos Aires and Beijing, respectively. The talks focused on increasing anti-crime cooperation.
- ***There is no indication that high-level visits will either decrease or increase over the next three years. Instead, China's influence via this instrument is likely to remain steady during this period.***



D2: International Military Education and Training Programs

Current Influence: Low

Projected Influence: Steady

- ***Argentina's military and national police have participated in a few short-term training programs in China.***
 - » In 2019, Argentine police officers attended a two-week course on combating organized crime hosted by China's Ministry of Public Security.²⁹
 - » In 2017, Argentine soldiers attended seminars in China on security in the Asia-Pacific Region, military logistics, and Sino-Latin American defense.³⁰
 - » There are also some reports of Argentine soldiers attending short-term courses at the PLA National Defence University in Beijing and the PLA Army Command College in Nanjing.³¹
- ***Chinese and Argentine officers also participate in a limited number of military education and training exchanges.***
 - » In April 2019, the then-Chief of the General Staff of the Argentine Navy, Admiral José Luis Villán, attended a symposium in Qingdao organized by the PLA Navy.³²
 - » In 2018, two PLA officers, Major Wu Yuanye and Lieutenant colonel Cai Sujing, attended Spanish-language courses at the War College of the Argentine Armed Forces.³³
- ***There are some references to future short-term military education exchanges between China and Argentina, and this low frequency is expected to remain steady over the next three years.***



D3: Soft Power Activities

Current Influence: Low

Projected Influence: Steady

- **Official reports confirm multiple military attaché activities.**
 - » In July 2023, the Chinese Embassy military attaché held a meeting with the head of the Argentine Federal Police.³⁴
 - » The Chinese Ambassador and military attaché held meetings with Defense Minister Taiana in August 2023³⁵ and with Francisco Cafiero, Secretary of International Affairs of the Ministry of Defense, in December 2019.³⁶
- **Official reports confirm shared military participation in other standard soft power activities, such as humanitarian and athletic activities.**
 - » The Chinese Ministry of Defense donated medical supplies to Argentina's Armed Forces in February 2021³⁷ and June 2020.³⁸
 - » Argentine soldiers participated in the 2019 Military World Games in Wuhan, China.³⁹
- **Argentina has long maintained good relations with China regardless of presidential administration and, therefore, standard soft power activities probably will continue steadily over the next three years.**

I - Informational Instruments

China's use of informational instruments to exert military influence in Argentina centers on cultural and media outreach, as well as collaboration in ICT. Senior Chinese officials frequently contribute opinion pieces to the Argentine press, promoting positive views of China while criticizing the United States. The presence of Chinese media in Argentina is evident through media cooperation agreements and Spanish-language publications by Chinese state-owned companies. Additionally, there are bilateral agreements and statements of intent along with actual collaboration in ICT sectors, especially by Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei. However, there is no publicly available information about Chinese cooperation with Argentina in military intelligence and communications programs during the relevant period.



