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Eurasia group top risks 2019 report

#1 risk is Rigged! Who controls the United States? The 2020 US presidential election will be a US Brexit - a tipping point for polarizing the country, not because of the referendum result, but a delegitimized process and contentious outcome. NEW YORK, January 6 - Eurasia Group President Ian Bremmer and Chairman Cliff Kupchan are pleased to present this year's Top Risks report, which identifies the key geopolitical trends and stress points for global investors and market participants in 2020, as well as some red herring - issues that, despite media attention, are unlikely to pose a significant threat or drive instability in the coming year. 2020 will prove to be a tipping point in international politics, Bremmer said. In recent decades, globalization has created opportunities, reduced poverty and supported peace for billions of people. But now China and the United States are in the process of technology, developed world countries have become toxically polarized, and climate change is important like never before. Overall, these trend lines are likely to create a global crisis. Rigged! Who controls the United States? tops the list in 2020. This year, American institutions will be tested in unprecedented ways, Bremmer and Kupchan write. We face the risk of a US election that many will see as illegitimate, uncertainty in the wake and a foreign policy environment that is becoming less stable by the resulting vacuum. Below is a summary of all ten Top Risks for 2020. Please click here for the full report and an exclusive video. Bremmer and Kupchan will host an on-the-record conference call today at 10:00 AM EST/15:00 GMT to discuss the risks and take questions. Dial-in information is below. 1 - Rigged! Who controls the United States? In 2020, American institutions will be tested like never before, and the November election will produce a result many see as illegitimate. If Trump wins amid credible accusations of irregularities, the result will be contentious. If he loses, especially if the vote is close, same. Both scenarios would create months of litigation and a political vacuum, but unlike the contentious Bush-Gore 2000 election, the loser is unlikely to accept a judicial outcome as legitimate. It is an American Brexit, where the question is not the outcome, but political uncertainty about what the people voted for. 2- The Great Decoupling Disconnection of U.S. and Chinese technology sectors is already disrupting bilateral flows of technology, talent and investment. In 2020, this disconnection will go beyond strategic technology sectors such as semiconductors, cloud computing and 5G to broader economic activity. This trend will affect not only the \$5 trillion global tech sector, but other industries and institutions, too. This will create a deeper business, economic and cultural divide that will risk becoming permanent, and throw a deep geopolitical chill over global business. The big question: Where will the virtual Berlin Wall stand? 3- / China As this disconnect occurs, tensions between the United States and China will provoke a more explicit national security, influence and values. The two sides will continue to use economic tools in this fight - sanctions, export controls and boycotts - with shorter safeguards and targets that are more explicitly political. The confrontation will grow across Hong Kong, Taiwan, the Uighurs, the South China Sea and a host of other issues. 4- MNCs not to the rescue Far from filling the gaps on critical issues such as climate change, poverty reduction and trade liberalization left by underperforming national governments, multinational corporations (MNCs) will face new pressure from political officials, both elected and unelected. Politicians working to tackle slowing global growth, rising inequality, populist threats and security challenges created by new technology will assert themselves at the expense of MNCs. In this more difficult global environment, business leaders will be more focused on their bottom lines, not less. 5- India gets Modi-fied In 2019, Prime Minister Modi and his government revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, piloted a plan that stripped 1.9 million people of their citizenship, and passed an immigration law that considers religious affiliation. Protests of various kinds have expanded across India, but Modi will not back down, and a fierce government response in 2020 will provoke more demonstrations. Emboldened state-level opposition leaders will directly challenge the central government, leaving Modi with less room for maneuvering on economic reform at a time of slowing growth. 6- Geopolitical Europe European officials now believe that the EU should defend itself more aggressively against competing economic and political models. On regulation, antitrust officials will continue to fight North American tech giants. On trade, the EU will become more confident in rules enforcement and retaliatory tariffs. On security, officials will try to use the world's largest market to break down cross-border barriers to military trade and technology development. This more independent Europe will generate friction with both the United States and China. 7- Policy vs. economy of climate change Climate change will put governments, investors and society at large on a collision course with business makers, who must choose between ambitious commitments to reduce their emissions and their bottom lines. Civil society will be unforgivable to investors and companies they think are moving too slowly. Oil and gas companies, airlines, automakers and meat producers will feel the heat. Disruptions to supply chains are a meaningful risk. Investors want to reduce their exposure to carbon-intensive industries, and send asset prices lower. All this as global warming makes natural disasters more likely, more frequent and more severe. 8- Shia crescendo The failure of U.S. policy toward Iran, Iraq and Syria - the major Shia-led countries in the Middle East - creates significant risks to regional stability. These include a deadly conflict with Iran; upward pressure on oil prices; A caught between Iran's trajectory and state failure; and a rogue Syria melted to Russia and Iran. Neither Donald Trump nor Iran's leaders want all-out war, but deadly skirmishes in Iraq between US and Iranian forces are likely. Iran will disrupt more tank traffic in the Persian Gulf and hit the United States in cyberspace. It could also use its proxies in other Middle Eastern countries to target U.S. citizens and U.S. allies. The likelihood increases that the Iraqi government will expel U.S. troops this year, and popular opposition from some Iraqis against Iran's influence will burden the Iraqi state - OPEC's second-largest oil producer. Feckless U.S. policy in Syria will also drive regional risk in 2020. In 2020, public anger over weak growth, corruption and low-quality public services will keep the risk of political instability high. This comes at a time when vulnerable middle classes are expecting more government spending on social services, reducing the government's ability to implement austerity measures expected by foreign investors and the IMF. We will see more protests, financial balances will deteriorate, anti-establishment politicians will grow stronger, and the election results will be less predictable. 10- Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan - who has a long history of provocative behavior in response to threats that sparked confrontation with both foreign and domestic critics - has entered a period of steep political decline. He suffers defectors from the ruling Justice and Development Party when popular former allies establish new parties. His ruling coalition is shaky. Relations with the US will hit new lows when likely US sanctions take effect in the first half of this year, undermining the country's reputation and investment climate and putting further pressure on the lira. Erdogan's response to these various challenges will further damage Turkey's ailing economy. Red herring The new axis of evil - Iran, North Korea, Venezuela and Syria - is unlikely to blow up in 2020, despite the headlines. Iran represents the greatest threat, but neither Trump nor Tehran wants all-out war. The world's advanced industry democracies (the United States, Europe and Japan) are still well positioned to withstand the populist storm this year. A major victory for Boris Johnson and his Conservative Party, and a historic loss to Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party, gives Britain a much-needed break from the Brexit madness of 2020. Top Risk conference call dial (10:00 am EST/15:00 GMT) +1 800.791.4813 (US, CANADA) +1 785.424.1102 (INTERNATIONAL) CONFERENCE ID: 4994 Conference Call replay available three hours after call at: +1 844.488.7474 (Free) +1 862.902.0129 (Toll) Access Code: 12161550 *** Eurasia Group is the world's leading global political risk research and consulting firm. 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