

▶ All Chinese nationals have left Gaza safely: Chinese FM China continues efforts to push for cease-fire in Gaza

By Yang Sheng

The situation of the Palestine-Israel conflict remains horrific as the death toll of Palestinians has risen to 11,240 as a result of Israel's attacks on the Gaza Strip and as the United Nations (UN) lowered the flags of its institutions all over the world for the 101 staff killed so far during the war in Gaza. China is continuing its efforts in the UN and is dispatching diplomats to visit countries with influence to seek a cease-fire and promote peace in the region.

Special Envoy of the Chinese Government on the Middle East Issue Zhai Jun and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan met on Monday in Ankara to discuss the latest developments in the Gaza Strip, according to a release from the Chinese Foreign Ministry. During the meeting, Zhai said the top priority is to immediately impose a cease-fire to prevent further escalation.

Geng Shuang, China's deputy permanent representative to the UN, on Monday also made remarks at the Fourth Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), saying that nuclear weapons and other WMDs have been a major factor causing a trust deficit in the Middle East, undermining regional peace and stability.

The ongoing crisis has exposed the problem of dysfunction in the UN Security Council due to the irresponsible acts of the US. And Middle East countries might face the danger of an arm races as they are concerned that the geo-political balance and security mechanism are collapsing, said Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University.

After the outbreak of the latest Palestine-Israel conflict, some voices from

Israel, including politicians like Israeli Heritage Minister Amihai Eliyahu, who said the use of nuclear weapons in Gaza is an option, have prompted heavy criticism and raised international concern over nuclear proliferation in the region, analysts said.

"China, as the permanent member of the UN Security Council and a nuclear-armed power, needs to play a responsible role to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the region," said Wang Jin, an associate professor at the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies of Northwest University.

If Israel wants to legitimize its nuclear-armed status during its war against Gaza, this will definitely force other regional powers like Iran and Saudi Arabia to get rid of the restrictions of the non-proliferation treaty, experts noted.

All Chinese nationals have left Gaza safely, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said on Tuesday.

Japan eyes expanding security assistance to Vietnam, Djibouti, raising concerns

By GT staff reporters

Japan is considering providing defense equipment to Vietnam and Djibouti under a new security assistance framework after a similar move with the Philippines, Japanese media outlet NHK reported on Monday. This new framework of cooperation clearly targets China, but it will very likely end up as wishful thinking, experts noted on Tuesday.

Through the Official Security Assistance (OSA) framework, Japan earlier agreed with the Philippines that Tokyo will provide Manila with surveillance radar systems. Vietnam and Djibouti are the next candidates to receive OSA from Japan during the fiscal year that begins in April 2024, according to NHK on Monday.

The selection of candidates such as the Philippines and Vietnam in the South China Sea reveals Japan's real ambition – creating security threats against China, analysts noted.

In recent years, especially since current Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida took office, Japan has been determined to antagonize China, Lü Chao, director of the Institute of US and East Asian Studies under Liaoning University, told the Global Times on Tuesday.

"It is guided by the active promotion of the US' so-called Indo-Pacific Strategy, and was boosted after the Camp David summit between the US, Japan, and South Korea," the expert commented.

Lü noted "China is clearly targeted in the framework."

"As China's relationships with ASEAN countries have developed rapidly in recent years, Japan stepped up looking for various excuses to create troubles for China," the expert noted. "But the plan is likely to end up as wishful thinking, as these small favors will not necessarily change the basic friendly relationship between these countries and China."

The implementation of the OSA framework is another attempt from Japan to break through the restrictions on arms exports, and another manifestation of Japan's push for military normalization by breaking "Article 9 of the Constitution," observers noted.



A UN flag flies at half-mast at the UN headquarters in New York on November 13, 2023. UN lowered the flags of its institutions all over the world for the 101 staff killed so far during the conflict in Gaza.
Photo: AFP

Thai PM defends Chinese police cooperation proposal; hype of 'sovereignty concern' ill-intentioned

By GT staff reporters

Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin on Monday defended the proposal to cooperate with Chinese police on information exchange about criminal networks, but denied there are plans to invite Chinese police officers to patrol local tourist destinations.

Chinese experts refuted individual Western media reporting such as Bloomberg's hyping of "national security" concerns, stressing that this police cooperation, if it happens,

would only be based on mutual respect for each other's laws and regulations and has nothing to do with independence or sovereignty.

Experts stressed police cooperation can help the two countries share experiences on combating crimes and boost Chinese tourists' confidence to visit Thailand.

"Please do not exploit this matter for political gain. It would be better if all sides concentrate in working for the benefit of the country and the people," a Thai government

spokesperson Chai Wacharonke said earlier on Monday, Thai media outlet the Bangkok Post reported.

According to the Thai government spokesperson, the Royal Thai Police (RTP) said they had found Chinese tourists were afraid they could be targeted for attack by Chinese criminals while visiting Thailand. Police representatives suggested the best way to cope with Chinese criminals was for Chinese police to be invited to come and work alongside Thai police.

Criticism that the presence of Chinese police would be tantamount to Thailand giving up its independence and sovereignty was unfounded, the spokesperson stressed.

However, the police cooperation plan triggered controversy after Bloomberg on Monday tried to smear the proposal, citing some unidentified Thai internet users as saying that "they are worried that Thailand would become another location for covert operations targeting Chinese dissidents overseas."

Xu Liping, director of the

Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that the police cooperation is only about public security.

Western media's hype is over-interpreted and unfounded, Xu said, noting that police cooperation will be maintained in line with relevant Thai laws and regulations and so it will be impossible to affect Thailand's independence or sovereignty.

