
China Briefs

Chinese Defense Minister May Meet U.S. Counterpart at Shanghai Dialogue

China's Ministry of Defense Announced that Defense Minister Wei Fenghe will be attending this year's 19th Shanghai Dialogue and visit Singapore from June 8 to 12. During the international security forum, Wei will speak on China's vision for regional order and introduce China's policies concerning multilateralism, maintaining regional peace and stability, and promoting a community with a shared future for mankind, the ministry said in a statement.

The minister will meet heads of foreign delegations to exchange views on international and regional situations, as well as bilateral defense and security cooperation, it said. He will also hold talks with leaders of the Singaporean government and its defense department during his visit there. Analysts are speculating on whether or not he will meet with U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, who will also be attending the meeting.

Wei's first participation in this forum, which is sponsored by the British International Institute of Strategic Studies (ISIS), was in 2019 when he met with then acting U.S. Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan. No meeting has yet been confirmed for this year. "Both China and the United States attach importance to risk management, but they disagree on approaches that are necessary," said Zhou Bo, a senior fellow at the Center for International Security and Strategy at Tsinghua University. He added that

if a face-to-face exchange takes place, both sides can share views and positions with each other, which is one of the most important ways to avoid miscalculations.

Wang Yi: U.S. and China Must Build a Diversified World with Shared Security

Speaking at an online forum titled, "Henry Kissinger and U.S.-China Relations" on May 31, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi responded to the speech of U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in which Blinken reiterated the notion that the primary goal of the United States was to assert itself in competition with the PRC. This has involved U.S. attempts to pressure other countries to restrict technology transfer to China and to move supply chains away from Chinese production lines. It also involves bringing Taiwan into play in a bigger way in its campaign against China. Wang Yi warned that if the U.S. keeps back-sliding on its commitment on the Taiwan question, it could cause serious damage to the relationship. "The China-U.S. relationship cannot deteriorate further, and the right choice must be made, that is, to correct strategic recognition, abandon Cold-War mentality, solidify political fundamentals, properly manage divergences, get out of a competitive logic, and enhance communication and cooperation," he said.

Wang Yi said that the current atmosphere of China-U.S. relations is extremely abnormal, and the anxiety expressed by the U.S. side to China's rise in the world economy is completely

uncalled for. China's overriding task is to concentrate on developing itself and meet its people's aspirations for a better life, Wang said. If the United States keeps defining its relations with China in terms of major power competition and sets its policy goal as "I-win-you-lose," it will only push China and the United States into confrontation and conflict and the world into division and turmoil.

He added that it is the responsibility and obligation of the two countries to jointly advance the building of an interconnected, diversified and inclusive world with shared security, reflecting President Xi's proposal for a new Global Security Initiative.

Chongyang Report Warns of Military Conflict with U.S.

A report released by Renmin University's Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies on May 29 warned that China must relinquish any hope of avoiding competition with the United States and should be prepared for an eventual military conflict.

"To respond to U.S. President Joe Biden's all-out competitive offensive, China should give up its illusions, and make every effort to guard against the possibility of a final showdown of high-intensity military confrontation," the report said. "The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has exacerbated the strategic anxiety of the United States towards China. The United States has begun to accelerate the build-up of comprehensive strategic competition with China."

At the same time, the report recom-

mended that while adapting to the spike in bilateral tensions, China should also take the initiative to shape ties with the U.S. and seek “the possibility of cooperation between the two nations.” The report also underlined the danger of “decoupling,” including the U.S. and its allies stopping high technology exports to China and reducing reliance on Chinese products.

“The Biden administration believes that competition is still the main axis of China-U.S. relations, and the tough U.S. stance towards China will not fundamentally change in a short period of time,” the report noted. It also encouraged moving forward in the development of its own Cross-Border Interbank Payment System.

China Climbs Out of the Latest Bout with COVID

There are clear signs that China is starting to get the upper hand in the latest outbreak of the Omicron variant of COVID. Shanghai, which has been under serious lockdown for nearly two months, is starting to open up, with malls and tourist sites now taking in a restricted number of people, at less than 75 percent of capacity in many cases. The situation in China’s northeast is also coming back, and severe restrictions in Beijing are confined to the areas which show a heavy incidence of infection.

On June 1, the State Council issued guidelines for a package of assistance to help the economy recover: more than 400 billion yuan of new tax rebates to be refunded in July; a credit line of 800 billion yuan for infrastructure; and temporary subsidies or assistance to migrant workers whether they presently have insurance or not. In addition inspection teams have been sent out to the 12 provinces to investigate how the policies are being implemented.

Liu He Speaks on Science and Technology Goals

Vice Premier Liu He presented a speech at the opening ceremony of the 16th Academician Conference of the Chinese Academy of Engineering on May 30. He emphasized the academy’s critical role in the nation’s strategic and technological strength.

Liu He referenced the importance of food and energy security based on “natural endowments.” In that light, much to the dismay of the Green New Deal anti-fossil fuel fraudsters, he called for enhanced research on coal, oil, and gas technologies.

Wang Yi Builds China-Pacific Islands Cooperation

China’s State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi concluded a successful tour of the eight Pacific Island Nations, joining on May 30 with Fijian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama to chair the Second China-Pacific Island Countries Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Fiji. Wang read a message from President Xi Jinping who emphasized that China will always cooperate with the island nations, regardless of their size or what happens on the international landscape. China, he said, will always be a good partner.

At the meeting, which Wang described as very successful, he announced that China intends to continue to jointly build six new cooperation platforms with regional countries in such sectors as poverty alleviation, disaster prevention, climate change, agriculture, and security and law enforcement. Although the ten participating nations did not produce a final document, attendees reached a five-point consensus, focusing on deepening their

comprehensive strategic partnership, upholding true multilateralism and “pursuing common development and prosperity.” Wang also emphasized that China would continue to cooperate with the region, carry out three and four-party cooperation, and promote regional development.

Ignoring these positive developments, Western media jackals chose to focus on the fact that a final document was not signed, describing this as a setback and an “embarrassment” for China. But Wang Yi and others pointed out that there is nothing unusual about the meeting not producing a final document. Negotiations that must be carried out in a respectful and professional manner take time, effort, and patience from all parties, he said, adding that there are “no strings attached” to China’s negotiating process.

Following the meeting, China’s ambassador to Fiji, Qian Bo, told reporters there had been some “concerns on specific issues” from some of the participating nations about the proposed agreement. Under huge pressure from the U.S. and Australia, who are making up stories about China building military bases in the Pacific Islands and threatening Australian security, some Pacific Island countries were reluctant to sign a more inclusive regional pact with China. David Panuelo, the President of the Federated States of Micronesia, expressed concern that signing any agreement with China would heighten geopolitical tensions and threaten regional stability, adding that “it threatens to bring a new Cold War era at best, and a World War at worst.”

China will continue putting forward proposals to move in the direction of a more long-term pact of cooperation, however, while the overwhelmingly positive response China has received from the leaders of most of the Pacific islands has dealt a blow to the attempts by the Anglo-American crowd to isolate China in the region.