

Xi extends Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese

Updated: Feb 11, 2021 07:18 AM Xinhua

BEIJING — President Xi Jinping, on behalf of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, extended Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese on Feb 10 at a reception in Beijing.

Xi, also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered a speech at the gathering at the Great Hall of the People, greeting Chinese people of all ethnic groups, compatriots in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and overseas Chinese.

This year's Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on Feb 12.

Achieving the first centenary goal of finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects is a great feat of milestone significance, Xi noted.

Demanding the virtues of modesty and prudence, Xi called for efforts to achieve the second centenary goal and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and make new and greater contributions to the noble cause of securing peace and development for all mankind.

Party and State leaders Li Keqiang, Li Zhanshu, Wang Yang, Wang Huning, Zhao Leji, Han Zheng and Wang Qishan were present at the reception. Li Keqiang chaired the event.

Xi summarized the nation's major achievements in 2020 under the Party's leadership, including emerging as one of the first countries that brought the COVID-19 epidemic under control, taking the lead among major economies in achieving positive economic growth, making historic progress in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and accomplishing the poverty eradication tasks on time.

The country also saw the success of a number of key science and technology innovation projects, solid progress in pushing forward the Belt and Road Initiative and the successful conclusion of implementing the 13th Five-Year Plan, as well as growing global support for building a community with a shared future for humanity, Xi said.

Facts have once again proved that the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics has incomparable vitality and creativity, Xi noted.

As long as the entire Party and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups rally closely around the CPC Central Committee, there is no difficulty that cannot be overcome, he said.

In 2021, efforts should be made to consolidate and expand the results secured in epidemic containment and social and economic development, Xi stressed, demanding a good start in boosting the country's development during the 14th Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025) so as to celebrate the Party's centenary with outstanding achievements.

Having completed a glorious journey of 100 years, the CPC has grown into the world's largest Marxist ruling party that has been in power for over 70 years in the world's largest socialist country, Xi said.

The centenary sees the Party, with more than 91 million members, in its prime with the widespread support of 1.4 billion Chinese people, he added.

The Party will remain invincible as long as it stands at the forefront of the times, leads the charge in overcoming difficulties and challenges, and takes root among the people, Xi said.

http://english.www.gov.cn/news/topnews/202102/11/content_WS602469bbc6d0719374af8bf4.html

http://english.www.gov.cn/premier/photos/202102/07/content_WS601fae4bc6d0f72576945446.html

Xi, Biden talk on eve of holiday

By ZHAO HUANXIN in Washington | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2021-02-11 10:38

Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke by phone with his American counterpart Joe Biden on the eve of the Lunar New Year celebration, kicking off the top-level exchange between Beijing and Washington three weeks into the new US administration.

The two presidents exchanged Chinese Lunar New Year greetings along with views on bilateral relations and major international and regional issues, according to a release from China's Foreign Ministry on Thursday.

Xi once again congratulated Biden on his inauguration as US president and wished the Chinese and American people a happy and auspicious Year of the Ox.

In the telephone call, Xi said that cooperation is the only correct choice for China and the United States, and confrontation between them is a disaster for both countries.

Xi also said the two countries should re-establish their various dialogue mechanisms so as to accurately understand each other's policy intentions and avoid misunderstanding and miscalculation.

Xi told Biden that the foreign affairs departments of the two countries can deepen communication on a broad range of issues in bilateral relations and on major regional and international affairs.

More contact also may be carried out between economic, financial and law enforcement agencies as well as the militaries of the two countries, Xi added.

The president said China and the US should respect each other and properly manage their disputes in a constructive manner.

He said China hopes the US respects China's core interests and cautiously deals with matters related to Taiwan, Hong Kong and Xinjiang, which are China's domestic issues concerning the nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In the phone call, Xi mentioned that Biden once told him what defines the United States is the country's "possibilities", referring to their talks during Biden's trip to China a decade ago, when both were vice-presidents.

