# Semiconductor Concentration as Strategic Hostage_TSMC and the Bilateral Dependency Knot

*Indo-Pacific theater · Tier 4 articles[] · pressure-point analysis · anchors semiconductor-supply, semiconductor-trade-restrictions, us-ndaa-indo-pacific*

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## I. Two framings that miss the strategic function

Semiconductor concentration at Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company is conventionally approached through one of two framings. The first is the supply-chain framing: concentration is a vulnerability, disruption produces economic cost estimated in the trillions, and policy should diversify production to reduce fragility. The second is the industrial-policy framing: concentration is a problem to be solved through domestic fab investment, subsidy regimes such as the CHIPS Act and the European Chips Act, and indigenization programs in the PRC. Both framings treat concentration as a defect to be corrected, and both measure progress by the rate at which concentration is reduced.

Both framings are strategically underpowered. They describe concentration as a problem rather than as the operational structure that determines strategic behavior. Under Existential Imperative Realism, the analytical object is not whether concentration is good or bad; it is the question of what concentration *does* — how it structures the cost calculations, decision surfaces, and constraint sets of every actor whose existential imperatives intersect with advanced chip production. Concentration is not a flaw in the system. It is the system.

The correct framing is hostage geometry. TSMC concentration creates a three-way mutual-hostage structure in which Taiwan is hostage to invasion by the PRC; the United States technology and defense base is hostage to supply interruption from Taiwan; and the PRC technology base is hostage to the same supply interruption, and more acutely, because PRC indigenization at leading nodes remains incomplete. Each party holds leverage over the others precisely because each is exposed through its own dependencies on the system.

This structure has specific operational properties. It deters some behaviors and not others. It produces particular kinds of coercion management that differ from what either the supply-chain or industrial-policy framings would prescribe. And it is time-bounded: the geometry is stable under current parameters but will shift as Arizona capacity matures and PRC indigenization advances. Reading the structure correctly requires understanding all three properties together.

This essay works through the hostage geometry in detail, locates each party within it, traces the policy instruments that operate inside the structure rather than outside it, and identifies the rupture triggers that would shift the equilibrium. It concludes with the frame through which Indo-Pacific pressure cells related to semiconductors should be read, and the companion role this analysis plays alongside the Taiwan deterrence-stack thesis.

## II. Concentration as system architecture, not market outcome

TSMC produces the majority of the world's semiconductors at advanced nodes. The company manufactures over 60% of global semiconductor volume and approximately 92% of chips at 7nm and below, supplying Apple, NVIDIA, AMD, Qualcomm, Google, and the broader universe of advanced-computing customers. Disruption of Taiwan's semiconductor output has been estimated to produce annual global economic costs on the order of $2.5 trillion. TSMC's 2nm node entered volume production at Fab 22 in Kaohsiung in the fourth quarter of 2025, with Fab 20 in Hsinchu following shortly after. The company's 2nm nanosheet transistor process delivers 10–15% speed improvements or 25–30% power reductions compared to 3nm. Taiwan commands over 90% of the world's advanced-process chip production.

These figures are typically presented as concentration risk. They are more accurately presented as system architecture. Advanced semiconductor fabrication is not a commodity production process that could be replicated in any sufficiently capitalized location. It is the output of a co-evolved industrial ecosystem composed of four concentrated layers: the fabs themselves, the lithography equipment that patterns the wafers, the precursor chemicals and specialty gases that enable the process steps, and the trained human capital that operates and continuously improves the process recipes. Each layer is concentrated by its own industrial logic, and the layers are co-dependent in ways that cannot be unbundled on short timescales.

The lithography layer is the most concentrated. ASML is the sole producer of extreme ultraviolet lithography systems, which are required for nodes at 5nm and below. The company is Netherlands-based, its machines contain components from a global supplier network, and their export to the PRC is restricted under US-coordinated controls. The precursor-chemicals layer includes specialty gases (neon, krypton, xenon for excimer lasers; specialty etchants; photoresists) concentrated among a small number of producers in South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and the US. The human-capital layer is concentrated in a Taiwanese engineering workforce whose process knowledge has been built over four decades of continuous learning on TSMC's fab floors; this knowledge cannot be transferred through documentation alone and cannot be replicated through training programs on any timescale shorter than a decade.

