



Trump 'to be arrested,' calling for mass protests

Donald Trump claimed on Saturday that he would be arrested on Tuesday, which signals a new stage of ever fiercer partisan struggle, experts said **3**

Countries 'should be alert' for financial risks

China should accelerate the establishment of a new international financial governance system along the BRI, experts suggests on the heels of SVB failure **11**

Exhibition showcases history of China-Pakistan exchanges

The Gandhara art exhibition at the Palace Museum in Beijing offers a better understanding of time-honored cultural exchanges along the Silk Road **8-9**

State visit a milestone for bilateral relations in the new era Xi's visit to Russia conveys great significance, injects impetus

By Bai Yunyi in Moscow and Chen Qingqing in Beijing

Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to Moscow this week is expected to attract global attention as the visit – the first overseas visit of the Chinese top leader in 2023 following the two sessions – is described as a trip of friendship, cooperation

and peace. The visit, embodying the traditional friendship and conveying great significance, will deepen the strategic mutual trust and cooperation between China and Russia, and bring more certainty and positive energy to a turbulent world.

However, the US and its allies are viewing the upcoming visit through "tinted glasses" by

distorting the nature of China-Russia relations, smearing China's possible role as a mediator in the Ukraine crisis and rejecting its calls for a ceasefire in the conflict. Some Chinese and Russian observers believe that the question is whether the US and the West want a mediator now or they just want the Ukraine crisis to prolong as

long as possible, using Ukraine as a pawn to weaken Russia and control Europe while maintaining its hegemony in the world.

At the invitation of Russian President Vladimir Putin, President Xi will pay a state visit to Russia from Monday to Wednesday. During the visit, Xi will have an in-depth

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US

Iraq War 20 yrs on: countries more wary of US hegemony

By Yang Sheng and Zhang Changyue

The Iraq War, which started on March 20 of 2003 when the US and its allies launched an invasion against a sovereign country in the Middle East based on fake intelligence about "weapons of mass destruction," has brought destructive and irreversible disasters to the region, and caused much collateral damage to the world.

In recent days, many US and Western mainstream media outlets have published articles looking back on the war, but they failed to point out the fundamental reason why such a tragedy could happen and also failed to criticize the US hegemony that keeps imposing threats to world peace 20 years after the Iraq War, said experts.

The so-called democracy or "checks and balance" of the US political system cannot prevent Washington from making reckless decisions based on fraud, lies or manipulated public opinion, and this has brought devastating disasters to countries like Iraq, Libya, Syria and Afghanistan, while the military industrial complex and some senior US politicians including some former presidents, are the ones that benefited from the wars, analysts said.

In past decades, the West-launched invasions, interventions and proxy wars have led to chaos, deaths and poverty, which together formed a fertile "breeding ground" for terrorism, analysts said. This also proves that the Washington's "Greater Middle East Initiative" to Westernize the region has also completely failed.

US war crimes

Some US media and politicians

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Compared

Booming tourism



The streets of Causeway Bay, a famous shopping area of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, are crowded with people on March 19, 2023. According to statistics released by local government, the number of mainland tourists visiting Hong Kong reached 102,458 a day earlier. Photo: VCG



US' smear action exposes intention of extending crisis

► Xi's, from Page 1

exchange of views with Putin on bilateral relations and major international and regional issues of mutual interest, boost strategic coordination and practical cooperation between the two countries and inject new impetus into the growth of relations, according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

While the world is closely observing the trip, some US officials and Western media have been badmouthing China's role as a possible peacemaker in the Ukraine crisis, continuing to hype on claim of China's shipment of lethal weapons to Russia's forces in Ukraine and casting doubt over China's neutral stance on the crisis.

Smear campaign

John Kirby, spokesperson for the US National Security Council, told reporters ahead of Xi's planned trip to Russia, that "We don't support calls for a ceasefire

right now." He said a proposal from China could include some type of ceasefire, which would merely be a way for Russia to regroup before launching a reprisal, CNN reported on Friday.

Not only is the US worried about the deepening China-Russia relations, it also constantly smears China and rejects China's proposal for peace talks, which shows that Washington does not want peace as it only wants to continue using Ukraine as a tool of weakening Russia and using the Ukraine crisis to engage in bloc-led confrontation, said Zhang Hong, an associate research fellow at the Institute of Russian, Eastern European & Central Asian Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Although the US and some of its allies are skeptical about China's role and show "growing concerns" over the deepening China-Russia relations, some European countries such as France and Germany, which have been under the shadow of the crisis over the past year,

are expecting China to play a bigger role in mediating the conflict, experts said.

Russia will certainly trust China in playing the role of a mediator. The problem is that Ukraine and the West will not. Therefore, China could hardly play a mediating role, said Alexander Lukin, director of the Center for East Asian and SCO Studies at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations. At the early stage of the conflict Russian and Ukrainian delegations met each other directly. Now the sides don't talk to each other not because they are waiting for a mediator but because Ukraine refuses to start talks before Russia is defeated, Lukin noted.

