



### FM opposes provocations in Taiwan Straits

Regarding the back-to-back transits by British and Japanese warships, an expert said the two countries are competing to demonstrate loyalty to the US **3**

### Chinese, EU officials hold in-depth trade talks

A Chinese expert said the meeting shows both sides remain committed to resolving disputes through dialogue amid global turbulence and rising unilateralism **5**

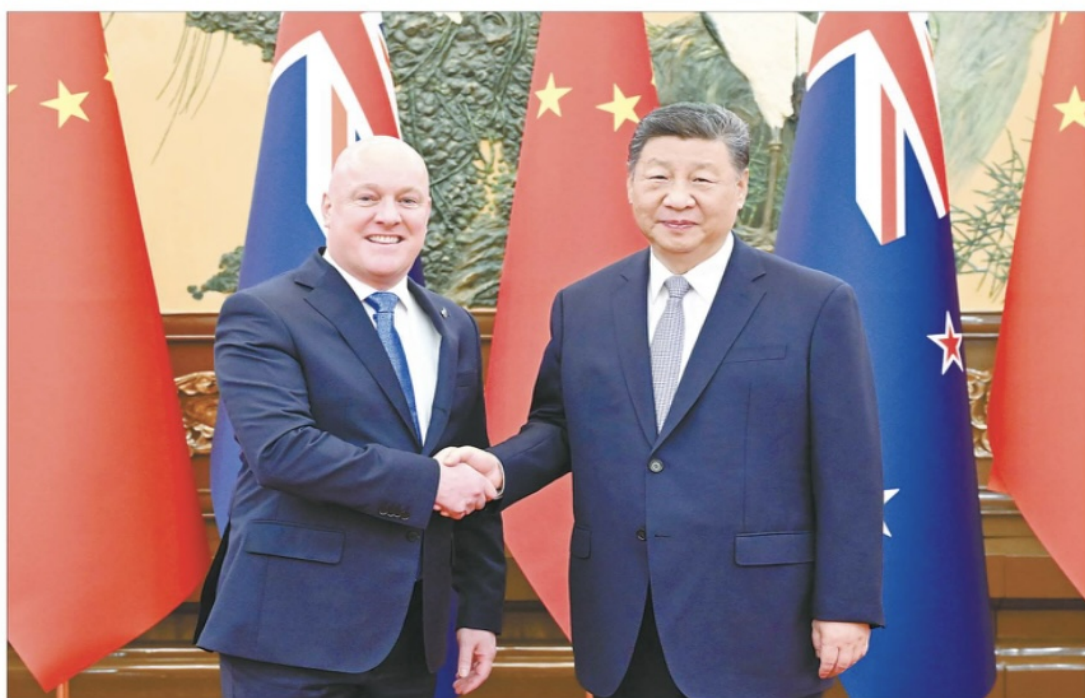
### China, Central Asian countries explore new devt opportunities

The recently concluded 2nd China-Central Asia Summit in Astana yielded fruitful results, with a number of agreements signed. Among the highlights were green development and enhanced connectivity **6**

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Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, who is on an official visit to China, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, on June 20, 2025. Photo: Xinhua

## ► Outcomes 'reflect steady strengthening of bilateral ties'

# Xi meets NZ PM, calls for greater emphasis on co-op

By GT staff reporters

Chinese President Xi Jinping met with New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon in Beijing on Friday, calling on both sides to place greater emphasis on cooperation, according to the Xinhua News Agency.

For more than 50 years, since the establishment of diplomatic ties, China-New Zealand relations have long been at the forefront of China's relations with Western developed countries, Xi said.

As the China-New Zealand com-

prehensive strategic partnership enters its second decade, both sides should work to grow the partnership and bring more benefits to the two peoples, he said.

Xi stressed that China and New Zealand should place greater emphasis on cooperation in bilateral relations, leverage their complementary strengths, deepen trade and investment cooperation, and explore potential for cooperation in scientific and technological innovation, climate change, and

### XI'S MOMENTS

infrastructure. He encouraged both sides to strengthen exchanges in education, culture, among youth and at non-governmental and sub-national levels.

