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| |  | | --- | | A person standing at a podium  Description automatically generated with low confidence | | [**The Paris Agreement Faces Its Biggest Test Yet**](https://www.cheerfulpodcast.com/rtbc-episodes/countdown-climate-summit-how-did-we-get-here)  In November 2015 over 190 countries signed on to the Paris agreement, a multilateral climate agreement under which parties undertook to limit global warming to 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels, but preferably to 1.5 degrees. Every five years there is a global ‘stocktake’ of commitments made under the Paris framework to see if we are on track to avoid 1.5 degrees warming. Countries are meant to bring along revised commitments to close the gap between their ambition and what the planet needs. The first stocktake (delayed a year because of COVID-19) will take place this month in Glasgow at COP26 and the commitments countries take to this conference will determine the global trajectory for the first half of what the IPCC is calling the ‘crucial decade’ for climate action. Next week Professor Susan Park [**will address AIIA NSW**](https://aiiansw.tidyhq.com/public/schedule/events/37840-can-international-agreements-prevent-climate-change-catastrophe)on the strengths and weakness of international climate agreements, but for those looking to get a head-start on the talk and understand what all the fuss is about, former UK Climate Change Secretary Ed Miliband and radio personality Geoff Lloyd have prepared a four part podcast series on COP26. [**Part one**](https://www.cheerfulpodcast.com/rtbc-episodes/countdown-climate-summit-how-did-we-get-here) looks at the history of the COPs and how we got to where we are. [**Part two**](https://www.cheerfulpodcast.com/rtbc-episodes/countdown-climate-summit-what-are-the-stakes) sets out the science of climate change and the stakes for the conference. [**Part three**](https://www.cheerfulpodcast.com/rtbc-episodes/countdown-climate-summit-what-needs-to-happen) dives into the politics of the COP and [**part four**](https://www.cheerfulpodcast.com/rtbc-episodes/countdown-climate-summit-what-can-we-all-do) shines a light on some of the activists shaping outcomes in Glasgow. It provides the ideal summary for those looking to brush up ahead of one of the biggest global events of the year. Image credit: [**Number 10**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/number10gov/49487775237/in/photolist-2ip4Ms6-2ip2m8b-2ip16PW-2kJaZRk-2kQhzUd-2kPYSKL-2kQhzVf-2kJaZS7-2kGMjvf-2kQhzWh-2kQhzWC-2kQi4oc-2kQhzXe-2kQi4oY-2kGMjwn-2kQi4pz-2kQhzRY-2kGMjwx-2kQhzYS-2kQhzYM-2kQhA3Q-2kQhzZt-2kQi4qS-2kPYSTM-2kQhA2Y-2kQi4sv-2kGMjyg-2kPYSW2-2kJaZWA-2kQi4uz-2kGMjAA-2kPYSYg-2kGMjzy-2kPYSVv-2kQhzSK-2msChbq-2kJaZZr-2kQi4vS-2kJaZZM-2kQi4xk-2kGMjCE-2kQi4wP-2kQhA7N-2kPYSLY-2ip4L6Z-2ip4L7F-2ms7aV4-2mA54gZ-2kJ3q3W-2kJ3pRy) | |

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| |  | | --- | | This article was selected by Cameron Smith. Cameron is a recent Bachelor of Arts (Honours) graduate majoring in History and International Relations at the University of Wollongong. Currently, he is working as an Electorate Officer at the Parliament of Australia and is the Co-Founder and Chief Operations Officer of the Australia-Pacific Youth Dialogue. He has a particular interest in US foreign policy, international security, and grey-zone operations in the Indo-Pacific. | |

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| |  | | --- | | [A picture containing map  Description automatically generated](https://www.pxfuel.com/en/free-photo-jrhcu) | | [The New Cold War: America, China, and the Echoes of History](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-10-19/new-cold-war) Parallels between the Cold War and today are easy to make when considering the growing bipolarity, inflammatory rhetoric  and sharpening distinctions between autocracies and democracies, but the context remains very different. According to Hal Brands and John Lewis Gaddis in [**this**](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-10-19/new-cold-war) article for Foreign Affairs, the answer to whether we are entering a new cold war is not a simple yes or no. Looking to history for a clearer understanding of the uncertainties in the rivalry between China and the US, Brands and Gaddis compare Xi’s break from the tradition of post-Cold War Chinese leadership, contemplating the vision of world order Xi sees with authoritarianism at its core.  The issue of nuclear capability may encourage a ‘long peace’, but Brands and Gaddis suggest that American unipolarity may not end with a precarious Sino-American bipolarity but with a multipolarity that constrains Beijing’s influence. The test for the US will be in managing internal threats to democracy, as well as tolerating geopolitical contradictions. Ultimately, they conclude, history remains the best compass for navigating the future of this protracted international rivalry between China and the US.  Image credit: [**DCMA**](https://www.pxfuel.com/en/free-photo-jrhcu) | |

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