SCIENTIFIC CULTURE

www.sci-cult.com

SCIENTIFIC CULTURE, Vol. 12, No. 1.1, (2026), pp. 2948-2958
Open Access. Online & Print

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.121126214

THE FUTURE OF CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION IN THE LIGHT OF DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY: SELECTED MODELS

Hayder Abed Kadhim[1]*, Shefaa Khaleel[2]

[1]University of Baghdad, Iraq
[2]University of Baghdad, Iraq

Received: 24/011/2025
Accepted: 06/01/2026

Corresponding Author: Hayder Abed Kadhim (haidar.abid@copolicy.uobaghdad.edu.iq)

ABSTRACT

The rapid digital technological transformation in our digital age has revived the nature of international competition between international powers. This is because digital sovereignty has emerged as one of the main variables of power and influence in contemporary international relations. In this context, the United States of America and China represent the most prominent model of international competition around redefining the rules of control over the digital space, including: data, infrastructure, technology, and digital, and global regulatory standards (global governance). Based on this, the research aims to analyze the future international competition between the two international powers considering the rising importance of digital sovereignty, through a forward-looking analytical approach according to the dismantling of different models of cyberspace management. Also, the study monitors the trends of competing international powers in the digital fields, represented by artificial intelligence, data governance, and digital technological supply chains. The research concludes that the US-China rivalry in light of digital sovereignty transcends the economic and digital technological dimensions to take on a strategic aspect. This aspect affects the global governance architecture of the Internet and the future of digital globalization. It proposes three main scenarios for the outcome of this competition. In addition, the research emphasizes that the future of the digital international system will continue to be linked to the ability of great powers such as the United States of America and major powers such as China to achieve a delicate balance between the requirements of national sovereignty and the requirements of global digital mutual interdependence. This will be directly reflected on the stability of the international system and its transformations in the twenty-first century.

KEYWORDS: Digital Sovereignty, International Competition, Digital Space, and Global Governance.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the technological development in our digital age, power is no longer limited to traditional military or economic capabilities. Yet the ability to control the digital space, data flows, and digital critical technological infrastructures has become one of the essential determinants of the position of countries in the pyramid of global power. So, in this context, the concept of digital sovereignty has emerged as a new framework, which includes the analysis of states' quest to impose political, legal, and technical control over their cyberspace and digital resources. These resources include data and platforms Digital, semiconductor, cloud infrastructure, and others. Hence, international competition in light of digital sovereignty has emerged as one of the most prominent variables on the international scene, as the United States of America and China are the two main poles in the international competition over digital sovereignty, especially that each embodies a different model for the management of the global digital space. Also, the United States of America leads a liberal model, based on digital openness, multilateral governance, and the dominance of transnational technology companies, while employing technological superiority in enhancing geostrategic influence, and protecting In return. China offers an alternative sovereign model based on state centralization, strict data control, technology localization, and linking cyberspace to national security, which is known as cyber sovereignty, which China has adopted in its digital and legislative strategies. This structural disparity between the American and Chinese models has led to the continuation of strategic competition in the fields of advanced digital technology, especially in the field of artificial intelligence, 5G networks, semiconductors, cloud computing, digital supply chains, and others.

In light of these transformations, the future of international competition under digital sovereignty raises fundamental questions related to the fate of the digital international system. Another question is on the limits of digital technological globalization. One more is the possibility of the division of the global cyberspace into competing blocs. There are also questions about the ability of middle and developing countries to maneuver between the two models, the future of global governance of the Internet. In addition, the balances of power in an era in which data is becoming a strategic resource is equally important more than the natural resources such as oil in the twenty-first century.

Based on this, this research seeks to analyze the future of international competition between the United States of America and China within the framework **of digital sovereignty**. It dismants the theoretical foundations of the concept, exploring the tools of digital competition between the two powers, and anticipating possible future scenarios for the reflection of this competition on the structure of the international system and contemporary geostrategic transformations.

First: International Competition and Digital Sovereignty: Conceptual Implications.

1- The concept of international competition.

With the development of the international system and the change in the balance of power in it, the methods and tools of international competition have changed, and these methods are no longer limited to traditional wars and the use of military force to achieve their goals, but there are more developed and influential tools on the overall relations between countries, including technological competition, economic wars, and digital competition, as well as media and cultural influence, which often contributes to increasing the intensity of competition, and international competition represents a state of competition between countries to achieve their national interests, whether economic or political, military, technological, digital, or other interests, and this competition is often in a peaceful framework, or sometimes develops into conflicts that lead to war.