"When I was with Xi Jinping — and I was on the Tibetan plateau with him — and he asked me in a private dinner, he and I, and we each had an interpreter, he said, 'Can you define America for me?'" Biden recounted during a swearing-in ceremony for new staffers, hours after his inauguration.

Biden, who was then vice-president in the Obama administration, said he responded to Xi, who was then vice-president: "possibilities", CNN reported on Jan 22.

Xi said he hoped that those possibilities will now point toward an improvement of China-US relations.

A readout from the White House said Biden shared his greetings and well wishes with the Chinese people for Lunar New Year and affirmed his priorities of protecting the American people in various areas.

"The two leaders also exchanged views on countering the COVID-19 pandemic, and the shared challenges of global health security, climate change, and preventing weapons proliferation," the White House said.

The long-awaited phone conversation with Xi came days after Biden said, "there's no reason not to call him".

<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202102/11/WS60249890a31024ad0baa8b4a.html>

'Let's each manage our own business': Yang Jiechi tells Antony Blinken

CGTN Updated 18:04, 06-Feb-2021

Chinese senior diplomat Yang Jiechi spoke to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Saturday during a phone conversation, the first official contact between the two countries after the new U.S. administration under President Joe Biden took office on January 20.

Yang called for "no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation" when speaking of bilateral ties. "Let's each manage our own business," Yang told Blinken.

The Chinese diplomat, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, also urged Washington to "correct its mistakes."

'Taiwan issue, core of China-U.S. relationship'

Describing Taiwan as "the most important and sensitive problem" in the relationship between China and the U.S., Yang told Washington to strictly abide by the one-China policy and the three China-U.S. joint communiqués. In the documents, Washington recognizes the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the sole legal government of China and thus, should stop any form of official exchange and military contact with southeast China's Taiwan region.

The Taiwan issue serves as one of the contributing factors to souring China-U.S. relations. During former U.S. President Donald Trump's tenure, Washington has moved closer to Taiwan with a slew of moves, including

high-level official visits, arms sales to the island and lifting of "self-imposed" restrictions on interactions.

According to an official release, Yang also stated that Hong Kong-, Xinjiang- and Tibet-related affairs are all China's internal affairs and allow no interference by any external force. "China will continue to firmly preserve our sovereignty, safety and interest of development," Yang said.

In response, Blinken reiterated the U.S. commitment to the one-China policy. "Our stance on that has not changed," he said.

According to a statement from the White House, Blinken also extended his best wishes for the upcoming Chinese New Year. The U.S. is hoping to work out stably developed and constructive bilateral ties with China, he added.

Key moment

In his conversation with Blinken, Yang stressed that the China-U.S. relations now stand at a key moment.

He said that the Chinese government takes a stable and consistent policy towards the U.S. while urging the U.S. side to rectify its mistakes made over a period of time and work with China to uphold the spirit of no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation, focus on cooperation and manage differences, so as to push forward the healthy and stable development of bilateral relations.

Reiterating China's unswerving commitment to the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and that no force can stop the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, Yang called on the two sides to respect each other's core interests and choices of political system and development path, and manage their domestic affairs well.

The senior Chinese diplomat voiced China's willingness to work with the U.S. to strengthen ties earlier this week.

Speaking on international affairs, Yang pointed out that it is the consensus of the international community that all countries in the world should

safeguard the international system with the United Nations (UN) at its core. The international order should be based on international law, and the basic norms of international relations in line with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

Yang urged the U.S. to play a constructive role in promoting peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

He also reiterated China's position on the current situation in Myanmar, stressing that the international community should create an enabling external environment for a proper resolution on the Myanmar issue.

The two sides agreed to maintain close contact on issues of common concern, according to the official release.

