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## Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Qatar Celebrates the 97th Anniversary of the Chinese People's Liberation Army

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DOHA — The Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Qatar hosted a grand event to commemorate the 97th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). The celebration saw the attendance of numerous distinguished guests, including high-ranking officials from the Qatari Emiri Air Force, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and international

defense attachés.

The event commenced with a welcoming address, highlighting the significance of the PLA's journey since its establishment 97 years ago. The PLA has grown into a formidable force known as the "Steel Great Wall," ensuring China's national security and interests while also contributing significantly to regional and global peace. The PLA's development underscores the belief that a strong nation necessitates a robust military to safeguard its security and sovereignty.

The event was graced by the presence of several notable dignitaries, including Brig. Gen. Khalifa bu Jalouf, Human Resources and Education Commander of the Qatari Emiri Air Force; Brig. Gen. Khalifa Ahmed Al Ammari, Airlift Group Commander of the Qatari Emiri Air Force; Lt. Col. Hamad Shaheen Al Madeed, Director of Defense and Security Agreements & Conventions Directorate; Lt. Col. Abdullrahman Al Dosary from the International Affairs Directorate; Ambassador CAO Xiaolin; and Commodore Iftikhar, Defense Attaché of Pakistan and Dean of the Defense Attaché Association in Qatar. Their presence underscored the strong and enduring relationships between China and its international partners.

### **Historical Significance and Development of the PLA**

The PLA's historical evolution reflects its crucial role in protecting China's territorial integrity.

With a land border of over 22,000 km and a coastline exceeding 18,000 km, China faces unique security challenges due to its extensive borders and maritime interests. The PLA's modernization and strength are pivotal in addressing these challenges, ensuring national unity and security.

Despite its military prowess, China remains a nation committed to peace. The suffering endured through wars has instilled a profound appreciation for peace among the Chinese people. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, China has adhered to an independent foreign policy of peace, committed to peaceful development. China has never initiated war, invaded another country's land, engaged in proxy wars, or participated in military blocs. China's record on peace and security is exemplary, and it remains the only major nuclear-armed country to pledge no first use of nuclear weapons.

### **Global Security Initiative and International Contributions**

In light of the complex international and regional security landscape, President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Security Initiative in April 2022. This initiative advocates for solidarity and a win-win mindset to address traditional and nontraditional security risks. It emphasizes dialogue over confrontation, partnership over alliances, and mutual benefits over zero-sum games. This initiative embodies China's commitment to global security, offering wisdom and solutions to

international security challenges.

China actively implements the Global Security Initiative through the PLA's contributions to international peacekeeping, maritime escort, and humanitarian assistance. As the second-largest contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget and the largest troop contributor among the permanent members of the UN Security Council, China plays a vital role in maintaining global peace. Since 1990, the PLA has sent nearly 50,000 peacekeepers to various UN missions, clearing over 18,000 mines, building or repairing more than 18,000 kilometers of roads, and providing medical services to over 267,000 individuals.

### **China-Qatar Strategic Partnership**

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the China-Qatar strategic partnership. Over the past decade, President Xi Jinping and His Highness Emir Tamim have met five times, agreeing to deepen this strategic partnership. Under their strategic guidance, China-Qatar relations have developed comprehensively and rapidly. China has been Qatar's largest trading partner and export destination for four consecutive years. The military relations between China and Qatar have also progressed positively, with notable visits and exchanges enhancing mutual cooperation. Recent visits include the 44th PLA Navy escort fleet to Doha and high-level exchanges between military leaders of both nations.

## **Humanitarian Efforts and International Cooperation**

The PLA Navy has dispatched 47 batches of naval ships for escort operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia, involving over 150 ships and 36,000 troops, escorting more than 7,000 vessels. Additionally, the PLA actively participates in international disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, including fighting the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, earthquake relief in Nepal, and providing essential relief supplies to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tonga. The PLA Navy's hospital ship, Ark Peace, has offered free medical services to over 250,000 people since 2010.

China actively engages in military exchanges with over 150 countries, establishing over 50 defense consultation and dialogue mechanisms with more than 40 countries and international organizations. This commitment promotes a new type of security partnership based on equality, mutual trust, and win-win cooperation. Recently, the PLA hosted a seminar for senior military officers from China and Arab States to deepen defense cooperation and build a China-Arab