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## Hospital ship Peace Ark completes mission

Chinese naval hospital ship *Peace Ark* completed its Mission Harmony-2024 on Thursday and returned to a military port in Zhoushan **4**

## Neutrality would best serve Philippine interest

The interest of the Philippines will be fulfilled only by ensuring that the country and Southeast Asia are not dragged into a cold war or hot war among great powers **6**

## China leads three shipbuilding indicators for 15th year

China's three major shipbuilding indicators all showed positive trends in 2024, China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology said, marking the 15th consecutive year China led these indicators globally **11**

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Numerous people celebrate the agreed ceasefire between Israel and Hamas on Hermannplatz in Berlin on January 15, 2025.

Photo: VCG

## China welcomes Gaza ceasefire accord, calls for implementation

By Zhao Yusha

China welcomes the Gaza ceasefire agreement and hopes that this agreement will be implemented effectively and that there will be a full and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, Guo Jiakun, a spokesperson of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said in response to a question about China's view on Israel-Hamas ceasefire accord.

The complex ceasefire accord emerged on Wednesday after months of mediation by Qatar, Egypt and the US and 15 months of bloodshed that devastated the coastal territory and inflamed the Middle East, according to Reuters.

The current ceasefire deal is set up to progress in three distinct phases. Phase one is expected to start at some point Sunday and last for six **2** Trump

► Domestic firms concerned about substantial subsidies giving US companies unfair advantage

# China could probe US legacy chips

By Chu Daye and Feng Fan

The Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) said on Thursday that it has received reports from domestic companies of concerns over unfair subsidies the Biden administration is giving to US chipmakers, and said that Chinese investigating authorities will review them in accordance with relevant Chinese laws and regulations, and could follow World Trade Organization rules, initiating investigations as required by law.

In response to a media inquiry about whether the ministry has received application requests for anti-dumping and

anti-subsidy probes from domestic legacy chips industries, as they are reportedly suffering from unfair competition from imported products from the US, a MOFCOM spokesperson said domestic chip industries have reported concerns about the Biden administration offering substantial subsidies to the US chip sector, giving American companies an unfair competitive advantage.

They claimed that these companies are exporting legacy chip products to China at "low prices," undermining the legitimate rights and interests of China's domestic industries, the MOFCOM spokesperson said. "The concerns raised

by Chinese domestic industries are reasonable, and they have the right to file applications for trade remedy investigations."

I would like to emphasize that for applications and appeals from domestic industries, the investigating authorities will review them in accordance with relevant Chinese laws and regulations, and could follow WTO rules to initiate investigations as required by law, the spokesperson noted.

The move is "one of Beijing's strongest retaliatory moves so far against American technology sanctions," according to Bloomberg on Thursday.

Chinese experts said on Thursday that in the face of mounting technology sanctions from the US, recently rolled out by the Biden administration in an irresponsible manner, the country will not hesitate to take measures to defend its lawful rights and interests.

A number of Chinese industry associations related to semiconductor manufacturing also voiced their support for MOFCOM's stance.

The China Semiconductor Industry Association (CSIA) said on Thursday that it firmly supports both domestic and foreign semiconductor companies oper- **2** Biden



# Biden team 'in rush to offload' China tech containment curbs

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ating in China in actively protecting their legitimate rights and interests in accordance with WTO rules.

The China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products said on Thursday that it firmly supports the Chinese chip industry and chip firms using WTO rules to defend their legitimate rights and interests.

In August 2022, the Biden administration officially signed the CHIPS and Science Act, pledging up to \$280 billion in subsidies, loan guarantees, and tax incentives to vigorously support the expansion of semiconductor manufacturing capacity in the US.

Ma Jihua, a senior industry analyst, told the Global Times on Thursday that a probe into US mature node chips would be a normal action based on the market dynamics and will adeptly address the situation of some US chip companies halting sales of advanced chips while simultaneously dumping legacy chips onto the Chinese market.

"As years of US containment of China's chip industry largely failed and China's homegrown mature node chips seeing rapid growth in recent years, China now knows how things stand and feels confident if it does start such a probe, it can use its own chips," Ma said.

## Strong opposition

In recent days, China has voiced strong objection against mounting and intensive sanctions by the outgoing Biden administration aimed at cracking down on China's tech industry, including artificial intelligence (AI) chips, connected vehicle supply

chains and drones, under the guise of protecting national security.

What the US does is typical economic coercion and bullying. China deplores it and firmly opposes it, said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun, in response to a question about the US announced further export controls on advanced computing semiconductors, increasing due diligence requirements for businesses.