I1: Cultural and Media Outreach, Collaboration, and Alignment

Current Influence: Medium

Projected Influence: Steady

- **Senior Chinese officials often write opinion pieces in the Argentine press, discussing topics that put China in a positive light and criticize the United States.**
 - » The Chinese Ambassador to Argentina has published multiple articles in Argentina's leading conservative daily, *La Nación*, including in July 2018,⁴⁰ June 2017,⁴¹ April 2017,⁴² November 2016,⁴³ and April 2016.⁴⁴ Some of the main topics include enhancing China-Argentina relations, promoting Chinese strategies (e.g., Belt and Road Initiative), and criticizing the American government for imposing tariffs on Chinese products.
 - » The Chinese Ambassador also published articles in *El Clarín* in May 2017,⁴⁵ *Dangdai* in February 2017,⁴⁶ and *Tiempo Argentino* in June 2015⁴⁷ and January 2014.⁴⁸
- **There is a limited presence of Chinese media in Argentina and one media cooperation agreement. Yet, a significant portion of the population expresses favorable views toward China.**
 - » Argentina's Ministry of Media and Communication and China Media Group signed a media cooperation agreement in 2022.⁴⁹
 - » In 2018, Argentina's Ministry of Media and Communication, along with China's Xinhua News Agency, hosted a conference in Buenos Aires to boost media cooperation between China and Latin America.⁵⁰
 - » In 2016, China Daily launched *China Watch Argentina*, a biweekly Spanish publication that is published with two local newspapers.⁵¹
 - » According to the latest *Latinobarómetro* (2020), 42 percent of Argentines had a very favorable or somewhat favorable opinion of China.⁵²
- **There is a significant presence of Confucius Institutes in Argentina.**
 - » Many of Argentina's top higher education institutions host Confucius Institutes, including the University of Buenos Aires, the National University of Córdoba, and the National University of Rosario.⁵³
- **The presence of Chinese media in Argentina is evident through Spanish-language publications by Chinese senior officials and state-owned companies. Yet, there is no data to suggest that this presence will either decrease or increase over the next three years.**

**I2: Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Support****Current Influence: Low****Projected Influence: Steady**

- ***There are multiple collaboration agreements in ICT between civilian entities.***
 - » In 2023, Huawei selected 42 college students from Argentina to receive ICT training. Since 2017, approximately 250 Argentine students across 70 universities have received training from the Chinese company.⁵⁴
 - » In 2019, the University of Buenos Aires and China's University of Jilin signed agreements to collaborate on artificial intelligence research.⁵⁵
 - » Huawei has signed collaboration agreements with multiple organizations, including the National University of La Rioja in 2021,⁵⁶ the Faculty of Engineering at the National University of La Plata in 2018,⁵⁷ and the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Buenos Aires in 2013.⁵⁸ These agreements enable local teachers and students to receive ICT training and certificates.
- ***Although ICT collaboration between China and Argentina is significant, there is little evidence to suggest that this will either decrease or increase over the next three years. There is at least one strategically significant expression of interest by Chinese government officials to deepen ICT collaboration with Argentina; however, it is nearly three years old and we have seen no effort to follow through.***
 - » In October 2021, the Chinese Foreign Minister expressed interest in expanding collaboration with Argentina in aerospace, 5G, and ICT communications.⁵⁹

**I3: Cooperation in Military Intelligence and Communications****Current Influence: Unobserved****Projected Influence: Unknown**

- ***There is no publicly available information about Chinese cooperation with Argentina in military intelligence and communications programs during the period in question.***
- ***Projected Chinese influence via this instrument is unknown because of the lack of observed activities.***

M - Military Instruments

China's use of military instruments to establish greater influence in Argentina is evident, though not extensive. Notably, there is a basing agreement allowing China to operate a military-run space station in Patagonia, which could be used to collect information on the position and activity of U.S. military satellites. Additionally, there is a minimal presence of Chinese private security contractors in Argentina, and the countries collaborate on various UN peacekeeping missions, which offer China little real influence. Finally, China and Argentina have signed a few nonbinding bilateral security or defense cooperation agreements, but none have been signed in the past six years.



M1: Formal Bilateral Military Engagements

Current Influence: Medium

Projected Influence: Steady

- ***There is a basing agreement for China to operate a military-run space station in Patagonia.***
 - » Since April 2018, China has operated a military-run space station in Patagonia, managed by the China Satellite Launch and Tracking Control Center General of the PLA Strategic Support Force. The agreement does not specify if the operations are being run by civil or military Chinese personnel.⁶⁰
 - » The basing agreement lacks an enforcement mechanism for Argentine authorities to prevent its use for military or signals intelligence purposes. U.S. military and intelligence officials are concerned it could be used to collect information on the position and activity of U.S. military satellites.⁶¹
- ***While the basing agreement is intended to last 50 years, there is no data to suggest a change in the frequency of formal bilateral military engagements between China and Argentina over the next three years.***