The concept of international competition has moved from the field of international economic relations to the field of international relations at all levels, especially with the increasing interdependence between States in various fields, and is defined as a state of interaction that occurs between two or more international parties, characterized by a peaceful nature away from any manifestation of violence, tension and conflict, in a way that does not reflect negatively on the nature of relations between their parties(El-Demerdash, 2020). It is also defined as a situation or situation between two or more international parties that decide to compete according to rational calculations, concentrating their efforts and capabilities on achieving the benefits and interests provided by a particular environment in the international system, without resorting to the use of military force and violence to obtain these benefits and achieve these objectives(Nazir, 2014).

Since international relations are continuous and changing, competition between them may be positive and turn into cooperation, especially in circumstances where cooperation is most appropriate to achieve common goals, such as mitigating potential risks and confronting various

threats, or competition may take a negative turn and develop into conflict between them. On this basis, international competition is defined as the imbalances that exist in the international community, which are inflated and take the form of conflict if they are not addressed, especially since countries often seek to maximize their gains according to the concept of national interest, in a way that contradicts the interests of other countries. International competition is also defined: It is a situation in which one or more parties disagree about incompatible goals, whether those goals are real, perceived, or about limited resources. Accordingly(Bouzidi, 2021)، the change in the elements of power and competition between competing international powers reflects a holistic character, which seeks greater gains, aimed at increasing the space for hegemony and influence(Dawood & Jasem, 2023).

In line with the above, international competition is no longer a phenomenon limited to the pursuit of states to achieve their national interests, but has become a natural phenomenon in the international system, through which states seek to achieve their highest strategic objectives, comprehensive interests, and scientific and technical progress, with the aim of obtaining an advanced international position and their desire to ward off risks and threats of all kinds.

Second: The concept of digital sovereignty.

It goes without saying that **the concept of digital sovereignty** and the conceptual connotations it entails, requires deconstructing the concept and addressing its contents in order to find out what it is, in order to reach a deeper understanding of the concept **of digital sovereignty**, by clarifying its paths in light of the developments in the international arena, and the interactions of countries and international actors in the international system, especially that the concept of sovereignty represents one of the most prominent concepts that have been associated with the security and independence of states, so it is one of the most preoccupied concepts that have occupied the minds of thinkers and researchers throughout the past history, and in various political, legal, social, and cultural fields.

With the end of the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1990, and the spread of liberal thought represented by democracy and free economy(KHALAF, 2024), which contributed to the reformulation of the concepts of international relations, instead of the concept of sovereignty, there was the concept of national sovereignty, which refers to the right of the state to exercise its internal and external power, within the limits of international law(Lasky, 2021). Thus, the concept of sovereignty has shifted from an absolute concept to a flexible concept compatible with international law, and a shift in the flexibility of sovereignty has emerged in the relations of States with each other, and this transformation has been reflected in international relations in the international system, and States have shifted from a state of isolation to a state of cooperation and solidarity in interests, and any action that lacks international legitimacy by a State may lose its national sovereignty(Al-Dulaimi, 2025), especially in light of the changes in the international system, which have redefined international dynamics and changed the international balance of power(Ali, 2025).

In light of the scientific, technological and strategic development in the late twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, with various levels, especially security, military and economic, the concept of sovereignty and national sovereignty has changed. Various high-level scientific and technological technologies are used to violate sovereignty with various tools of technological, technical and digital warfare, the most prominent of which are electronic propaganda, cyber programs, artificial intelligence applications, smart missiles, drones, and others(Al-Ali & Hamid, 2023).

The entry of the twenty-first century, the scientific, technical and digital developments, and the comprehensive reliance of states on electronic technologies and digital technology have become the fifth dimension of state power, after the land, sea, air and space dimensions Also, the traditional concept of sovereignty has declined, especially as countries have become open to each other digitally. This has led them to restrict the digital freedoms of their citizens, and to set new digital boundaries that enable them to regain control over sovereignty, and what is known as the concept **of digital sovereignty** appeared.

With the development of Internet technology, its spread domestically and globally, the development of satellites and space platforms, countries have become living in a virtual world that is difficult to control, and the importance of the traditional borders of states has declined. Furthermore, the state has become threatened through its sovereign space. It has also prompted it to adopt policies that enhance its digital sovereignty considering the continued rapid technological developments. It has only emerged as a result of the Internet and technological development that the boundaries of the traditional sovereignty of States have emerged(Al-Saadi & Al-Sane, 2015). Not only that, but the development of the digital sphere has become an arena for

competition and competition among States in international politics stepping up their quest to secure their digital sovereignty(Lambach & Oppermann, 2023).

