

China's Foreign Ministry: Position on Russia & Ukraine

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Today, the dangers of military escalation are beyond description.

What is now happening in Ukraine has serious geopolitical implications. It could lead us into a World War III scenario.

It is important that a peace process be initiated with a view to preventing escalation.

Global Research condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

A Bilateral Peace Agreement is required.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Russia relations, Ukraine, Humanitarian Aid, Taiwan, China-EU relations, China-Central Asia relations, sanctions, differing views of democracy, and European security.

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi has been busy with statements concerning the Ukraine conflict and China's position in the extent of its support for Russia. These are important as they affect the geopolitical position in Eurasia, Beijing's relations with Moscow as an ally, and the continuing of multilateral trade within the region.

Wang expressly stated that "China and Russia will maintain strategic focus and steadily advance our comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era" suggesting there is no change in its support for Russia. While opinions over the handling of the Ukraine situation may differ, the on-going China-Russia axis in terms of a strategic partnership looks set to continue. Beijing has long been wary of Washington's intentions and has already been subjected to sanctions itself, including quasi sanctions in the form of the 2018-2021 China-US Tariff wars. Beijing's policy makers will be studying weaknesses in the Russian system in addition to US tactics in terms of engaging its allies, including important Asian economies

such as Japan, Singapore, and South Korea, to move in such radical terms against Moscow. To some degree, Beijing will want to learn from the US how it has been able to place Moscow in such a position and to create defensive barriers from the same type of tactics.

At the same time, Beijing needs Moscow's support in energy and other trade needs, in addition to vital assistance in bringing peace and security to Central Asia in the wake of the US exit from Afghanistan and recent unrest in Kazakhstan. The energy and security issues are of profound importance to Beijing, which is why its relationship with Moscow can be expected to continue.

Wang held a press conference to discuss these issues. We provide details as follows:

Reuters: "Russia's military action in Ukraine has expanded to non-military targets. Will China do more to help resolve the conflict?"

Wang: *"On the Ukraine issue, China has adopted an objective and impartial attitude. We independently assess the situation and make our position clear on the basis of the merits of the issue."*

As a Chinese proverb puts it, it takes more than one cold day to freeze three feet of ice. The situation in Ukraine has become what it is today for a variety of complex reasons. What is needed to solve complex issues is a cool head and a rational mind, not adding fuel to the fire which only intensifies the situation. China believes that to resolve the current crisis, we must uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations (UN) and respect and protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries. We must adhere to the principle of indivisible security and accommodate the legitimate security concerns of the parties involved. We must settle disputes by peaceful means through dialogue and negotiation. And we must keep in mind the long-term peace and stability of the region and put in place a balanced, effective and sustainable European security architecture.

As things stand, the international community must make continuous efforts on two priorities.

One priority is to facilitate dialogue for peace. China has made some efforts in this regard and had close communications with the relevant parties. On the second day of the conflict, President Xi Jinping spoke to President Vladimir Putin on the phone and expressed China's desire to see Russia and Ukraine hold peace talks as early as possible. President Putin responded positively, and Russia and Ukraine have since had two rounds of talks. We hope that the upcoming third round will make further progress. China believes that the more tense the situation, the more important that the talks continue. The wider the disagreement, the greater the need to sit down and have negotiation. China is prepared to continue playing a constructive role to facilitate dialogue for peace and work alongside the international community when needed to carry out necessary mediation.

The other priority is to prevent a massive humanitarian crisis. To this end, China wishes to propose a six-point initiative:

First, make sure that humanitarian operations abide by the principles of neutrality and impartiality, and avoid politicizing humanitarian issues;

Second, give full attention to the displaced persons in and from Ukraine, and provide them with proper shelter;

Third, ensure the protection of civilians, and prevent secondary humanitarian disasters in Ukraine;

Fourth, provide for safe and smooth humanitarian aid activities, including providing rapid, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access;

Fifth, provide for the safety of foreign nationals in Ukraine, allow them safe departure and help them return to their home countries; and Sixth, support the UN's coordinating role in channeling humanitarian aid and the work of the UN Crisis Coordinator for Ukraine.