"There are no historical grievances or fundamental conflicts of interests between China and New Zealand. Both countries should respect each other, seek common ground while reserving differences, and appropriately view and address differences and disagree-

## Iran holds talks with Europe as US weighs direct military involvement

By Wang Qi

The military conflict between Israel and Iran entered a second week on Friday, with casualties and injuries continuing to grow. Amid the international calls for de-escalation, a meeting between Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his counterparts from UK, France and Germany (E3) was held in Geneva on Friday, after the White House said that US President Donald Trump will decide within two weeks whether the US military will become directly involved in the conflict.

The meeting is the first high-level one since Israel attacked Iran a week ago. European diplomats confirmed the planned talks, which involves French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot, British Foreign Secretary David Lammy, German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl, and EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas, Al Jazeera reported.

Prior to the meeting, an official from the E3 told Politico that the aim of resuming talks with Iran is to get a guarantee that Tehran will only use its nuclear program for civilian purposes. "That is exactly where we were with the negotiations ... which have been thrown off track because of Israeli activity," the official said, per the Politico report.

However, the official predicted that talks on Friday were "unlikely to come to a definitive conclusion."

Since the onset of the Iran nuclear crisis in 2003, Europe has been an important stakeholder in nuclear negotiations, and it's Europe that has engaged with Iran multiples times after the US withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), said Liu Zhongmin, a professor from the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University.

The negotiations may primarily serve as an opportunity for Tehran to demonstrate to the international community that it does not possess nuclear weapons and also to highlight Israel's violation of international law and infringement on Iran's sovereignty, Liu noted.



# China, NZ share responsibility in regional stability, devt: expert

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ments," Xi said.

As builders and defenders of the post-war international order, China and New Zealand should jointly uphold the international system with the UN at its core, and maintain the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core, he said. He urged both sides to work together to safeguard international fairness and justice and make the international order more just and equitable.

New Zealand attaches great importance to its relations with China and will continue to adhere to the one-China policy, Luxon said, adding that his country is willing to uphold mutual respect and understanding with China and maintain high-level exchanges.

Luxon said the world today is full of uncertainties, and the international community expects China to play a greater role. He said New Zealand is willing to actively communicate and coordinate with China to safeguard the multilateral trading system and jointly address global challenges.

Wang Xiaolong, Chinese ambassador to New Zealand, said that "The key outcome of the visit is the reaffirmation by both sides of the shared commitment to the bilateral relationship, a relationship defined and underpinned by mutually respectful and mutually beneficial cooperation. It is particularly pertinent given the fundamental interests of the two countries and the turbulent times we are going through at the moment."

The key highlight of the meeting was the shared emphasis by President Xi and Prime Minister

Luxon on further expanding bilateral cooperation, Chen Hong, a professor and director of the New Zealand Studies Centre at East China Normal University, told the Global Times on Friday.

Beyond traditional areas such as trade, investment, agriculture, education, and tourism – which have long underpinned the relationship – both sides aim to tap new potential in emerging sectors including technological innovation, climate change response, and infrastructure development, said Chen.

"These new areas of cooperation are both complementary and mutually beneficial, offering fresh opportunities for growth while reflecting joint efforts to address global challenges," said Chen.

During the Friday meeting, the two leaders also underscored the importance of the multilateral system and their shared commitment to safeguarding global frameworks, including trade. Luxon highlighted growing global uncertainties and expressed expectation for China to play a greater role, which showed that New Zealand has viewed China as a reliable partner in promoting certainty amid global volatility, Chen said.

## New momentum

The Friday meeting and Luxon's visit to China will inject new momentum into future bilateral cooperation, experts said, citing new visa arrangements, frequent high-level exchanges, and broader sectoral engagement during Luxon's visit to Shanghai and Beijing.