Returning to the concept of digital sovereignty and its origins, the concept originated in 2001, especially after the events of September 11. It coincided with the US Patriot Act, which was then called data sovereignty. It has the ability to collect and store data from different parts of the world, especially since it has advanced and unprecedented capabilities in this field(Lambach & Oppermann, 2023). It has almost complete control over Internet networks and communication technologies, which allows it to access data wherever it is and under any circumstances, which has prompted many developed countries to seek digital sovereignty. This happens on its territory and its digital space, to reduce the global dependence on American platforms and everything related to the digital world, and to get rid of its hegemony, which represents a comprehensive threat to its digital security(Thumfart, 2022).

In the early decade of the twenty-first century, governments began to spread the concepts **of digital sovereignty**. This is a sign of the return of the ideas of the Westphalian international order, not in its traditional form, but in its digital form. So the state has full sovereignty regionally, spatial and digitally, especially since countries have come to view digital transformation after it as a geostrategic threat in the first place. This occurs before considering it a threat to their sovereign or digital security, and in this context, countries have begun to consolidate the concept **of digital** sovereignty, in an effort to decisively legitimize its regional closure strategies to data flows(Glasze et al., 2023).

Thus, countries have been seeking to draw strategies aimed at consolidating their digital sovereignty on their territory. They have set regulatory standards for auditing and investigating the flow of data and information received and issued by them, despite the fact that these strategies inevitably contradict the processes of global digital interdependence. They also have been working to develop their own standards, digital software, and innovate various digital systems, to get rid of the American digital expansion. They believe that the widespread American dominance over the Data and digital technologies represent a breach of their privacy, and is sometimes considered a type of espionage, under the umbrella of the Open Digital Global System. This system refers to a digitally connected global network, based on the principles of openness, cooperation, and participation in the development of digital infrastructure, data and information, and this system aims to promote digital innovation and digital economic growth, by facilitating access to digital technologies, data and information for all, with the need to preserve on privacy and security(UNITED NATIONS, 2021).

Historically, the advent of the World Wide Web has created an opportunity for the world to be interconnected, representing a single global digital ecosystem. However, the growing mistrust between countries in the technological. The digital technical sphere has led to the growth of the concept **of digital sovereignty**, which refers to: the ability of the state to control its digital destiny and the flow of data. It controls the entire supply chain of AI software and applications, from data control to hardware and software control (Martynova & Shcherbovich, 2024). Although the concept of digital sovereignty began to be referred to since 2001, and entered the field of scientific and research discussions, and countries sought to achieve it, it was not addressed as a political concept by developed countries until 2010, after the European Union sought to include it in its digital architecture. The focus on it increased after the Snowden leaks in 2013, which has led countries to call for greater control over digitization processes and the economic empowerment of their local digital companies, as sovereignty issues in the digital field are often linked to the processes of regulating digitization and data circulation, through surveillance on the one hand and setting regulatory technical standards on the other(Glasze et al., 2023). Chinese President Xi Jinping has defined **digital sovereignty** as the right of each nation-state to choose its own path in cyber development, and its own model of regulation and Internet policy, without interference by other states(nternetsociety.org, 2022).

Digital sovereignty is defined as the ability of the state to determine its own destiny in the digital world. It is also the ability of individuals and economic institutions to use digital technologies in an autonomous way to define and exercise their roles independently and securely in the digital age(Pohle, 2020). It means the ability of the state, its individuals and institutions to use and control their digital data and technologies away from the threats of security breaches to their digital and technological systems, in light of the rapid developments in this field.

Digital sovereignty is also defined as the legitimate digital control over the digital world, and it refers to the ability of the state to exercise its authority over its digital policies, represented in the regulation, processing, and transmission of data, restricting certain content on the Internet, or prohibiting certain activities performed by foreign

digital companies. In addition, digital sovereignty has become a field for establishing mutual relations with other countries in an effort to enhance digital security and comprehensive security, by setting legal rules and creating barriers of a digital approach that would lead to digital independence(Saura García, 2024).

Digital sovereignty is also seen as the ability to control digital infrastructure, including the localization of data within its geographical borders, and control of its technological systems, within national and international legal standards. It includes not only the geographical scope of the state, but also extends to the digital space, which in the 21st century has become an integral part of the national security of states. Moreover, the states' quest to consolidate their digital sovereignty in their geographical location arises from the threats and risks posed by states and actors. It has the resources and capabilities to intervene in digital services and government communication technologies, and threats include two main categories of risks(Jansen et al., 2023):

A. States and Governments have legal means to access hosts within their jurisdiction, i.e. the existence of legal legislation granting them access to data beyond their territory and in the territories of host States.
B. Risks related to data movement between entities and users.