M2: Shared Informal/Multilateral Military Engagements

Current Influence: Very Low

Projected Influence: Steady

- ***There is a minimal presence of Chinese private security contractors in Argentina.***
 - » In 2022, RAND reported a minimal presence of Chinese private security contractors in Argentina, working in mining facilities, ports, and infrastructure projects.⁶²
 - » The Beijing Dujie Security Technology Company is reported to have an office in Argentina.⁶³
- ***The only evidence of collaboration between military troops and security personnel from China and Argentina is on UN peacekeeping missions. However, this type of collaboration gives China little influence in Argentina due to its remote and multilateral nature.***
 - » Experts, police officers, and military troops from China and Argentina have collaborated on UN peacekeeping missions in Jerusalem,⁶⁴ Western Sahara,⁶⁵ South Sudan,⁶⁶ and Lebanon.⁶⁷
- ***There is no data to suggest a change in the frequency of multilateral military engagements between China and Argentina over the next three years. The minimal presence of Chinese private security contractors and overlap in U.N. peacekeeping missions are expected to remain steady during this period.***



M3: Defense/Security Pacts and Agreements

Current Influence: Low

Projected Influence: Steady

- ***Argentina and China have signed a few nonbinding bilateral security or defense cooperation agreements, yet none have been signed in the past six years.***
 - » In 2016, the Argentine Security Minister and the Chinese Public Security Minister signed a bilateral agreement to combat organized international crime and terrorism.⁶⁸
 - » In 2015, China and Argentina signed a series of defense cooperation agreements. The agreements set the stage for joint co-production of weapons systems in Argentina, Chinese investments in Argentine nuclear plants, Argentine soldiers attending short-term courses, PLA construction of field hospitals in Argentina, etc.⁶⁹
- ***China's military influence in Argentina through this instrument is likely to persist at its current level during the next three years given the existing nonbinding bilateral agreements and lack of any signs of newer, more substantial defense/security pacts between the two countries.***

E - Economic Instruments

China's economic instruments to gain military influence in Argentina focus on trade and cooperation in nuclear energy, as well as the extraction of lithium, uranium, and oil. China and Argentina maintain substantial overall trade volume and high levels of cooperation in strategic sectors. Recent agreements aim to expand cooperation in these areas. However, while discussions and agreements between China and Argentina regarding the co-production of weapons systems exist, there have been no recent developments over the past seven years. Additionally, arms trade between China and Argentina is minimal.



E1: Arms Transfers

Current Influence: Unobserved

Projected Influence: Unknown

- *There have been no weapons exports from China to Argentina since 2010, according to the arms transfer database of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.⁷⁰ Argentina primarily imports weapons from the United States and France.*
- *Projected Chinese influence via this instrument is unknown because of the lack of observed activities.*



E2: Technology-Sharing and Joint Production Agreements

Current Influence: Low

Projected Influence: Steady

- *There is evidence of discussions and agreements between China and Argentina for the joint co-production of weapon systems in Argentina. However, no agreements have been reached in the past seven years.*
 - » In April 2023⁷¹ and February 2022,⁷² the Argentine Ministry of Defense discussed the possibility of co-producing ammunition, explosives, and fighter jets in Argentina with Chinese state-owned defense conglomerate China North Industries Corporation (Norinco).
 - » In 2015, China agreed to construct five naval vessels for the Argentine Navy, with up to three of the ships reportedly to be co-produced in Argentina.⁷³
- *In 2015, China and Argentina agreed to coproduce 100 or more amphibious armored personnel carriers, developed by Norinco.⁷⁴ Officials also discussed the future co-production of multirole combat aircraft and amphibious armored personnel carriers in Argentina.⁷⁵*
- *There is no evidence of agreements between China and Argentina for the joint co-production of weapon systems in the past seven years, and this is expected to remain steady over the next three years.*