The fab layer — the visible concentration that the supply-chain framing addresses — is downstream of and dependent on the other three layers. Building a fab in Arizona, Germany, or Japan relocates the fab layer without relocating the other three. Operating that fab requires continuous inputs from the lithography, chemicals, and human-capital layers, and those inputs remain concentrated regardless of where the fab physically sits.

The strategic implication is that the concentration *is the industry*. Diversification efforts that address only the fab layer do not reduce concentration; they distribute one layer across more geographies while leaving the upstream dependencies intact. This matters for the hostage structure, because it means that even successful fab diversification does not release any of the parties from the mutual exposure the geometry creates. The hostage dynamic is sticky at the system level in a way that the fab-distribution metrics do not capture.

# III. The three hostage positions

The hostage structure binds three principal actors whose existential imperatives intersect through the semiconductor system. Each occupies a distinct position, and each's behavior is shaped by the specific form of its exposure.

## Taiwan's hostage position

Taiwan's exposure runs in two directions simultaneously. The island is hostage to PRC action because its territory contains the concentration, and because the concentration makes it a high-value target in ways that non-concentrated states are not. TSMC is often referred to within Taiwan as the "sacred mountain protecting the country" — a phrase whose operational meaning is that the concentration is the strategic reason major external powers cannot allow Taiwan to be absorbed or disrupted on PRC terms.

But Taiwan is simultaneously hostage *to* the concentration itself, because its strategic relevance, its US security attention, and its capacity to resist coercion all depend on maintaining the fabrication dominance that produces the "silicon shield." A country whose strategic value is concentrated in a single industry may find its bargaining power declining rather than increasing — because all parties recognize that it cannot simply withdraw from the position that gives it value. Taiwan cannot reduce its concentration without reducing its leverage. It cannot increase its concentration without increasing its exposure.

This double exposure has shaped Taiwanese policy. Taipei has restricted offshore transfer of 5nm and below process technology, increased R&D subsidies to maintain the node-leadership position that makes concentration strategically valuable, and simultaneously permitted — under US pressure and customer demand — measured offshore expansion to Arizona, Japan, and Germany. The policy pattern is not an inconsistency. It is the only coherent posture inside the hostage geometry: preserve the concentration that produces leverage, while distributing just enough production to prevent total concentration from producing the counter-behavior (abandonment, forced absorption) that the concentration itself risks triggering.

## The United States' hostage position

The US position within the hostage structure is the one where the supply-chain framing most clearly breaks down. TSMC's revenue distribution shows North America at 74% of 2025 revenue and China at 9%, which reflects US customer concentration in the advanced-computing segments (NVIDIA, Apple, AMD, Google, Intel) that depend on leading-edge foundry capacity. The US is the largest customer for TSMC's output and also the party most dependent on that output for the AI, defense, and advanced-computing capabilities the 2025 National Security Strategy identifies as core national interests.

This creates a specific hostage dynamic: the US depends on Taiwan not only for general chip supply but for the specific leading-edge capacity that underwrites its technological edge over the PRC. Supply interruption from Taiwan would not merely impose economic cost on the US; it would directly compress the capability basis for US strategic competition with China. This is why US policy has treated TSMC concentration simultaneously as a vulnerability (justifying the CHIPS Act and Arizona investment) and as a deterrent (justifying the posture that treats a Taiwan contingency as directly tied to US national security).

The two postures are not contradictory. They are the two moves available to a hostage party: pay to reduce exposure over time, while simultaneously using the current exposure to constrain the hostage-taker's action. The CHIPS Act investments are the exposure-reduction move; the security guarantees and deterrence posture are the current-exposure move. Both operate inside the hostage geometry rather than escaping it.

## The PRC's hostage position

The PRC is the hostage position least recognized in conventional analysis and the position that most clearly determines the deterrent structure of the system. Beijing is a major consumer of semiconductors across its entire industrial and military base, and despite aggressive indigenization, it cannot replace leading-edge foundry capacity domestically at the timescales its broader competition with the US requires.

SMIC's 7nm (N+2) process, validated by the 2023 Huawei Kirin 9000S launch, uses older Deep Ultraviolet lithography through multi-patterning because ASML EUV equipment is export-restricted. Yield rates for the 7nm process have been reported at 20–40%, significantly below industry-standard yields at comparable nodes. SMIC's 5nm development has continued through 2025 and 2026, with pilot runs and state-directed investment through the $47.5 billion "Big Fund III" launched in 2024. SMIC's cost per wafer at 7nm is estimated at 40–50% above TSMC's EUV-based equivalents, with 7nm DUV production requiring 34 lithography steps compared to nine steps with EUV. Projected 5nm yields are 30–40% against TSMC mature yields above 80–90%.

