

China/ Diplomacy

China won't lose a new cold war because it's not the Soviet Union, says ambassador to US

Qin Gang tells press briefing that Beijing has learned from the fall of the USSR and will not suffer a similar fate

Ambassador says the interests of the world's two leading powers are intertwined



Laura Zhou

[+ FOLLOW](#)

Taiwan has become the main potential factor that could plunge the US and China into conflict, Qin Gang said. Photo: Xinhua

China is not the Soviet Union and will not lose if there is a new cold war, Beijing's [ambassador to the United States](#) has said.

Qin Gang also urged policymakers in the US to “cautiously” manage ties with Taiwan, which he said has become a major potential flashpoint. He also said that nuclear talks with the US are unlikely, because China’s arsenal does not “match” the size of America’s.

The comments were made during a press briefing on Monday and published by the Chinese embassy on Friday.

Qin, who [took over](#) as ambassador in July, asked: “Why is there a sense of a new cold war making a comeback? It is because some people in the US harbour a cold war mentality and treat China like the former Soviet Union.

“But China is not the former Soviet Union, and the US is not the US of 30 years ago, and the [interests of the two countries](#) are closely intertwined.”

02:20



China's US envoy Qin Gang strikes conciliatory note on arrival in Washington

 China's US envoy Qin Gang strikes conciliatory note on arrival in Washington

China had been studying why the Soviet Union collapsed and had drawn lessons from that, Qin argued, adding that the Chinese Communist Party was not like its “rigid” Soviet counterpart.

He said the US is now China's largest trading partner, while China is behind only Mexico and Canada when it comes to trade with America, adding that bilateral trade is expected to surpass US\$700 billion this year.

Both sides have said they want to avoid another cold war, but [Joe Biden](#) recently announced that the US would not send a government delegation to the Beijing Winter Olympics because of concerns about China's [human rights record](#) – a diplomatic boycott also joined by Australia, Britain, Canada and Japan.

02:12



US confirms diplomatic boycott of 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics

 US confirms diplomatic boycott of 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics

China has also said that the recent announcement of the [Aukus security pact](#) between the US, Britain and Australia is further evidence of a resurgent cold war mentality.

Qin said it was wrong for Washington to use competition to define the relationship between the two countries and the US should not use competition as an excuse to contain China, by blacklisting Chinese firms and trying to squeeze the country out of global supply chains.


“Competition should not be a ‘zero-sum game’, let alone a ‘you lose, I win’ or ‘I win, you lose’, but should be fair and healthy,” Qin said.

The ambassador warned Washington to “very cautiously” manage its ties with [Taiwan](#), which he said has become “the main potential factor that could plunge the US and China into conflict”.

01:16



Don't 'play with fire': Mainland China tells US for inviting Taiwan to democracy summit

 Don't 'play with fire': Mainland China tells US for inviting Taiwan to democracy summit

Qin also defended the closer ties between [China and Russia](#), which he said have “both faced some unjust attitudes and behaviours” as the US tried to create “anti-China and anti-Russian alliances”.

“[China and Russia] have no choice and, just like the US and Canada, being good neighbours means being friends,” he said.

The US is seeking a trilateral nuclear arms control negotiation with Russia and China, but Beijing is unlikely to join the talks at present, Qin said.

“If China has to be brought into the negotiations, does that mean that China first has to raise its arsenal to the level of the US? Or that the US first reduces its own nuclear arsenal to China's level?”