

Nato

China rejects Nato accusations of supporting Russia's war in Ukraine

Beijing accuses military alliance of 'lies and smears' and warns it to stay out of Asia



The Chinese aircraft carrier Shandong. Beijing's criticism of Nato came amid the People's Liberation Army's summer air and naval drills © Japan's Ministry of Defense/AFP via Getty Images

Kathrin Hille in Taipei and **Henry Foy** and **Felicia Schwartz** in Washington 6 HOURS AGO

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China has accused Nato of smearing the country and demanded the transatlantic alliance stay out of Asia, as its military demonstrated growing clout with record numbers of air operations near Taiwan and naval drills near the Philippines.

Beijing lashed out on Thursday at Nato's accusation that [China](#) had become a "decisive enabler" of Russia's war against Ukraine. Nato's 32 leaders demanded on Wednesday that China "cease all material and political support to Russia's war effort" in its strongest-ever condemnation of Beijing.

In a joint statement at its annual summit in Washington, [Nato](#) said Beijing's "large-scale support for Russia's defence industrial base . . . increases the threat Russia poses to its neighbours and to Euro-Atlantic security".

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said Beijing had lodged representations with Nato over the accusations, which he called "biased, slanderous, and provocative" and dismissed the alliance as "a relic of the cold war"

and provocative and dismissed the alliance as a relic of the cold war .

Lin added that [China's "constructive role"](#) on the war in Ukraine was "widely recognised by the international community". In an earlier statement, China's mission to the EU said Beijing had never provided lethal weapons to either side, adding that its "normal trade flows" with Russia should not be subject to disruption or coercion.

"Without any evidence, Nato continues to spread falsehoods fabricated by the US, openly smearing China, sowing discord between China and Europe, and undermining China-European co-operation," Lin said.

China's EU mission countered Nato's accusations by warning the alliance to stay out of Asia, which it said was "not a wrestling ground for geopolitical competition".

Nato "keeps playing up the interlink between Europe's security and the security in Asia-Pacific . . . We urge [it] to stay within its role as a regional defensive organisation in the north Atlantic," the statement said.

"Nato should not become the disrupter of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific or a tool used by certain great powers to maintain hegemony."

The heated rhetoric comes as Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand join the Nato summit, a practice that started after Russia's full-scale assault on Ukraine in 2022.

In response to the growing regional power of the People's Liberation Army, US allies in Asia, including Japan and the Philippines, have [stepped up joint planning](#), exercises and weapons deployments. Nato members such as Britain, France, Canada and Germany have also increased military operations and security co-operation in the region.

Beijing has pushed back, with top Chinese military officials denouncing US efforts to strengthen ties with its allies in the region as a plot to [create an "Asian Nato"](#).

As Beijing criticised Nato, Taiwan recorded the largest-ever Chinese incursion into its air defence identification zone (ADIZ), a buffer area defined by Taipei to allow early warning against hostile jets.

Taiwan's defence ministry said 66 Chinese military aircraft operated around the island in the 24 hours to 6am on Wednesday, 56 of which entered the ADIZ.

The activity is part of air and naval drills at the peak of the PLA's summer exercise season. On Tuesday, Taiwan's defence minister said a PLA aircraft carrier had passed

through the Balintang Channel between two of the Philippines' northernmost islands on its way into the Pacific Ocean.

The PLA drills have been under way since early July and have included air and naval manoeuvres in the East China Sea north of Taiwan, in the South China Sea and in the Philippine Sea east of Luzon.

In parallel the US is hosting Rimpac, the world's largest naval exercise, which is taking place near Hawaii and includes nearly 30 countries but not China.

Additional reporting by Wenjie Ding in Beijing

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