Read more: [Yang Jiechi: China ready to work with U.S. to strengthen ties](https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-02-06/China-U-S-senior-diplomats-hold-phone-calls-on-ties--XEMJJVAQM/index.html)

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-02-06/China-U-S-senior-diplomats-hold-phone-calls-on-ties--XEMJJVAQM/index.html>

Thursday, February 04, 2021, 21:13

China readily considering joining trans-Pacific trade bloc

By Xinhua (China Daily)

BEIJING - China is readily considering joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (**CPTPP**) to promote economic globalization and regional economic integration, the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) said on Thursday.

The country is actively conducting research on joining the CPTPP, MOC spokesperson Gao Feng told a press conference when responding to a question on China's timetable of joining the pact.

Gao said that China is willing to strengthen technical communication and exchanges on relevant issues with all CPTPP members.

ALSO READ: [CPTPP interest proof of China's further opening-up](#)

The country last year voiced its openness to joining the CPTPP following the signature of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement.

<https://www.chinadailyhk.com/article/156992#China-readily-considering-joining-trans-Pacific-trade-bloc>

China, Japan agree to manage differences, promote cooperation in maritime affairs

Updated: Feb 04, 2021 07:54 PM Xinhua

BEIJING — China and Japan have agreed to properly manage their differences through dialogue and pragmatically promote cooperation in maritime affairs, making the East China Sea a sea of peace, cooperation, and friendship.

The agreement was reached during the 12th round of high-level consultations on maritime affairs held between the two countries via video link on Feb 3. Based on a meeting of delegation heads on Jan 20, this round of consultations saw a plenary meeting for the consultation mechanism and three working group meetings on maritime defense, maritime law enforcement, and security, and the marine economy.

Stressing the importance of peace and stability in the East China Sea, the two sides agreed to hold annual and special meetings for the defense sector's maritime and air liaison mechanism as soon as possible, accelerate the construction of a direct telephone line under the mechanism, and strengthen crisis management and control to prevent unexpected events.

China and Japan reached a consensus on maritime search cooperation between the China Maritime Search and Rescue Center and the Japan Coast Guard, combating maritime crimes and promoting exchanges between law enforcement officers.

The two sides agreed to promote exchanges concerning marine environmental protection and to further strengthen cooperation on the prevention and control of marine plastic waste.

They also agreed to carry out exchanges between maritime personnel from the two foreign ministries, promote exchanges between young officials, and support exchanges and cooperation among think tanks as well as academic and educational institutions.

The two sides pledged to cooperate further in combating illegal fishing, promoting eel resource management, and conserving fishery resources in the North Pacific.

They also exchanged views on marine resources and energy, wastewater treatment at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, marine science and technology, and marine industrial cooperation.

They agreed in principle to hold the 13th round of high-level consultations on maritime affairs later this year.

http://english.www.gov.cn/news/international/exchanges/202102/04/content_WS601be05bc6d0f725769451e6.html

China, Japan to strengthen defense cooperation

Updated: Dec 15, 2020 10:40 AM english.www.gov.cn

State Councilor and Defense Minister Wei Fenghe held a video call with Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi on Dec 14.

Wei said both sides have reached a consensus on China-Japan relations in the new era, and both defense ministries should maintain exchanges between higher-ranking officials and pragmatic cooperation.

He also stressed accelerating construction of the maritime and air liaison mechanism as part of efforts to build constructive bilateral security relations.

China is determined to safeguard its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights concerning the East China Sea and Diaoyu Islands issues, Wei added. And both parties, he said, should focus on the big picture, with further communication and negotiation to properly dissolve divergences.

Nobuo Kishi said Japan is willing to beef up communication and cooperation with China in defense work and push forward the construction of the maritime and air liaison mechanism.

http://english.www.gov.cn/statecouncil/weifenghe/202012/15/content_WS5fd8221ac6d0f72576941e54.html

Chinese defense minister holds phone talk with ROK counterpart

Updated: Oct 21, 2020 10:08 PM Xinhua

BEIJING — State Councilor and Minister of National Defense Wei Fenghe on Oct 21 spoke over the phone with Suh Wook, defense minister of the Republic of Korea (ROK).