E3: Trade and Cooperation in Strategic Commodities/Sectors

Current Influence: High

Projected Influence: Steady

- *Investments and cooperation in strategic sectors by private and state-owned companies are China's primary economic instrument for gaining military influence in Argentina. Recent agreements exist to expand cooperation in strategic sectors, especially energy production and lithium extraction.*
 - » As of August 2022, the Chinese state-owned Zijin Mining Group is investing \$380 million and constructing a lithium extraction project in Argentina.^{76 77}
 - » As of April 2022, China is financing the construction of the Santa Cruz River Hydroelectric Project. The project is led by Represas Patagonia, a consortium involving China Gezhouba Group (with a 70 percent stake in the company) and two local companies.⁷⁸
 - » The private Chinese company Tsingshan plans to undertake a joint lithium-production venture in Argentina with French mining group Eramet, valued in total at more than \$1.7 billion in two stages.⁷⁹
 - » In February 2022, the state-owned China National Nuclear Corp signed a contract in Argentina to build the \$8 billion Atucha III nuclear power plant.⁸⁰

- ***In addition to these agreements, there is already ongoing cooperation in strategic sectors by both Chinese private and state-owned companies.***
 - » Private companies Ganfeng Lithium⁸¹ and Hanaq Group⁸² operate 13 projects extracting lithium, uranium, silver, and other strategic materials.
 - » State-owned companies Sinopec (with Oxy Argentina), PowerChina, and Goldwind operate over a dozen oil, natural gas, solar, and wind power plants in Argentina.⁸³
 - » The Cauchari Solar Plant by PowerChina is the largest in Latin America.⁸⁴
- ***In 2022, China was Argentina's second-largest trading partner and its main import partner.***
 - » Despite these economic ties, there are no significant export or import dependencies in strategic materials between China and Argentina, according to the Observatory of Economic Complexity.⁸⁵
- ***Intensive trade and cooperation are occurring in strategic sectors, and this is expected to continue in the next three years given the multiple agreements reached in 2022 between Argentina and China.***

CONCLUSIONS

China's current M-DIME influence in Argentina is assessed as Low. China's current military influence in Argentina occurs at roughly similar levels across all four types of instruments—diplomatic, informational, military and economic. China's primary means of influence involves investments and collaboration in strategic sectors by private and state-owned companies, focusing on hydroelectric and nuclear energy, lithium, uranium, natural gas, and oil (E3). Comprehensive cooperation in strategic sectors between Argentina and China is important, as the South American country is a key trading partner for the United States. Beijing could leverage this collaboration to enhance its military influence, given Argentina's dependence on foreign companies for this economic sector. Diplomatically, official reports confirm semifrequent high-level visits between heads of state and defense ministers (D1), as well as shared military participation in standard soft power activities, such as military attaché activities and athletic events (D3). In terms of informational instruments, senior Chinese officials frequently contribute opinion pieces to the Argentine press, promoting positive views of China while criticizing the United States. The presence of Chinese media in Argentina is also evident through media cooperation agreements and Spanish-language publications by Chinese state-owned companies (I1). Additionally, there are bilateral agreements and statements of intent along with actual collaboration in ICT sectors (I2). Finally, China's use of military instruments to establish greater influence in Argentina is apparent. There is a basing agreement allowing China to operate a military-run space station in Patagonia, which could be used to collect information on the position and activity of U.S. military satellites (M1).

China's projected M-DIME influence in Argentina is assessed as Steady. Chinese military influence in Argentina is expected to remain diverse, occurring at roughly similar levels across all four types of instruments in the next three years. China will likely continue prioritizing the energy and mining sectors as its key instrument for strategic influence in Argentina (E3). However, China's use of this instrument has probably plateaued and is unlikely to increase in the next few years, primarily because of the recent election of a president who favors deepening strategic relations with the United States, not China.

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