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## China, US should chart right course for ties, push relations back to healthy, stable track

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Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with US President Joe Biden in Bali, Indonesia,

*Nov. 14, 2022. Photo: Xinhua*

Current state of China-US relations is not in the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples, and is not what the international community expects, Chinese President Xi Jinping said during his meeting with US President Joe Biden in Bali, Indonesia on Monday, which marked the first face-to-face meeting between the leaders of the world's two biggest economies since Biden took office.

During the meeting, which reportedly lasted about three hours and 12 minutes, Xi told Biden that as leaders of two major countries, they need to chart the right course and find the right direction for bilateral ties and elevate the relationship, according to Xinhua. Xi also stressed that the two countries should take history as a mirror and let it guide the future.

The two leaders consider that the meeting, is in-depth, candid and constructive, and they instructed the teams of the two countries to follow up the key consensuses reached by the two leaders, to take concrete actions to push the China-US relations return to a stable track for development, and the two leaders agree to keep contacts constantly, CCTV reported.

Such remarks and the summit itself inject a certain degree of positivity into bilateral relations, which have entered a downward spiral due to the US' ever widening containment strategy against China, and especially after the provocative visit by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to the island of Taiwan, Chinese analysts noted, calling on the US to stay true to its pledges to avoid confrontation.

The stakes for the summit, which took place one day before the G20 Leaders' Summit was set to kick off in Bali, couldn't be any higher, as the world, with growing concerns over the state of the world's most consequential bilateral relationship, watched intently for any positive signs that the two countries will try to work toward lowering tensions and cooperate on global issues.

## **Constructive signs**

After a handshake, the two leaders walked into a spacious room together and delivered opening remarks that lasted over six minutes, with both stressing the importance of the face-to-face meeting.

Xi said that though the two leaders have maintained communication via video-conferences, phone calls and letters, but none of these can really take the place of face-to-face exchanges, according to the Xinhua News Agency.

Xi expounded on the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and its key outcomes, pointing out that the domestic and foreign policies of the CPC and the Chinese government are open and transparent, with clearly stated and transparent strategic intentions and great continuity and stability.

China is advancing the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization, basing our efforts on the goal of meeting people's aspirations for a better life, unswervingly pursuing reform and opening-up, and

promoting the building of an open global economy, Xi said.

For his part, Biden also said that there was "no substitute" for such face-to-face meetings, according to video footage carried by several media outlets.

Biden said to Xi in front of the press before the close-door meeting that "China and the US can manage our differences, prevent competition from becoming anything ever near conflict, and to find ways to work together on urgent global issues that require our mutual cooperation."

"The world expects, I believe, China and the US to play key roles in addressing global challenges," he said.

Since Biden took office, the two leaders have talked over the phone or via video link five times. The last time they met in person was in 2017 during the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

The meeting on Monday took place at the request of the US side at the Mulia Resort in Bali overlooking the Pacific Ocean. China Media Group said that the meeting was held at the hotel where the Chinese delegation to the G20 stayed.

According to the readout released by the White House, Biden remained tough on topics that are China's internal affairs, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Xizang (Tibet). Chinese analysts said the US has failed to realize that it was its unilateral, arrogant and hostile strategy against China that put bilateral ties in risk of spiraling out of control and toward direct conflict, and in the future, the risk of confrontation between the two great powers will still exist if the US refuses to change its arrogant attitude and hostile strategy.

China-US relations should not be a zero-sum game where one side out-competes or thrives at the expense of the other, Xi said. The successes of China and the US are opportunities, not challenges, for each other. The world is big enough for the two countries to develop themselves and prosper together, he added.

The two sides should form a correct perception of each other's domestic and foreign policies and strategic intentions, Xi said, adding that China-US interactions should be defined by dialogue and win-win cooperation, not confrontation and zero-sum competition.

Chinese analysts said the Xi-Biden summit sent a positive signal to the world that even though tensions exist, the world's two biggest economies remain in communication and share the consensus of avoiding direct conflict, and are also trying to seek the possibility of cooperation.

## Redlines and guardrails

Ahead of the meeting with Xi, Biden and the US side released information to the press that they are trying to build "floor" or "guardrails" for US-China ties in the first face-to-face talk with the Chinese leader, in other words, the US side wants to show that they are making efforts to prevent bilateral relations from going out of control, analysts said.

However, the US is the one that should be held responsible for the worsening of the tensions, as its strategy for "competition," confrontation in fact, has seriously undermined China's sovereignty on sensitive issues like the Taiwan question and China's development in science and technology, especially in the semiconductor industry, so China is also using the chance to "draw redlines" for the US, warning the opportunists and hawkish politicians in Washington about the danger of challenging China's core interests, experts said.

Xi gave a full account of the origin of the Taiwan question and China's principled position. He stressed that the Taiwan question is at the very core of China's core interests, the bedrock of the political foundation of China-US relations, and [the first red line that must not be crossed in China-US relations](#).

Anyone that seeks to split Taiwan from China will be violating the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation, Xi said, adding that the Chinese people will absolutely not let that happen.

China hopes to see, and are all along committed to, peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits, but cross-Straits peace and stability and "Taiwan independence" are as irreconcilable as water and fire, Xi said, expressing hope that the US side will match its words with action and abide by the one-China policy and the three joint communiques.

Xi said "President Biden has said on many occasions that the US does not support 'Taiwan independence' and has no intention to use Taiwan as a tool to seek advantages in competition with China or to contain China. China hopes that the US side will act on this assurance to real effect."

Jin Canrong, associate dean of the School of International Studies at the Renmin University of China, told the Global Times that "the US will continue to provoke China on the Taiwan question. After the midterm elections, Republicans are set to take the House, and the new Republican House speaker will very likely follow what Pelosi has done to visit the island, to show that Republicans dare to be tough against China."

Apart from this, the two major US parties will push the Taiwan Policy Act to keep forcing the White House to abandon strategic ambiguity on the Taiwan question, and this will then bring a new round of serious impacts on China-US relations, Jin said.

"So it's important for the Chinese leader to warn the US side again about where the redline is and what would happen if the US crosses the redline. This is how China is making efforts to prevent direct conflict while the US is being provocative," the anonymous expert said.

Biden reaffirmed that a stable and prosperous China is good for the US and the world, saying that the US respects China's system, and does not seek to change it.

The US does not seek a new Cold War, does not seek to revitalize alliances against China, does not support "Taiwan independence," does not support "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan," and has no intention to have a conflict with China, he said, adding that the US side has no intention to seek "decoupling" from China, to halt China's economic development, or to contain China.

Seeking or exploring possibilities for cooperation is a way to prevent conflict, experts said. In fact, China and the US share common ground in many aspects, from climate change to the nuclear issue in the Korean Peninsula and Iran, as well as handling the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine crisis and dealing with the food and energy crises, Jin said.

During the meeting, the two sides vowed to keep constant strategic communication between the diplomatic teams of the two sides, and agreed that the teams on financial affairs from the two countries would have dialogues and coordination on macroeconomic policies and trade issues. The Chinese and US leaders also agreed to make joint efforts to push the UN Climate Change Conference COP27 to reach success

The two sides also reached consensus to promote cooperation and dialogues in the fields of public health, agriculture and food security, and the two sides also agree that the people-to-people exchanges are very important, and agree to encourage the expansion of exchanges between personnel from various areas of the two countries, according to China Central Television.

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