China will continue its efforts to stem the humanitarian crisis. The Red Cross Society of China will provide Ukraine with a tranche of emergency humanitarian supplies as soon as possible."

International Media Group Rossiya Segodnya (RT):

"The West is ratcheting up sanctions on Russia. How will this affect Russia-China relations?"
(Note: Rolling news on Western sanctions being imposed on Russia [here](#))

Wang: *"China and Russia are both permanent members of the UN Security Council, and each other's most important close neighbors and strategic partners. Our relationship is one of the most crucial bilateral relations in the world. Our cooperation not only advances the interests of both peoples, but also contributes to peace, stability, and development in the world.*

Last year, the two sides commemorated the 20th anniversary of the China-Russia Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation. Given the increasingly complex international strategic landscape, our shared commitment to ever-lasting friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation, as enshrined in the Treaty, is highly relevant and important not only to both sides but also to countries across the world.

I wish to stress that the China-Russia relationship is valued for its independence. It is based on non-alliance, non-confrontation and non-targeting of any third party. It is free from interference or discord sown by third parties. This is both what historical experience has taught us and an innovation in international relations. Not long ago, the two sides issued a joint statement on international relations entering a new era and global sustainable development. It sends an unequivocal message to the world that China and Russia jointly oppose attempts to revive the Cold War mindset or provoke ideology-based confrontation, and stand for greater democracy in international relations as well as the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

The China-Russia relationship is grounded in a clear logic of history and driven by strong internal dynamics. and the friendship between the Chinese and Russian peoples is rock-solid. There is a bright prospect for cooperation between the two sides. No matter how precarious and challenging the international situation may be, China and Russia will maintain strategic focus and steadily advance our comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era."

Xinhua: "China has been evacuating many of its nationals from Ukraine. Can you share more information on this?"

Wang: *"With tensions escalating in Ukraine, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council are highly concerned about the safety of every Chinese national in Ukraine. General Secretary Xi Jinping has taken a personal interest, repeatedly asked about the situation, and demanded all-out efforts to ensure the safety of Chinese nationals. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has activated its consular emergency response mechanism, both maintaining diplomatic communications with Ukraine, Russia, and countries in the neighborhood, and issuing safety alerts and reminders for Chinese compatriots in Ukraine."*

Agencia EFE: *"Does China believe that its ever-closer relations with Russia and the conflict in Ukraine may affect its relations with Europe and the European Union?"*

Wang: *"China and Europe are two major forces for world peace, two big markets for common development and two great civilizations for human progress. The China-Europe relationship is not targeted at any third party, nor is it subjugated to or controlled by any third party. Dialogue and cooperation between the two sides on the basis of mutual respect and mutual benefit will add more stabilizing factors to an unstable world."*

China and Europe had fruitful cooperation in 2021. Let me give you two examples. China-EU trade exceeded US\$800 billion last year for the first time, underscoring the high complementarity of the economic and trade ties. The China-Europe Railway Express ran more than 15,000 cargo trips, up by 29 percent year on year, and played an active role in promoting international cooperation against COVID-19, ensuring the stability of industrial and supply chains, and facilitating global economic recovery."

That said, some forces are unhappy to see the steady growth of China-Europe relations. They fabricate the narrative of "China threat", play up competition with China, clamor for seeing China as a "systemic rival", and even impose sanctions and provoke confrontation with China. Both China and Europe must be on high alert against these developments. China-Europe cooperation, going through decades of ups and downs, is deeply rooted in solid public support, extensive common interests, and similar strategic needs. Such cooperation enjoys great resilience and potential. It cannot be reversed by any force."

