

U.S. and China Restore Military Dialogue

In a video call with his Chinese counterpart, Gen. Charles Q. Brown stressed the importance of communication to reduce tensions.

By [Helene Cooper](#)
New York Times

The United States and China restored communications between their two militaries on Thursday, as President Biden's senior military adviser, Gen. Charles Q. Brown, held a videoconference call with his Chinese counterpart, Gen. Liu Zhenli.

The call signaled a significant step in the relationship between two of the world's most powerful militaries. The Pentagon and the Chinese military have had frosty relations over the past few years amid tensions over Taiwan and the South China Sea.

Relations further deteriorated earlier this year after the Pentagon [shot down a Chinese spy balloon](#) that had traversed the continental United States.

But within days of [taking office](#) as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff this fall, General Brown [wrote a letter](#) to his Chinese counterpart saying the United States was open to resuming military-to-military communications, which Beijing suspended last year to protest Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan.

Thursday's call came a month after Mr. Biden and President Xi Jinping of China [agreed to resume the dialogue](#) during a summit in the San Francisco area.

"General Brown discussed the importance of working together to responsibly manage competition, avoid miscalculations and maintain open and direct lines of communication," Capt. Jereal Dorsey, the spokesman for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in an email to reporters.

He said that General Brown "reiterated the importance of the People's Liberation Army engaging in substantive dialogue to reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings."

The two military leaders discussed several global and regional security issues, Captain Dorsey said.

China's defense ministry, in its account of the call, said General Liu stressed that "the key to developing a healthy, stable and sustainable military-to-military relationship is that the United States must have a correct understanding of China."

A [Pentagon report](#) in October accused China's military of taking increasingly dangerous actions to deter U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region, including maneuvers in the skies above the South China Sea intended to intimidate American military aircraft.

Beijing has long bristled at the U.S. military aircraft and ships that operate in international skies and waters near China.

The report also said China was continuing to build up its strategic nuclear arsenal and had probably amassed 500 nuclear warheads as of May, an increase of about 100 over last year's estimate.