Digital sovereignty is defined by the German Federal Ministry of the Interior as: the ability of state agencies to make independent decisions on the use of information technology, especially software in public administration. It is an integral part of efforts to modernize the German state and build a so-called digital Germany(Lambach & Oppermann, 2023).

Digital sovereignty also refers to data control, software such as artificial intelligence, standards It also means protocols such as 5G networks, domain names, processes such as cloud computing, devices such as smartphones, services such as social media, e-commerce, and infrastructure such as submarine cables, satellites, and smart cities(Chander & Sun, 2023).

Thus, the concept of digital sovereignty is seen as controlling the external dimension of the digital infrastructure, in order to protect the digital security of countries from the impact of data aninformation flows, and cyberattacks, especially with the existence of an independent software and hardware base in the field of digital technology, the information technology sector, and advanced platform companies. In addition, the rapid development of radioelectronics production technologies, routers, chips, microprocessors and semiconductors is also very broad. This concept is therefore very broad and includes a number of other concepts that are interpreted in its sense(Zinoveva, 2023).

From the above, it can be said that the spread of the Internet and technological technologies has led to the creation of new challenges for countries, and has created threats of a different kind, not only at the security and military level, but also at other levels. Thus the concept of digital sovereignty has emerged as a means of managing those challenges, mitigating or overcoming threats, and in line with that, digital sovereignty is represented according to the researcher's vision which is a comprehensive framework that prevents the sum of the country's digital capabilities and capabilities to have the ability to exercise its role in the digital world, in an independent and secure manner. In other words, it is self-designed, and does not rely on the technologies of other countries to protect its digital national security.

Third: Digital Sovereignty Models: USA-China.

1- Digital sovereignty of the United States of America.

The United States of America adopts a unique approach in employing digital sovereignty within its liberal-economic model, which differs from the orientations of other powers. This approach is centered on promoting economic growth, technological and digital innovations, and the protection of human rights, as well as opposing protectionism, which hinders the free flow of data. This model reflects the ability of the United States of America to strengthen its technological and digital leadership and impose its digital standards globally, as well as its ability to invest in digital innovations as a strategic tool for international competition, while maintaining a balance between market freedom and the protection of personal data(United States International Cyberspace and Digital Policy Strategy, 2024).

After 2001, the United States of America is the sole superpower in the international system, responsible for promoting stability and safeguarding international peace and(Kadhim & Abed, 2020) security. Itstrategically employed its digital sovereignty to enhance its digital superiority and maintain its position in international digital competition, through a set of policies that made technology, digitization and data a new weapon. It offers pivotal in international relations, especially as it follows a different approach, as it prioritizes national security and the access of entities. It should

be noted that the US law enforcement agencies have broad powers to request access to data of various kinds, which raises the concerns of other international powers about the US dominance of data sources(Blinken, 2025).

A- Strategic dimension: American digital sovereignty is an integral part of a broader US national strategy aimed at global dominance, and this strategy is based on two main pillars:

- **Leadership and control of innovation: The United States of America sets** strategic goals to be the primary leader in the design, development, governance, and use of digital technologies, in line with democratic values and respect for human rights. This leadership is not only a pursuit of technical or digital excellence, but is essentially a tool for digital domination and influence, and this is done according to its vision, by defining global standards and technical and technical protocols. These protocols govern the global digital space, ensuring that these innovations serve Their national interests, as well as their control over global supply chains, enable them to continuously access reliable technological capabilities(Leong, 2022).
- **Control of global internet platforms:** American transnational companies such as (Google, Microsoft, Apple) dominate most of the global digital platforms, such as search engines, social media, and cloud computing (Manati & Alwan, 2024).which gives them great influence over information and data, e-commerce, and global communication, so they oppose the localization of data that imposes digital trade barriers. It advocates an open digital environment that enhances the influence of their companies globally. Here, the United States of America has the largest A network of data centres represented by major technology companies, as well as excelling in telecommunications and 5G networks, is moving at a rapid pace towards the development of 6Gnetworks(Leong, 2022).

