Virus may be time for us all to rest tourist priorities

TOM SWITZER

The world was warned this trouble was coming but the West didn’t understand

Rarely has history in a decade been more fraught than under President Joe Biden. Two decades ago with the Cold War over, the world was a safer place. The United States had handily won its biggest “power struggle”. The Soviet empire had collapsed. Nuclear war had not happened. It was a time for “enemies” to talk to each other. The West’s geostrategic adversary, China, was a regional power, not a global contender. China’s communist leaders, as a consequence, had given their focus to growing the economy, creating employment opportunities for young people. The US-China economic and international relations agenda of the Cold War era was over. This era was about a world where China was a regional power with no interest, ambitions, or capacity to compete with the US and its allies. The US and the EU would continue to lead the world, and China would be a follower, a subordinate power. The idea of China becoming a world rival or competitor seemed unfathomable.

Now that has changed dramatically. That idea is a reality. The world faces a world-changing rivalry between the US and China. It is a rivalry that will define the future of the world for decades to come. The US-China rivalry is a rivalry where China is a serious world power. China is pushing the US to the periphery, and it is doing so not as a regional power, but as an emerging economic and military powerhouse.

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