China's domestic immersion DUV lithography development through Shanghai Yuliangsheng Technology — codenamed "Mount Everest" — is a 28nm-capable tool targeted for insertion into SMIC's 28nm flow in 2027. Scaling the domestic lithography path to 16nm and then to 7nm would require significantly redesigned scanners, pushing genuine domestic sub-10nm fabrication to the end of the decade at earliest. SMIC's 5nm release has reportedly been delayed to at least 2026, and Chinese chipmaking technology has stalled rather than advanced at the trajectory the 7nm announcement had suggested.

The operational implication: the PRC can produce 7nm-class chips at low yield and high cost, cannot produce at leading-edge nodes at volumes its AI and advanced-computing ambitions require, and faces a domestic-lithography trajectory that does not resolve the leading-edge gap within the current decade. This places Beijing in a hostage position that the PRC's own public messaging does not acknowledge but that operationally constrains every decision regarding Taiwan.

The hostage position has specific operational consequences for any Taiwan contingency. A PLA kinetic operation against Taiwan cannot seize TSMC and operate it. Leading-edge fabrication requires continuous inputs from the ecosystem layers described in Section II, and export controls and sanctions regimes would immediately cut off those inputs in any invasion scenario. The fabs themselves cannot be operated by a hostile-occupation workforce; the process knowledge is in the Taiwanese engineering cadre, not in documentation. A seizure attempt does not capture the capacity. It destroys it. The prize is a crater, and the crater is in Beijing's own advanced-computing pipeline as much as it is in the US pipeline.

This is the deterrent geometry, and its specific shape matters: it deters invasion more than it deters coercion. A PLA blockade or quarantine campaign that does not destroy the fabs imposes global costs but preserves the concentration for potential PRC access under a post-coercion political settlement. A PLA kinetic operation destroys the concentration and imposes the largest single technology shock on the PRC's own industrial and military base. Tabletop exercise and scenario analysis has identified quarantine as the most likely PRC method in the near term, blockade in the medium term, and full-scale invasion in the long term — a sequence consistent with the hostage geometry's asymmetric deterrent effect.

The hostage geometry therefore predicts the PLA's observed preference for coercion-short-of-war. This is not an accident. It is what the geometry generates.

# IV. The fabless-design mirror hostage

A dimension of the hostage structure that rarely surfaces in public discussion is the mirror hostage operating at the design layer. The PRC's constraint is not only fabrication; it is that it cannot design its own leading-edge chips without IP it does not own.

The electronic design automation market is concentrated among three firms — Synopsys, Cadence, and Siemens EDA (Mentor Graphics) — two of which are US-based and the third whose key technology base is also US-origin. The ARM instruction-set architecture, which underlies most mobile and many AI chip designs, is UK-based but subject to US extraterritorial export-control reach through its silicon partners and licensing structure. Advanced chip design without these tools and this IP is not merely more expensive; it is technically impossible at the leading edge within the current decade.

This creates a second hostage axis running in the same direction as the fabrication axis. PRC fabless design capabilities at advanced nodes are captive to the same US-centered IP ecosystem that governs fabrication access. Breaking the fabrication constraint through domestic lithography does not release the design constraint; breaking the design constraint through indigenous EDA does not release the fabrication constraint. Both would have to be solved simultaneously for the PRC to reach genuine leading-edge autonomy, and both are constrained by export controls that are tightening rather than loosening.

This mirror hostage is load-bearing for the overall deterrent structure. It means that PRC seizure of TSMC would not only destroy the fabrication capacity but would also not resolve the design-tool dependency that makes advanced chips possible in the first place. The total technology-stack capture the PRC would need to achieve through any kinetic Taiwan operation would require simultaneously seizing TSMC, breaking into ASML's Dutch facilities, capturing the Synopsys and Cadence IP bases, and retaining the Taiwanese engineering workforce — none of which is possible through any plausible kinetic sequence.

The PRC therefore faces a hostage geometry in which the objects of its strategic desire are not spatially collocatable. It cannot assemble a complete leading-edge semiconductor capability through any single geographic action. The only paths to autonomy are incremental indigenization (trajectory currently late-decade for genuine sub-7nm) or negotiated access (currently foreclosed by the trajectory of US export controls). Neither path shortens on any kinetic action against Taiwan.

