WORLD

Xi congratulates Sisi on reelection as Egyptian president

By XU WEI xuwei@chinadailu.com.cn

President Xi Jinping extended a congratulatory message to Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on his reelection as Egyptian president on Tuesday, stressing his readiness to work with Sisi by offering firm mutual support and jointly advancing

US to play

due role for

By ZHOU JIN

resolutions.

Wang said.

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truce in Gaza

Beijing said on Tuesday that it

hopes Washington will listen to the

growing international calls to end

hostilities between Palestine and

Israel, and refrain from unilaterally

obstructing the United Nations Secu-

rity Council from passing relevant

Foreign Ministry spokesman

Wang Wenbin made these remarks

at a news conference, after United

States Ambassador to China Nicho-

las Burns said at a recent Brookings

Institution event that China wishes

to become influential in the Middle

East, but it is on the shoulders of the

The US should play its due role in

promoting an immediate cease-fire

and ending the violence to prevent a

larger-scale humanitarian disaster,

Since the outbreak of the Pales-

As president of the UN Security

Council for November, China promot-

ed the adoption of the first resolution

and submitted China's position paper

to push the UNSC to take more action.

batches of humanitarian assistance,

including cash, food and medicine to Gaza, Wang said.

The spokesman stressed that Chi-

na does not have selfish interests in

the Middle East and does not seek to

China always believes that the future of the Middle East should be

in the hands of the people in the

region, he said, adding that China supports the Palestinian people's just

cause of restoring their legitimate

In recent years, China has proposed

In March, Saudi Arabia and Iran

reached a deal, which includes the

agreement to resume diplomatic

relations under the mediation of

China. Last week, the first vice-min-

isterial level meeting of the China-

Saudi Arabia-Iran trilateral joint

All of these efforts were made to

encourage regional countries to

realize development through soli-

darity and resolve disputes and dif-

ferences through dialogue and

consultation, said Wang, adding

that China would like to work

relentlessly to that end.

committee was held in Beijing.

a series of initiatives and proposals to

broker peace in the Middle East.

form exclusive circles

national rights.

Beijing has also provided multiple

tine-Israel conflict, China has been

committed to pushing for a cease-

fire and protecting civilians.

US to end this conflict.

Belt and Road cooperation. Xi emphasized that China and Egypt are good friends with shared aspirations and mutual trust, as

He noted that relations between

across various fields, and the friendship between the two peoples has deepened continuously.

The president stressed his strong elevate the

ship to new heights and deliver more benefits to people of both

office in 2014, won the presidential election of the Arab country with some 40 million, or 89.6 percent, of valid votes, securing his third term in power, Egypt's National Election Authority announced on Monday.

Spewing fire China urges

well as good partners for joint development and prosperity.

Beijing and Cairo have flourished in recent years, yielding fruitful results in pragmatic cooperation

emphasis on bilateral ties, saving that he is willing to make joint efforts with Sisi to uphold the common interests of developing counbilateral tries. comprehensive strategic partner

nations. Sisi, who was first sworn into



A volcano spews lava and smoke as it erupts in Grindavik, Iceland, on Monday. Iceland, which sits above a volcanic hot spot in the North Atlantic Ocean, averages an eruption every four to five years. The most disruptive in recent times was the 2010 eruption of the Eyjafjallajokull volcano. HANDOUT VIA REUTERS

Joint force to counter attacks in Red Sea

GAZA/MANAMA/JERUSA-- Several countries have LEM agreed to jointly carry out patrols in the southern Red Sea and Gulf of Aden to try to safeguard commercial shipping against attacks by Yemen's Houthi militia.

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, on a visit to Bahrain, identified several countries taking part in an international force. It was unclear whether those countries are willing to do what US warships have done in recent days, shoot down Houthi missiles and drones and rush to the aid of commercial ships under attack.

"This is an international challenge that demands collective action. Therefore today I am announcing the establishment of Operation Prosperity Guardian, an important new multinational security initiative," Austin said in a statement on Tuesday.

It identified participating nations led by the United States as including among others Bahrain, Britain, Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Seychelles and Spain.

Houthis have waded into the Israel-Palestine conflict by attacking vessels in vital shipping lanes and even firing drones and missiles at Israel.

Houthi militia on Monday claimed responsibility for attacks on an oil ship and a cargo ship in the southern part of the Red Sea. Houthis attacked two commer-

cial shipping vessels in the southern Red Sea on Monday, the US Central Command, or CENTCOM, said in a statement. The chemical oil tanker motor vessel Swan Atlantic was attacked by a drone and an anti-ship ballistic missile. it said. At about the same time in a separate incident, the bulk cargo ship MSC Clara reported an explosion in the water near its cation, CENTCOM said.

There were no injuries reported by either vessel.

Crucial gateway

In addition, the Houthis have sued explicit warnings to international shipping companies, advising against engagement with Israeli ports.