B- The cyber dimension and geostrategic power: This dimension represents great importance in US policies, especially since data has become an important strategic resource at the global level, as the United States of America uses its digital technologies as a tool of economic and security influence in the international system, and controls the main submarine cables of the Internet, all of which pass through major American companies. It has advanced defensive and offensive cyber capabilities, which are often used to protect its vital interests, deter adversaries, and in some cases Sometimes they launch strategic cyber operations to achieve their geopolitical goals, especially as they lead the world in the field of cybersecurity, through the National Security Agency and the U.S. Cyber Command Center. It confront malicious cyber activities carried out by other countries in an effort to enhance collective cybersecurity and confront common(Fratini et al., 2024) digital threats. The United States of America has also worked to build international digital alliances, such as the Alliance for an Open and Secure Internet, to confront the Chinese and Russian models in the field of digital sovereignty(U.S. Department of Commerce, 2023). It has agreed to set standards and values for the Internet, and to declare the future of the free and secure Internet in 2022, with more than 60 countries, and this agreement represents a soft force against closed sovereignty models(FACT SHEET, 2022).

C. Legal-Regulatory Dimension: Although the U.S. model differs from other models of digital sovereignty(Cronin, 2023), the U.S. seeks to promote a global framework that respects human rights and protects privacy, in line with its values, by establishing laws that ensure its ability to legally access U.S. providers' data, even if it is stored outside the U.S. The **CLOUD Act, or Cloud Act,** is a law passed by the United States of America in 2018. This law represents an effective approach to protecting privacy and civil liberties, in which the external legal use of data is clarified to ensure quick access to electronic information, which is held by global service providers, residing in the United States of America, which is very important because it contributes to the detection of serious crimes, from terrorism to crimes It is worth mentioning that all information and data are held by a global provider based in the United States of America, which prompts States to conclude bilateral international agreements with them to facilitate direct access to information and data with partner States(Office of International Affairs, 2025)

D- The economic-industrial dimension: The United States of America relies on a liberal-economic model in its digital policies, as major transnational technology companies play a pivotal role in data management, technology development and digital innovations, especially

as they largely control digital infrastructure, and control applications and data flows. Its global influence(Larsen, 2022).

2- Employing Chinese digital sovereignty.

China is one of the most prominent countries that have adopted the concept **of digital sovereignty** as a strategic tool to achieve its national interests and enhance its position in the international system. It has sought since the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century, specifically in late 2010, to build a special model **of digital sovereignty**, based on the principle **of national control over cyberspace and critical digital infrastructure.** In line with its vision of digital and national security and sustainable development. In particular, China treats digital space as a sphere of sovereignty similar to land, sea, air and outer space, as demonstrated by its policies that emphasize the principle of a "**Internet with Chinese characteristics**", which means that the State exercises its full authority over the flow of data, content and communications, within its digital borders(Shen, 2016). China has employed this concept through the development of stringent legislative and policy frameworks, such as **the 2017 Cybersecurity Law and the 2021 Data Security Law,** which have given the Chinese government broad powers to manage data and protect critical digital infrastructure(Hulvey, 2022).

China has also relied on **digital sovereignty to** protect its national security in the face of external cyber threats, especially coming from the United States of America, and has focused on establishing specialized institutions to achieve maximum digital protection of its data, vital and digital infrastructure, such as: **the Central Administration of Cyberspace (CAC),** which oversees all policies related to cybersecurity, **and the National Cyber Security Center.** China(Doshi, 2020) has gradually strengthened through several main phases the concept **of comprehensive security**: which integrates cyber, technological, digital, political, economic and social security within the framework of the so-called **Xi Jinping Doctrine of Digital Security,** Through this, China seeks to achieve its supreme national interests, represented in confronting the global American digital hegemony first, and achieving a global international position that qualifies it to limit American digital influence, and enables it to protect its vital digital infrastructure(Doshi, 2020)**.**

A· Control of technology and data(Doshi, 2020): China seeks to develop an independent and controllable digital infrastructure, with a focus on the development of alternative domestic technologies to reduce dependence on foreign technology, and this step is part of China's strategy to strengthen its digital security and protect its comprehensive security.

B. Digital Military Strategy: China's modern national military strategy seeks to take advantage of cyber power, through permanent readiness and information technology, to enhance its information influence. China considers this readiness as an operational advantage gained from its ability to control, process, and defend information to achieve maximum digital protection against cyber intrusions, in the case of defense, and to launch offensive cyber operations against adversaries in the event of an attack(Lee, 2025).

C. Cybersecurity is part of China's national security: Chinese President Xi Jinping has emphasized that the absence of cybersecurity means the absence of national security. It thus emphasizing the protection of cyberspace as an integral part of China's national sovereignty, calling in 2023 for the construction of a solid security barrier around the Internet under the supervision of the Communist Party to protect data and information on the Internet, reflecting China's firm commitment to full control over its digital space(Jinping, 2023).

