ME Instability & the US-China Power Balance

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Geopolitical Ripples: How Middle Eastern Conflict Shifts the Indo-Pacific Power Balance

Timeframe: 17/04/2017 – 28/04/2026

China · Bilateralism & Multilateralism · Issue I

Key Insights

- 1: How does the escalation of instability in the Middle East affect the global balance of power between the U.S. and China, and what are the secondary implications for stability in the Indo-Pacific?
- 2: While the U.S. faces a "credibility gap" as a security provider, China acts as a "free rider," leveraging M. Eastern energy and the BRI to bypass Indo-Pacific maritime chokepoints.
- 3: Escalation in the Middle East profoundly impacts the U.S.-China rivalry across both regions

Definition

Rimland: A geopolitical concept by Nicholas Spykman, referring to the coastal fringes of Eurasia, whose control is considered vital for global maritime and territorial dominance

> *Any instability in the Middle East translates into immediate geopolitical pressure on the Indo-Pacific, with the security of maritime routes serving as the primary strategic stake*

Documents: Source Document