

► 1st visit to China by a UK Cabinet minister under new government

UK foreign secretary's China visit to 'enhance strategic mutual trust'

By GT staff reporters

A sustained and steady China-UK relationship serves the interests of the two countries and contributes to the joint international response to global challenges and world peace and development, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said, in response to UK foreign secretary's upcoming visit to China.

At the invitation of Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi, David Lammy, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the UK, will pay an official visit to China from October 18 to 19, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning announced on Thursday.

Further elaborating on the visit, Mao said at a press briefing on Thursday that Lammy's upcoming visit will be the first to China by a UK Cabinet minister under the new government, and the two sides will have an in-depth discussion

on implementing the important understandings reached between the leaders of the two countries during their phone call in August, enhancing strategic mutual trust, and strengthening dialogue and cooperation in various fields.

Both China and the UK are permanent members of the UN Security Council and major economies in the world. China stands ready to work with the UK to continue seeing each other as partners, uphold open cooperation, strive for mutual benefits, and promote the sustained and steady growth of bilateral relations, Mao said.

According to Li Guanjie, a research fellow with the Shanghai Academy of Global Governance and Area Studies under the Shanghai International Studies University, the visit may have the purpose for the UK to review and adjust its China policy.

The Labour government needs to change the UK's chaotic China policy over the past decade or so, therefore the visit could be an attempt to stabilize and

improve the relationship with Beijing and reset the UK's diplomatic priorities, Li said.

After the ups and downs, both sides are looking forward to this visit to rebuild mutual political trust. Specific topics of discussion between the two sides are likely to include economic cooperation, trade, according to experts.

Although the new Labour government reportedly seeks less confrontational ties with China and to resume trade and investment talks, they still need to balance the impact of the Conservative Party, said Cui Hongjian, a professor at the Academy of Regional and Global Governance at Beijing Foreign Studies University.

To bring China-UK relations back on track, the Keir Starmer administration needs to make a clear distinction between its China policy and that of the Conservative Party, Cui said, noting that the UK should reassess its China policy from a more practical and impartial perspective.

Japan urged to reflect on aggression history as PM sends offering to Yasukuni Shrine

By Liu Xin

China urges Japan to face and reflect on its history of aggression, act prudently on historical issues and to make a clean break with militarism, and to earn the trust of its Asian neighbors and the international community with concrete actions, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said on Thursday, after Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba reportedly sent an offering to the war-linked Yasukuni Shrine.

The Yasukuni Shrine is a spiritual tool and symbol of Japanese militarists responsible for the war of aggression. The place honors 14 convicted Class-A war criminals with grave responsibilities for the war crimes committed during that war of aggression, Mao said.

Ishiba, who took office on October 1, made a ritual "masakaki" tree offering under his name as prime minister on Thursday on the occasion of the shrine's autumn festival, according to Jiji Press.

Kyodo News cited a source close to Ishiba, saying that he is expected to refrain from paying a visit in person.

Lü Chao, an expert at the Liaoning Academy of Social Sciences, told the Global Times that the attitudes of Japanese politicians toward the shrine reflect their understanding of history. With many politicians leaning right, Ishiba is apparently under pressure from right-wing factions, which forced him to adopt a more rightist stance.

Japanese politicians should adopt a clear stance and a correct understanding of history. If they cling to remnants of militaristic thought and waver on the issue of visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, it will be difficult for neighboring countries to view Japan with trust, Lü said.

South Korea on Thursday voiced "deep regret" after Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba sent an offering to a war shrine in Tokyo seen as a symbol of its militaristic past, according to Yonhap News Agency.

"We urge the leaders of the new Japanese cabinet to squarely face history and show through action humble reflection and genuine atonement for past wrongdoings," South Korean foreign ministry spokesperson Lee Jae-wong said in a commentary.

Families' grief

Bereaved family members of the victims of the Halloween crush in 2022 react with grief and anger at the Seoul Western District Court in Seoul, South Korea, on October 17, 2024. On the day, the court has found the former police chief of Seoul and two other officers not guilty over a botched response to a Halloween crowd crush that killed 159 people. Photo: VCC



EU nations' planned 'maximum pressure' over Israel unlikely to have substantial result: expert

By Deng Xiaoci

EU nations with peacekeepers in Lebanon reportedly expressed "the shared will to exert maximum political and diplomatic pressure" on Israel over attacks against UN mission.

US media reported on Wednesday local time that Italy and France had organized a video conference among the 16 EU countries that participate in UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL,) where defense min-

isters "strongly condemned" attacks the mission has blamed on Israel, the Italian defense ministry said in a statement.

The EU nations with peacekeepers in Lebanon have expressed "the shared will to exert maximum political and diplomatic pressure on Israel" to prevent further "incidents" against the UN mission.

Since September 23, the Israeli army has been launching an unprecedented, intensive air attack on Lebanon, dubbed "Ar-

rows of the North," in a dangerous escalation with Hezbollah, according to Xinhua.

UNIFIL said on Wednesday that its peacekeepers near southern Lebanon's Kfar Kila observed an Israeli Merkava tank "firing at their watchtower," adding that "two cameras were destroyed, and the tower was damaged." The UN peacekeepers said that the attack by the Israeli forces was "direct and apparently deliberate." Al Jazeera reported on Wednesday,

The maximum pressure exerted by the EU nations on Israel is unlikely to constitute substantial pressure, though following economic sanctions cannot be ruled out, Liu Zhongmin, a professor at the Middle East Studies Institute of Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times.

Liu noted that although the US has differences with Israel on specific issues, in practice, it provides firm support to Israel in terms of equipment and

military aid, citing the Pentagon's latest authorization of the deployment of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, missile battery and its associated US military crew to Israel as an example.

The standoff between UN peacekeeping forces and Israel is expected to continue for some time, said the expert.