New Zealand is simplifying transit procedures and lowering costs for

Chinese travelers to enhance tourism and trade. Starting in November, Chinese passport holders will no longer require a traditional Transit Visa to pass through New Zealand airports. Instead, they will be able to obtain a New Zealand electronic Travel Authority (NZeTA), which is cheaper and faster to process, according to a Xinhua report on Thursday.

The outcomes of Luxon's visit reflect the steady strengthening of China-New Zealand relations. Frequent high-level and people-to-people exchanges have fostered mutual understanding and trust, driving deeper cooperation across various sectors. This positive cycle continues to enhance bilateral ties, Chen said.

New Zealand has shown a strong adaptability to balance its relationships with China, the US and Australia. While being a Five Eyes member with deep alliances, New Zealand values its relationship with China and navigates geopolitical complexities with independence and flexibility, said Chen.

On Pacific Island issues, China and New Zealand also have opportunities to work together and contribute positively to regional development rather than adopting policies of exclusionism, said the expert.

Luxon's visit reflects a proactive and positive approach to China policy, which forms the foundation of New Zealand's broader strategy. "Amid growing global uncertainties and regional tensions, both China and New Zealand, as key Asia-Pacific nations, share a responsibility to help maintain stability and promote development," said Chen.

Lu Hanqi contributed to this story

## Intl community calls for de-escalation as Israel-Iran conflict drags into 2nd week

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"Iran will continue to assert its right to peacefully utilize nuclear energy... After having engaged in over two decades of negotiations with the West and paying a heavy price for it, Iran is unlikely to agree to the US demand for dismantling its nuclear capabilities," Liu said.

The expert stated that Tehran is more likely seeking to return to the framework of the Iran nuclear deal reached in 2015 on the diplomatic front, namely the JCPOA, which safeguarded its right to peaceful nuclear energy while establishing a verifiable and transparent monitoring mechanism to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

Regarding the talks between Iran and the three European countries, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Thursday that the message from Secretary-General António Guterres is clear: "Stop the military action, too many people have been killed. Return to diplomacy, and avoid at any cost the further internationalization of this conflict," per an AP report.

## US' calculation

A day before the Iran-E3 talks, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said on Thursday local time that Trump will decide whether the US should get involved in the conflict within the next two weeks, according to NBC News.

Ahead of his trip to Geneva, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy held talks with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and White House Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff in Washington on Thursday local time about the crisis in the Middle East.

Wang Jin, an associate professor at the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies at Northwest University in Xi'an, believed that the two-week period for consideration and talks with the E3 countries seem to indicate that the US is stepping back from its previous threats to strike.

Citing sources, CBS reported on Wednesday that Trump approved the attack plans on Iran on Tuesday night but has not made a final decision on whether to strike the country and formally join Israel's air campaign. It added that Trump is willing to get the US involved if that's what it takes to knock out Fordow, a subterranean uranium enrichment facility in Iran.

According to media analysis, Iran still has the capability to attack US bases and personnel through armed groups it backs in the region, and could also hit back economically, as Tehran has threatened to attack commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, which would affect global trade and increase oil prices.

In the face of Iran's tough stance, the US does not want to show any signs of concession, but it also seeks to avoid being dragged into a quagmire of war, which makes Europe's coordination vital for Washington, Wang said.

On the other hand, according to a Reuters report on Thursday, the prospect of a US strike against Iran has exposed divisions in the coalition of supporters that brought Trump to power, with part of his base urging him not to get the country involved in a new Middle East war.

The US may participate in the conflict in some way, but it will also avoid getting involved in a war similar to those in Afghanistan and Iraq, which left the US deeply embroiled in the region. Additionally, from a technical perspective, US needs to thoroughly assess the manner and extent of its support for Israel, Liu said.

## ► Hongshan dragon



Visitors view a C-shaped jade dragon of the Hongshan culture on display at the Shanghai Museum, East China's Shanghai on June 20, 2025. Hongshan culture is a Neolithic civilization that emerged around 6,500 years ago in North China. Photo: VCG

