
China, Qatar Reaffirm Growing Defence Partnership at PLA 99th Anniversary Reception



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the Ritz-Carlton Doha to celebrate the 99th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), highlighting China's commitment to peace, regional stability and the expanding strategic partnership between China and Qatar.

The reception began with the national anthems of China and Qatar, reflecting the close friendship between the two countries. The event was attended by senior military officials, diplomats, members of the diplomatic corps, defence representatives and distinguished guests from various sectors.

The ceremony was hosted by Senior Colonel Yang Yongzhi, Defence Attaché of the Embassy of China, in the presence of H.E. Ambassador Cao Xiaolin. A ceremonial cake-cutting was later held by Ambassador Cao Xiaolin and senior guests to mark the occasion.

Among the distinguished guests were Maj. Gen. Mohammed Rashid Al Shahwani, Head of the International Military Cooperation Authority, representing H.E. the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs and H.E. the Chief of Staff of the Qatari Armed Forces, and Brig. Gen. Rajah Mohammed Al Nabit, President of the Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies, along with ambassadors, senior military officers and members of the diplomatic community.

Addressing the gathering, Senior Colonel Yang Yongzhi said the PLA had evolved over the past 99 years from a force dedicated to China's national independence into a modern military committed to safeguarding sovereignty, security and development while contributing to regional and global peace.

He stressed that the mission of a military is not to wage war but to prevent it, noting that recent conflicts in the Gulf region had demonstrated the importance of peace, dialogue and international cooperation. He reaffirmed China's adherence to a defensive national defence policy and said the country would never seek hegemony, expansion or spheres of influence.

The Defence Attaché highlighted President Xi Jinping's Global Security Initiative, which promotes common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security through dialogue, respect for sovereignty and peaceful settlement of disputes. He reiterated China's support for peace and stability in the Gulf and its commitment to strengthening mutual trust with regional countries.

Reviewing the PLA's modernization, Yang said China's armed forces had undergone historic reforms with improved command systems, advanced equipment and stronger joint operational capabilities as they continue progressing towards becoming a world-class military. He emphasized that China's defence expenditure remains below 1.5 percent of GDP and is purely defensive in nature, aimed at protecting national sovereignty while contributing to international

peace rather than seeking military dominance.

The Defence Attaché also highlighted the PLA's international contributions, describing it as an important force for global peace and security. He noted that China is the largest contributor of peacekeepers among the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the second-largest contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget. Over the past three decades, more than 50,000 Chinese peacekeepers have served in over 20 UN peacekeeping missions, while 17 Chinese peacekeepers sacrificed their lives in the service of peace.

Yang further noted that since 2008, the Chinese Navy has maintained uninterrupted escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and waters off Somalia, providing safe passage to more than 7,000 Chinese and foreign commercial vessels. He said these operations have played a vital role in safeguarding international maritime trade routes, particularly those linked to Gulf energy exports and commercial shipping.

He also highlighted the PLA's role in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, medical support, maritime search and rescue operations and overseas evacuations. Recalling his participation in the 2015 Yemen evacuation, he said Chinese naval vessels safely evacuated more than 600 Chinese citizens and 279 foreign nationals from 15 countries, demonstrating China's commitment to protecting lives and fulfilling international responsibilities.

Highlighting bilateral relations, Yang noted that China and Qatar continue to expand defence cooperation through high-level exchanges, military education, personnel training and defence industry collaboration. He said Qatari officers had participated in the Second Shanghai Cooperation Organization Junior-and-Middle-Level Officers' Exchange, while Chinese defence companies took part in DIMDEX. Military officers from both countries have also continued studying at each other's military academies, further strengthening strategic mutual trust.

He said the growing defence relationship reflects the broader China-Qatar Strategic Partnership, which continues to expand across political, economic, security and cultural fields. He expressed confidence that defence and security cooperation between the two friendly countries would continue to flourish through mutual respect, practical collaboration and shared commitment to regional peace and stability.

Expressing confidence in the future of China-Qatar relations, the Defence Attaché said both countries share a commitment to peaceful development, openness and mutually beneficial cooperation. He affirmed China's readiness to deepen defence exchanges and industrial cooperation with Qatar and other friendly nations.

Concluding his remarks, Yang emphasized that peace remains the foundation of development and called for stronger international cooperation to safeguard regional stability, global energy

security and shared prosperity. He said China and the PLA would continue working with partners around the world, particularly Gulf countries, to promote dialogue, strengthen security cooperation and contribute to lasting peace.