

China rebuffs annual US military report



Senior Colonel Wu Qian, spokesperson of the Ministry of National Defense of China. [File photo by Chen Boyuan / China.org.cn]

China has resolutely opposed the latest U.S. military report that distorts China's legitimate development in military and security sectors and is meant to spread the so-called "military threat from China".

The U.S. Department of Defense recently published its Annual Report to Congress on Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2017.

The report summarized the developments in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) organizational reform, highlighted China's new weapon's capabilities, China's regional maritime claims and presented its interpretation of the situation across the Taiwan Strait.

China's Ministry of National Defense (MOD) spokesperson Senior Colonel Wu Qian refuted late on June 6 the allegations in the Pentagon report. He said that China has resolutely adhered to its path of peaceful development and its defensive-orientated national defense policy.

"China will not seek military expansion or sphere of influence; China will remain a resolute power to preserve world peace," Sr. Col. Wu said.

The Pentagon report said that "China has continued construction at its military outposts" in the South China Sea islands. It also highlighted

civilian passenger aircraft landings on newly built airfields on a handful of these islands and reefs.

Sr. Col. Wu said that China will resolutely safeguard its national sovereignty and security concerning the East China Sea and South China Sea while preserving regional peace and stability.

In comparison, "the United States wants to enhance military deployment in this region. The U.S. military frequently sends vessels and aircraft to conduct close-in reconnaissance along China's borders, resulting in regional tensions," said the MOD spokesperson.

The U.S. report stated that "China's published military budget omits several major categories of expenditure, such as R&D and the procurement of foreign weapons and equipment". Wu insisted China's defense budget had always been "transparent" and that China's military reform, ordnance development and construction of cyberspace defense capability was "legitimate and reasonable." He rebutted the accusations in the Pentagon report as "pure speculations."

The Pentagon report includes a chapter on "U.S.-China Military-to-Military Contacts", saying the "defense contacts and exchanges provide opportunities to explore and expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest and to manage competition constructively."

Sr. Col. Wu acknowledged that China was aware of the American special attention towards military exchanges between the two countries. He maintained that a healthy military-to-military relationship was in the "common interest" of both countries.

"We hope the United States will reasonably and objectively treat China's development in national defense and military, move toward China to enhance ties, carefully implement the major consensus reached by two heads of state, and facilitate the development of the ties between the two militaries," said the MOD spokesman.