Based on the above, Xi Jinping's doctrine of digital security represents an advanced model of China's national security in the digital age, especially as it reflects a comprehensive vision linking cybersecurity, technological control, and data protection, within the framework of national sovereignty. It appears through the time developments from 2013 to 2025, that this doctrine was not a separate concept, but rather the product of a gradual strategy based on centralized control, technological independence, and the enhancement of digital military capabilities, among others. The Chinese leadership has been keen to ensure comprehensive control of the digital space, with the continuous development of digital infrastructure. Thus Xi Jinping's doctrine can not only be seen as a national policy, but also as a frame of reference for understanding global transformations in digital security, and the role of the state in controlling technology and information to protect its strategic interests at the domestic and international levels.

Fourth: The Future of International Competition in Light of Digital Sovereignty.

1- The scenario of the development of the continuation of international competition in light of digital sovereignty.

This scenario assumes that international competition between the United States of America and China will evolve in the direction of rational regulation of competition, rather than zero escalation, as a result of the rising cost of full digital fragmentation on the global economy and digital technological innovation(Schneider, 2023). It is based on the realization by the two powers that interdependence in digital value chains cannot be dismantled without causing strategic damage to both parties. Moreover, this scenario assumes that the development of bilateral competition will not lead to the dominance of one of the two powers digitally, but will lead to the expansion of competition to multiple poles in digital governance with the entry of other actors such as the European Union, Russia, and others. The main pillars of this scenario are the following points(Fratini et al., 2024):

A. Moving from open and intense competition to regulated competition, in the fields of artificial intelligence, data security, and digital infrastructure.

Developing flexible international frameworks for the governance of the digital space, especially in transnational issues, such as cybersecurity and artificial intelligence standards.

Promoting digital pluralism, allowing middle and developing countries a wider margin to maneuver between digital forces, and not fully dependent on one of the two models.

The establishment of numerous digital alliances led by the United States of America in competing with China. These alliances represent one of the pillars of the development of the US-China international competition as in Table (1)(Liu, 2024).

Table (1) shows the US digital alliances in China's competition.

Objectives of the Alliance.	Type of Alliance.	Establishment.	The name of the alliance.	Sequencing
Intelligence and digital information gathering and surveillance.	Partial alliances, between the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand.	1945.	The Five Eyes Alliance.	1_
Digital Transformation, Digital Infrastructure, and Cybersecurity.	Partial alliances, between the United States of America, India, Japan, Australia, South Korea, and others.	2018.	Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP).	2_
Setting standards for governance and artificial intelligence.	G7, USA, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan.	2020.	Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence (GPAI).	3_
Digital Infrastructure, Digital Finance.	The Big Seven group.	2022.	Global Infrastructure and Investment Partnership (PGII).	4_

The table is prepared by the researcher based on(Liu, 2024):

(2)European Commission, EU contribution to the Partnership for Global Infrastructureand Investment, https://2cm.es/1hQnP, 5/12/2025.

2- The scenario of the continuation of international competition in the light of the digital lady.

Accordingly, the United States of America will continue to strengthen digital alliances to counter Chinese influence in digital technology. In return, China may expand its digital initiatives such as the Digital Belt Initiative to connect countries to their digital networks, and reduce their dependence on American digital technology. The continuation of this competition may lead to the continuation of this competition Digital challenges, represented by a further fragmentation in global digital security standards, and a wide restriction on transnational data flows of States, and therefore the goal of competing with these two digital powers is based on achieving digital dominance and digital influence within the framework **of digital sovereignty(Schneider, 2023).**

3- The scenario of the decline of international competition in light of digital sovereignty.

This scenario assumes that the digital rivalry between the United States of America and China will move towards a relative decline with the transition of the international system from a stage of increasing digital polarization to a more flexible phase based on the management of competition, rather than its continuation(United States International

Cyberspace & Digital Policy Strategy, 2025). A result of the realization, the continuous escalation in the field of digital sovereignty produces high economic, technical, and security costs that exceed their strategic gains, as well as the division of the global digital space into opposing systems, which will push the two powers to reassess the feasibility(Fratini et al., 2024). In this context, the decline is not understood as an end to international competition, but rather a shift in its nature from direct geostrategic competition in digital infrastructures and data to indirect competition centered on technical standards, regulatory frameworks and digital governance models, especially as countries are more inclined to adopt interoperability solutions and hybrid systems, rather than full technological separation, due to the financial burdens and risks to national economic security imposed by this separation. and the digital economy.