"I want to stress that no sanction or suppression will stop China's development and progress, and no bullying or coercion will weaken China's resolve in boosting its own strengths. We will take resolute measures to firmly safeguard the legitimate and lawful rights and interests of Chinese companies and individuals and our country's sovereignty, security, and development interests," Guo said.

In December, a number of Chinese industrial associations including the CSIA have urged domestic firms to exercise caution when purchasing US chips as US curbs on China have caused disruptions in the supply chain of US companies, affecting their reliability.

## A forced rush

"The actions of the Biden administration can be seen as a final rush, cramming all the initiatives it deemed necessary into the closing months. The decisions were made with little communication with US businesses," Song Guoyou, a deputy director of the Center for American Studies at Fudan University, told the Global Times on Thursday.

Considering the fact that Biden is about to leave the White House, these newly ushered policies were effective-

ly imposed on the incoming Trump administration, Song said.

"In a sense, Biden's team seems to be worried that the next administration won't follow their policies, and has thus resorted to a forced approach. This has not only pressured US businesses but also put pressure on the future Trump administration," Song added.

The latest actions revealed that the US is continuing to abuse its overall dominant position to place curbs on China and contain its development, Gao Lingyun, an expert at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, told the Global Times on Thursday. Gao said China's reactions to the US crackdown will be based on the two countries' overall competition and will maintain strategic focus and zoom in on improving its competitiveness in the tech arena.

The irresponsible actions by the Biden administration have drawn vocal criticism from within the US.

US-based chip manufacturer Nvidia said in a statement posted on its website on Monday that the Biden administration's new AI chip rule is unprecedented and misguided, and threatens to derail innovation and economic growth worldwide.

Rather than mitigate any threat, the new Biden rules will only weaken America's global competitiveness, undermining the innovation that has kept the US ahead, the company noted.

On January 5, Ken Glueck, executive vice president of Oracle, wrote a blog post saying that the Biden administration's AI chip rule will go down as one of the most destructive to ever hit the US technology industry.

# Trump, Biden both claim credit; expert says uncertainty remains

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weeks. This phase will feature a ceasefire, a withdrawal of Israeli troops, "a swap of hostages and prisoners," and an influx of humanitarian aid into Gaza. US hostages held in Gaza will be released in that first phase, US President Joe Biden said on Wednesday, according to CNN. The second and third phases are less developed, and the details will be decided during the first phase, Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said in a briefing Wednesday.

The deal, once emerged, was welcomed by international community. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the agreement, stating, "Our priority must be to ease the tremendous suffering caused by this conflict."

Iran's Revolutionary Guards have hailed the ceasefire deal as a "victory" for Palestinians and a "defeat" for Israel, according to Al Jazeera.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said his cabinet will not meet as scheduled to approve the Gaza ceasefire deal, blaming Hamas for causing a "last-minute crisis," according to Al Jazeera. The Israeli cabinet was supposed to meet on Thursday morning to ratify the deal, with the ceasefire scheduled to take effect from Sunday.

The sudden twist underscores the intense struggle within Israel's government over reaching a ceasefire with Hamas, as well as the uncertainty surrounding the accord, said Wang Jin, an associate professor at the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies at Northwest University in Xi'an.

The changes in the political situation in Syria, along with Hezbollah's ceasefire deal with Israel, have significantly weakened external support for Hamas. The situation in the Middle East is increasingly developing in a direction favorable to Israel, said Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University. An external factor is the US, which puts considerable pressure on Israel to reach a ceasefire deal, he said.

## Who's credit?

During his remarks on the Israel-Hamas ceasefire deal on Wednesday, Biden said that the ceasefire was "developed and negotiated by my team and will be largely implemented by the incoming administration." But a reporter asked, "who do you think deserves credit for this Mr. President: you or [Donald] Trump?"

"Is that a joke?" the president asked and then walked away flanked by vice-president Kamala Harris and secretary of state Antony Blinken.

Trump also said in a post on Truth Social, a social media network, that "This EPIC ceasefire agreement could have only happened as a result of our Historic Victory in November, as it signaled to the entire World that my Administration would seek Peace and negotiate deals to ensure the safety of all Americans, and our Allies."

"Netanyahu's administration intends to use the ceasefire deal to appease both sides: for Biden, it represents a diplomatic success as he prepares to leave office; for Trump, it signals a new chapter in US-Israel relations," Liu noted.

In the short term, the ceasefire agreement is a notable achievement of US diplomacy in the Middle East.

However, from a long-term perspective, there are no winners, as both the Israeli and Palestinian sides have paid a heavy price. Over the past year, the US has also suffered significant damage to its moral standing due to its perceived bias toward Israel, he opined.

## Welcoming Spring Festival



Red lanterns are hung at Beihai Park on January 16, 2025 to welcome the Spring Festival in Beijing. Photo: VCG