# V. Policy instruments as moves inside the geometry

The supply-chain and industrial-policy framings read the CHIPS Act, US export controls, Arizona fab development, and European Chips Act investments as policies in tension — one trying to onshore, one trying to contain, one trying to diversify. Under the hostage framing, these are not policies in tension. They are the same coercion-management move executed from different ends of the geometry.

## CHIPS Act and Arizona capacity

TSMC Arizona's total planned investment is $165 billion across six fabs, two advanced packaging facilities, and an R&D center. Fab 21 Phase 1 is in mass production of 4nm chips. Fab 21 Phase 2 has completed construction, with equipment installation planned for Q3 2026 and high-volume 3nm production targeted for 2027. Fab 21 Phase 3 is expected to use 2nm and A16 process technologies, with production targeted for 2029. The Arizona gigafab cluster is expected to account for 30% of TSMC's 2nm and more advanced capacity when complete. The

Department of Commerce has awarded TSMC Arizona up to $6.6 billion in direct CHIPS Act funding.

The Arizona trajectory is a genuine exposure-reduction move but it does not resolve the hostage geometry in the current decade. Leading-node capacity — the specific capacity that carries the strategic weight of the hostage dynamic — remains concentrated in Taiwan through at least 2027 and predominantly so through 2029. The Arizona fabs ramp from trailing-edge (4nm Phase 1) toward leading-edge (2nm Phase 3) on a trajectory that meets the hostage geometry's shift window in the late 2020s. Before that window closes, Arizona is exposure reduction at the margin, not exposure elimination.

This matters for how the CHIPS Act should be read. It is not an industrial-policy victory against Taiwan concentration; it is a coercion-management instrument that slowly shifts the US position within the hostage geometry without releasing the US from it. The appropriate metric is not Arizona capacity; it is the share of US-consumed leading-node chips produced inside the hostage-vulnerable zone, which remains dominant and will remain so for years.

## Export controls and advanced-node denial

Export controls on advanced semiconductor manufacturing equipment, AI chip exports, and specialty materials are typically framed as containment measures. Under the hostage framing, they are structural reinforcements that prevent the PRC from exiting its hostage position through indigenization. 2025 saw dozens of Chinese entities added to export control lists, with requirements for licenses on advanced technologies and chip-making tool access. The controls extend to Dutch ASML equipment and Japanese specialty-materials producers under coordinated allied frameworks. US-led export controls, coordinated with Japan and the Netherlands, have progressively tightened to include ASML's most advanced DUV systems, forcing China toward more complex and costly alternative paths.

The controls do not eliminate PRC indigenization capability; they constrain its rate. The trajectory observed through 2025–2026 is one in which PRC progress has stalled rather than accelerated, with 5nm release delayed and the Potemkin-breakthrough character of early 7nm claims becoming apparent. From the hostage-geometry perspective, this is the intended operational effect: the controls hold the PRC in its hostage position, preventing it from reaching the autonomy that would release it from the deterrent structure.

Recalibrations of specific controls — such as the Nvidia H20 rules adjusted amid diplomatic engagement with Beijing, or the December 2025 suspension of certain export restrictions as part of negotiated rare-earth coordination — illustrate how technology measures integrate into broader strategic negotiations. These recalibrations are not policy drift. They are adjustments to the coercion-management mix that keep the PRC hostage structure productive under diplomatic pressure from other surfaces.

## Pax Silica and allied-framework consolidation

The Pax Silica initiative — a US-led international effort to secure trusted supply chains for AI, semiconductors, and related technologies with allied partners — embeds supply network security into alliance frameworks, consolidating the coercion-management structure at the alliance rather than bilateral level. This is the third structural move within the hostage geometry: it hardens the allied side of the geometry against PRC attempts to fracture the controls through bilateral negotiations with individual supplier states.

The integration of the Netherlands (ASML), Japan (specialty materials, lithography components), South Korea (memory, advanced packaging), and Taiwan (foundry) into a consolidated framework makes the hostage geometry institutionally durable in ways it was not in the pre-2022 period. The framework raises the cost to the PRC of any attempted break-out through bilateral pressure and simultaneously reduces the risk that any individual supplier state defects under direct PRC inducement.