China views its relations with Europe from a strategic, long-term perspective. China's policy toward Europe is firm and consistent. It will not be affected by any turn of events. We will continue to support the independence of Europe and a united and prosperous EU. In the meantime, we hope that Europe will develop a more independent and objective perception of China, adopt a more pragmatic and rational China policy, and work with China to oppose a new Cold War and uphold and act on true multilateralism."

Going forward, the two sides need to work together for the success of the China-EU Summit and other important events on the political agenda. We will seek greater strategic synergy, expand practical cooperation, advance multilateral coordination, deepen people-to-people exchange, and properly manage differences, so as to jointly deliver more concrete benefits to the world."

Khabar 24 News Channel (Kazakh): *"This year marks the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and the five Central Asian countries. What will China do to meet the goals set at the virtual summit held early this year to commemorate the anniversary?"*

Wang: *"China always believes that a growing, prosperous, stable and dynamic Central Asia*

is in the common interest of China and other countries in the region. We will continue to follow the principles of mutual respect, good-neighborly friendship, solidarity in trying times and mutual benefit, as it works with Central Asian countries to forge a strategic partnership featuring rich substance, fruitful results and enduring friendship, and build a China-Central Asia community with a shared future.” ([Note: China and the five Central Asian countries held a recent regional summit in January. More on that here](#)).

Global Times (China): “Having hosted a “Summit for Democracy” last year that was widely deemed unsuccessful, the US plans to hold another one this year. How will China respond?”

Wang: “Last year, the US held a summit in the name of promoting democracy. Yet the so-called “Summit for Democracy” excluded nearly half of all countries on the planet, blatantly drew an ideological line between countries and created division in the world. The act violated the spirit of democracy. To hold another such summit would receive even less support around the world.

China practices whole-process people’s democracy. It is broad-based, genuine, and effective democracy which enjoys the wholehearted endorsement and support of the Chinese people. This January, the world’s largest public relations consultancy firm Edelman released a survey. In 2021, trust among Chinese citizens in their government was a record 91 percent, again topping the world and reaching the highest level in a decade. Polls conducted by Harvard University for many years also produced similar results. The world recognizes China’s democracy, and we have full confidence in our path.

Human civilization, if compared to a garden, should be a diverse place in which democracy in different countries blooms like a hundred flowers. Setting a standard for democracy after the US system is undemocratic. Meddling in other countries’ internal affairs in the name of democracy would only hurt the people in those countries. Putting one’s own system on a pedestal is not just against the spirit of democracy, but also spells disaster for democracy.

We look forward to exchanges and mutual learning with other countries on the basis of equality. Let us promote the true spirit of democracy, strip pseudo-democracy of its various types of charade, and make international relations more democratic so as to inject forward momentum to human progress.” ([Note: More on the United States ‘Summit for Democracy’ perceptions here](#))

Bloomberg (US): “What similarities are there between the current situation in Ukraine and the question of Taiwan? How likely would you say conflict in the Taiwan Strait is at the moment?”

Wang: “Let me first make it clear that the Taiwan question and the Ukraine issue are different in nature and are not comparable at all. Most fundamentally, Taiwan is an inalienable part of China’s territory, and the Taiwan question is entirely China’s internal affair. The Ukraine issue arose from contention between two countries, namely Russia and Ukraine. Some people, while being vocal about the principle of sovereignty on the Ukraine issue, have kept undermining China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity on the Taiwan question. This is a blatant act of double standards.

Tension exists in the Taiwan Strait. Its root cause is that the DPP authorities refuse to recognize the one-China principle and attempt to change the status quo that both sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to one and the same China. The DPP authorities have sought to

create “two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan” to misrepresent Taiwan’s history and sever Taiwan’s roots. This, in the end, will only ruin Taiwan’s future. Some forces in the US, in a bid to hold back China’s rejuvenation, have condoned and abetted the growth of separatist forces for “Taiwan independence” and tried to challenge and hollow out the one-China principle. This gravely violates the basic norms of international relations and puts the peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait in serious jeopardy. This would not only push Taiwan into a precarious situation, but also bring unbearable consequences for the US side.

