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CHINA

A New Round of Discussion on China's "New Era Struggle Outlook"

In early May, the National Defense Mobilisation Department of the Chinese Central Military Commission (CMC) carried out discussions on the "[New Era Struggle Outlook](#)" to promote the high-quality development of national defense mobilization in the new era. According to state media reports, the aim of the discussion was to thoroughly study and implement Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism, his ideas on strengthening the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the vision of building the PLA into a world class army by the 100th anniversary, and consolidate the ideological foundation of loyalty to the party. In March this year the concept of "New Era Struggle Outlook" was proposed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for guiding all personnel to deeply understand the decisive significance of the "Two Establishes", unite and struggle, overcome difficulties, forge ahead, achieving the goal of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the PLA, and comprehensively build a war-oriented national defense mobilization.

China Holds Joint Sword-2024A Military Drills around Taiwan

The PLA conducted a [two-day military exercise](#) around Taiwan, extending from 23-24 May, following swearing in of President Lai Ching-te. The drills were projected as [response](#) to President Lai's inaugural speech where he pledged to protect Taiwan's democracy from China's pressure. In a We Chat post the [Eastern](#)

[Theatre Command](#) stated that the exercises by land, sea and air forces were "punishment" for "Taiwan separatists" and a "severe warning" to outside forces that intend to interfere in China's internal affairs. According to the same post, the military drills called [Joint Sword-2024A](#) involved actions like "advancing", "besieging", "blockading", "attacking", "destroying" and "cutting off". The drills were denounced by Taipei as unnecessarily provocative. The United States (US) expressing deep concern urged restraint.

JAPAN

US-Japan-Australia Trilateral Defence Ministers' Meeting

Defence ministers of the United States (US), Japan and Australia met in Hawaii on 2 May for the [thirteenth edition of their trilateral dialogue](#), where they set down the new parameters of their enhanced partnership in security and defence. Reflecting on China's activities the three countries agreed to cooperate to support other states in exercising their rights and freedoms in the maritime domain. The joint statement issued at the end of the meeting also called for greater cooperation with Southeast Asian and Pacific Island Countries (PICs). The expansion of Japan and Australia's counterstrike capabilities was lauded in the statement, which also held forth the prospect of more trilateral research and development in 'operationally-relevant advanced technologies. The statement also pledged more military-to-military cooperation besides collaboration in Asset Protection Missions (APMs) and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR).

TAIWAN

US Congressional Delegation to Taiwan

Following the PLA drills near Taiwan, a [US Congressional delegation visited Taiwan](#) and met President Lai Ching-te on 27 May, expressing US support for Taipei. Congressman Andy Barr, Chair of the Taiwan caucus in the US Congress assured Taiwanese public in a press conference, that the US is “fully committed to supporting Taiwan militarily, politically and diplomatically”. Lin Chia-lung, the new foreign minister of Taiwan applauded the American delegation visit as an important gesture of solidarity. Responding to the visit the Chinese foreign ministry stated that it severely undermined Sino-US relations and peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

KOREAN PENINSULA

South Korea to Share Military Technology with Australia, US and UK

South Korean defence minister, Shin won-sik informed in a press conference held on 1 May that Seoul is considering [sharing advanced military technology](#) with the US, United Kingdom (UK) and Australia through the AUKUS framework. He stated that the possibility was discussed during Shin’s visit to Melbourne towards the end of April. Reportedly, during the visit Australia, US and UK invited South Korea to be part of AUKUS Pillar 2 which will involve cooperation on a range of security technologies including artificial intelligence, electronic warfare and hypersonic systems.

Drills Simulate Pre-Emptive Attack on South Korea

The Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported on 31 May that North Korean leader Kim Jong un supervised drills [simulating nuclear capable missile launch](#) into South Korea. According to the state media, the drills were meant to demonstrate Pyongyang’s resolve to launch a pre-emptive strike on South Korea if it felt threatened. The news report cited Kim declaring that the drills “will serve as an occasion in clearly showing what consequences our rivals will face if they provoke us.”