## European and Japanese parallel moves

The European Chips Act, targeting 20% of global production capacity, and Japan's Rapidus and TSMC Kumamoto investments are parallel exposure-reduction moves by other advanced economies within the same hostage structure. They operate on the same logic as the CHIPS Act: exposure reduction at the margin, coercion management rather than coercion escape. The cumulative effect is a multi-year trajectory in which the hostage geometry shifts at the fab layer while remaining stable at the lithography, chemicals, and human-capital layers that determine the overall structure.

# VI. The 2028–2030 shift window

The hostage geometry is not permanent. Several trajectory variables converge in the late 2020s and early 2030s in ways that will shift the structure, and the shifts may occur in either direction depending on which variables mature first.

The Arizona leading-node trajectory is the principal exposure-reduction variable. Phase 2 3nm production is targeted for 2027; Phase 3 2nm production is targeted for 2029. When leading-node capacity in Arizona reaches the 30% of TSMC's advanced capacity that the current plan targets, the US position within the hostage geometry will have shifted substantially. The hostage structure does not dissolve, but US leverage relative to the overall structure increases.

The PRC indigenization trajectory is the principal hostage-exit variable from Beijing's perspective. SMIC insertion of domestic immersion DUV tools in 2027 at the 28nm node, with the path to 16nm and then 7nm requiring years of additional development, places genuine PRC sub-10nm autonomy at the end of the decade at earliest. SMIC's 5nm production, if it reaches mass production in 2026 as stated targets suggest, would be DUV-based, low-yield, and expensive, rather than EUV-based. The PRC trajectory is not accelerating to the point where it would exit the hostage position before the US reduces its exposure through Arizona, but the trajectory is not static; late-decade breakthroughs in domestic EUV development would shift the geometry.

The export-control trajectory is the variable over which the US and allies retain the most policy leverage. Tightening controls on sub-7nm DUV equipment, specialty materials, and EDA tools extends the PRC hostage position; loosening controls shortens it. The December 2025 recalibration illustrates that this variable is live and bilateral, subject to adjustment through broader strategic negotiations.

The rupture triggers worth watching are: a PRC breakthrough in domestic EUV lithography that would release the PRC hostage constraint; a catastrophic event at the Arizona fab ramp that would delay US exposure reduction; a Taiwanese political shift that changes the terms under which TSMC technology transfer proceeds; and a PRC policy shift that attempts to accelerate indigenization through resource commitment at scale beyond the current Big Fund framework. None of these triggers is indexed to a specific date, but each is a variable the Indo-Pacific pressure cells should track directly.

The 2028–2030 window is therefore the period during which the hostage geometry becomes most unstable — not because any single party will exit it, but because multiple trajectories mature simultaneously and the equilibrium is subject to perturbation from any of them. Policy design inside the hostage geometry should be calibrated to the window's actual timing rather than to aspirational diversification milestones.

## VII. The hostage geometry under the February 2026 Middle East shock

The 2026 Iran war has tested the hostage geometry indirectly, and the test has produced a specific finding worth naming. The Polymarket prediction market's estimate of a Taiwan-China military clash in 2026 held at approximately 16% from the beginning of March through April 2026, essentially unchanged by the Iran conflict. TSMC stock declined from early March onward, but company fundamentals (including 2026 outlook) did not deteriorate on the same curve.

The pattern is informative. A major Middle East conflict consumed US military and diplomatic attention, opened a multi-front strain on US munitions stockpiles and naval posture, and created exactly the distraction condition that hostage-geometry rupture analysis would flag as an elevated-risk window. And yet the implied probability of a Taiwan contingency did not materially shift.

The hostage-geometry reading of this non-movement is that the deterrent structure does not rest primarily on US force posture in the Pacific. It rests on the hostage geometry itself. The

PRC's cost calculation against a Taiwan contingency is dominated by the fact that kinetic action against Taiwan destroys the concentration and compresses the PRC's own technology trajectory by a margin that no amount of US distraction compensates for. US attention shifting to the Middle East did not change the fact that the fabs produce a crater rather than a prize under PLA assault.

This is the hostage geometry operating as a deterrent independent of US force posture. It is the structural finding that the February-April 2026 period has stress-tested and validated. The geometry does the deterrent work that would otherwise require continuous US attention, and the deterrent holds during periods when US attention is elsewhere. This is the strongest available evidence that the hostage-geometry framing captures the actual strategic function of semiconductor concentration in a way the supply-chain and industrial-policy framings do not.