Wei noted that President Xi Jinping and ROK President Moon Jae-in have met and held phone talks on various occasions in recent years, leading all-around and rapid development of the China-ROK relations.

China is willing to work with the ROK to earnestly implement the important consensus reached by the two heads of state, deepen exchanges and cooperation in defense and other fields, and jointly maintain regional peace and stability, said Wei.

Lauding the Chinese government and military's efforts and significant achievements in fighting the COVID-19 epidemic, Suh Wook said the ROK stands ready to promote bilateral defense relations and make joint efforts with China in safeguarding the stability in the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia.

http://english.www.gov.cn/statecouncil/weifenghe/202010/21/content_WS5f9040efc6d0f7257693e347.html

ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus held online

Updated: Dec 10, 2020 09:33 PM Xinhua

BEIJING — The 7th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus took place via video link on Dec 10.

State Councilor and Defense Minister Wei Fenghe attended the meeting and delivered a speech.

In the face of a pandemic of the century and momentous changes never seen in the last one hundred years, countries around the world should work together to build a community with a shared future for humanity, Wei said.

Defense departments and militaries of countries in the Asia-Pacific region should strengthen strategic communication, play an active role in building consensus, deepen practical cooperation, and jointly safeguard regional development and prosperity, he noted.

Wei also explained China's position on the South China Sea issue, saying that China is ready to work with the ASEAN countries to adhere to the dual-track approach. He added that China would steadily advance the Code of Conduct consultations and safeguard peace and stability in the South China Sea.

A joint declaration on strategic security was adopted at the meeting.

http://english.www.gov.cn/statecouncil/weifenghe/202012/10/content_WS5fd22393c6d0f72576941aca.html

ST-WEF webinar:

How America can win back Asia



Magdalene Fung Assistant Foreign Editor

PUBLISHED : JAN 29, 2021, 8:10 PM SGT **THE STRAITS TIMES**

SINGAPORE - Asia yearns for a strong America that will pick up the mantle of global leadership once more, with greater focus on improving the pandemic-battered world economy rather than on its rivalry with China.

But first, the United States needs to put its own house in order and start listening to its friends again, said Singapore's diplomatic and academic heavyweights at the Geopolitical Reset 2021: Implications for Asia webinar presented by The Straits Times and the World Economic Forum on Friday (Jan 29).

The webinar's backdrop is US President Joe Biden's first days at the helm of the superpower, which has signalled renewed interest in engaging Asia amid broad consensus that it has been losing ground to China in the region.

"Frankly, Asia is about business," said Professor Chan Heng Chee, ambassador-at-large and chair of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities. "It's partly about military and security, and that undergirds business, but Asia is primarily interested in business."

Prof Chan was among the four panellists at the webinar that also included Professor Wang Gungwu, a prominent sinologist with the National University of Singapore and emeritus professor at the Australian National University; Mr George Yeo, senior adviser to Kuok Group and Singapore's former foreign minister; and Professor Kishore Mahbubani, distinguished fellow at the Asia Research Institute. ST's US bureau chief Nirmal Ghosh and China bureau chief Tan

Dawn Wei also joined the discussion, which was moderated by associate editor Vikram Khanna.

World dominance does not mean just military power, but also the ability to offer global leadership in areas such as economic policy and managing the pandemic, Prof Chan said. If the US works on these areas, the world "will look up to American leadership... to bring everyone to the next level".

Many nations' present-day concerns are centred on the state of the world economy, Prof Wang said, pointing out that in Asia, economic progress has largely depended on the well being of the economies of the US as well as western Europe.

"So, a shift (by the US) over to much more emphasis upon economic benefits that we can share, and to really concentrate our attention on rescuing the world from a

very disastrous year (from the coronavirus pandemic), all that is a much better message than to constantly talk about military cooperation between the democratic countries," he said.