I must stress that the two sides across the Taiwan Strait share the same historical and cultural roots and belong to one and the same China. Taiwan’s future and hope lies in the peaceful development of cross-Strait relations and reunification with the mainland, not in counting on the empty promises of external forces. Seeking foreign support to gain independence is a dead end. The scheme to use Taiwan to contain China is doomed to fail. Taiwan will eventually return to the embrace of the motherland.”

Wang / Borrell Discussions

Wang also held telephone discussions with Josep Borrell, the EU’s High Representative of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. These talks are of interest as Borrell is not trusted by Moscow due to his support for Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, and his position in appointing a German Christian to negotiate peace in Serbia, which has Christian/Muslim conflicts.

Chinese media have reported the discussion as follows:

“Wang Yi expressed that China deplores the fact that the situation in Ukraine has come to this point. Sanctions will not solve the problem, and escalating sanctions will only make the situation more complicated and aggravated. The immediate priority is to avoid a humanitarian crisis. The Chinese side has publicly put forward a six-point initiative to prevent a humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. The main purpose is to promote the formation of a joint force of the international community and prevent the humanitarian situation in Ukraine from further deteriorating.

Wang Yi said that we should also encourage Russia and Ukraine to hold peace talks. China has advocated dialogue from the very beginning. It is hoped that the international community will support Russia and Ukraine in conducting serious negotiations, not only to continue the negotiations, but also to negotiate a ceasefire, a cessation of war and peace. China is willing to continue to play a constructive role in de-escalating the situation to the best of its ability. It is also hoped that the European side will have a comprehensive and serious dialogue with the Russian side on European security issues in the future, and will form a balanced, effective and sustainable European security framework based on the principle of indivisibility of security.

Wang Yi said that under the current situation, China and the EU, as two major forces in the world, should make joint efforts to well prepare for the China-EU leaders’ meeting and send a positive and positive signal to the world.”

Summary by Chris Devonshire-Ellis

It is notable in terms of the Ukraine conflict that Wang suggested that Beijing and Brussels

should work together to discuss European security issues and specifically omitted mention of the United States in this regard, an indication that Beijing views Washington as the protagonist in developing the Ukraine situation. This comes after the West became convinced to impose sanctions on China late last year over issues concerning the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, rhetoric that only increased after the US ignominious exit from Afghanistan. Products made in Xinjiang, China's largest province by geographical size, have been sanctioned by Washington and the European Union. China has denied claims of 'genocide' and has stated the Uyghur clampdown is a security matter – partially caused by regional instability in the wake of the US withdrawal. Certainly, the extent and regularity of sanctions imposition in contemporary times is completely unprecedented, to the position that to the West, Russia and Belarus are being effectively removed from the map.

US senators are also now publicly calling for assassinations, an extraordinary – and dangerously antagonistic political development.

It remains to be seen how Russia especially will recover from having its economy effectively thrown up into the air, however it now relies on China more than ever as a reliable trade partner. China will be propping Russia up, however this will also come with geopolitical strings attached, especially in the Russian Far East, where discontent over Russia's ownership of Vladivostok has been simmering with certain Chinese factions referring to it as [Haishanwai](#), as well as influence within Central Asia.

China is conducting a balancing act here and will be seeking to support Russia (and take some advantage) while pushing the EU to talk more with it as a counter-balance to US influence – especially now as Russia appears to have lost that capability, at least for the immediate future. Brussels will be wary, but some EU politicians remain both friendly towards China especially, and support for Russia still remains in certain circles, especially among those who view the American influence and gains made from the Ukraine confrontation as a little too convenient. The consequence will be continuing support for Russia, an examination of where the fault lines lie, as well as a considerable upcoming China push to have more of a say in Eurasian, and European security.

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