Industry giant Maersk was the first to advise its fleet on Friday to halt all voyages through the Bab al-Mandab Strait, a narrow sea passage near Yemen, which holds immense strategic significance, serving as a major artery for global oil shipments and as a crucial gateway to the Suez Canal.

Mohammed al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi politburo, told Al Jazeera on Monday his group would be able to confront any US-led coalition in the Red Sea.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in a call with Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan on Monday, condemned the attacks on commercial vessels, the State Department said.

Meanwhile, Israel's assault continued in Gaza where it has vowed to annihilate Hamas

A World Health Organization official said on Monday that the Kamal Adwan hospital in northern Gaza that Israeli troops raided last week is no longer functioning and patients including babies have been evacuated.

"We cannot afford to lose any hospitals," said Richard Peeperkorn, WHO representative for Gaza.

Peeperkorn also said about 4,000 displaced people taking refuge on the grounds of the Nasser Medical

Complex in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis were at risk as Israel pursues military operations there. Early on Tuesday, residents of

some areas in Khan Younis reported fierce gunbattle between Palestinian fighters and Israeli forces. Israeli tanks and planes bombed areas near the city center, residents said.

The Gaza health ministry said on Monday that 19,453 Palestinians had been killed and 52,286 wounded in the Israeli assault on the Hamas-ruled enclave in more than two months of conflict.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to achieve total victory over Hamas. whose fighters killed 1,200 people and took 240 hostages in a surprise Oct 7 raid into Israel, according to Israeli tallies.

AGENCIES-XINHUA

Restrictive legislations spark protests

Florida laws targeting Chinese nationals and entities generate widespread dissent

By MAY ZHOU in Houston mayzhou@chinadailyusa.com

United States Representative Judy Chu of California, Gene Wu, who is a member of the Texas House of Representatives, and 2020 presidential candidate Andrew Yang of New York joined hundreds of protesters in the pouring rain in Miami over the weekend to protest two Florida laws that target Chinese nationals and entities.

The three, all Democrats, were joined on Saturday by leaders of civil rights organizations including the League of United Latin American Citizens, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and United Chinese Americans in protesting Florida Senate Bills 264 and 846, both of which took effect on July 1.

SB 264, which some critics refer to as "Florida's New Alien Land Law", prohibits entities and citizens of seven "countries of concern" - China, Cuba, Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Russia, Svria and Venezuela - from acquiring agricultural land in the state

In addition, Chinese nationals are singled out for further restrictions. Those with nontourist visas are allowed to acquire only one property smaller than 0.8 hectare that is at least 8 kilometers from military installations or 16 kilometers from critical infrastructure. Sellers and buyers alike could face charges for any violations.

SB 846 prohibits Florida's public colleges and universities from taking money from or partnering with entities in the same seven countries of concern.

It also prohibits institutions from offering anyone living in one of those countries a contract to conduct research. The law aims to pre-vent the governments of those countries from "influencing" state colleges and universities and their students and staff.

Jiangeng Xue, professor of materials science and engineering at the University of Florida, told China Daily that high-quality graduate students working as research assistants are vital to many laboratory projects.

More than 280 faculty members at the University of Florida, which has the state's largest research portfolio, have signed a petition urging the university to actively support a call for an open-door hiring policy.

"We urgently request a timely decision that allows us to recruit top international graduate students with an assistantship, irrespective of their nationality," said a petition sent on Dec 6 to University of Florida President Ben Sasse and the university's senior leadership

"Failure to act swiftly may result in the loss of exceptional students to other universities, and the damage will be irreversible," the petition said.

law defines a "foreign The researcher" as not just people currently living in another country, but also anyone with one year or more of training or employment outside the US - even if they hold US citizenship. Those turned away due to something in their background must be reported to the FBI or another law enforcement agency designated by Florida's governor.

Lengthy review process

The Florida law allows exceptions only when the state's Board of Governors, which oversees higher education, decides that the interaction is not "detrimental to the safety or security of the US or its residents" through a case-by-case vetting process. It would be the last step in a lengthy review process for anyone seeking a position as a graduate assistant or postdoctoral researcher.

Xue said vetting is "not practical", because the submission times required by the Board of Governors make it impossible to meet general academic application deadlines either the decisions will not be made in time, or students will be informed too late

The uncertainty created by the law has put a freeze on making offers to research students in China for the fall of 2024, which normally happens in December and early January, according to the journal

Science. "We have missed that window," said Zhong-Ren Peng, a UF professor of urban planning who leads a center for adaptation planning and design.

"And the best students cannot wait. Instead, they will go some-where else," he told science.org.

Xue said the new law is "political". "There have already been laws discriminating against Chinese," said Xue. "It just amplifies it."

Many others agree.

"You'd go to jail if you sell a house to Chinese. Chinese are not allowed to come over to schools. Once those ideas are deeply planted in people's minds, the average Chinese Americans will be discriminated (against)," Steven Pei, an engineering professor at the University of Houston, said in a group chat when encouraging people to go to the rally

Ai Heping and Mingmei Li in New York contributed to this story

International Education Column

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