## VIII. Reading the pressure cells through the hostage geometry

The Indo-Pacific theater page tracks two semiconductor-related pressure cells directly — semiconductor supply and semiconductor trade restrictions — and the NDAA Indo-Pacific cell incorporates semiconductor provisions through export-control and security-assistance language. Under the hostage-geometry framing, these cells should be read as follows.

**Semiconductor-supply stress** is the most visible cell and the one most prone to supply-chain-framing misinterpretation. Stress in this cell is typically read as vulnerability signal. Under the hostage frame, it should be read as coercion-geometry-state: rising stress indicates the geometry is being tested or perturbed (by Taiwanese political movement, by PLA exercise tempo, by TSMC technology-transfer negotiation), and the direction of movement in the pressure cell maps to the direction of the geometry's perturbation.

**Semiconductor trade restrictions** is the cell most directly tied to policy instruments operating inside the geometry. Tightening movement in this cell (new export-control designations, tightened equipment restrictions, expanded entity lists) indicates the hostage structure is being reinforced on the allied side. Loosening movement (recalibration, licensing exceptions, negotiated carve-outs) indicates the structure is being adjusted within broader strategic bargaining. Both directions are normal operations within the geometry, and interpretation requires reading which broader negotiation the adjustment is servicing.

**NDAA Indo-Pacific** incorporates the semiconductor dimension through security-assistance, export-control, and Taiwan-related authorization language. Movement in this cell reflects Congressional response to the hostage-geometry state: reinforcement authorizations reflect perceived pressure on the structure, relaxation reflects perceived stability.

The three cells operate together because they are measurements of different aspects of the same geometry. Reading any one of them in isolation produces the kind of supply-chain or industrial-policy reading this essay argues against. Reading all three together as coordinated readouts of the hostage structure is the intended function of the theater page's pressure-cell architecture.

## IX. Companion position within the Indo-Pacific anchor set

This essay operates as the actor-level companion to the Taiwan deterrence-stack thesis. The deterrence-stack essay establishes the multi-variable decision calculus Beijing performs against the composite stack; this essay isolates the single variable that most strongly deters invasion specifically, as distinct from coercion generally.

Together, the two pieces provide the frame through which the full set of Indo-Pacific pressure cells should be read. The deterrence stack is the decision architecture; the hostage geometry is the economic-coercion substrate that makes the decision architecture load-bearing at the invasion threshold. PLA exercise tempo, Taiwan defense spending, US-Japan alliance cohesion, and NDAA provisions operate inside the deterrence stack; semiconductor supply and trade restrictions operate inside the hostage geometry; the two structures interact but are analytically distinct.

The EIR framework reads both structures as expressions of survival logic under structural constraint. The PRC's concentration on indigenization reflects conatus under denial conditions; the US posture toward CHIPS Act investment plus export-control reinforcement reflects coercion-management by a hostage party; Taiwan's policy of controlled technology transfer plus R&D reinforcement reflects the only coherent posture available to a state whose leverage and exposure are the same variable. None of these behaviors is optimal in the sense of solving the underlying structural problem. Each is the rational survival move inside a geometry none of the parties fully controls. The geometry itself is the analytical object, and the pressure cells are its readouts.

The near-term trajectory of the Indo-Pacific theater is governed by three variables: the 2028–2030 shift window described in Section VI, the deterrence-stack movement tracked in the companion thesis, and the coupling between them as the stack's weakening dimensions (particularly US industrial sustainment) interact with the hostage geometry's slow exposure-reduction trajectory. Readers tracking the dashboard across semiconductor, Taiwan, Japan, and US-posture cells are reading the converging state of both structures as they operate together. The state of that coupling, not the state of any single cell, is the decisive variable for the theater.

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*Citation base: TSMC annual reports and Arizona fab disclosures; Department of Commerce CHIPS Act awards and NIST documentation; SMIC reporting on 7nm and 5nm node trajectories; ASML export-control disclosures; Shanghai Yuliangsheng domestic lithography development reporting; Big Fund III investment tracking; Polymarket and equity-market data on 2026 Taiwan contingency pricing; ORF Special Report No. 304 (April 2026) "The Global*

*Microchip Conflict"; Bloomberg Economics "$10 Trillion Fight" Taiwan war modeling (February 2026); Global Realist "Mandate and Strategy" (February 2026) and "Civilizational Code: America's AI Action Plan" (February 2026); ScienceDirect tabletop exercise and scenario analysis on Taiwan Strait semiconductor vulnerability; Existential Imperative Realism framework texts (Global Realist archive, 2025).*