From the above, the future of international competition under digital sovereignty between the United States of America and China is likely to take the path of managed competitive equilibrium, in the sense that competition for digital influence and normative leadership continues. It is based on normative structural competition, rather than direct clash, and on the dependence of technological value chains and economic interconnectedness. This leads to the reshaping of the international system in a way that allows competition to be managed, and the risks resulting from the digital divide are reduced, while maintaining global innovation and digital growth.

Conclusion

The analysis of the future course of international competition under digital sovereignty shows that the relationship between the United States of America and China is no longer understood within the traditional frameworks of geopolitical competition. However, it become embodied as a structural geostrategic competition for control of the global digital space, including digital infrastructure, technical standards, Internet governance, and digital technological value chains and security. In this context, the research reveals that the United States of America adopts a digital sovereignty approach based on normative leadership and open digital alliances, by consolidating the values of the open internet, cross-border data governance, and building alliance networks, such as the Five Eyes Alliance, digital partnerships, and global infrastructure investment initiatives and Digital Silk Road Initiative.

In light of this, the research reached a number of conclusions:

1- Digital sovereignty has become a central pillar of the power of international powers: the power of international powers is no longer subordinate to its overall power, but has turned into an independent dimension that reshapes patterns of influence, and directly affects national security and the economic growth of the great and major powers**.**

The U.S.-China rivalry has taken on a more normative rather than military character: the competition revolves around who sets the global rules and standards for the digital space, and not only on technological superiority, reflecting the transition of international competition to the level of organizational and digital dominance**.**

The future of international competition depends on the ability of the United States and China to build common governance frameworks: the absence of agreed international rules for data, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity will lead to structural escalation, while expanding institutional cooperation may support the scenario of declining competition**.**

4- The impossibility of completely separating the global digital space: Despite the trends of the digital divide, the interdependence of digital technology and digital supply chains impose practical limits on the scenario of declining international competition**.**

The future of international competition under digital sovereignty will not be decided by the superiority of one party: The future of international competition under digital sovereignty will not be decided by the superiority of one of the two competing parties, but by long-term competition, as the United States seeks to lead this system through alliances and open standards, China is working to establish an alternative model based on national technical sovereignty.

Digital alliances are a tool to manage international competition, not just to escalate **it:** The United States uses digital alliance initiatives, such as GPAI and other alliances, as a means of containing Chinese influence, by offering normative, developmental, and digital alternatives.

References

Al-Ali, V. A. Z., & Hamid, A. H. (2023). Modern Warfare Tactics: Cybersecurity, Enhanced, and Hybrid Wars. *Al-Arabi Publishing and Distribution, Cairo*, 125.

Al-Dulaimi, A. A. S. (2025). *The Effectiveness of Power in International Politics and its Relationship to National Sovereignty in Light of International Changes and Globalization*. Dar Al-Moataz for Publishing and Distribution.

Al-Saadi, W. N., & Al-Sane, M. Y. (2015). *Public Freedoms and Ensuring Their Protection*. Al-Ma'arif Publishing and Printing Facility.

Ali, I. A. (2025). RESHAPING THE WORLD, RETHINKING ACTORS: THE ROLE OF SUB-STATE ACTORS IN FOREIGN RELATIONS. *Journal of International Studies (1823-691X)*, *21*(1).

Blinken, A. J. (2025). *United States International Cyberspace and Digital Policy Strategy, Towards an Innovative, Secure, and Rights- Respecting Digital Future, U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE, 2021*.

Bouzidi, A. (2021). The Conceptual Limits of the Term Competition in International Relations, Journal of Humanities, University of the Brothers of Mentory, Constantine. *21*(2).

Chander, A., & Sun, H. (2023). *Data sovereignty: From the digital silk road to the return of the state*. Oxford University Press.

Cronin, A. K. (2023). How private tech companies are reshaping great power competition. *The Kissinger Center Papers*.

Dawood, N. Z., & Jasem, F. H. (2023). The Power Vacuum and the Authority of Informal Actors. *Russian Law Journal*, *11*(8S), 169-175.

Doshi, R. (2020). The United States, China, and the contest for the fourth industrial revolution. *US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation*.

El-Demerdash, M. M. (2020). The Phenomenon of International Economic Competition and its Implications for Peaceful Coexistence with a Focus on Comprehensive Trade and Development Issues. *Journal of Legal and Economic Research, Faculty of Law*, *32*(1).

FACT SHEET. (2022). United States and 60 Global Partners Launch Declaration for the Future of the Internet, The White House, https://linksshortcut.com/wbMlZ, 4/9/2025. .