"So to bring Kiev to the table one would need not to mediate but to press it into the talks. Or the situation has to change in a way that Ukrainian leaders stop thinking that defeating Russia is feasible," he said, noting that by providing Kiev with more weapons, the US and its allies work in an opposite direction.

The China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era is based on independent foreign policy, and the regular reciprocal visits of heads of states of Russia and China have been a tradition since mid-1990s said some Chinese and Russian experts.

Ten years ago, Xi's first overseas visit after being elected as the President was to Russia and during that visit, he elaborated for the first time on building a community of shared future for mankind, said Wang Yiwei, director of the Institute of International Affairs at the Renmin University of China.

"President Xi's state visit to Russia this time is a milestone for China-Russia relations in the new era. It will inject a strong impetus into bilateral relations and lead the sustained development of bilateral ties at a high level," Chinese Ambassador to Russia Zhang Hanhui told the Global Times in a recent interview.

Compared to US exporting wars, China more actively contributes to world peace: expert

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have tried to argue that the US "liberated Iraqi people from the evil dictatorship" and brought positive changes to Iraq despite some disgraceful records like the Abu Ghraib torture and prisoner abuse and killing civilians during US' military operations. But from the perspective of Iraqi people, we heard completely different stories.

Waleed Khaled Mfatan, an Iraqi safety engineer who witnessed the changes in the past two decades of his country and now works on a school construction project, told the Global Times that the US forces in his country are "tyrants," and "whoever tyrannizes the country cannot establish peace."

Haider Qasim Al-Tamimi, head of the Institute of Historical Research at the Bayt Al-Hikma, a think tank in Iraq, told the Global Times that the war was well planned and based on lies and fake evidence, and served the interests of US politics and strategy, but eventually, it brought disaster to Iraqi people. "More than 200,000 civilians were killed, tens of millions of people were displaced, and the economic losses are uncountable." The damage caused by the war is still ongoing, and the US not only destroyed a country that used to be prosperous and beautiful, but also broke the power balance of the Middle East. This deeply changed the geopolitical landscape of the region, and caused endless chaos and uncertainties, said Al-Tamimi.

The war shattered Iraq's politics, economy and society, and the chaos provided a



Demonstrators march in Washington, D.C. on March 18, 2023 during an anti-war protest organized by the Answer Coalition and dozens of other groups, in remembrance of the 20th anniversary of the US military invasion of Iraq and to call for peace negotiations in Ukraine, among other demands for international peace. Photo: AFP

breeding ground for terrorism, so the threat of terrorism has risen rapidly after the war. Terrorist groups like ISIS rose one by one, which proves that the so-called Global War on Terror launched by the US, which is also an excuse for US interventions in the region, has also failed, experts said.

The US has not learnt from the lessons of history. The Ukraine crisis is an example. NATO's unbridled expansion triggered strong reaction from Russia and caused the outbreak of the military conflict, and this has once again shown that US international policies are seriously problematic, said the Iraqi expert.

Chinese analysts said Iraq is far from the only victim of

US hegemony. Many countries across the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, Europe and Asia share the same pain. These countries have been damaged to different extents, and the security and peace of their regions have not been improved, instead they worsened after US interventions.

To contain hegemony

The Iraq War was the start of the decline of the US' soft power since the end of the Cold War, said Zhu Weilie, director of the Middle East Studies Institute at Shanghai International Studies University. "Global trust in the US plummeted after the Iraq War," Zhu said. The US failed to provide any convincing evidence to support its pretexts for

launching the war, and the pretext itself has proven to be a lie. After the war, the US failed to provide better governance and development for the region, but made everything worse, Zhu noted. When more members of the international community realized that the US is untrustworthy and unreliable, and perceive the danger of US hegemony, they will consider how to deal with the hegemony and better protect each other from US interventions, long-arm jurisdiction and sanctions, said experts.

The latest diplomatic victory of resuming diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran with China's mediation and support is a positive signal showing that major powers in

the Middle East have realized the importance of independent decision-making, and to jointly find the way for peaceful coexistence and cooperation in the future, in other words, to jump out the trap of a "clash of civilizations" set by the US, analysts noted. More importantly, the US' hard power is declining, as it has no strength to launch another invasion against a country of Iraq's size, and China with rising influence and strength has brought more energy to the side of justice in the international arena, making more and more developing nations have the confidence to seek their own ways for development and security, experts said.

Li Haidong, a professor at the Institute of International Relations at the China Foreign Affairs University, said that "to contain US hegemony, it's crucial that all nations in the world should respect the authority of the UN, making Washington unable to legitimize its unilateral military actions against other countries. But this is not enough, and we have a lot more things to do."

Compared to the US which exports wars and chaos, China is now more actively providing public goods to contribute to world peace and development, such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiatives, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, and these initiatives are not just words, but come with effective actions, Zhu noted.