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NATO summit threatens China, at US instigation

Members of the 30-nation NATO alliance concluded their summit Monday with a communique targeting China, declaring that it poses “systemic challenges” to the military alliance.

The wording of the document marked a significant new stage in the efforts of the United States to, in the words of US President Biden, “organize the world to take on China,” as part of a massive escalation of tensions by Washington against Beijing.



US tanks are unloaded in Antwerp, Belgium to take part in the Atlantic Resolve military exercises. (AP Photo/Francisco Seco)

The 79-paragraph NATO communiqué mentions China a dozen times, in a marked contrast from previous statements. The current NATO strategy document, first published

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in 2010, does not reference China, and the 2019 communique mentions the country only once.

“The strength of the statement shows how far relations between the West and Beijing have deteriorated in the 18 months since NATO countries last met,” noted the *Financial Times*. “Now, just a year and a half later, China has risen to become a systemic rival,” commented Germany’s *Der Spiegel*.

“China’s growing influence and international policies can present challenges that we need to address together as an alliance,” the NATO document states. “We will engage China with a view to defending the security interests of the alliance.”

The communiqué says that China presents “systemic challenges to the rules-based international order,” claiming that China is expanding its military forces and seeking to cooperate with Russia.

Biden’s efforts to recruit Washington’s allies against China is the diplomatic aspect of US efforts to strangle China’s economic development, demonize it in the eyes of the world’s population and prepare for military conflict.

On Wednesday, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin issued a directive declaring China to be the “number one” focus of the US military. *Foreign Policy* commented that the review sought “to infuse the Pentagon, and indeed the entire U.S. government, with the overarching goal of bracing for long-term strategic competition with China.”

As *Foreign Policy* noted: “That’s been a constant refrain for Biden even before he took office, framing China’s rise as the United States’ central challenge of the century. Unless the United States regains its competitive and technological edge, Biden warned, China is ‘going to eat our lunch.’”

Last week, the US Senate passed the so-called “China competitiveness bill,” a massive \$250 billion package of corporate subsidies and sanctions that the *New York Times* termed “the most significant government intervention in industrial policy in decades.”

The NATO summit followed the weekend's G7 meeting, which, in the words of the *FT*, “criticised China over human rights, trade and a lack of transparency over the origins of the coronavirus pandemic.”

After the NATO summit, Biden was set to fly to Geneva to meet Wednesday with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Ahead of the summit, Biden declared, “What I’ll convey to President Putin is that I’m not looking for conflict with Russia.” Biden described the Russian president as “bright,” “tough” and a “worthy adversary.”

Ahead of the summit, Biden refused to back Ukraine’s admission to NATO, declaring, in a non-sequitur, “School’s out on that question, it remains to be seen. ... They have more to do.”

Despite the US’s insistence on threats against China, the NATO communiqué remained aggressively tilted against Russia, mentioning it 60 times.

While the US’s NATO allies agreed to its demands for more belligerent language against China in its communiqué, there remain significant differences over Washington’s diplomatic offensive against China.

“I don’t think anybody around the table today wants to descend into a new Cold War with China,” British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel added, “one must not overrate” the threat posed by China, declaring, “we need to find the right balance.”

And NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg insisted Beijing was “not an adversary” but said the alliance needed to “engage with China to defend our security interests.”

As Germany’s *Der Spiegel* commented: “For some NATO members, whose economy is closely intertwined with that of China, however, this is extremely dangerous—especially for Germany and its export economy. They therefore wanted to prevent overly martial rhetoric against Beijing.”

As Reuters pointed out:

Allies are mindful of their economic links with China. Total German trade with China in 2020 was more than 212 billion euros (\$257 billion), according to German government data. Total Chinese holdings of U.S. Treasuries as of March 2021 stood at \$1.1 trillion, according to U.S. data, and total U.S. trade with China in 2020 was \$559 billion.

But, for all that, *Der Spiegel* declared: “In China—this much has been clear since Biden’s summit debut—the USA and NATO see the long-term more dangerous opponent.”

Despite their differences and contradictions, the United States and its NATO allies are barreling headlong into a major escalation against China with potentially catastrophic consequences.

Despite a raging pandemic, all of the NATO members are massively expanding their militaries. Earlier this year, the UK announced a 40 percent expansion of its nuclear arsenal, while the Biden administration has requested the largest Pentagon budget in human history.

The massive military buildup currently underway, combined with US threats against China, present an immense danger to all mankind.

With a frankness entirely missing from the US press, Russia’s Ambassador to China Andrey Denisov spoke with China’s *Global Times* about the consequences of a US war with China.

Denisov was asked by the *Global Times*: “Competition and confrontation between China and the US are escalating. If one day an armed conflict between China and the US happens, what position would Russia take?”

Denisov replied that there “will be no answer to this,” because “such a conflict would exterminate all mankind, and then there would be no point in taking sides.”

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