Fratini, S., Hine, E., Novelli, C., Roberts, H., & Floridi, L. (2024). Digital sovereignty: A descriptive analysis and a critical evaluation of existing models. *Digital Society*, *3*(3), 59.

Glasze, G., Cattaruzza, A., Douzet, F., Dammann, F., Bertran, M.-G., Bômont, C., Braun, M., Danet, D., Desforges, A., & Géry, A. (2023). Contested spatialities of digital sovereignty. *Geopolitics*, *28*(2), 919-958.

Hulvey, R. A. (2022). Cyber sovereignty: How China is changing the rules of internet freedom.

Jansen, B., Kadenko, N., Broeders, D., van Eeten, M., Borgolte, K., & Fiebig, T. (2023). Pushing boundaries: An empirical view on the digital sovereignty of six governments in the midst of geopolitical tensions. *Government Information Quarterly*, *40*(4), 101862.

Jinping, R. X. (2023). *calls for 'solid' security barrier around China's internet, 2023, https://h1.nu/1h9Pn, 10/10/2025*.

Kadhim, H. A., & Abed, Q. M. (2020). The Voting Behavior of the Permanent Members of the Security Council Regarding the US War on Iraq in 2003. *Journal of Political Issues*(63).

KHALAF, H. M. (2024). The Methodological and Epistemological Developments in Conflict and Peace Studies. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*(47).

Lambach, D., & Oppermann, K. (2023). Narratives of digital sovereignty in German political discourse. *Governance*, *36*(3), 693-709.

Larsen, B. C. (2022). The geopolitics of AI and the rise of digital sovereignty.

Lasky, H. J. (2021). *The Theory of the State and the Foundations of Organization and Sovereignty, edited by Abdel Halim Radwan,(Publishers)*. Arab Press Agency

Lee, N. (2025). China's Cyber Playbook for the Indo- Pacific, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Pennsylvania, 2025, https://h1.nu/1ha8z, 10/10/2025.

Leong, K. (2022). Analysis of Digital Sovereignty and Identity: From Digitization to Digitalization.

Liu, X. (2024). Coalition building and Sino–US competition in the digital era. *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, *17*(4), 425-448.

Manati, T. K., & Alwan, S. O. (2024). Transformations of the World Order after the Corona Pandemic COVID-19: The Role of Culture, Science, and the Environment. Journal of International Crisis and Risk Communication Research, 7(S10), 1810.

Martynova, E., & Shcherbovich, A. (2024). Digital transformation in Russia: Turning from a service model to ensuring technological sovereignty. *Computer Law & Security Review*, *55*, 106075.

Nazir, H. M. (2014). The Phenomenon of International Competition in International Relations, Arab Democratic Center, accessed 23/5/2025.

nternetsociety.org. (2022). Navigating Digital Sovereignty and its Impact on the Internet.
Office of International Affairs. (2025). CLOUD Act Resources, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice, https://linksshortcut.com/ckjXk, 4/9/2025.
Pohle, J. (2020). Digital sovereignty. A new key concept of digital policy in Germany and Europe.
Saura García, C. (2024). Digital expansionism and big tech companies: consequences in democracies of the European Union. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, *11*(1), 1-8.
Schneider, I. (2023). Digital sovereignty and governance in the data economy: Data trusteeship instead of property rights on data. In *A Critical Mind: Hanns Ullrich's Footprint in Internal Market Law, Antitrust and Intellectual Property* (pp. 369-406). Springer.
Shen, Y. (2016). Cyber sovereignty and the governance of global cyberspace. *Chinese Political Science Review*, *1*(1), 81-93.
Thumfart, J. (2022). The norm development of digital sovereignty between China, Russia, the EU and the US: From the late 1990s to the Covid-crisis 2020/21 as catalytic event. *Enforcing Rights in a Changing World. Computers Privacy Data Protection (CPDP)*, *14*, 1-44.
U.S. Department of Commerce. (2023). Biden-Harris Administration Launches First CHIPS for America Funding Opportunity, 2023, https://linksshortcut.com/iCUjt, 4/9/2025. .
UNITED NATIONS. (2021). IGF 2021 WS #106 Open Source Collaboration for Digital Sovereignty, 2021, https://linksshortcut.com/luzoS, 12/7/2025.
United States International Cyberspace & Digital Policy Strategy. (2025). Towards an Innovative, Secure, and Rights-Respecting Digital Future, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, 2021_2025, p10_40.
United States International Cyberspace and Digital Policy Strategy. (2024).
Zinoveva, E. (2023). Digital Sovereignty in Russia and China, Modern Diplomacy, https://linksshortcut.com/olcvT, Accessed: 4/7/2025.