Fix your own house first

The panellists stressed the importance of America first getting a handle on its own domestic issues.

"Everybody in this region is watching the US very carefully. You can make all the soothing statements you want, (but) they cannot wipe out what happened on Jan 6 and an awareness that the US is a deeply divided country," Prof Mahbubani said, referring to the insurrection at the US Capitol by former president Donald Trump's supporters seeking to overturn his election defeat. "If the US wants to really take on China, it has first got to fix its own house.

Among Mr Biden's first and most important tasks, Prof Mahbubani said, are to lift the standards of living of America's bottom 50 per cent, reduce the intense polarisation of its society, and move towards bipartisan foreign policy in critical areas.

"If they can agree to a bipartisan policy... and work on trade and economic relations to stabilise US relations in East Asia, then that sends a positive long-term signal," he said. "It's not about words; it's about deeds."

Agreeing, Mr Yeo said America's best strategy to achieve a geopolitical reset right now would be for Mr Biden to focus on ameliorating the country's domestic problems.

"Everyone triangulates between the US and China today and what they see to be the future," he said. "All policymakers ask themselves: In 10 years' time, what will the world look like? Is the US healing? Is the direction of the

vector changing?

"It's how people perceive the future that would decide how they will react today and re-triangulate their positions."

Don't go all anti-China

Prof Wang lamented the loss of faith in international organisations, led by US scepticism of such global bodies over the past years.

As president, Mr Trump withdrew the US from several global pacts, including the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership that would have become the world's largest trading bloc. (The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership later took that honour, bringing together 15 nations in Asia and the Pacific, encompassing nearly a third of global GDP.)

Smaller states, in particular, need multilateralism to survive, Prof Chan noted. But as a result of such US withdrawals from international agreements, countries now view the reliability of US promises with suspicion, she said.

On America's intention - as indicated by Mr Kurt Campbell, Mr Biden's pick to lead US foreign policy in Asia - to pivot towards issue-based partnerships as opposed to just big blocs of country-based coalitions as a strategy to deal with a rising China, Prof Chan said that Asian nations would sign up if such alliances were inclusive and open to all who want a part in them.

If a US-led coalition were in any way anti-China, however, "its effect and impact will be limited because every country in the end calculates in its own interest", Mr Yeo said.

"Asean is not going to turn anti-China. Japan, while it tilts towards America, maintains a very keen balance because it needs a long-term option with China... Even Australia's national interest involves a very substantial trading relationship with China," he said. "So the US has got to be more subtle, and its leadership is most powerful when it is idealistic, when it is positive and not negative."

Hear your friends out

Prof Mahbubani said America's negative actions against China - such as the imposition of tariffs, and sanctions on people in Hong Kong - have not made the US any stronger or enhanced its standing in Asia, so it should focus instead on positive actions, and start listening again to its allies and friends.

Prof Wang called on Asean - both as a whole and as its individual states - to speak up and share its views and experiences with the US. The regional body has the capacity to influence key players on the global stage not only because of its geopolitical location, but also because of its long experience of small states coming together to work in unison while balancing each one's own interests.

Asean must share with the world how its "way of doing things... has made a major contribution to how small states, in their relations with big states, can provide a platform for new developments that benefit all", Prof Wang said. "We need to tell people that our experience is worth looking at very carefully."

The coronavirus pandemic has provided clarity on the importance of strong political leadership, Prof Chan said, adding that countries with good leaders who push out good policies, care about their people and are pro-science

will do well.

Mr Yeo agreed: "In South-east Asia, Singapore has come out reasonably well, and this is a huge plus for Singapore's future... But the country that has succeeded the most is China."

"China last year grew almost 3 per cent, while the rest of the world went back more than 4 per cent," the former foreign minister said. "Western countries look only at the pimples on the Chinese face... but (anyone doing) a reasonable analysis of China will know that it has succeeded beyond belief."

<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/st-wef-webinar-how-america-can-win-back-asia>